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THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



Year of the INFANTRY

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ISSUE 19 | SEPTEMBER 2008 | \$3.95



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Issue 19 – September 2008

CONTACT

AIR, LAND & SEA



Cover Story

Year of the Infantry
Heavy Weapons
Full story page 40

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Authors and photographers may submit articles and high-quality photos for consideration for publication, however, the editor accepts no responsibility for any material submitted and does not undertake to publish all submissions. Include a stamped, self-addressed envelope if material is to be returned.

An army marches on its stomach – but morale binds it together and confidence makes it strong.

To engender confidence and improve morale, I remember that as part of the indoctrination process at Kapooka, it was drummed into me that 'the system' would always be there to look after me. Later, working in the aviation side of the Army, the reputation and legend of the Aussie evac pilot in Vietnam was part of our culture.

Later still, in East Timor, I recall one occasion when I consciously considered the evacuation plan that I 'knew' was behind me, ready to whisk me out of the field and into a competent medical facility if I was hurt – so I soldiered on, confident, bulletproof.

When I left the army as a photojournalist, I thought about going overseas to 'cover the war' but, as a married man with responsibilities, it didn't take long to talk myself out of that idea. The actual getting hurt part wasn't the scary bit. When I thought about it, I suddenly realised that being outside 'the system' brought me out from under that umbrella I always subconsciously 'knew' had been there to protect me as a soldier. Now, as a civilian, I could no longer depend on a helicopter magically appearing from over the hill when things turned to poo. I could not, confidently, put myself in harm's way.

Emergency responders and medical practitioners know from experience that any patient's chances of survival are dramatically improved if adequately treated within the 'golden hour' following severe trauma.

In Korea and Vietnam, the advent and use of the helicopter took battle-casualty survival rates to new highs. And, as a sad consequence of the dangerous world we live in, practice has raised the odds of battle-casualty survival even higher.

As this magazine goes to print, and we have sadly already covered the death, repatriation and funeral of yet another fine Aussie soldier, I am sickened to see another storm of controversy blow up around another soldier's death.

I realise we all want answers, but, as per normal, we will simply have to wait for the results of lengthy inquiry processes to get to the bottom of it. When they do come, however, I sincerely hope that the results shine a better light on this sad affair than the media has.

However, Defence's answers to the media's speculating did not inspire confidence either, unfortunately.

Assurances that the timeframes involved in this particular mission were standard across Afghanistan and applied equally to ISAF and US forces were hardly comforting.

"Two ISAF AME helicopters were launched from Kandahar **within the required 30 minutes** of receiving the evacuation request," Defence says. "The AME arrived at the incident site **within 1 hour and 30 minutes** of the AME request being received," they assure us.

Whether Signaller McCarthy could have been saved by a quicker response is yet to be assessed. Whether he could have or not is one thing – the damage that must surely have been done to the morale and confidence of our soldiers who now know that 113 minutes from trauma to hospital is acceptable to their commanders is something else altogether.

Brian Hartigan
Managing Editor

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INCOMING

BOMB SHELL

Under current legislation, Defence only 'pays in' to your superannuation until you reach the MSBS Maximum Benefit Limit (MBL).

Most people have heard the term MBL, but few understand the impact of reaching it. Think of it this way – if, for example, you were earning \$100,000 a year and you have reached MBL, you will not receive the 28 per cent previously paid into your super by your employer. That's a loss of \$28,000 a year!

The Military Super Review 2007 states, "to address retention concerns, as well as fairness, the Review Team recommends that MSBS Maximum Benefit Limits be fully abolished..."

I believe this should be implemented for the following reasons;

- MBL is similar to the RBL in the private sector, which was abolished in July 2007;
- MBLs were set when retirement age was 55, but it's now 60, so, you can work for another five years, but Defence won't pay you any super!
- If you leave Defence, a new employer will give you the 9 per cent compulsory superannuation guarantee – but stay with Defence and you receive an effective 'pay cut' of up to 28 per cent, plus you miss out on the growth that that money would have attracted.

Use the 'compareyourpackage' website to verify what I'm saying.

Everyone in MSBS will be affected if they reach their MBL. There are currently more than 600 affected members and growing.

To find out more or add your weight to the argument, Allan Moore of Adsum Wealth is raising awareness of this with relevant officials outside Defence. He is licensed to provide personal advice and happy to receive calls – (02) 9579 4081.

Les H by email

TIMED ASSAULT

What brand of wrist watch does the Australian Army use?
Vasily B, via web-site feedback

While every soldier, sailor or airman is expected to be on time, whether in barracks or on operations, and while everyone routinely synchronises watches during orders, the ADF issues watches to a limited number of members. Navy loans watches as returnable, personal-issue safety equipment to clearance divers and aircrew. Army issues watches to members who require them for specified duties. The RAAF issues watches to aircrew, EOD, medical and some dog-handler members. Everyone else buys his/her own. It would be inappropriate for Defence to endorse a specific brand – Ed

WARNING ORDER

The 4RAR Association of South Australia will dedicate a memorial to our fallen at the Pathway of Honour on 1 Feb 2009. All are welcome to attend.

More info will be sent out later in the year.

Secretary Mick Fincham – (08) 8264 6576 – mickf38@optusnet.com.au

SPECIAL ROUND

I think CONTACT is a great mag, giving the public a pretty good idea of what goes on in the ADF.

I was wondering if you could do an article on special forces selection, going into a bit more detail than past stories, as I'm very interested in applying for the special forces.

Also, could CONTACT please send me a special forces training schedule if you have one?

Ben M, via web-site feedback

I really hadn't planned on revisiting the subject of special-forces training since we covered it in issue #1 – mainly because SF are so secretive that it's too hard to get the access we'd like.

We have been asked about their training schedules before, but Defence said no, primarily because it's sort of secret (ish), but mainly because they couldn't give such a heavy-duty work schedule to someone without knowing their base-level fitness – Ed

SNAP SHOT

Great mag. Every CONTACT I've got is falling apart [from over reading, I hope – Ed]. Hope you keep it going for years to come.

Marc V, via web site feedback

COMPETITION WINNER



Winner of the customised ASLAV model by Russ French of Defence Models and Graphics is...

Alex Kruger, an RAAC trooper attached to Sydney University Regiment's Training Support Company.

Alex wrote...

I'm a proud Chocco Blackhat, And I wish I drove a LAV, But in my Uni Regiment Infantry Minor's all I have, Spare a LAV?

Congratulations Alex, you wrote **exactly** 25 words as per my request. While this was a popular competition, 80 per cent of entrants disqualified themselves by not reading the question properly. RTFQ!!!

■ Russ French has a wide range of excellent models for sale as gifts or souvenirs. He can even personalise them for you. Visit www.defencemodels.com.au to see his great collection – and remember me on your Christmas list!

BOEING 707 *END OF SERVICE*

After 29 years of service as a VIP aircraft, troop and cargo transport and air-to-air refuel tanker, the venerable Boeing 707 has retired.

Words Brian Hartigan

Pic Leading Aircraftsman David Gibbs

'City of Richmond' made the final official flights for the fleet on 30 June when it took a full load of lucky passengers for a run along the NSW coast and through Sydney heads for a run up the harbour.

Just days earlier the aircraft was doing the business on its final military exercise, conducting air-to-air refuel sorties during Exercise Pitch Black over the Northern Territory.

'Richmond Town', a former passenger jet purchased second-hand from Qantas in the 1970s, has recently sported a dark-blue tail scheme commemorating the aircraft's service with the RAAF.

Also retired in June was the B707 flight simulator that was operated by 285 Squadron over the past nine years. It was the first 'Level-Five' accredited military transport simulator in the world, taking a heavy training commitment away from the real B707 airframes.

Defence's growing workload formerly carried out by the RAAF's fleet of four B707s is now shared by the more specialist 737 Business Jet VIP fleet, the C17 Loadmaster cargo transport and the soon-to-be-introduced Airbus A330 air-to-air tanker fleet, which will also be equipped for troop transport.





WAR HERO

GROUNDLED

A Sikorsky MH-53M on display at the National Museum of the US Air Force. PIC US AIR FORCE

A war hero of a different kind has gone on display at the US Air Force Museum at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

MH-53M Pave Low IV helicopter serial number 68-10357, which was flown by Air Force special operations forces in almost every theatre from Vietnam to Iraq, is famous for its part in a mission to rescue American POWs from the Son Tay prison camp near Hanoi in 1970.

Fittingly, after 38 years of service, its final flight was a combat mission in Iraq on 28 March 2008.

Records show that the fleet of only 72 MH-53 airframes has been involved in combat actions that resulted in the awarding of 140 Silver Stars.

Remaining MH-53s in the Air Force inventory will be retired by September this year.



HISTORICAL REWRITE

Another terrible wrong of the Vietnam War has been righted with long-fought-for official acceptance that a brave and successful Australian fighting unit actually existed.

Strange as it might seem, the very existence of the 2nd D&E Platoon (Defence and Employment) has until now been denied by successive governments, military leaders and official histories.

However, in May this year, Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support Mike Kelly told veterans of the 2nd D&E Platoon that their role in the war would be forever enshrined and acknowledged in the Official History of the Vietnam War, which will soon be published.

"For many years now, the surviving members of this platoon have been battling to have their record and role in the Vietnam War officially recognised," Dr Kelly said.

"I am pleased to announce that I have been able to bring this long struggle to a conclusion by confirming that the Rudd Labor Government and the Defence Department have been able to determine that the platoon did indeed exist and engaged in a series of important actions in Vietnam as part of the Australian Task Force.

"I would like to pay particular tribute to the courage and dedication of the men of the 2nd D&E Platoon. They were a team that was effectively born in battle, not having been formally raised and trained as a sub-unit in Australia before deploying to Vietnam, but being assembled in country in response to the

particular security requirements of the ATF. They were able to come together as an effective fighting force thanks to the professionalism of the soldiers and in particular the non-commissioned officer who led them – Corporal James Bertram Riddle."

Dr Kelly said the action for which the 2nd D&E Platoon should particularly be noted was a successful ambush they executed together with 2 Troop, B Squadron, 3rd Cavalry Regiment, in May 1969 at Thua Tich.

"This was a ferocious battle that involved the engaged troops taking on a much larger enemy force, beyond artillery support, and, through many heroic individual and collective efforts, were able to soundly defeat the enemy without loss.

"Their success was a tribute to their professionalism and to the outstanding leadership and courage of Corporal Riddle, whose personal actions ensured the survival of many members of the platoon who would otherwise surely have been killed."

Dr Kelly met surviving members of the platoon and thanked them for their service to the country and the Australian Army. He said they had served and performed in the finest traditions of the Australian Defence Force and they would have an honoured place in its history.

"As part of my responsibility for education and training in the ADF, I intend to see that our future generations of Army leaders will have the opportunity to not only be aware of this legacy but to have the opportunity to learn from it."

A400M ROLLS OUT

Airbus Military has rolled out the first complete A400M military transport aircraft from its final assembly line facility in Seville, Spain.

Designed initially to fill a recognised requirement for a new airlifter for European air forces, the A400M incorporates high levels of composite materials and technology perfected in today's civil aircraft fleets.

Features such as electronic flight controls, carbon composite structures and an automated handling system will bring new standards of operability and safety to military crews.

Launched under a single contract in 2003 with 180 orders for seven European customers, the A400M represents the most ambitious military procurement programme ever undertaken in Europe. Launch customers Belgium, France, Luxembourg, Germany, Spain, Turkey and the UK have since been joined by Malaysia and South Africa.

A400M can carry up to 37 tonnes over ranges of up to 8700km. It can also be configured as an in-flight refueller.

A400M lines up to carry Europe's tactical and strategic air-lift needs. PIC AIRBUS MILITARY



SPECIAL DELIVERY

Australia's third MRH90 helicopter has been brought to Australia by a RAAF C-17 that found itself on the return leg of an operational task with room to spare.

The lift not only capitalised on a great opportunity to bring the MRH to Australia early, but proved a significant capability milestone for the C-17 at the same time.

Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Procurement Greg Combet said it was the first time, worldwide, that a helicopter of this type had been transported in a C-17.

"This is a significant achievement by Defence and Industry," Mr Combet said.

"It demonstrates the C-17's ability to deploy the helicopter globally once it is ready for operational service.

"The [early arrival of the] third MRH90 will also provide an increase in capacity



Above: Rotary Wing Aircraft MRH-90 MRH-004 is unloaded from a Royal Australian Air Force C-17 Globemaster III at Brisbane Airport. PIC LEADING SEAMAN KELVIN HOCKEY

for the test and training program for Defence's new troop-lift and maritime-support helicopter.

Following assembly and acceptance testing, MRH-004 was destined for 5 Aviation Regiment in Townsville to join the test and training program.

MRH90 will replace the Black Hawk and Sea King fleets and provide additional troop-lift capability for the ADF.

AUSSIE THUNDER ARMoured UP

Raytheon has announced the successful completion of a series of live tests to validate the AS-9 'Aussie Thunder' advanced armour solution.

AS-9 self-propelled howitzer (SPH) is a joint Raytheon/Samsung Techwin solution for the Australian Army's LAND 17 Artillery Replacement Program.

It is protected against projectiles using removable armour for vehicles (RAV) developed by the Australian company SEAL Solutions, initially developed as a collaboration between DSTO and SEAL Solutions to protect the Bushmaster. It has been further refined in collaboration with Samsung Techwin to ensure maximum possible coverage of the protected crew compartment.

AS-9 is also protected by a 20mm spall liner and composite belly armour, mine blast resistant seating and a blast overpressure kit.

Raytheon's managing director Ron Fisher said these tests demonstrate our commitment to ensuring the AS-9 is one of the safest SPH platforms in the world.

"SEAL Solutions has a history of delivering outstanding results to the Australian Army and we have tremendous confidence in this system," Mr Fisher said.

"AS-9's advanced armour solution, combined with high mobility and first-rate command and control arrangements, will give Australian gunners the edge on operations."

Mr Fisher said AS-9 is essentially a military off-the-shelf (MOTS) solution he looked forward to demonstrating to the Commonwealth.

AS-9 'Aussie Thunder' offered as Army's self-propelled howitzer solution. PIC RAYTHEON



LONGER DEPLOYMENTS

The duration of some Army operational deployments will be increased from six to eight months commencing from October this year.

Longer deployments will allow soldiers more time to develop and maintain cohesive relationships with local populations and coalition partners, and to better understand the environment they operate in.

The increase will also provide a corresponding increase in time between deployments, allowing the Army more time to train in the broad range of capabilities it requires, and will also increase the length of individual soldiers' respite between operations.

CONTACT's observations in Iraq suggest this move will be generally welcomed on the ground.

BUSY HERCULES

RAAF C-130 Hercules continued to make a major contribution to ADF operations in the Middle East as the aircraft's operator, No 37 Squadron, marked its 65th anniversary in July.

Three J-model Hercules, which recently took over intra-theatre airlift support from the older H models, are now on station, supported by a detachment of approximately 160 personnel from 37 Squadron.

Air Force has operated a Hercules detachment in the MEAO since February 2003, and had completed 2194 missions for a total of 14,737 flying hours to July this year. They have carried 20,760 tonnes of cargo, 93,559 passengers and transported 2283 medical patients.

ALLIES KILLED

An Afghan National Army soldier and a coalition national serving alongside an Australian patrol were killed in an improvised explosive device detonation in Oruzgan Province in July.

The explosion occurred as the predominantly Australian force withdrew from a successful compound clearance operation.

Australian troops provided immediate first aid and subsequently transported the pair to a nearby ISAF medical facility.

The deaths occurred on the same day Signaller Sean McCarthy's remains arrived in Australia.

CHINOOK DOWN

An Army Chinook helicopter was badly damaged in a heavy landing incident in June while making an approach at the Military Operations in Urban Terrain facility at High Range Training Area near Townsville.

No injuries were reported among the aircrew or 16 personnel on board.

The aircraft sustained substantial damage to its undercarriage and fuselage.

GRENADE DIVER



In February, a Royal Marine with the British Commando Reconnaissance Force threw himself on a live grenade, shielding his commander and colleagues from the blast that followed. In July he received a George Cross for his actions.

The citation for the medal sums up the marine's actions - 'Lance Corporal Matthew Croucher's section was deployed on a highly dangerous and challenging operation. Using night-vision devices and under constant threat of attack from improved explosive devices or enemy ambush, the Commando Reconnaissance Force successfully negotiated complex and varied terrain between their forward operating base and a suspect compound, and established an over-watch position.'

A four-man team, including Lance Corporal Croucher, went forward to conduct a very high-risk, close-target reconnaissance, requiring entry to the compound, which was thought to be occupied.

The team moved forward with extreme caution and stealth and successfully entered the compound without incident.

After 30 minutes on task, and having identified numerous items that could be used by insurgents to manufacture improvised explosive devices, the team commander gave the order to extract.

Lance Corporal Croucher was at the head of the group. Behind him, approximately 5m away, the team commander and another marine were in the open and fully exposed, with the fourth member a short distance behind.

As the team moved, Lance Corporal Croucher felt a wire go tight against his legs, just below knee height and heard the fly-off lever of a grenade eject. The grenade fell on to the ground immediately beside him.

Instantly realising what happened, Lance Corporal Croucher shouted 'grenade', then 'tripwire'. However, it was clear to him that, given the lack of cover in the immediate vicinity, he and the other team members were in extreme danger.

With nowhere to go Lance Corporal Croucher made a decision to attempt to shield the other members of his team from the impending explosion. In an act of great courage, and demonstrating a complete disregard for his own safety, he threw himself on top of the grenade, pinning it between his day sack and the ground, and braced for the explosion.

As it detonated, the blast effect of the grenade was absorbed by Lance Corporal Croucher and the majority of the fragmentation was contained under his body. His day sack was ripped from his back and completely destroyed. While his body armour and helmet were pitted by grenade fragments, the marine suffered only minor injury and disorientation.

The only other injury was a slight fragmentation wound to the team commander's face.

Lance Corporal Matthew Croucher with the rucksack that absorbed most of the explosion when he shielded his colleagues from a live grenade in Afghanistan.

PIC PO TERRY SEWARD © CROWN COPYRIGHT/MOD 2008

After confirming that no significant casualties had been sustained, the team prepared to interdict enemy follow-up forces. Lance Corporal Croucher, having refused to be evacuated, joined his team in engaging and neutralising one enemy fighter.

Without question, Lance Corporal Croucher's courageous and utterly selfless action prevented death or serious injury to his team.'

The George Cross, instigated to formally recognise individual acts of outstanding bravery by civilians during WWII, was ranked equal to the Victoria Cross. Since inception, however, more than 70 per cent of awards have been made to the armed forces. If both awards are made to the same person, the VC takes precedence.

The VC is awarded for brave actions in the presence of the enemy.

BIG BLOW

Australian Collins Class submarine HMAS Waller has become the first submarine to fire the new MK 48 Mod 7 Common Broadband Advanced Sonar System (CBASS) torpedo, jointly developed by Australia and the US.

The firing occurred during the Rim of the Pacific 2008 exercise, involving multiple navies off the coast of Hawaii during June and July, and resulted in the planned sinking of a retired US warship.

Considered the world's premier submarine-launched torpedo, the MK 48 Mod 7 represents a superior capability against both surface ships and submarines, with sonar enhancements that make the torpedo an effective weapon in shallow water and in a countermeasures environment.

The development of the CBASS torpedo was achieved under an armaments cooperation program between the United States Navy and the RAN. The program established common requirements, interfaces, configurations and maintenance standards that enable any Australian or US submarine to load torpedoes prepared by any Australian or US torpedo maintenance facility.

The shot fired by Waller during RIMPAC08 was assembled in Australia.

Of particular significance to Australia, Defence Minister Joel Fitzgibbon said this 'warshot' was a good reminder of the Collins Class submarine's capability.



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CANTERBURY CURTAILED

Navy Amphibious Sealift Ship HMNZS Canterbury was scheduled to depart the Devonport Naval Base in June for a short but intense period of aviation, seamanship continuation training and core mariner skills in the South Pacific area. However, only days after her trip was announced, authorities issued a second statement that restricted the ship to home waters.

Defence officials said the ship would stay within New Zealand waters while remedial issues, including issues with the RHIB seaboot launch system, were worked through with the prime contractor, Tenix.

On the wider voyage, Canterbury had been scheduled to call in at Raoul Island to drop off food supplies and technical equipment. She was also expected to visit Tonga and Western Samoa on 'defence diplomacy visits' which were expected to generate a lot of excitement, as this

would have been the new ship's first tour in this part of the world.

The voyage, had it gone ahead, would have lasted 18 days.

CHIEF HONOURED

New Zealand's Chief of Defence Force Lieutenant General Jerry Mateparae was awarded a University of Waikato 2008 Distinguished Alumni Award in July, recognising his exemplary career and his contribution to the military and the New Zealand community.

General Mateparae graduated from the university in 1996 with a Master of Arts in International Relations and Strategic Studies.

This year's other recipients were Solomon Islands Prime Minister Derek Sikua and businessman Peter Vela.

Lieutenant General Mateparae, who holds the highest military rank in New Zealand, is also the youngest person and first Maori – of Ngati Tuwharetoa descent – to be appointed Chief of Defence.

CASE DISMISSED

Charges brought against six junior NZDF personnel alleged to have used drugs in Bamyan, Afghanistan, in March this year have been dropped.

The charges were dismissed in June after it was found that correct legal procedures were not followed during initial interviews, rendering all evidence inadmissible to a court martial.

The accused have been advised that no disciplinary or administrative action will proceed against them, however, they will be offered counselling.

NZDF has been reviewing its military justice system, with the aim of simplifying processes while ensuring the rights of personnel are protected.

A new training programme will reach all 11,500 members before 1 July 2009, including certifying an appropriate number of 'disciplinary officers' and 'defending officers', and is expected to vastly strengthen the Defence Force's justice system.

FIRST LADY VISIT

US First Lady Laura Bush visited the New Zealand Provincial Reconstruction Team in Bamyan Province, Afghanistan, in June.

Mrs Bush was greeted with a haka before meeting NZPRT Commander Colonel Darryl Tracy and other members of the PRT.

Major Justin de la Haye, who escorted the VIP visitor, said she was a very charming person and very knowledgeable about New Zealand's contribution in Afghanistan.

"She was also very interested in the history of the Haka," Major De la Haye said.

The First Lady's three hour trip to Bamyan province also included a visit to an orphanage, a women's business workshop and an Afghanistan National Police training centre, where New Zealand Police officers mentor instructors.

IT'S A TERRITORIAL THING

A vet, a postie and a DOC Ranger were among 44 mainly Territorial Force personnel who deployed to the Solomon Islands in July for a four month tour of duty.

The contingent, drawn mainly from the 7th Wellington Hawke's Bay Battalion and 5th Wellington West Coast Taranaki Battalion, will be the seventh rotation to support the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands.

Operations such as RAMSI offer Territorial Force members a great opportunity to take on the challenges of full-time service while also applying their civilian skills to their work with the local populations.

Led by Major Bede Fahey – who is normally employed by the New Zealand Police – the Kiwis will carry out patrols, provide assistance to local police, help with external security at Rove Prison and liaise with the local population.

CHOPPERS LAST RUN

The last Royal New Zealand Air Force helicopter detachment to serve in Timor-Leste has commenced operations in the country.

The 30-strong team of Number 3 Squadron personnel will spend three months in Dili before withdrawing their personnel and two Iroquois helicopters.

Detachment commander Squadron Leader Ben Pryor previously served in Timor-Leste during 2000 and again in 2001, and was looking forward to seeing the changes that have occurred in the region since then.

"I'm definitely looking forward to continuing to play a part in the rebuilding and stabilisation of this small nation.

We realise the East Timorese still face a significant number of challenges to ensure their own peace and stability," he said.

"For that reason I'm also very interested to see what progress has been made in the seven years since I last deployed."

The 3 Squadron personnel and two Iroquois helicopters support the Combined Joint Task Force in Timor-Leste, working alongside Australian Defence Force assets, and carry out personnel movement, aero-medical evacuation and air logistics support tasks.

Current NZ helicopter commitments in Timor-Leste will end in October to allow the Air Force to start its transition to NH90, expected in service from 2010.

MODIFIED KIWIS FLY AGAIN

RNZAF's Boeing 757 modification and upgrade programme reached a significant milestone in June when the first of two aircraft completed successful test flights at Mobile Aerospace Engineering in Alabama, USA.

RNZAF 757 test pilot Squadron Leader Richard Beaton said he was delighted with how the plane performed and handled.

"Of particular interest to us was how the aircraft handled with the changes that were made to the aircraft fuselage combined with the increase in thrust from the engines," he said.

After modification, the two 757 aircraft will provide the RNZAF with the ability to rapidly convert from standard passenger configuration to a combination freight/passenger, full freight, aero-medical evacuation or VIP set up.

▪ Shortly after the Boeing test flights, another Kiwi bird was in the air in Canada when the first of the RNZAF's newly upgraded C-130 Hercules

completed a series of successful test flights at L-3 Communications Spar Aerospace facilities at Edmonton.

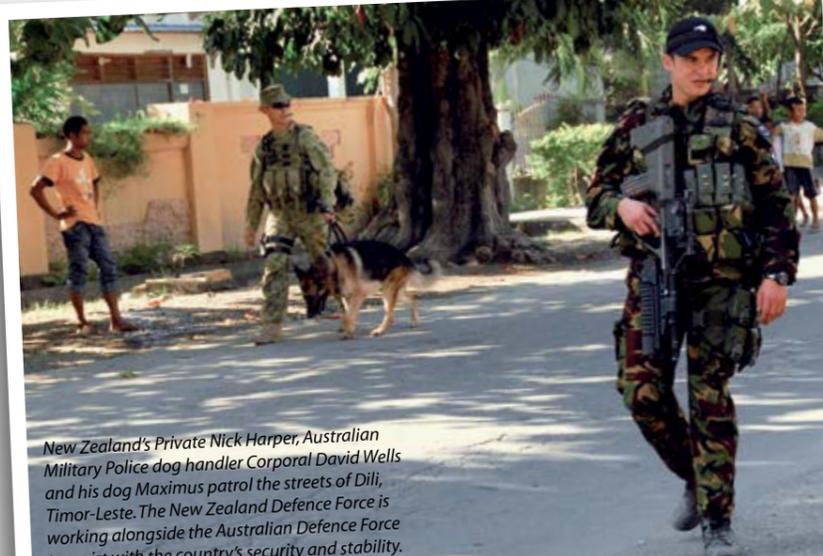
The upgrade, described by the contractor as the most comprehensive modernisation project ever undertaken on a C-130, included centre wing refurbishment, a major rewire, replacement of communication and navigation systems and an upgrade to its self-protection system.

Test pilot Squadron Leader Pete Saunders said the new aircraft would enhance the Air Force's ability to operate with aircraft from other nations and decrease the workload of the crew in operational environments.

"By design, this should also make the aircraft easier to maintain and improve reliability," he said.

Acceptance testing on the Hercules was expected to take 86 hours of flying time.

Two airframes will be upgraded in Canada while the remaining three will be completed at home in a program that will see the Hercules operational life extended to 2017.



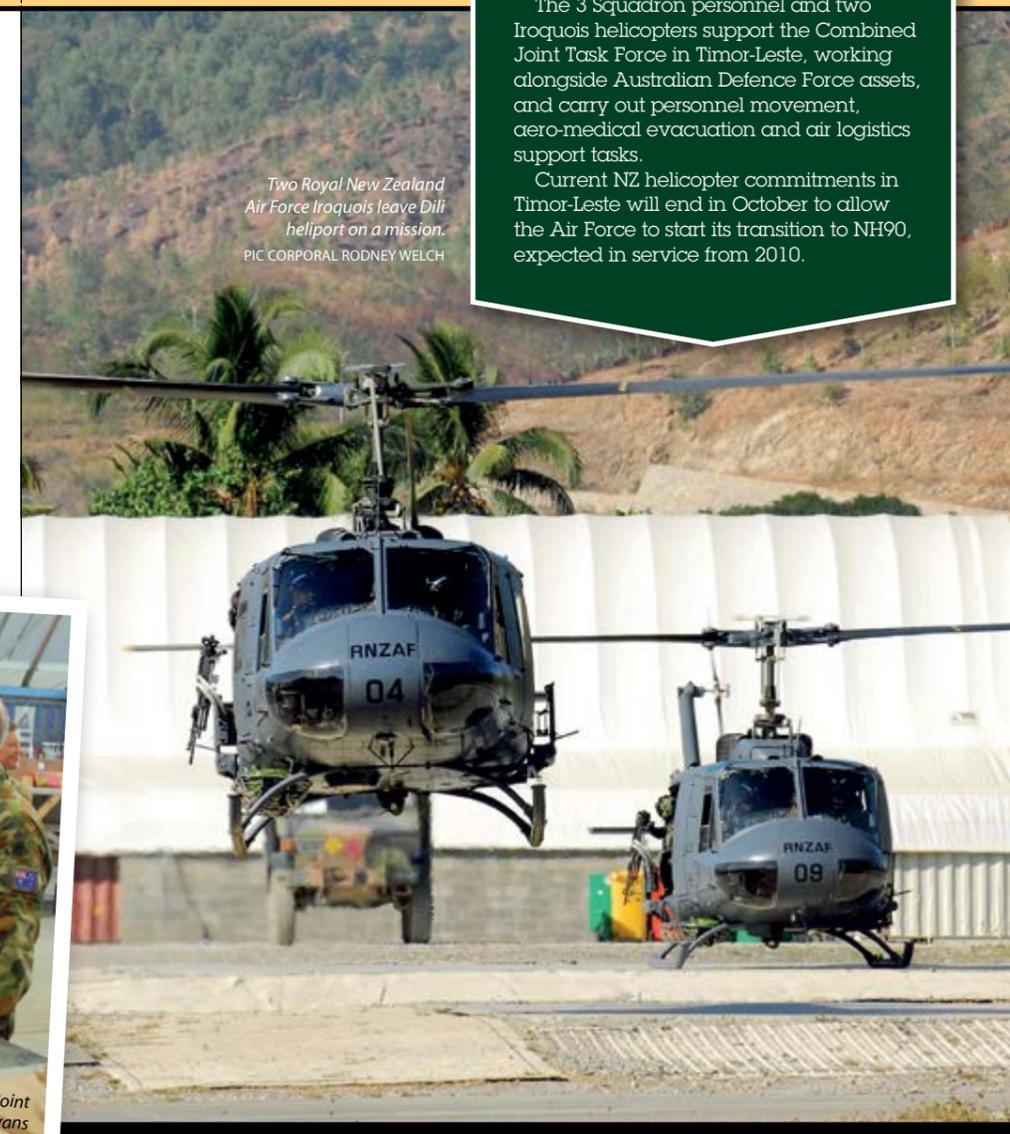
New Zealand's Private Nick Harper, Australian Military Police dog handler Corporal David Wells and his dog Maximus patrol the streets of Dili, Timor-Leste. The New Zealand Defence Force is working alongside the Australian Defence Force to assist with the country's security and stability.

PIC CORPORAL CHRIS MOORE



Australia's newly appointed commander Joint Operations Command Lieutenant General Mark Evans talks with Royal New Zealand Air Force personnel during a visit to forward units in Timor-Leste.

PIC CORPORAL RODNEY WELCH

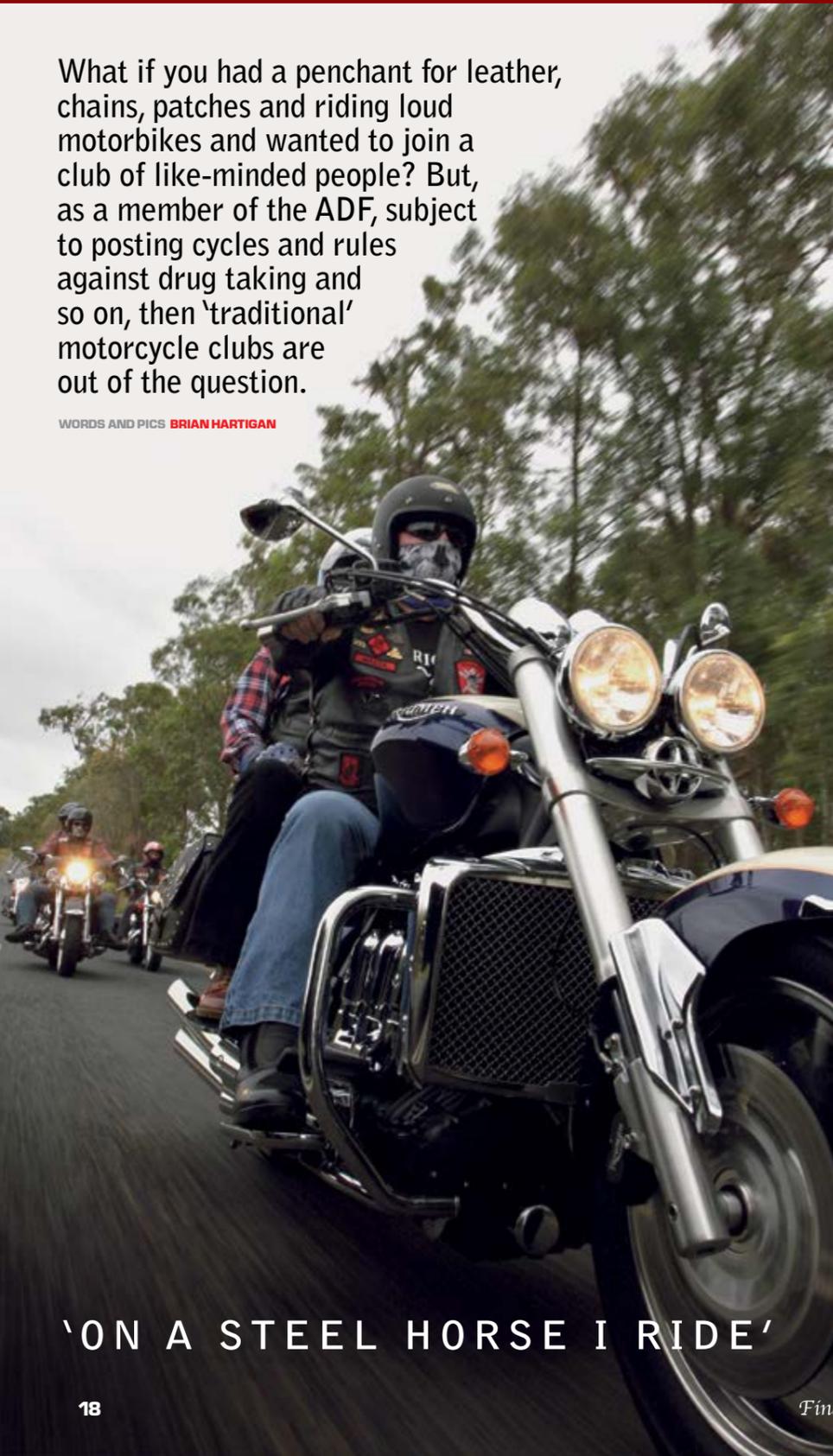


Two Royal New Zealand Air Force Iroquois leave Dili heliport on a mission. PIC CORPORAL RODNEY WELCH

PATRIOTS AUSTRALIA

What if you had a penchant for leather, chains, patches and riding loud motorbikes and wanted to join a club of like-minded people? But, as a member of the ADF, subject to posting cycles and rules against drug taking and so on, then 'traditional' motorcycle clubs are out of the question.

WORDS AND PICS BRIAN HARTIGAN



'ON A STEEL HORSE I RIDE'

Patriots Australia may be just what you're looking for. Patriots is a motorcycle club for regular, reserve and ex-serving members of the defence forces that was raised about 15 years ago in response to the restrictions listed.

And, as word gets around, the club continues to grow, with chapters in all-but two states in Australia, and in New Zealand as well. South east Queensland, in particular seems to be expanding in leaps and bounds, with four chapters in the Brisbane area alone – two of them raised in the past 12 months.

Patriots Australia is run in strict accordance within Department of Defence guidelines. They do not allow drugs or violence and they uphold non-sexist policies.

To see a Patriots chapter out on the road, it might be difficult at first glance to tell them apart from a traditional 'biker gang', but a closer inspection will quickly tell. Although the leather jackets and (for the most part) the long hair are there, you'll quickly notice that they are a disciplined, courteous pack on the road. And, if you follow them back to their clubhouse, you'll also notice that they are a friendly, welcoming bunch too – especially if you're a military or ex-military species yourself.

Patriots Moreton Bay Chapter President Trevor 'Bull' Herrod – a former commando – says the members' biggest aspiration for getting together is simply mateship – mates getting back with mates, getting to know new mates or being able to just chat with peers who know what they're talking about.

"When I left the army I was in limbo for quite a few years. I worked in a university and it was hard to talk to anyone there," Bull says.

"After a while, you seek out like-minded people and your mates again – and that's basically how we came together as the Moreton Bay Chapter."

Chapter secretary Jamie 'Chops' Day – a former submariner – says, you miss something when you get out of the services – and for a while you don't really know what that is.

"I rode with another group for two years and, while it was good, I had nothing in common with those people except the bike," Chops says.

"When I started telling warries, I'd get looks from people who wanted to understand, but none of them actually could, so they'd just switch off.

"Here, though, you spend Friday nights just laughing and telling stories. It's a clique, it's what you left behind and it's all here together again.

"No one really understands like someone else who served."

The Moreton Bay Chapter was born late last year after 10 members of the Queensland Chapter decided to go their own way.

"We saw a need for another chapter in Brisbane and there was a very close group



Info: www.patriots-australia.com and www.patriotsmoretonbay.org

of military blokes who wanted to be with military blokes, so about 10 of us moved away," Chops says.

"Queensland had been established a long time with more than 80 members – military as well as civilian associate members.

"In a club that size, you'd probably only see 25 per cent of them randomly from time to time.

"But we were very keen to keep military members together more coherently, so, rather than 10 or so blokes trying to change the way the bigger club did things, it was just easier for us to move away and start a new chapter.

"In a small chapter like we have now, we are much closer. We see each other every Friday night at the clubhouse or every Sunday on rides. It works really well."

Out on the road, the president or the 'road captain' (the person who organised a particular ride) leads the pack, followed by the committee, then the members, nominees, prospects and anyone else along for the ride. Right down the back, is a sergeant at arms who looks after discipline in the chapter, just as a sergeant major would.

While safety and discipline and an element of military crossover are evident in the club, it is not unique to Patriots. But, as Bull says, "it's about being organised – otherwise we'd just be a bunch of blokes on bikes with no goals, no leadership, no foresight.

"A lot of it boils down to safety, too.

"It's not unlike being in a section, with a scout group, a gun group and a rifle group – you know what your mate's going to do if something comes up – you know where he's going to go and what he's going to do.

"We also try to look professional, organised and disciplined on the road – not like a rag-tag bunch. We are conscious of our reputation and how we present ourselves in public," he says.

Morton Bay Patriots have a great little clubhouse at the Redcliffe Showgrounds – a location that sort of fell into their lap at just the right time.

"The caretaker here at the showground is an ex reservist MP and his son-in-law

was a submariner. The local fire chief who inspected the building for us is ex army, the guy who helped us apply for the liquor license was an ex commando and many of the local police are either ex army or ex navy. "Speaking of police – they treat us well out on the road, too. We've introduced ourselves and let them know who we are and what we're about – so there's no dramas or negative vibes.

"And once they notice the badges or the medal ribbons on your vest – bang – the stories are rolling."

Chops says the chapter gets really well treated on the road. He and Bull went on an epic trip to Canberra and back recently, and were amazed by the reception they received everywhere they went.

"I was waiting for negative vibes out there – you know, two guys travelling together wearing vests and patches and stuff – but, we had publicans opening doors for us, locking our bikes away safe in beergardens and so on.

"Or, you'd pull up at a service station and straight away you're in a discussion with someone because he's done service too.

"We lost time left right and centre like that – which was great – but not one hint of negative feedback.

"Everyone bent over backwards to look after us and make sure we were safe."

Patriots Moreton Bay Chapter President Bull Herrod says they would like to see their club grow in the future, but probably to no more than about 30, strictly ex-service members.

"One of our goals is to become a legitimate, accredited, ex-serviceman's organisation," he says.

"We want to be a sort of a drop-in centre – somewhere blokes can come where they know they are always welcome to drop in for a chat."

Chops agrees. "We have a lot of guys here who have gone through things such as TPI claims and the like, who have a lot of information and experiences they can share on a peer-to-peer basis."

Bull jumps back in – "We want servicemen to be able to pop in, chat with like-minded

people, and, if they feel comfortable, they can have a real 'talk', have a beer, get with the boys.

"It's a bit like when you were out in the bush with your mates, there's a real bond.

"Same when we're going for a ride – you get kicked up, go off for a good time with the boys, everyone's excited."

Chops says life's not all about the club, though. He has a full-time job and a small business, he's a single father of two and has a new partner he's due to marry.

"Essentially everything else comes before the club, but at the same time, this is an outlet when all those other pressures are on me I can come down here and vent to these blokes – or, I can pick up the phone and I know they will do whatever they can to help me.

"We here are all thinking along the same lines, we are all very strong in our commitment and we know what we want and the direction we want our chapter to go in – so I don't see us growing so big we'd need to slit.

"We're like best mates here – so why would you want that to split up?"





HeliPacific is a two-day talkfest and exhibition for anyone involved or interested in the helicopter industry, either civil or military.

Held in south-east Queensland every two years, the conference is growing in stature, which was reflected in this year's attendance.

Even the number of helicopters on the ground has grown – causing some interest and amusement as the very limited 'parking lot' filled up, just outside the '19th hole' at Royal Pines Resort on the Gold Coast.

This year's event, organised by the British-based Shephard Group, was well attended by industry and Defence. It was also very encouraging to see large numbers of aviation-interested school tours vacuuming up information – and exhibitor handouts!

WORDS & PICS BRIAN HARTIGAN



Above: Major General Tony Fraser, head of Helicopter Systems Division, and Chris Clapperton, Helitech, visit the CONTACT stand.

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PITCH BLACK

PICS ADF

Early June saw the skies above the Northern Territory ripped by military aircraft of all sizes – supported by more than 3000 ground personnel – from six countries, as they participated in biennial aerial wargames.

Exercise Pitch Black saw the RAAF play host to their counterparts from the United States, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, Germany, Canada, United Kingdom and France with more than 60 aircraft based out of Darwin and Tindal for the three-week exercise. This was the first year that members of the Royal Malaysian Air Force or any NATO air force participated.

Pitch Black brought fighter, strike, early warning, air-to-air refuelling and transport aircraft together with an array of surface forces and systems to simulate and evaluate operational planning and tactics in realistic war-like scenarios, interweaving simulated assets into live missions for added complexity.

Pitch Black '08 was designed as an offensive counter air (OCA) and defensive counter air (DCA) exercise that provided valuable learning experiences for RAAF personnel in a genuine multinational environment. The PB08 scenario focused on both the operational and tactical levels of warfare.

The scenario divided the Northern Territory into two notional 'countries' called BlueLand and RedLand. RedLand has a track record of belligerence against the neighbouring BlueLand, and cross-border tensions were on the increase. Both forces possess a number of fighter aircraft and ground-based air-defence assets in a complex, integrated air-defence-systems environment.

Aircrews, aircraft maintainers and commanders worked day and night in intense exercises that tested participants with realistic, confrontational scenarios.

Engagements were 'fought' during both day and night scenarios with Red Forces from RAAF Base Tindal engaging Blue Force aircraft from RAAF Darwin in defined exercise areas while, high above them, airborne early warning and control (AWAC) aircraft orchestrated activities.

Neutral, or White Force, tanker aircraft from the RAAF, Royal Singapore Air Force and Royal Malaysian Air Force supplied both sides with the necessary fuel to sustain their battles.

An open day at RAAF Darwin also gave the public a chance to see the aircraft up close and personal.

Pitch Black '08 was also the last official task for the RAAF's Boeing 707 air-to-air refuelling platform, after 29 years' service.





**IN OUR
OPINION...**

BUY YOUR OWN HOME

A new Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS) introduced in July looks set to stem the tide of discharges from the ADF or even lure recent retirees back in – which, of course are two of the main aims of this very expensive exercise.

Under the scheme, eligible full-time and reserve personnel can claim a home-loan subsidy up to about \$700 a month!

In fact, this scheme looks so good that, if I qualify, there's no way I would contemplate retiring anytime soon.

Naturally, everyone's circumstances will be different (and there is a whole minefield full of variations) so, let's take me as an example.

With just under 12 years full-time service, followed by a little over five years (with some breaks) as a reservist, the on-line calculator says I should be entitled to the top-tier subsidy. All I need to do to qualify (if I read the rules right) is complete 20 days effective service in the current financial year.

Of course, the on-line calculator is just a guide and I won't know for sure until I apply for and receive my 'Entitlement Certificate' from the Department of Veterans' Affairs. Then, I take that certificate to one of the three accredited lending institutions and refinance my mortgage. I will have to cop any fees involved in this transaction, but that shouldn't be too much of a concern, keeping the long-term benefits in mind.

Under the old Defence HomeOwner Scheme (the \$80k DHOS), I receive about \$160 a month reimbursed against the interest I pay on that loan.

If I'm right about my eligibility for the new scheme, I should be entitled to a good-sized payment under the top tier.

A key difference between this new scheme and the old schemes is that the new scheme is not tied to a specific loan product offered by the homeloan providers (choice of three), nor is it tied to a specific loan amount. The amount

you borrow will depend on your personal circumstances and your home-loan provider's lending criteria – in other words, how much they are willing to lend you.

Another major difference that could be worth looking at for military couples is that if two qualified serving members buy a house together, they can make separate applications on the same house and thus legitimately qualify (in the right circumstance) for a double dip!

Some members may opt for a once-only chance to convert their accrued DHOAS entitlement into a lump sum, which could be a good option for a first-home buyer looking to accumulate a deposit. Restrictions on this clause, however, limit the lump sum to a little more than \$8000 (presumably taxed) and eliminates any entitlement to the long-term benefits – so think about this carefully.

Because the scheme is not linked to a specific loan product and, with the choice of three providers, there may also be opportunities to negotiate a better loan in the first place, so shop around.

If you have recently quit the ADF and now regret missing out on this scheme, you can rejoin the ADF and still qualify, under the right conditions. For example, if, during your previous service you would have qualified and you have been out of uniform for less than five years as a full-time member or two years as a reservist – you can rejoin the ADF (assuming you're fit etc) and still benefit from this scheme.

On the other hand, if you were a serving member on 1 July this year and have completed your qualifying service for this scheme, you can discharge now and still claim your entitlement at any time within the next two years.

My opinion – from the Defence viewpoint, this could well be one of the best, most effective, incentive schemes ever devised to keep members serving longer – and could entice many retired members to come back. From the individuals' viewpoint, this is simply too good not to take a serious look at.

– Brian Hartigan

QUALIFYING THRESHOLDS FOR DHOAS

For further details, check out the web site – www.dhoas.gov.au

Subsidy Tier Level	Minimum Permanent Service	Minimum Reserve Service	Maximum Loan Limit	Maximum Monthly Subsidy
1	4 years	8 years	\$187,159	Up to \$353
2	8 years	12 years	\$280,738	Up to \$529
3	12 years	16 years	\$374,318	Up to \$705
Authorised Lending Institutions		NAB	DefCredit	DFCU

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Black Hawk simulator cockpit



Black Hawk simulator control room

REALITY CHECK

WORDS AND PICS BRIAN HARTIGAN

When it was installed in a purpose-built facility at Oakey in 2001, the Black Hawk simulator cost nearly \$40 million and was the first of its kind in the world. In 2008, the same 'first-of-kind' tag can be applied to the Tiger simulator, which cost more than twice as much and is also housed in its own state-of-the-art training facility. At the other end of the scale, across the road in the former ORs' boozier, aircrewman (formerly loadmaster) training is being effectively delivered on a simulation system that cost little more than the average family car! So, we ask...

Can simulation ever train as effectively as the real thing? And, are the top-end systems really worth that much money?

'REALITY IS FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T HANDLE SIMULATION'

Use of simulation in military training has almost become commonplace. Pilot training was an obvious application, but the virtual world has permeated more and more areas of the military, from top-end platforms such as tanks, right down to foot-soldier basics such as individual navigation skills.

However, it is in the area of pilot and aircrew training that we most readily associate the use of simulation – even if we don't fully understand how it works or how effective it really can be.

Both the new Tiger simulator and the slightly older Black Hawk simulator are rated to the highest level of training fidelity in the aviation industry. In other words, one hour in either simulator is regarded as having the same training value as one hour in a real aircraft.

There are those who claim the simulators are even better than that, however.

Consider basic flight training for example. Let's say the mission is to practice touch-and-go landings. In a real aircraft, this is bread-and-butter basic training for a pilot that, obviously, they must master. The aircraft taxis to the end of the runway, does

a takeoff roll, gets airborne, flies around the circuit, lands, then takes off again without stopping, repeating the process until the training objective is attained to a satisfactory level.

After the touch-and-go, flying the aircraft around the circuit back to the top of the final approach can take several minutes – but, by this stage of his training, the student pilot already knows how to fly straight and level, so flying the circuit is wasted time as far as this specific lesson is concerned. In the real aircraft, there'd be no choice, but in the simulator, a controller can magically 'put' the aircraft back on approach in an instant, maximising the student's effective learning time and minimising time wastage on the simulator. Thus, in the simulator, a student could conceivably accomplish 20 ever-better practice runs at the touch-and-go, whereas in a real aircraft he might only achieve five or six in the same timeframe.

At an estimated \$20,000 per hour to operate a real Black Hawk, versus approximately \$1200 to run the simulator, the cost benefits alone are obvious. But, one could easily say that this student has learnt three times more in this instance in the simulator than if he had been flying the real thing.

At the higher end of operations, too, the simulator can be a far better trainer than

a real aircraft. Take an emergency scenario where power in both engines is lost for some reason. This, hopefully, would be a very rare emergency, but one that must be considered and trained for nonetheless.

In the real aircraft, such an emergency can be simulated by the instructor simply pulling back the throttles. The student then diagnoses the fault and either takes remedial action to 'reignite' the engines or land the aircraft without power.

Whichever outcome is called for in the training objective, safety considerations in the real world do not allow the student to fully experience the emergency, even when he takes the right actions. If he were to get it wrong, it could be very messy, very expensive or, ultimately, fatal.

Also, the trainee in a real aircraft will see the instructor's hand reaching to pull back the throttle and thus receive an unrealistic visual clue as to which 'emergency' is about to unfold. The trainee in the simulator, without this clue, must actually look to his instruments and other indicators to make a diagnosis when something is obviously not right.

In the simulator, not only can such dire emergencies be simulated to their ultimate, even ugly, conclusion, but they can be simulated even more realistically. Without being constrained by safety

rules, emergencies can be escalated to the extremely challenging. The same engine failure as before could be made to happen while the pilot is already dealing with severe weather and enemy action, for example – all of which could be encountered in the real world – but not on a training mission.

Captain Nathan Coyle – whose job it is to verify that the simulator flies like the real thing, by regularly flying both – says someone who has trained on a simulator is more likely to carry out the right corrective actions, without hesitation, because he has already seen what effect those actions have on flight parameters.

"For example if you have an engine fire, the simulator-trained pilot will have no hesitation to cut the fuel supply to that engine, whereas someone trained only in a real aircraft who has only ever 'simulated' cutting the fuel, may hesitate to do it for real because he's never experienced flying the aircraft with only one engine.

"Yaw-control emergencies are another example. They are so dangerous to properly emulate in the real aircraft that remedial action is mostly just theory.

"But a pilot can 'actually' do it in the simulator and thus become comfortable with the actions and the consequences and be confident that if he has the real

Tiger simulator domes

**TIGER FFMS**

Weight:
9.5 tonnes each

Hydraulics:
1500psi/high flow

Cylinder stroke:
5 feet/software and buffer limited

Range of motion:
1 cylinder can be fully retracted with all others fully extended

Tiger simulator control room



emergency in the real aircraft, he will be able to handle it."

Captain Coyle says people can get so immersed in a mission in the simulator that some actually come out sweating and worked up.

"One inexperienced pilot I was teaching to hover begged me to take over when things started to go wrong," he says with a grin.

"But I didn't have to. Even though we crashed – and you get the terrible sounds of a crash and a dramatic flashing red screen – it's still just us sitting in a benign environment and I, as the instructor, can allow the student to make catastrophic mistakes without any fear of hurting either of us, if I think they will benefit from the experience."

Captain Coyle says other, more advanced flying can also be simulated effectively and efficiently in a simulator.

"A pilot could do an instrument approach to Brisbane airport, for example, simply by starting his flight 25 miles out, instead of wasting time in transit just to get to that point."

Similarly, a pilot could practice landing on the back of HMAS Kanimbla, for example, without having to phone the Navy to find out where the real ship is currently steaming. Not only that, he can also request

the system operator to give him rolling seas, gusting winds and driving rain on a moonless night – something he might eventually experience, but might have to wait a long time for that particular set of circumstances to come together in the real world.

Or, as happened in the wake of the fatal crash on Kanimbla near Fiji last year, the system can replicate all the circumstances of a real-life incident so that investigators can get a better sense of what went wrong.

Following a visual-system upgrade later this year – which will be based on easily upgraded mapping and mission-building software, and will be common across the three services – the Black Hawk simulator will also be readily available for mission-specific training. For example, a pilot destined for Tarin Kowt in southern Afghanistan could fly the circuit area of that airfield 50 times before he even leaves Australia, so that when he arrives in theatre, he will be mission ready instead of requiring several familiarisation flights.

All the same theory and argument applied above can be applied to the recently commissioned Tiger simulator next door. Both systems rely on 'fidelity' to deliver training outcomes as realistically as possible. Apart from the very obvious six-axis movement capabilities of the systems,

they both have internal 'shakers' to replicate the higher-frequency vibrations associated with a rotary-winged aircraft. Sound is also replicated realistically – so much like the real thing that double hearing protection is required when it's turned on.

However, the Tiger simulator immediately looks different to the Black Hawk in that it actually has two separate moving domes to simulate the one aircraft. Unlike the real Black Hawk, the Tiger crew are seated in tandem – one behind and higher than the other. While the visual screen on the inside of the pilot's dome gives him 240 degrees horizontal and 85 degrees vertical fields of view, if his battle captain were actually positioned behind and higher than him as per normal, this second member would have a much restricted view because he would be closer to the sides and top of the screen. Also, thanks to the physics of the Tiger, the man in the back seat should feel a different, slightly lessened range of motion, because he is sitting closer to the aircraft's centre. For both these reasons, a Tiger crew will actually sit in two separate domes while sitting in the same virtual aircraft.

It would be easy to think of either the Black Hawk or the Tiger simulators as just (three) moving boxes perched on top of their spindly legs. But, in fact, both simulators are a collection of parts that

THE TIGER SIMULATOR IMMEDIATELY LOOKS DIFFERENT TO THE BLACK HAWK IN THAT IT ACTUALLY HAS TWO SEPARATE MOVING DOMES TO SIMULATE THE ONE AIRCRAFT

include a whole team of people to run them (operator experience being very important), banks of computers, TMPs (training management plans) and the actual facilities in which they are housed.

Tiger's computer room is something to behold. In fact, I was so gobsmacked when I saw it, I forgot to take a photo!

Manager of the facility, Trevor Ward from Australian Aerospace, tells me there are about 80 PCs distributed around Tiger's FFMS (full-flight and mission simulator) system handling various tasks, while there are also four Silicon Graphics SGI 350s acting as the FFMS host computer and two Silicon Graphics 3800 Image Generators handling out-the-window displays.

This level of computer power is required to ensure that all the parts of the

system come together seamlessly. Even a millisecond's disparity between what the motion system is doing and what the visual system is doing could be enough to upset the human brain at some stage, and would ruin the occupant's immersion in the simulated world.

Trevor Ward says there is a whole science behind fooling the human mind in the world of simulators.

"An awful lot of work goes into designing a range of movements that can trick the brain," he says.

"A quick, even radical 'initiator movement' can give the occupant a sense of acceleration, for example, and this sensation can be maintained by gravity when the dome is leaned a certain way, even though the actuators are returning to their neutral position, ready for the next initiator movement.

"This return to neutral will not be perceived by the occupant if it is done at the right speed."

I said earlier that the two domes in the Tiger simulator formed one virtual aircraft. While this will be true for 95 per cent of sorties, the system is capable of running two separate missions at the same time. When this is required, the overlooking control room is physically divided to allow, for example, a trainee pilot to do circuits

in the pilot module while an advanced battle captain can work on new tactics in the other.

In any case, it is envisaged that up to 70 per cent of Tiger transition training will be conducted on the simulators rather than on live aircraft. To accommodate this, Australian Aerospace is contracted to run the system for up to 16 hours a day, five days a week. They could, if the need arose, run it for up to 22 hour a day, seven days a week – allowing a little time each day for maintenance and systems checks.

After an all-too-brief but very interesting tour of both simulator systems recently, I discovered what must be the best job at Oakey – the man whose job description requires him to 'fly the simulator for half an hour, conduct basic and aggressive manoeuvres and generally test the systems' before signing it over for another day of training!

So, answering the questions posed earlier – yes, these high-end, high-cost simulation systems are extremely effective and are surely worth every penny and then some.

I haven't forgotten the aircrewman simulator mentioned in the intro either – I just ran out of space, so, I will delve more deeply into that system, next issue...

Found in Pheasant Wood Lost soldiers unearthed

The first sod was turned on a long search for missing soldiers on a World War I battlefield after more than 90 years when on 26 May a suspected mass burial site was opened on a small rural property near Pheasant Wood, northern France.



Human remains and artefacts were discovered in five of the eight pits over the following days and, while the evidence was pointing in the right direction, no conclusive proof of nationality could yet be established.

Severe storms on day seven caused concern and some setback, but there was no damage caused to any of the uncovered remains.

Work was painstakingly detailed. Using small trowels, palette knives and plastic 'tooth picks', each bone, or other find was slowly uncovered, cleaned with a small sponge, identified, catalogued and then protected. No remains were exhumed in the process.

Objects uncovered to this point included an almost complete set of webbing equipment issued to British and Empire soldiers, including eight ammunition pouches complete with three clips of .303 ammunition in each. Leather straps, that appeared to be braces, were uncovered on one set of remains. Fabric including German ground sheets, British trousers material, buckles, buttons, strap ends and part of a gas mask were also revealed.

Frustratingly, though, none of these artefacts could positively point to whether the remains were specifically British or Australian, as all the equipment was common across the forces.

Day 14, however, would yield the proof the experts sought when two deteriorated but clearly distinguishable rising-sun collar badges were uncovered – clear indication that Australian soldiers were buried here.

Minister Snowdon quickly confirmed the discovery.

"Our archaeology team in Fromelles has unearthed a Rising Sun badge in pit four, which proves that the remains of Australian soldiers are buried at this important site," he said.

"This is a momentous discovery and makes this field at Pheasant Wood on the other side of the world, of national significance for all Australians.

"And, we must remember that it is likely none of this would have happened without the foresight and dedication of Mr Lambis Englezos, the amateur historian and head of the Friends of the 15th Brigade whose research led to Army's decision to investigate."

By day 16, work has commenced to carefully backfill the pits, ensuring all human remains were left in position and with great care taken to ensure that no damage was caused in the process.

On Friday 13 June, a simple ceremony was held at the site to acknowledge the significance of the ground, and to provide the local community and those involved with the dig an opportunity to pay their respects.

Both governments have since decided the remains will be exhumed and the soldiers will be buried individually, with full military honours.

Non-invasive surveys and archival research had indicated that up to 400 Australian and British soldiers may have been buried by German forces following the Battle of Fromelles which took place over 19-20 July 1916.

Defence Science and Personnel Minister Warren Snowdon said that research proved beyond reasonable doubt that approximately 400 soldiers were buried near the battlefield.

"Now we are trying to ascertain whether the remains are still here or if they were disinterred at some stage during the subsequent years," he said.

Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD) carried out the works, under the supervision of Australian Army representative Major General Mike O'Brien. Other specialists were also on hand to identify artefacts and assess the condition of remains.

"The most important task for this team is to concentrate on a thorough and scientific process to evaluate whether remains are located in this field," Minister Snowdon said.

The team scored early success when, on the first day of the project, they established the original outline of two burial pits after little more than five hours.

A small excavator was initially used to scrape topsoil away before archaeologists used hand tools to probe into the subsoil below. A bluish-tinged



clay clearly marked the outline of what they expected to be pits number five and six of a possible eight total pits in the 300m long field.

Major General Mike O'Brien said the discovery was in line with what the Army and GUARD expected to find.

"The Army has undertaken a thorough and painstaking process to get to this point, and we were confident that we would discover the outline of each burial pit in relatively good time," he said.

By the end of day two, human remains had been discovered, with further human remains and artefacts found on day four.

What appeared to be a piece of cloth and remnants of a British-pattern brass strap-end and stud now at least began to indicate that this was indeed an Allied burial site.

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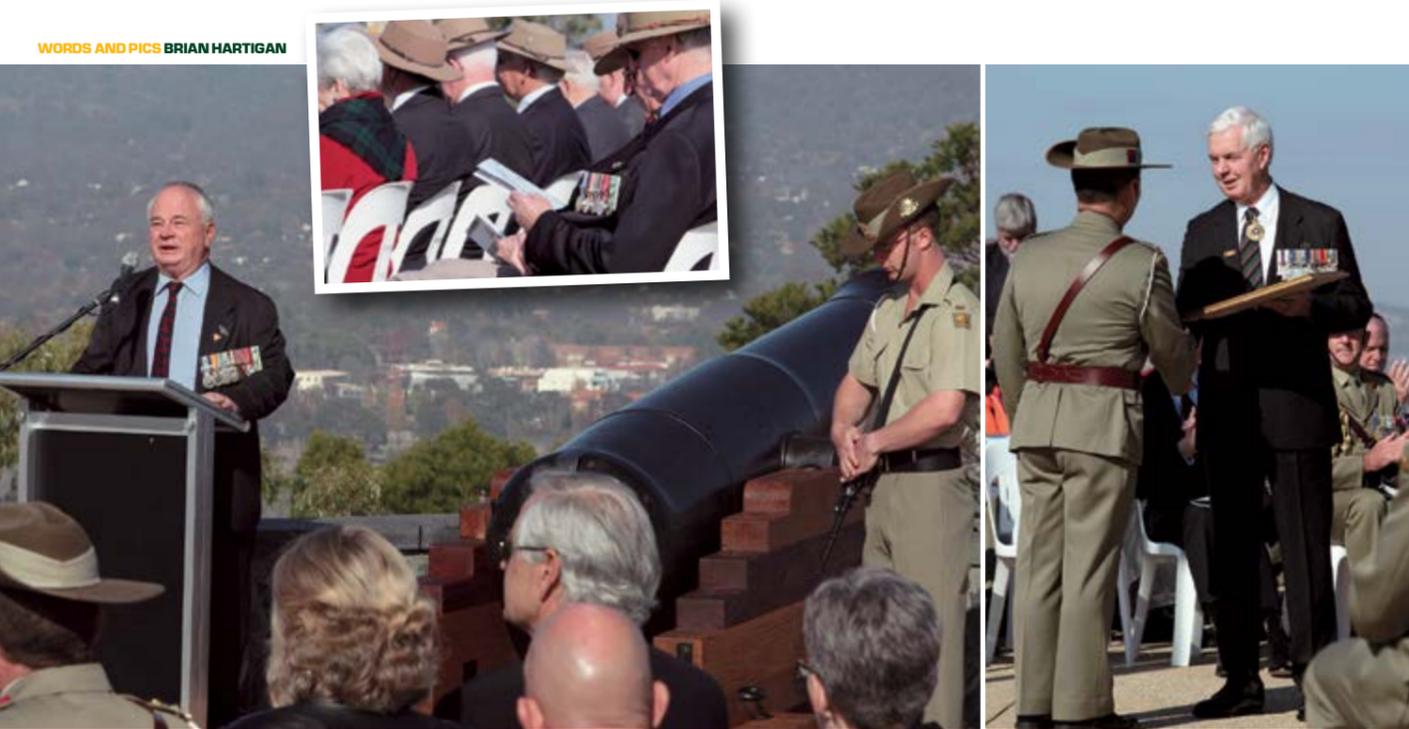
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THALES

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What's in a name?

Forty years after a battle that has gone into the history books as a pivotal engagement in the Vietnam War, an Australian artillery unit has made history again by becoming the first unit in the country to receive an 'Honour Title'.

Henceforth to be known as 102nd (Coral) Field Battery, the artillery unit saw close and intense action at Fire Support Base Coral during May and June 1968.

At 2.15am on 13 May, a barrage of mortars and rockets were fired at Coral, after which a North Vietnamese Army regiment (about 1000 men) assaulted the position.

Early in this battle, one of the artillery gun positions was overrun, with artillerymen forced to engage the enemy in close-quarter fighting. Another gun was turned to aim at the lost artillery piece with orders to destroy it if the enemy attempted to turn it back on the Australian position.

The remaining Aussie guns were engaged in fierce battle over several hours. Not only did they continue to support their infantry, cavalry and engineer colleagues by providing indirect fire support (as per their normal

→ 102nd (Coral) Field Battery

modus operandi) but they were also forced, on several occasions, to lower the gun barrels and fire anti-personnel munitions directly at the enemy, like a giant shotgun.

After more than four hours of intense and desperate fighting, in which the enemy was repulsed and the captured gun retaken, 11 Australians lay dead and 28 were wounded. Three more were killed in follow-up patrolling during the day.

The base was attacked again two nights later, when another five Australians were killed and 19 wounded.

Follow-up actions and aggressive patrolling by the Aussies over the following weeks, with New Zealand and American support, saw the enemy eventually beaten back.

But why is 102 Field Battery specifically recognised through the award of the 'Coral' Honour Title? Because, traditionally, only units that normally engage the enemy with direct fire (infantry, armour and aviation) are awarded Battle Honours for distinguished performance in battle. Also, the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery (RAA) has already been recognised by a single, embracing Battle Honour, UBIQUE (Everywhere), recognising its presence at almost every significant battle, without usually engaging the enemy directly.

Major General Michael Jeffery, Governor-General of Australia, said we honour 102 Battery because, despite temporarily losing a gun, and in hectic

and very tough battle conditions, the gun crews stuck brilliantly and bravely to their task of supporting their infantry, armour and cavalry comrades, even though at times they were firing over open sights at a determined enemy assault force closing on their own gun lines.

"It is totally fitting and appropriate that, with the award of the battle honour 'Coral Balmoral' to the Royal Australian Regiment, that the battery which shared the same dangers and experiences should also share in battle-honour recognition," Major General Jeffery said.

"And so it is that on this 40th anniversary, we remember and honour the Australian servicemen who acquitted themselves so supremely well in these fierce encounters, and in particular the gallant gunners of 102 Field Battery."



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TRUE ANZAC SIGNALLER LOST ON OPS

Less than three weeks after being commended for cool, calm actions in battle, another member of the Special Air Service Regiment was killed while on patrol in southern Afghanistan.



Chief of Defence Force Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston said Signaller Sean McCarthy, who was 25, was killed when the vehicle he was travelling in was struck by a road-side bomb. Two other Australian soldiers and a coalition partner were also wounded by the improvised explosive device but their conditions were assessed as serious but stable.

Sean Patrick McCarthy was born on 5 January 1983 in Auckland, New Zealand, and enlisted into the Australian Defence Force in July 2001.

After initial recruit training and completion of mandatory courses, he was posted to 7 Signals Regiment. He transferred to SASR less than six years later.

Signaller McCarthy saw operational service as part of the Special Operations Task Group in Afghanistan in 2007, followed by a rotation on Operation Astute in East Timor in 2008 before redeploying to Afghanistan.

His actions under fire were recognised by a Special Operations Command commendation presented less than three weeks before his death, for his actions in Afghanistan last year as part of SOTG Rotation V.

The commendation reads, in part – “Signaller Sean McCarthy, I commend you for excellent achievement in the application of battle craft beyond the standard expected whilst acting as a special operations electronic warfare operator during Operation Slipper. Despite being in contact with the enemy, you maintained your presence of mind and displayed excellent soldier skills. You showed courage and mission focus. Your actions demonstrated excellent application of battle craft above your recognised training levels in a complex, dangerous and confusing situation. Your deeds have brought

credit upon yourself, the Special Air Service Regiment and Special Operations Command”.

A solemn ceremony at the International Security Assistance Force base at Tarin Kowt offered Signaller McCarthy's colleagues a final opportunity to say goodbye to their comrade.

Following a solemn memorial service, an SOTG patrol vehicle bearing Signaller McCarthy's casket, followed by a procession of his Special Operations Task Group colleagues passed along a route lined by members of the Australian Reconstruction Task Force and representatives of other coalition forces in Oruzgan.

The casket was then carried by eight of his mates, at a slow march, into the back of an Australian C-130 Hercules that would

take him on the first leg of the long journey home to Australia.

Five days later, a solemn funeral service on the Gold Coast was attended by family, friends, SASR colleagues, Defence leaders and government dignitaries, including the Prime Minister.

CDF Air Chief Marshal Houston said it was a tragic day for the ADF and, on behalf of the entire Defence organisation he extended his deepest sympathies to the family, colleagues and friends of Signaller McCarthy.

“Our best wishes are also with the wounded soldiers in the hope that they make a speedy recovery,” he said.

Signaller McCarthy is the sixth Australian soldier killed since Australia commenced

operations in Afghanistan in 2002.

Defence Minister Joel Fitzgibbon said the tragic loss of Signaller McCarthy was a reminder of the dangers and challenges faced in this vital mission.

“The men and women of the Australian Defence Force are taking the fight to this enemy. They are disrupting, destroying and displacing those that would seek to return Afghanistan to the medieval bastion of tyranny and terror it was under the Taliban,” the minister said.

“[Our soldiers] are the people who risk their lives every day in the service of this noble and hard-fought aspiration. They deserve the respect and thanks of this government and of the people of Australia.”



THE MOST DANGEROUS BUILDING SITE IN THE WORLD



ADF combat engineers provide mobility support, while construction guys build a patrol base and a river crossing, and the explosive ordnance device team deal with a cache of Taliban weapons. It's just another typical morning for the sappers of Reconstruction Task Force 4 currently operating in the Afghan mountains, north of Tarin Kowt.

WORDS CAPTAIN DOUGLAS MCGUIRE
PICS CORPORAL NEIL RUSKIN

Their work, in an area of huge strategic importance to the Taliban, is helping to extend the influence of the Afghan government into the formerly lawless Oruzgan Province.

Combat Team Hammer is part of a major RTF4 push into the former insurgent heartland to the north of the regional capital, Tarin Kowt.

RTF4 has almost completed a patrol base on a key hill in the area, and is now building a \$600,000 all-weather river crossing nearby. "The river crossing will allow the people of this area to gain access to Tarin Kowt, which is normally cut off by the Dorufshan Rud during the winter and when the snow melts" Major Niall Pigott, Officer Commanding Combat Team Hammer says.

"That gives them access to business opportunities, health services and education all year 'round."

For the chippies, sparkies and plumbers of the task force currently building a patrol base, life is very different from their mates working on sites back in Australia.

The best they can hope for at the end of their 16-hour day isn't a couple of beers and to go home to their families, but several hours manning a machine gun and a once-a-week 'shower' consisting of four bottles of mineral water poured into a bucket with holes in the bottom.

Working in the shadow of the Kuran Ghar

mountains in the foothills of the Hindu Kush, Aussie soldiers have been rebuilding schools, mosques and hospitals on six-month rotations for the past two years.

Now the force has moved into a former Taliban stronghold to the north of the coalition base in Tarin Kowt to build a patrol base for the Afghan Army, working under the watchful eyes of their Australian infantry, cavalry and combat-engineer colleagues.

Protected construction is a truly combined-arms operation. Australian infantry, artillery, armour and engineers supported by aviation and intelligence are a potent force in the Afghan desert.

Construction, such as the ford at Baluchi, provides access to health care and markets, and this is something the Taliban simply cannot compete with.

Patrol bases and police stations for the Afghan National Security Forces also allow the government to provide security for its citizens, which in turn sets the right conditions for development in terms of schools and health centres.

Security, governance and development are closely intertwined and all three require the construction of infrastructure.

A Trade Training School in Tarin Kowt run by the RTF conducts trade courses, including basic plumbing, concreting, painting, tiling, carpentry and finishing trades. Other courses include generator maintenance, as

Cunning linguist

Lance Corporal Chris Lewis devoted more time than most in his preparation for deployment with the Australian Army to Afghanistan.

The engineer from Sydney-based 17 Construction Squadron, first completed three months language training at the Defence School of Languages, then worked as a concierge at Afghan weddings in Sydney to hone his skills and to delve deeper into the culture of Afghanistan.

Now, during a very satisfying deployment with the Australian Reconstruction Task Force in Afghanistan, the 29-year-old's effort is paying off.

Lance Corporal Lewis is mentoring a group of Afghan National Army engineers on construction projects in Oruzgan Province and is living, eating and sleeping with a section, north of Tarin Kowt.

Despite losing some of his language skill in the busy months leading up to his deployment, Lance Corporal Lewis says it didn't take him long to get back in the swing of it once he started interacting with the locals.

"It only took me about three days to feel comfortable with the language again," he says.

"I knew I was doing all right when I noticed I could understand them when they talked at their own pace.

"So now I have progressed from being just this guy feeling alone in a foreign culture to now being a part of it and understanding what they are saying - and being able to communicate effectively."

He says that not many people have an opportunity like this and he is loving the experience.

"I knew there was a good possibility of coming here, so I wanted to learn the language and make the most of the opportunity."

"I thought it would be a good way to show that we respect their way of life and their culture."

Lance Corporal Lewis trained and practiced in the Dari language back in Australia, but since deploying to Afghanistan he has also picked up enough of the Pashto language to be able to communicate with local villagers and farmers as well.

Lance Corporal Lewis is hopeful that his language skills and newfound understanding of the local culture in Afghanistan will be enough to secure a return deployment to the Tarin Kowt to continue helping the people of southern Afghanistan.



well as basic, intermediate and advanced construction workers' courses.

Australian tradesmen work alongside Afghan instructors to transfer their skills to keen local students who in turn are recognised in Tarin Kowt by local contractors for their improved abilities.

RTF teams mentor local contractors and increase the capacity of the local building industry, which in turn will leave a lasting legacy of self help in the community.

The Australian Reconstruction Task Force is working with the Netherlands Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) and forms part of a NATO-led International Security Assistance Force. The RTF has a clearly defined role to work on reconstruction, improvement of provincial infrastructure and community-based projects. Apart from trade training provided to the local population, military-engineer training is also delivered to the Afghan National Army.

This type of assistance is designed to benefit the people of Oruzgan Province well into the future and form the building blocks of a stable and prosperous community

RTF4 contains around 400 ADF personnel from predominately Brisbane- and Sydney-based units. It includes elements that provide command, security, engineering and administrative support and is equipped with Bushmasters, ASLAVs and armoured engineer plant.



AFTER-ACTION REPORT

Having reported on the memorial services and funerals for several Australian soldiers killed in action over the past 12 months, we present the following extracts from an official report into the death of Private Luke Worsley and a separate report into civilian deaths in the actual battle in which he died. These details are presented, in the absence of other relevant reportage from the field, to showcase the professionalism of our soldiers under fire in a complex environment.

On the night of 22/23 Nov '07 Australian force elements* were conducting a search and clearance, operating approximately 30 kilometres from Tarin Kowt, Afghanistan. During the course of the clearance, significant enemy resistance was encountered, resulting in the combat death of Private LJ Worsley.

The Australian patrol planned and conducted a direct action mission to search and clear two compounds of interest (consisting of several smaller compounds) in order to disrupt enemy forces. This mission was the fourth phase in a series of actions. Intelligence indicated the compounds were regularly used by Taliban forces for meetings.

At ### hours local, the Australian force element (FE) initiated an engagement with one enemy armed with an RPK light machine gun, assessed to be a sentry in an alleyway. The enemy was killed in action and initial plans to seek invited entry into the compounds were abandoned.

At this time, call signs ### and ### made manual entry into an adjoining compound. Private Worsley was the first member to enter. Almost immediately, Private Worsley identified a person with a PKM heavy machine gun. This enemy was approximately 18 metres distance. During the ensuing firefight, Private Worsley was fired on by the enemy machine gunner and was killed by a single gunshot wound to the head.

An intense close-quarter battle continued within the compound, involving high volumes of small-arms fire and the use of fragmentation weapons by Australian FE to neutralise the threat. The enemy engaged the Australians from multiple directions. All enemy within the compound were killed.

A total of one friendly, ### enemy and two local national non-combatants were KIA. ### persons of interest were detained. A number of unverifiable reports have indicated other persons may have been wounded.

The compound where the incident occurred is a small mud brick compound

within a larger compound system, rectangle by shape measuring approximately 21 metres by 13 metres surrounded by eight-foot mud brick walls. A series of rooms and/or covered areas line the inside of the compound along the walls. The centre of the compound is largely open except for an outhouse positioned near the centre south. A single entry point to the compound exists located along the southern wall.

Although night time, some members described visibility as good due to a high amount of ambient light. These conditions can be advantageous to either opposing force. This light diminished within the confines of the compounds, particularly in shaded areas. There was no street lighting in this area.

During the approach there was no noise. Whilst static in the FUP, a number of dogs began barking in response to small groups of fighting-age males moving away from the compound system. This noise masked the move of Australian personnel to the compounds. Once the 'troops in contact' occurred, a significant amount of noise erupted as a result of combat.

The Australian contingent has access to coalition intelligence sources and the incident area had been the subject of intelligence interest over a protracted period. The general area had a history of Taliban activity including previous contacts with coalition forces, known staging bases for Taliban attacks and locations for IED-making materials.

The patrol was aware of a number of Taliban medium-value commanders who frequented the area. The area was a well-known Taliban meeting location. There was no understatement of the threat.

The original plan of the Australian patrol was abandoned once 'troops in contact' occurred. This necessitated a manual entry into the compound where Private Worsley was killed in action. The ensuing noise would have alerted the occupants to an imminent forced entry and provided them a brief period to prepare. It is highly likely that the enemy who engaged and killed Private Worsley used this time to collect his weapon and possibly to adopt a fire position to his advantage. Notwithstanding, it was appropriate for the Australian patrol to conduct a manual entry once 'troops in contact' had occurred. Had they delayed, it could have provided more time for all enemy fighters to prepare themselves, resulting in increased friendly force casualties.

The operational ground commander placed himself in a position to observe direct actions without being decisively engaged by enemy fighters. He retained control as officer commanding. ### likewise placed himself sufficiently rearward to understand the circumstances of the contact and direct friendly forces as appropriate. The platoon commander manoeuvred his headquarters throughout the

contact as the circumstances dictated. Both team leaders within the forward sections were located with their members throughout the task including the contact. From members' statements there is overwhelming suggestion that control was being exerted by the team leaders and their actions were well coordinated. It is the assessment of the IO that given the closeness and intensity of the fighting within such a complex environment, that additional casualties, both friendly and non-combatant, would most likely have resulted had effective control and coordination not been present.

The significant contributing factor in the incident is the deliberate actions carried out by a prepared, equipped and determined enemy. There is little doubt that the enemy had decided to engage the Australian patrol with the intention to inflict casualties.

The 'troops in contact' commenced about ### when members of the Australian FE came across an armed person. They called out for the person to lie down (using the local language) but the person then commenced to raise his weapon (an RPK) pointing it in their direction. The Australian FE immediately engaged that person with their own weapons and killed him.

Immediately thereafter, another enemy was seen about 25 metres away in an aqueduct with an AK47. He was engaged by the Australian FE who was advised by a colleague that the enemy had been hit and fallen back into the aqueduct.

After the first contact, the Australian FE manually entered (forced entry) their designated compound where they observed two persons walking from left to right across the northern side of the compound. These persons appeared unarmed. The Australians called out to the persons to lie down (using the local language). They did not do so but proceeded into the eastern buildings. [These two persons were not engaged] despite the fact that they later engaged the Australians.

Once ### had identified a person in the north-eastern corner had a PKM and had adopted a posture indicating hostile intent, he engaged that enemy.

Australian troops within this compound were at a decided disadvantage since they were largely exposed to hostile fire from different windows (covered positions) within the eastern rooms of the compound. As such, the use of small-arms fire and grenades against the enemy was appropriate in all circumstances. The killing of the male and female in the eastern building was appropriate having regard to their role as combatants in firing upon Australian troops. An AK47 was found near these two persons.

Likewise the killing of the enemy combatant climbing onto the roof in the courtyard (found to be carrying a PKM machine gun as well as communications

equipment) occurred only after the Australian forces had positively identified him as in possession of a weapon, and acting with hostile intent by adopting a fire position directed towards Australian forces.

The male killed within the compound was in the north east corner room and was observed to be armed when Australian soldiers entered the room. In a later clearance of the eastern building a second PKM was found. All four enemy within this compound were combatants properly engaged by the Australian troops.

It is noteworthy that during the course of the intense close-quarter battle, a toddler was observed to walk across the compound. Despite the pressures of the battle, the Australian troops exercised remarkable skill and judgement in ceasing fire so as not to injure the child. Upon the child being clear of danger they correctly re-engaged the enemy. The child was later found unharmed with other non-combatants.

A baby, estimated to be no more than six-months-old was originally found near the north-eastern corner room of the compound. One of the soldiers conducting the clearance of the eastern rooms had sufficient awareness to notice the baby being in the passage and picked it up with a view to moving it to a safe area before continuing the clearance of the building. This was the first time that any Australian soldier had noticed that the baby was in the area. The baby appears to have been in one of the rooms from which the male and female were engaging the Australians with AK47 fire. The baby was swaddled with its face visible; it had no apparent external injuries although it was crying in a distressed way. Upon returning after the clearance of the building the child was found to have died. The cause of the baby's death can only be conjecture. Having regard to the lack of apparent external injuries one could speculate that concussion from grenades may have caused internal injuries that led to death.

The other non-combatant killed in the incident was a girl in the northern building. She is described as likely to have been about 13 to 16 years old. She was located during the building clearance within one of the northern rooms near where the machine-gun fire originated from. There is no direct evidence as to whether she died as a result of small-arms fire or injuries from a fragmentation device. The deceased female was in the darkness of an unlit room at the northern end of the compound. A great deal of fire was being properly used by Australian forces into that area in an attempt to prevent further engagement by the machine gun which had commenced to fire upon them from the north-eastern corner and killed Private Worsley. It is not known at what stage the girl was killed. The girl was not

noticed by any Australian soldiers until they commenced a clearance of the room where she already lay deceased.

One civilian (a female) was observed to have a possible injury to her upper leg but [she] declined assistance. It is not possible to determine how her injury was sustained or who caused it. All of the other women and children located were protected and guarded during the clearance of the compound.

From the moment the first 'troops in contact' occurred, Australian forces began to come under fire from various locations from the west, south and east. The return of fire by the Australian forces was in accordance with [their rules of engagement]. In defending themselves and their comrades, the ground forces accounted for an additional ### enemy killed outside the compound. Support elements were also called in to assist the Australian force elements, resulting in a further three enemy killed.

It is my finding that the actions of the enemy were consistent with that of an organised, equipped, coordinated and determined militant force.

Witness statements indicate they came into contact with armed personnel whose positions and actions were akin to tactically sited early warning or sentries. Local nationals ignored verbal challenges and calmly moved to positions of cover from where they engaged Australian force elements. The speed by which other local nationals not immediately committed to the firefight responded, indicated a high level of preparedness and commitment to a cause that was wider than their own direct needs. The majority of the enemy engagement positions were located outside of compounds and from concealed positions. This indicated that the firers moved to positions of tactical advantage and demonstrated offensive intent rather than defensive. Throughout the period of the whole engagement, the fighting was at times described by many witnesses as intense, and, equipment captures by Australian elements included heavy and light machine guns, push-to-talk communications and a combat harness.

As a result of the ongoing nature of the operation and the inability to secure the entire fighting area, only limited battle-damage assessment was possible. Of the ### reported enemy killed, four occurred within the main compound of compound two. Three of those four have been positively identified and subsequently confirmed as local Taliban commanders within the area. They are alleged to have about 30-40 fighters between them.

* Passages in italics are generic entries made by CONTACT to replace sections deleted from the official reports for security reasons. Other gaps marked ### represent information too specific to replace generically and [] indicate other editing by CONTACT.



DFSW

DFSW – DIRECT FIRE SUPPORT WEAPONS – IS ONE OF THE MAJOR SUPPORT ELEMENTS NATIVE TO AN INFANTRY BATTALION. YET, IN THE NOT-TOO-DISTANT PAST, IT WAS A CAPABILITY ON THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION. TODAY, HOWEVER, DFSW IS NOT ONLY REPAIRING ITSELF, BUT IS SET FOR A COMEBACK THAT WILL CHANGE THE FACE OF INFANTRY. OF COURSE IT'S NOT JUST DFSW THAT'S CHANGING. UNDER THE 'HARDENED AND NETWORKED ARMY' CONCEPT, ALSO REFERRED TO IN SOME QUARTERS AS THE '2012 CONSTRUCT', INFANTRY, AS THE BASIC BUILDING BLOCK OF THE MODERN BATTLE GROUP, WILL BE BIGGER, BETTER AND MORE CAPABLE THAN EVER BEFORE.



MAIN PIC CORPORAL NEIL RUSKIN

A gradual decline in infantry numbers combined with the increased tempo of operations in recent years saw DFSW operators deployed as regular infantrymen simply to make up numbers in overstretched infantry platoons. These highly trained and skilled soldiers were not used in their specialist roles. Consequently, a level of 'skills fade' had set in and was in serious danger of snowballing.

WORDS BRIAN HARTIGAN PICS ADF



PIC CORPORAL NEIL RUSKIN



PIC CAPTAIN CAMERON JAMESON

he writing was on the wall. Already, training responsibility for mortars had been transferred from the School of Infantry to the School of Artillery and assault-pioneer training had gone to the engineers. While these moves make sense on some levels – and mortars and pioneers still actually belonged to infantry – to some people this was the thin edge of the wedge, and DFSW could well be next. In fact, DFSW was itself an amalgamation of the former machine-gun and anti-armour platoons, brought together because of manning difficulties.

WO2 Andy Thompson, Officer Instructor at Tactics Wing, School of Infantry, says the problem had been well recognised for quite a while and considerable brain power had been expended on various solutions.

Then came the 'Hardened Networked Army' concept and new life was breathed into DFSW.

"We were already doing CPR on it, but 2012 added the extra breath it needed," WO2 Thompson says.

While the 2012 Construct is a whole-of-army concept that reaches into the fundamentals of every corps, infantry will be one of the big winners. We already know about the growth in infantry overall, with

the re-raising and delinking of battalions to give us the eight battalions of the 2012 army (see CONTACT #12, p14). What wasn't clear – at least not to me – was that each battalion is also set to expand, at least in theory.

Light battalions in particular will benefit and, when all is said and done, they may not be so 'light' after all.

Let's take a look back for a minute at the makeup of a 'traditional' infantry battalion.

The first thing to realise is that there is a theme that has and will probably always run through the army – the concept of building blocks.

At the base level you have a soldier – a rifleman – who completes his basic training with every other soldier, at Kapooka. He then does the basic infantry course, usually at the School of Infantry, but more and more frequently, in a battalion (CONTACT #16 p38). After basic training, the now-qualified infanteer is posted onto the strength of a battalion where he enters the base-level infantry team – the section.

There were traditionally nine soldiers, in three groups, in a section – a scout group, rifle group and gun group. The section had a corporal as section commander – the backbone of the army. His 2IC (second

in command) was a lance corporal who traditionally headed up the gun group and was also the admin master for the section, looking after its food, water, ammunition and any other resupply needs. He also understudied to the corporal, one day destined to lead his own section.

So, let's start building a battalion – three sections, with three or four men in a headquarters element, made up a platoon, three platoons, plus HQ, made up a company and three companies plus HQ made a battalion. Actually it's not quite that simple because most, if not all, battalions also had a support company and a lot of other elements intrinsically added on. Thus, a typical infantry battalion would consist of around 35 officers and 700 soldiers.

We'll come back to support company in a minute, and digress just a little further by pointing out that in the simplest theoretical build, three sections make a platoon, three platoons a company, three companies a battalion, three battalions a brigade, three brigades a division, two or more divisions a corps and two or more corps an army. After that you simply have multiple armies.

Getting back to support company now, and it is here you find many of the added

capabilities a battalion commander wouldn't want to go to war without, including assault pioneers to either build or blow things up; snipers to apply precision fire from afar; mortars to rain heavy metal on an enemy; anti-tank troops to keep enemy armour at bay; recon to seek out battlefield information; signals to keep him in touch with everyone; and, direct fire support weapons to bring some heavy, extra firepower to the field.

DFSW, in recent years, was armed with Mag 58 machine guns and 84mm Carl Gustav anti-armour weapons. They brought some extra hitting power to the fight and, trained more highly in the tactics and theory of the machine gun in particular, they could apply their force to greater effect than section-based machine guns (which had been downscaled from the 7.62mm Mag 58 to 5.56mm Minimi in the 1990s – although, to redress this a little, a second Minimi was added to the standard section a few years later – and, whispers have it, the army may be looking to up-gun again by replacing the 5.56mm Minimi with its 7.62mm younger brother.

Unfortunately (read this word in the context intended) for DFSW, the operational

tempo of the 1990s and early '00s saw the Australian Army increasingly engaged in operations that, although 'warlike' or 'real', were not 'full-on' in the traditional war-fighting sense.

On operations such as those in support of CHOGAM, APEC, the Olympics and disaster reliefs at home and overseas, there's little call for heavy weapons. Even in places like East Timor and the Solomon Islands, while the weapons may be there on standby, the likelihood of them being called into action in their designated role is pretty slim.

Combine this with a reduction in the number of on-line battalions and a slump in recruiting/retention, commanders looked to DFSW and other highly trained but under-used soldiers as a ready source of warm bodies to fill the ranks in depleted rifle companies.

DFSW soldiers employed in non-core roles saw their skills fade, plus, fewer soldiers available in the battalions meant there were fewer soldiers released to attend DFSW courses. And so the snowball began to roll.

Fortunately (read this word in the context intended) for DFSW, Iraq, Afghanistan and the 'Hardened and Networked Army' concept came along in the nick of time.

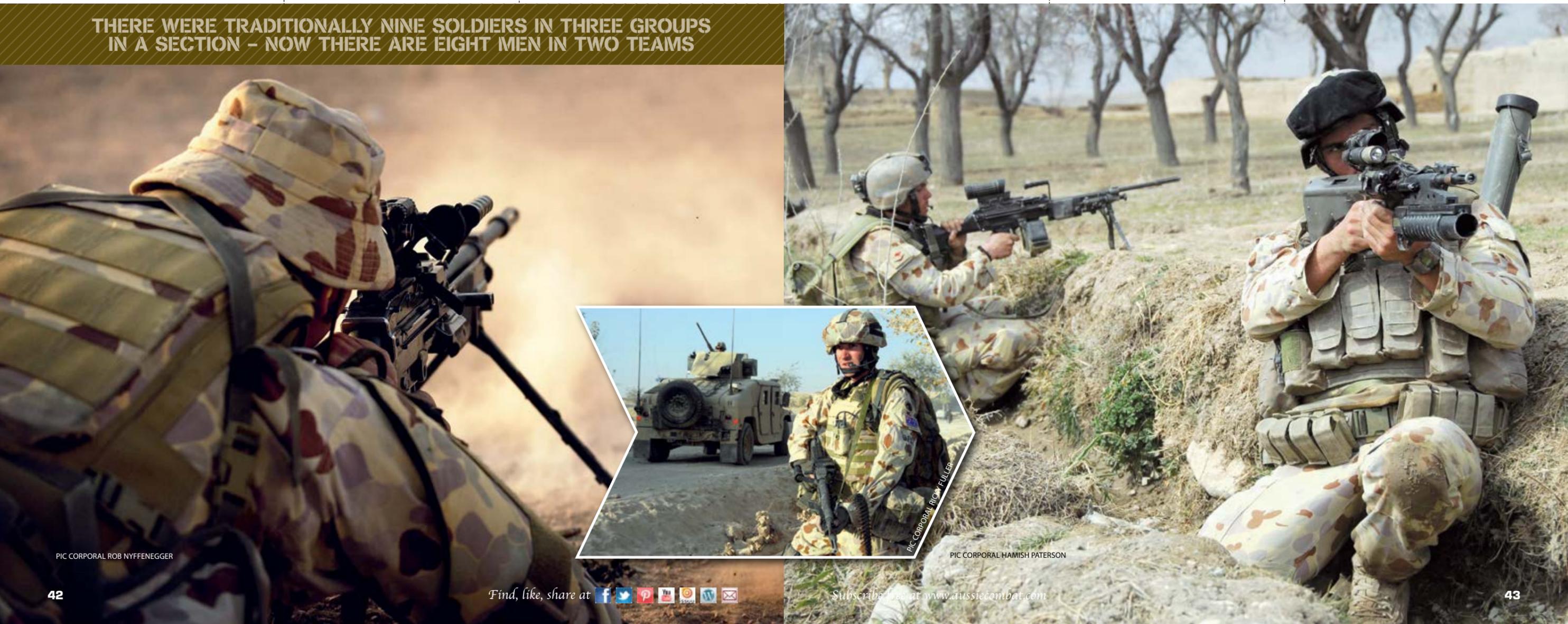
It was time to put all ideas on the table. 'We need more soldiers to train as DFSW operators,' some said.

'DFSW is meant to bring extra hitting power to the battlefield – how can we improve on that?' others asked.

The floodgates were opened. In a minute, we'll look at some of the ideas that have actually gained traction and are now included in planning the infantry battalions of 2012. Some of these ideas have even been field trialled in Townsville in recent months, while others have already been operationally employed in Iraq with the Overwatch Battle Group (West) (see CONTACT #18 p38).

First, let me say that while the old battalion structure had a support company containing all the support elements a commander could pick and choose to support his companies as required, the new construct calls for many of the support elements – especially heavy weapons – to be integrated at a lower level, so that each company will have its own support platoon and every platoon will have a manoeuvre support section of three, four-man teams, armed to the teeth with the best weapons and with the capacity to carry them.

THERE WERE TRADITIONALLY NINE SOLDIERS IN THREE GROUPS IN A SECTION – NOW THERE ARE EIGHT MEN IN TWO TEAMS



PIC CORPORAL ROB NYFFENEGGER

PIC CORPORAL HAMISH PATERSON

PIC CORPORAL RICHY FULLER

JAVELIN IS A SHOULDER-LAUNCHED MISSILE SYSTEM THAT CAN BE USED AGAINST ANY TARGET TYPE OUT TO 2500M



PIC SERGEANT JOHN CARROLL



PIC CORPORAL NEIL RUSMIN



PIC CORPORAL ROB NYFFENECKER



PIC CORPORAL DARREN HILDER



New heavy weapons coming down the platoon supply chain are...

Javelin shoulder-launched missile system (CONTACT #1)

Javelin is a shoulder-launched missile system that can be used against any target type out to 2500m. Its manufacturers claim it can defeat any armour on the battlefield, including explosive-reactive armour, thanks to its dual warhead design. But, while it is effective against the heaviest tanks, any vehicle, bunker, building or even slow-moving helicopter can also be engaged.

Once locked on to a target, Javelin is a fire-and-forget autonomous projectile, which means the shooter can pull the trigger and, while the missile is still in the air, bug out to a safer location. Once it is airborne, it has an almost 100 per cent kill probability – if it was aimed and locked on correctly. And that is simply a matter of training.

Employing Javelin will not be restricted to DFSW operators, however, and the School of Infantry is currently engaged in training trainers who can then go back to their units and spread their knowledge and expertise in a much wider field.

Unlike most other weapon systems, Javelin need not be live-fired by an operator to deem him qualified to use it – and, at a speculated \$140,000 a shot, that's probably just as well. Thanks to comprehensive, effective and completely portable weapon simulators, Javelin courses and refresher training can be delivered in barracks or in the field with no other specialist facilities required.

84mm Carl Gustav ammo

The 84mm Carl Gustav medium-range anti-armor weapon (simply referred to by soldiers as 'the 84') is a recoilless rifle with a range of applications beyond just defeating armour. It is already used in the Australian Army to fire illumination rounds, delivering 650,000-candle-power lighting for about 40 seconds. It can also be used to throw up a thick smoke screen to hinder an enemy or facilitate own-force withdrawal.

New developments in ammunition natures for this weapon will see its effectiveness stretched even further. For example, SAAB,

its manufacturer, has one round that can be used either directly, exploding on impact, or as an airburst weapon, dispersing 800 steel pellets – like an airbourne Claymore! The point at which the air burst occurs can be dialled into the round before launch. That means, for example, if you come across an enemy hiding behind some boulders and you can't shoot him directly, you could use a laser range finder to accurately measure the distance, add a metre or two when you dial that into the '84' ammunition, and fire. The round bursts above the enemy's head, the impenetrable rocks offering him no protection.

Another enemy you come across is encamped inside a building of brick or even solid concrete. You could choose another SAAB round to either blow a hole in the wall to allow your colleagues to enter the building or, by switch selection on the round, choose to have the round punch through the wall and explode inside the room.

Yet another round (one of about 10 to choose from) doesn't explode, but fires 1100 steel darts, shotgun-like, at a close-in enemy. The darts or 'flechettes' scatter in a pattern of about five to 10 per square metre at 100m.

A new composite-materials version of this weapon has reduced its weight to about 10kg, making it even more deployable.

Machine guns

The **Mag58** 7.62mm general-purpose machine gun has been in service with the Australian Army for a long time and, since it is an excellent weapon that still does the job, why get rid of it? Not only are there no plans to get rid of it, but the army is looking at new, innovative ways to employ it more effectively.

As a direct-fire machine gun, the Mag58 is effective out to 1000m on a bi-pod or 1500m on a tripod. But, borrowing the sighting system and targeting principles from a mortar tube, the MAG58 can be adapted to reach even further with indirect, harassing fire on an enemy out to 3000m.

The **Browning M2HB .50 cal** machine gun is a heavy weapon (in more ways than

one) that is usually mounted on a vehicle or a ship. At 38kg (57kg with tripod) it's not the kind of weapon you could easily take on patrol and, as such, hasn't really been used by light infantry in the DFSW role. But that's about to change too!

Designed during WWI and brought into service more than 75 years ago, this weapon has nothing to prove. It is a heavy machine gun with an effective range of 1800m on its tripod. But, again, adding the sighting system and principles that make mortars an effective weapon, the .50 cal could harass an enemy more than 7km away!

Firing 40mm grenades with effective point-target accuracy to 1500m, an **automatic grenade launcher** (AGL), also referred to as a grenade machine gun, will also add considerably to the heavy-weapons' effects of light infantry on the battlefield. The make and model that will eventually be purchased for general use throughout the army has not been decided yet, but at least one model has already been used by Australian special-forces elements and other units in Iraq and Afghanistan.

(The 5.56mm Minimi is not listed as a machine gun, because it is designated a light support weapon or LSW).



Building blocks

Traditionally, the infantry has placed an emphasis on the battalion as being an in-barracks raise, train and sustain organisation as well as an operational entity. In 'the old days' (Vietnam, for example) a battalion deployed as a battalion answering to a higher headquarters.

Under the 2012 construct, however, while the battalion will remain the principle raise, train and sustain organisation, it will rarely, if ever, conduct operations as a discreet entity again. Instead, the battalion, or parts of it, will operate as one element of an all-arms battlegroup – as we saw with OBG(W) IV in Iraq (CONTACT #18 p38).

Soldiers who deployed to Al Muthanna Provence, deployed as members of OBG(W) I, II, III or IV and as members of Comabt Team Waler, Combat Team Healer etc – not as members of 6RAR or 2/14LHR (QMI) etc.

OBG(W) IV was the Hardened and Networked Army concept in action. There we saw two four-man teams comprising a standard infantry section (as opposed to the 'traditional' three-man, three-group section). We also saw infantry working side by side in combat teams with cavalry and, in this case, working under a cavalry headquarters – and we saw them working together as cohesive, effective teams.

Team

The infantry team – the basic building block for the modular infantry unit – will consist of four soldiers in the roles of commander, designated marksman, grenadier and LSW operator.

Members of the infantry team will be trained to safely operate all weapons within their team but will possess advanced skills on their primary weapons. All members will be trained to use hand grenade, Claymore and a close-range anti-armour weapon (such as the ubiquitous '66' rocket in a tube) while selected members of the team will also receive training in explosives, IED disposal, breaching and other specialties.



Section

Two teams will come together to form a section, but will retain sufficient flexibility to be readily reorganised as the operational situation demands. A section commander will lead the section as a whole but, if the teams were to split, the section commander takes one team and his 2IC the other.

Manoeuvre Support Section

Additional to the basic infantry section will be a new manoeuvre support section in each platoon. As mentioned, these will consist of three, four-man teams. Each team will consist of a commander, sharpshooter, grenadier and machine gunner. Each soldier will be trained to a higher level than an infantry team and, for their support role, will have enhanced support weapons and some form of integral mobility (probably all-terrain vehicle of about half-tonne payload). Their training will include operation and tactical employment of precision direct-fire weapons, area suppression weapons and multi-purpose weapons to take out bunkers, buildings or armour.

Platoon

The new-look infantry platoon will consist of three sections (six teams), the manoeuvre support section (three teams) and a headquarters team – 10 teams for a total of 40 men (30 in the old system). It is at this level that the full potential of the building-block or 'arms room approach' will be realised. The 'arms room approach' refers to the ready

availability of a number of weapons and equipments a commander can choose from to deliver the battlefield effects he believes a given set of circumstance calls for.

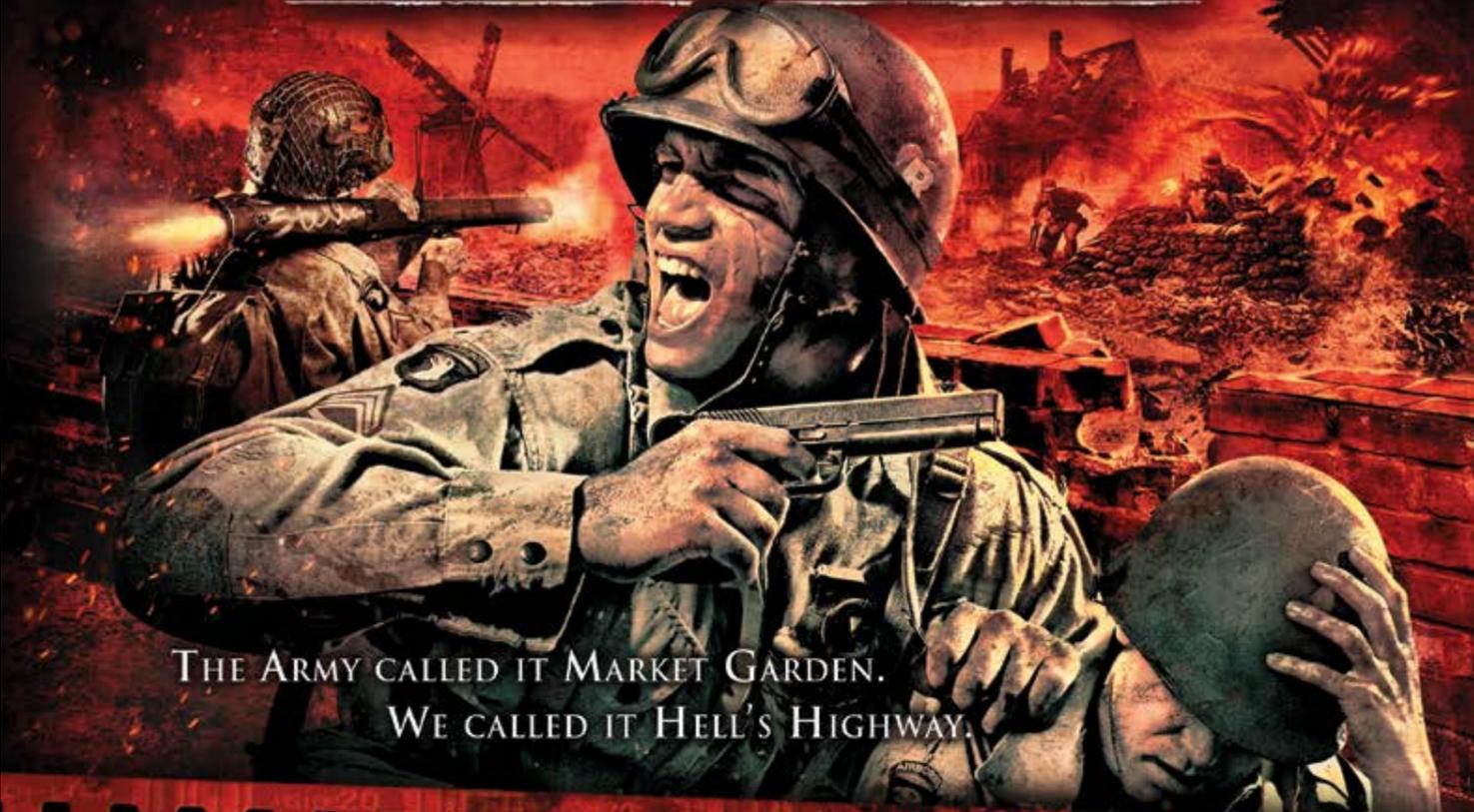
Company

The company will be the build level where the greatest flexibility and adaptability will be derived. Three platoons will come together to form a company – although, in-keeping with that adaptability, the 2012 plan suggests that two of the three platoon-based manoeuvre support sections would be pooled to form a separate company support platoon.

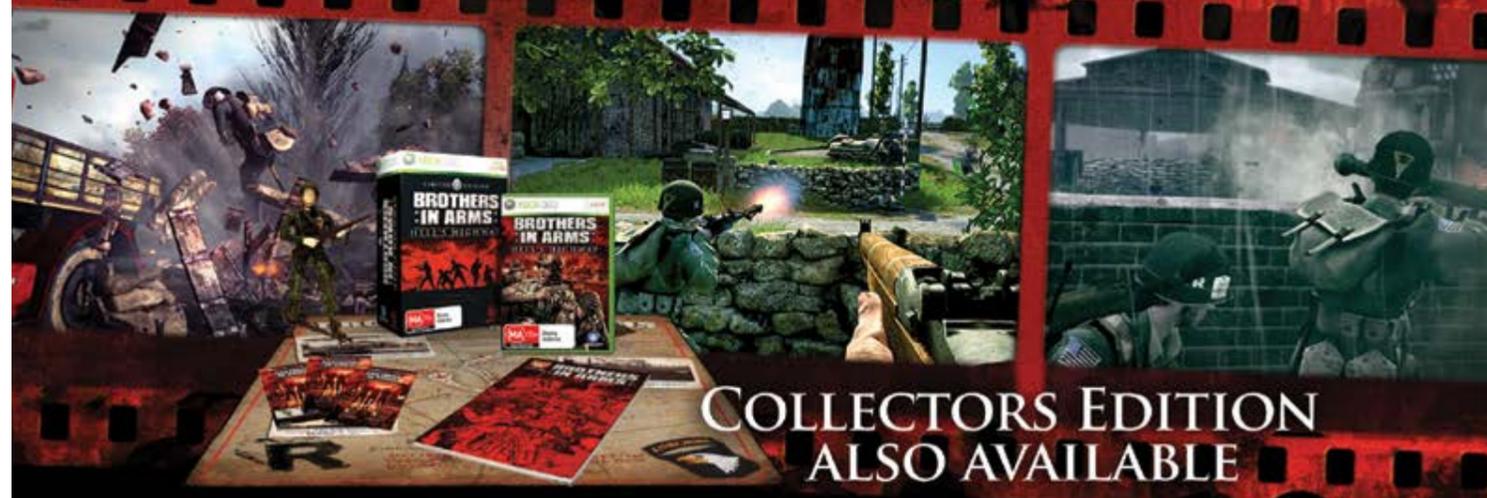
Much of what has been discussed here applies mainly to the basic foot soldier and the basic infantry battalion – the light infantry battalion. While the pure concepts and philosophy will translate to the motorised and mechanised infantry battalions, most of it already applies in so far as they already have the mobility and the heavier firepower embedded in their vehicles.

With the flexibility of the arms room approach, and with its extra manning, heavier weapons and imbedded mobility, the light infantry battalion of tomorrow looks to be a way heavier beast than its forefather – and DFSW (albeit with a new name) has not only been saved, but is set to burgeon.

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AGRO SALMON ANZAC PATROL

WORDS AND PICS BRIAN HARTIGAN

As last issue's reader will know, I had the great privilege and thrill of spending ANZAC Day in Tallil, southern Iraq, with the men and women of the Overwatch Battle Group West 4. Not only did I participate in a very special Dawn Service with all the trappings but, later in the day, I even went on patrol with Combat Team Waler, in an ASLAV named 'Aggressive Salmon'.



As combat Team Waler rolled out of Camp Terendak under a scorching mid-afternoon sun, I stood in the forward right hatch of the APC-type ASLAV and snapped away at everything I could.

But there are some things you can't photograph. The American's get very testy about cameras on 'their' base. The Aussies, too, have a few 'do not photograph' pieces of kit – and, of course, I was more than happy to do the right thing.

Sometimes it can be very frustrating, though, especially when one soldier tells you, "you can't photograph that vehicle", only to find out from another man in uniform that there's no problem photographing the vehicle generally, just don't show this bit or that bit. Then you find out from someone in the intelligence cell that, although the enemy know what it is, what it does and can easily see it as it drives by, the reason you can't photograph that particular bit is because the angle of its dangle could give its secrets away if the enemy had the time and opportunity to study a quality photograph. See, now I understand – no problem!

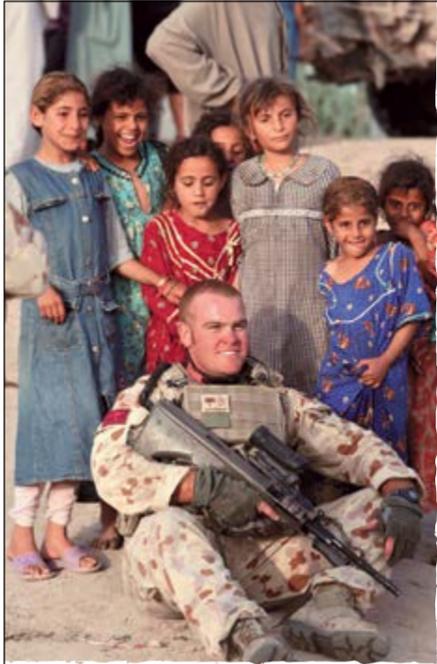
Now, riding in the right forward hatch of an APC-type ASLAV across the deserts of Iraq might sound like a pretty 'cool' thing to do – believe me, it isn't. It's not that you feel exposed to potential threats or that the view isn't worth writing about. The problem is, quite literally, that it's too damn hot. With the ambient air temperature soaring past 40 degrees centigrade (and it was still just springtime in the Northern Hemisphere) and with the engine cooling system blowing mightily through the large square grill on the slightly angled surface in

front of me, I felt like a plucked chicken in a fan-forced oven. So, with a good variety of pics eventually stored away on my compact flash card, I very kindly offered my position to another journalist on our tour (but he didn't stick it as long as I did!).

Anyway, while I was up there in that hatch I did get to see some pretty 'cool' sights. A huge convoy of fuel tankers, escorted by several Hummers and black Suburbans, cruising down Route Tampa (which we traversed by flyover on our way somewhere else) – 'dead' anti-aircraft guns, trucks and cars off the side of the road – cones of dust sucked up by desert whirlwinds dancing across the otherwise featureless expanse – Bedouin (mostly children) herding goats or camels from one grassless patch of dirt to another – a CH-53 Jolly Green Giant and a V-22 Osprey (the first I'd seen in the flesh) – Iraqi police checkpoints, where Iraqi police work in very Iraqi (read impoverished) facilities – and, of course, Aussie soldiers working in their very Aussie, well-equipped and highly professional way.

On this patrol, the crew in 'my' ASLAV consisted of the crew commander Sergeant Kent Sparke, Trooper Luke Smith riding 'shotgun' in the front left hatch beside me, and our driver Trooper Dylan Close, who professed to being a big fan of CONTACT.

I made mention of Trooper Smith last issue, not by name, but by describing his actions. I said how I thought he was being rudely hot and cold towards my riveting conversation (!) until I realised that at key points in the road, such as when we approached a flyover or a parked car, his attention and his rifle aim were 100 per cent focused on the possibility of a threat.



And, with the likely threat passed, he was 50 per cent back with me – but still watchful for the slightest sign that something was out of place.

I also noticed that the rather large and imposing .50 cal machinegun mounted in front and slightly to the left of me was also ‘staring’ and panning towards these potential threats as we approached and passed them despite being a standalone ‘unmanned’ weapon station, remotely controlled by Sergeant Sparke in his commander’s hole. With infra-red sensors and low-light TV with high-powered zooming capability, there wasn’t much Sergeant Sparke couldn’t see or reach out and touch (in a very nasty way!) from his control station.

I noticed, with some amusement, that the .50 cal weapon station also panned left to track a few American Hummers we met on the road – but I guess that was just Sparkey using his rather fearsome electronic ‘eyes’ to look at a friend, rather than any perception of a possible threat?!

I didn’t see much of Trooper Close the whole trip. He was locked away beneath the closed, slightly domed hatch covering the driver’s hole, doing a very good job of driving the beast, despite having just three small periscopes through which to view the world ahead.

Oh! I mentioned earlier that the ‘car’ Closey was driving us in was called ‘Aggressive Salmon’. That came about because all car names in A Squadron (the backbone of the Cav-heavy CT Waler) start with A and because the OBGW(4) arm patch is the Australian red kangaroo on a maroon (salmon-pink) background, reflecting the Queensland makeup of the battlegroup.

On this ANZAC-Day patrol, Combat Team Waler – comprised of members of 2/14 Light Horse Regiment (Queensland Mounted Infantry) and 6RAR, led by Major Chris McKay in ‘ANZAC’ – took us first to the local firing range. Here we witnessed the ASLAV’s awesome 25mm Bushmaster cannon in action, as well as the Mag 58 machinegun, the ubiquitous shoulder-launched anti-tank weapon simply known as the ‘66’, a Steyr-mounted 40mm grenade launcher and (a first for me) the 40mm automatic grenade launcher remote weapon station.

After the visit to the weapons range – necessitated by recent repairs to the 25mm cannon – we hit the road again to check in with some local police manning what turned out to be a relatively major checkpoint at a four-way intersection in the middle of nowhere. Traffic here was nonetheless heavy, with mainly commercial vehicles keeping the police busy through the heat of the afternoon.

Dropping in unannounced didn’t seem to phase the police, but because of the media presence, there was a little negotiating to be done before we could dismount. Once the all clear was given, though, the constables on duty seemed more than happy to continue business as usual (with a hint of extra enthusiasm) in front of the cameras.

Business as usual consisted of briefly stopping each vehicle for a rudimentary search – though the trucks and bigger vehicles came in for far less attention than cars, the drivers of which were asked to open their boots and bonnets and produce ID. The Aussies, meanwhile, offered tips and friendly advice on the process without interfering too much.



After just 40 minutes or so at the checkpoint, we were off again.

This time I rode inside the ASLAV and was completely surprised when I climbed out at the next stop to find we were in a small village in the middle of an expanse of marshland. What a contrast!

We got a mixed reception here. While the village elders chatted amicably with our military leader, and a plethora of kids swarmed around dismounted soldiers, one old gent, well past his prime, uttered unintelligible and probably uninterpretable mutterings and cast a disapproving eye in our direction before shuffling off. Still others were a little miffed that our rather fat vehicles (‘bar armour’ adding to the imposing stature of the ASLAV) were completely blocking the only path through the village. Despite their grievance, however, they stood back and waited

20 minutes or more before sending a representative forward to politely ask for passage – at which time the ASLAVs were manoeuvred tentatively closer to the frail-looking edge of the raised thoroughfare, or off the road altogether, into a farmyard. The local vehicles eventually passed with scant regard for how perilously close they were to falling off the embankment. Was it skill born of practice, or a she’ll-be-right attitude? The latter might explain the poor state of the vehicle, with its myriad bumps and bruises attesting to previous (but unsuccessful) gauntlet running.

It was dark and late by the time we eventually dismounted from the vehicles back at Camp Terendak. The mess was closed and all the ANZAC Day beer drunk. But, who cares – I was too tired to worry about either. Yet I went to bed satisfied and happy with a great day’s work.

FOOTNOTE: While the soldiers of OBG(W)4 were looking forward to going home after completing their individual tours of duty in June, I did encounter a level of frustration that the task initially set for the group was being flick-passed to another country to complete. The Aussies who served in Al Muthanna and Dhi Qar provinces have a high level of respect and empathy for the local Iraqi population and were a little disappointed that Australia couldn’t commit for the long haul in southern Iraq. That said, they obediently accepted their government’s orders and look forward to the next task.

IRAQ DRAWN DOWN

WORDS BRIAN HARTIGAN PICS ADF



Several months after our soldiers in southern Iraq handed responsibility for security in Al Muthanna and Dhi Qar provinces to Iraqi security forces, they finally handed over residual 'overwatch' and training responsibilities to soldiers from the US Army's 82nd Airborne Division, pulled down the Aussie flag and came home.

Contingency planning for the drawdown actually started months before any official announcement of a withdrawal was made by the new Rudd government – in fact, from day one of OBG(W)4's entry into theatre, non-essential equipment and stores were slowly shifted back to Australia through the expansive supply chain.

Before leaving the theatre, the Aussies conducted comprehensive handover activities with the US forces replacing them. Typical of the handover process, US commanders and soldiers joined Diggers from Combat Team Heeler for a two-day patrol through Dhi Qar province.

The patrol took place in harsh conditions, with daytime temperatures edging past 50 degrees centigrade.

Integral to the Australian drawdown, the patrol met with tribal and civic leaders and were treated to a traditional lunch in the town of Al Islah. The Australians exchanged gifts with local leaders in recognition of mutual support and cooperation since 2006.

The patrol also visited a school refurbished by the Australians in the district of Al Gharref, one of many such contracts they had initiated and supervised since arriving in the area. The school was typical of OBG(W)4's focus on children as the future of Iraq.

As their mission wound down, the first leg of the journey home for our soldiers took



them to Australia's main support base in the Middle East where they conducted a range of administrative checks over several days before returning to Australia.

Some soldiers expressed disappointment that Australia had left southern Iraq with its task there not quite complete – but were nonetheless confident that they had done a very good job in their allotted time and were now looking forward to the next task – whatever that might be.

After more than six months away from home the soldiers were proud of the many achievements of the Battle Group and the Training Team but were also delighted to be home with family and friends.

'Welcome Home' parades and other activities were held in Brisbane, Darwin and Townsville for all soldiers who deployed in southern Iraq as part of Operation Catalyst.

Brisbane's parade on 28 June was headed by Private Liam Haven who was blinded in an IED attack in May. Private Haven was one of the few casualties suffered by Australian forces over the term of the five-year commitment in one of the world's worst hot-spots.



HEY, SOLDIER. WHERE DID YOU GET THAT WATER?

There's a bottling plant at Camp Liberty, Baghdad, which is one of six such plants around Iraq, wholly dedicated to producing handy 1-litre plastic bottles and filling them with pure, clean drinking water.

This plant, called the al-Morrell Development, owned by the Oasis International Waters company of Utah, USA, is managed by an Australian, Bruce Everson from Townsville (right).

The day I visited, Bruce was looking forward to leaving on a nice big block of R&R back in Australia after working this contract for nearly four years.

Anyway, the plant Bruce manages (just like the other five) makes its own plastic bottles. It has two monstrous Italian-made machines constantly stamping them out, 32 at a time, in a cycle that takes about 10 seconds.

Each bottle is made of about 40g of PET plastic, delivered to the factory in bags of 1.5 tonne each. The factory uses between 11 and 12 such bags per day – pumping out about 38,000 bottles per bag, or more than 400,000 bottles per day.

Since installation, the machine on the left has been running effectively for 13,707 hours and 15 minutes and has spat out 133,038,696 bottles – 107,824 of which were rejected by the automated quality-control checker, for various reasons.

After being formed by a combination of heat and pressure in a mould, the bottles drop from the Italian-made machines and are conveyed into a giant hopper. From there they go through an intriguing mechanical ballet to get filled, capped, sorted, wrapped and palletted before being fork-lifted into a giant holding area to await shipping.

The water that services this plant comes from the Tigres River, diverted by a system of canals to a lake nearby. From there it is pumped into the plant for purification before bottling, packaging and shipping out to the thousands of American, Australian and other coalition soldiers and contractors engaged in the greater Iraqi war effort.

Interestingly, however, you can't just pick a 'fresh' bottle off the production line and skull it – it needs to sit for at least four hours to allow ozone to dissipate first.

Being on Camp Liberty and being part of the war effort, the plant has also come under attack – a rocket directly hitting a stockpile of bottles in the yard one day. No one was hurt, of course, because the water was perfect at absorbing the blast and shrapnel – but half a day's production was splatted all over the car park! It made for some interesting photos, though – or so I'm told.

Thanks for that – but, you could have just said you got it from the fridge!



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While the numbers are impressive, commander of the final AATTI rotation Lieutenant Colonel Alby Hughes would be the first to agree that the standard of training for an Iraqi recruit was not nearly comparable with that of an Australian recruit – but, applying the ‘horses-for-courses’ principal, he was confident their training was nonetheless adequate for the task.

Paraphrasing Lawrence of Arabia, Lieutenant Colonel Hughes says it is better to let the Iraqis do it tolerably themselves than to do it perfectly for them.

“Our guys are very professional – and, frankly, much better than any of our coalition partners in this type of role – but we weren’t here to push our own wheelbarrow. It wasn’t a case of do it ‘our way or the highway,’” Lieutenant Colonel Hughes says.

“All their training is conducted to a strict TMP (training management plan) and we made sure that the Iraqi trainers stuck to that.

“It was a big challenge but it was a very important role we played.”

Camp Samawah, where the Aussies delivered training and mentoring, is a pretty

rough and ready army base – but eminently suitable to the task, providing as it does, a realistic, true-to-life environment for training inside the wire compared with outside.

As many as 2750 recruits could be trained at the camp at any one time. Obviously these were split into manageable-sized groups – 400 Iraqi trainers, mentored by 20 Aussies handling 1850 recruits.

Basic training for the Iraqi recruits was a five-week course. After that they received collective training at their battalion before heading out on live operations not long after.

While AATTI did not formally follow up on the recruits after they left the camp, feedback through normal channels and through direct observation by other Australian and Coalition patrols gave a good indication as to how they were travelling. Any identified shortfall was then addressed, where possible, in the training package.

But, all indications from the field were positive.

One measure of how the Iraqi Army in Al Muthanna Province was travelling is in the number of boots it can put on the ground. In Iraq, divisional commanders are allocated

“The Iraqis recognise the casual swagger of the Aussies. I think we relate to each other very well.

“And I think they will miss us.”

During my trip to Iraq for ANZAC Day, I visited some of the AATTI guys at Camp Samawah and saw them in the middle of a train-the-trainer session for Iraq Police SWAT teams.

WO2 Scott Oben says the guys on the course are unbelievably keen to learn.

“What we are doing is trying to instill a culture of learning from lessons learned on operations,” he says.

“These guys have been doing the job in the field and already know that environment. So, we’re trying to polish that basic knowledge a little but, more importantly, trying to give them some techniques and confidence to be able to pass on what they already know to the junior members of their teams when they go back to their barracks.”

Daryl, a former (and built-like-a-brick-shithouse) American policeman now working as a contractor on the police side of the house at Camp Samawah tells me he



The Australian Army Training Team Iraq that recently returned home from Al Muthanna did an amazing and important job while deployed. Approximately 500 Australians rotated through AATTI over five years and in that time they trained more than 30,000 recruits for the new Iraqi Army – that’s about 5000 more than the whole of the Australian Regular Army!

WORDS AND PICS BRIAN HARTIGAN

AATTI DELIVERS LASTING LESSON



a set budget to pay a specific number of wages. By running shifts or reducing individual packages, a commander has some freedom to divvy this budget to suit his circumstances. In 10 Div, this translates to 30 per cent more soldiers on the books than expected – and they are all volunteer soldiers, keen to serve their country and earn a relatively decent and stable wage.

Lieutenant Colonel Hughes says his team got good proof of the training when 10 Div – which included a large number of Aussie-mentored former recruits – acquitted themselves well on security operations in the province.

“We have seen or heard about a couple of operations here in Al Muthanna and Dhi Qar where the Iraqi Army was very tractable, and those units definitely contained a good number of soldiers who we had trained or mentored here.

“And that was really good to hear.”

He said the Iraqis knew they were getting a superior training package from the Aussies and he knew the Aussies would be missed when they left.

“When the Iraqi soccer team beat Australia, that broke an unbelievable amount of ice between us. They had something to rib us about and they realised we could take it – and we like to give it out,” Lieutenant Colonel Hughes says.

is very impressed by the enthusiasm of the SWAT guys – especially when you realised what they’re up against.

“It hits you when, for example, you try to teach these guys to face an enemy threat square on so that they are presenting their body armour to the threat – and they reply, “we don’t have body armour””

Ali, a SWAT team member on the course, graduated from university as a lawyer but joined the police force as a way of doing something more constructive and more urgent for his country.

Thanks to his size (cam-patterned t-shirt in photos) and demeanor, Ali was immediately assigned to SWAT and has been on the job for just nine months, and is now a trainer of less experienced men!

“After this training I will go back to my unit and hopefully pass on what I have learned here,” Ali says.

“I would like to thank the Australian instructors who have come here to help us. They have done a very good job and we appreciate their help.

“But this is our country and it is our responsibility to go out there and do the best job we can for our country.

“I know this is a dangerous job, but I think it is very worthwhile.

“I think it is my duty to do something to help my country when it is in need and trying to rebuild.”

AATTI was closed down and brought home in June. Its training responsibilities at Camp Samawah assumed by the Americans.

BASIC TRAINING FOR IRAQI RECRUITS IS A FIVE-WEEK COURSE. AFTER THAT THEY RECEIVED COLLECTIVE TRAINING AT THEIR BATTALION BEFORE HEADING OUT ON LIVE OPERATIONS NOT LONG AFTER



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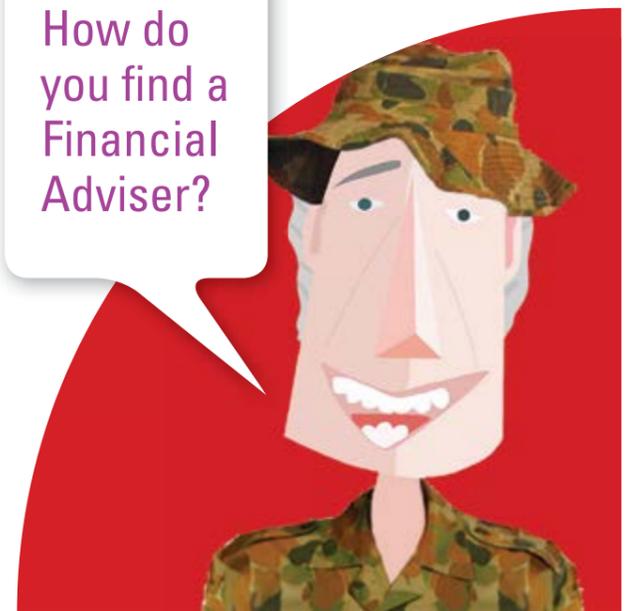
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DIESEL, DUST AND CAMEL DUNG

WORDS AJ SHINNER
PICS ADF AND SHINNER COLLECTION

I'm sure military historians could give you a list of firsts, as well as other interesting facts in regards to 1RAR's deployment to Somalia.

One of those facts is that, apart from one or two individuals higher up in the ranks, the battalion group had no combat experience whatsoever – something that, to my knowledge, had never happened before in the history of deployments made by the Infantry Corps. But don't be misled by this fact though – in late 1992 the 'Big Blue 1' was motivated, at the top of its game and ready to get dirty.

Like every infantry rifle platoon that had headed off into the unknown before them, call sign 3-2 had its healthy share of in-house issues.

Between the three sections and a dozen or so clikky groups, there were a number of egos, a few rivalries, a couple of feuds and roughly a million or so differing opinions on how to wage love and war. But, despite being asked by some to write more about the ins and outs of a rifle platoon on operations, I've decided that 3-2's dirty laundry will stay in the basket where it belongs. I believe that our minor squabbles pre-deployment and on the streets of Biadoc, pale into insignificance when constantly trying to deal with and understand the local population.

Using hindsight, and after recently contracting in Iraq, I've come to the conclusion that the Aussie Digger tends to be far better than most other modern nation's soldiers at empathising with local populations, understanding their individual joys, triumphs, tragedies and their general day-to-day struggle for survival.

Although, after saying that, there were a few occasions that had us all completely baffled as to what was brewing in some Somali heads.

I definitely inherited the collecting bug from my parents. No sooner had we filed off the 747 at Mogadishu than I was looking for things to scrounge, trade or liberate.

By the end of the first month in country I had already acquired a nice pile of booty. Several different-coloured shemaghs, Somali currency, a couple of locally made knives, a heap of American crap and a nice old AK47 bayonet were all sitting under my cot waiting to be shipped home.

But one thing that had eluded me to that point was the complete bandit garb.

This is not to say that all bandits got around looking the same but, generally speaking, they wore a camouflage shirt, an earthy-colour sarongy thingo or trousers, basic belt kit or AK chest rig and, finally, a pair of sandals made from old pieces of truck tyre.

At some time in the past, the Somali Armed Forces wore a specific camouflage pattern that resembled a type used by the Pakistanis and it was quite common to see it worn by local men in town.

One day, while doing next to nothing in an NGO (non-government organisation) compound in town, I cornered one of the security guards who spoke a bit of English and asked him if he could get me a set.

After about an hour of explanation, a few drawings and a lot of hand gesturing he assured me that for \$50 US he could run down to the markets and get a shirt and a pair of trousers in the described camo material and be back within the hour.

Unluckily for me, this was the most interesting thing that had happened on that particular day and, before long, a few of the guys were crowded around carrying on and calling me a fool as I grudgingly handed over the cash and the grinning guard walked out the gate with what for him would be about a year's wages.

Feeling a bit foolish and starting to think this wasn't such a good idea after all, I reassured myself that his AK was still leaning against the wall and that he had to return for it some time, didn't he?

Knowing 3-2 Bravo had the first night patrol that night we tried our best to chill out and take it easy.

While waiting for my new clobber to arrive, I joined in on a discussion Rock and Axle were trying to have with an older security guard. Having a bit of fun, Axle did the motions and asked why all Somalis fired their rifles off the hip and aimed too high.

The guard turned and said something to one of his colleagues and, together, they laughed. The guard got up, cleared his AK and then, through a small swirl of dust, executed the fastest and lowest leopard crawl over blue metal I have and probably will ever see.

Grinning, he then field-stripped and reassembled the weapon in record-breaking time without looking down at it.

Finally, aiming at a point on the far wall he carried out several flawless stoppage drills while keeping the barrel rock steady on the imagined target.

Ouch – humble pie tastes like shit.

After a nervous three hours of lecturing from the guys, as well as several debates on what the guard was spending my deployment allowance on, he sheepishly walked back in the gate with a newspaper-wrapped parcel in his hands.

As the boys gathered for the unveiling, I said a silent prayer and thanked God that my dignity was about to be restored.

With the roaring laughter filling my ears, I held up what could only be described as an XXL white puffy pirate shirt.

Red faced, I suppressed the rage and inspected the accompanying beige slacks that, together with the pirate shirt, could only be at home in a Darlinghurst night club or the Blue Oyster Bar.

Finally snapping, I hurled a stream of abuse and the clothing at the guard as the boys tried to catch their breaths from laughing so hard.

God only knows how he thought he was going to pull off this swiftie after he couldn't find the right items, but there was no way I was going to cop this.

Demanding my money back, I walked over to his AK, folded the stock and placed



Axle in the camel markets

orders at the truck wreck that day. I do remember that the wounded were tended to, both directions were covered by a machine gun and survivors were kept away from the deads' meagre belongings – but I can't remember the process that led to it.

The passengers that were originally seated on top of the rice, who weren't thrown clear or lying dead in the debris up the road, now lay entombed under the several tonnes of bagged rice and sugar in the cave that was the welded frame of the overturned truck.

Without being asked, Polly, Gus, Steve, Smurf, Lively, Jerry, Abs and myself took off our gear and started cleaning up.

In turns, we climbed through the framework and started clearing out bodies and bags, as diesel fuel ran down over us from the ruptured fuel tanks above.

body of a younger woman, her lungs became compressed and she let out a chilling moan, while another with a spring-loaded leg muscle kicked me in the stomach.

At the time I thought I was handling the situation quite well until me and Lively pulled away a bag of rice to find a pair of feet and hands sticking out of the pile. At first I thought it was two bodies lying top to tail until we dug deeper to find it was actually one body, backbone severed and folded back on itself the wrong way.

I can't remember what I was babbling about, but I guess I was saying it too fast and too loud.

"You OK?" I turned to see Steve looking at me with a concerned, puzzled look on his face.

"I'm good," I replied trying to sound convincing.

for the records, with a permanent marker by Steve.

As the sun started its run toward the horizon, the boss decided that, with our limited resources, there was nothing more we could do.

I remember someone trying to explain to the assembled crowd that the rice and sugar was now contaminated with diesel and should not be consumed.

After gearing up, I walked past the row of bodies and removed one of the number plates from the truck before climbing back into the cupola of our Mog.

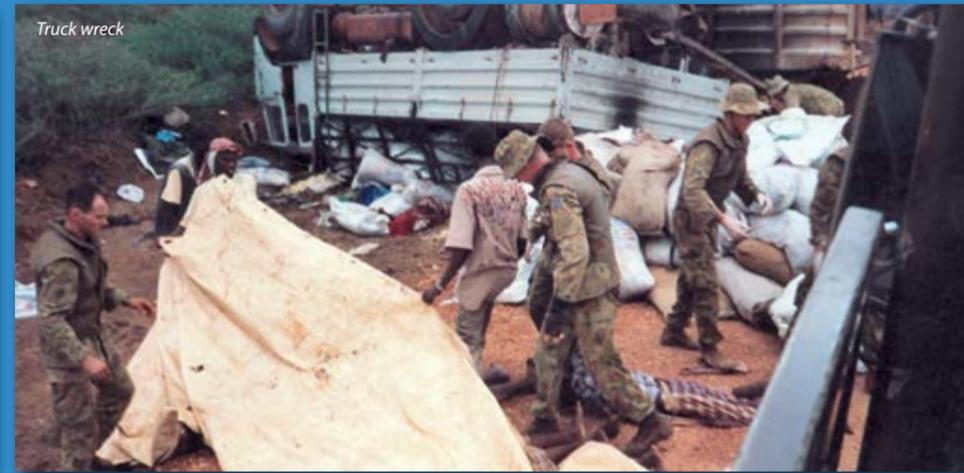
Surprisingly, I never picked up my camera once that day.

As we drove off, I looked back and watched as the crowd swarmed over the wreck to pick it clean of useful or valuable items. Yet, the line of bodies remained on the side of the road totally ignored.

Callsign 3-2 Bravo on a T34



Truck wreck



Truck wreck

it on the top of my pack. The only thing the boys needed to complete their day's entertainment were deck chairs and popcorn as I sat next to my gear and stated that the AK was now my property until the money was returned.

While the guard danced around screaming his head off, I did my best impersonation of a hard bastard by pulling out my field knife and, feigning boredom, tried to dislodge a piece of camel dung stuck in my boot tread.

Ten minutes after running out of the compound screaming obscenities in Arabic, the guard returned with the same crisp \$50 note.

From then on, in that particular compound, I received evil looks from the guards, so I always tried to keep a healthy distance between him and myself and, as always, slept with one eye open.

A couple of days later, our platoon was rotated back onto the warm-and-fuzzy role of food distribution and, thankfully, my

embarrassing run-in with the local security guard was forgotten by most.

As well as the traditional food-distribution tasks, we also conducted what we jokingly christened Tupperware drops, which was basically handing out pots, pans and other kitchen items to the sometimes baffled looks of the local populace.

It was returning home from one of these reasonably uneventful Tupperware drops in the north west that we came across what I've always simply dubbed 'the truck wreck', although, in my mind, the title never seems to do it justice.

The truck was a bit bigger than a Unimog and was pulling a trailer, both having a heavy-gauge steel frame welded to the sides and tailgates.

It appeared that one of the steering rods snapped after hitting a pot hole, causing the truck to flip over at high speed. Laying 90 per cent across the road, the truck now rested firmly upside down on its cab and steel-framed sides.

There was a fragmentation zone that fanned out 50 metres in front of the wreck that included bodies, personal items and bags of rice and sugar, which was the main cargo of the stricken vehicle.

Like all vehicles in the Third World travelling from point A to point B, the driver charges a small fee for travellers to climb aboard – and this one was no exception, with more than 50 people on board at the time of the crash.

The boss jumped out of the lead vehicle and headed up to check it out.

I watched from the cupola of our Mog as he walked up to the wreck and talked to a couple of Aussies working on some wounded next to another Mog already on the scene.

I would learn later that it was J Conway, Nalder and Eato who had found the wreck while moving to another task involving members of 3-2 Alfa.

I honestly don't remember our section commander, Mac or the boss giving

During the time it took to clear under the truck's chassis, we chatted, cracked jokes and tried our best to ignore the diesel fumes that fought to overpower the urine and excrement smell which marked the victims' last seconds of life.

As our ridiculously flimsy rubber gloves became ripped on sharp metal and compound fractures protruding from limbs, we simply pulled on other pairs. At the end of the day, I counted out loud as I pulled off six pairs of tattered gloves.

The effort we took with the gloves was futile, though – we all ended up saturated from head to toe in blood, human waste and diesel fuel.

Morbidly, we were all fascinated by the way the diesel had penetrated and reacted with the dead victims' skin. As we grabbed the limbs to free them from under the pile of bags, their dark layer of top skin would peel off in large sheets revealing the smoothest, bubble gum-pink surfaces.

When one of the guys tried to free the

To throw me even more, Major Mick Moon, our company commander, seemed to appear from nowhere and stuck his head in to see how we were doing.

Major Moon locked eyes with me. "You OK, Shinns?" he asked in a way that demanded a no-bullshit response. "I'm good sir" I replied, wondering how bad I really looked.

He chatted with us for several minutes, handed some bottles of water around and even helped clear out a few bags of rice, totally oblivious to the diesel dripping on his head and back.

Major Moon was a consummate soldier and, along with our boss, Lieutenant McGregor, was probably the only officer I truly liked, respected and trusted with my life.

In the end, two, small, wrapped bundles that were once healthy happy babies along with 21 adult men and women lay in a row beside the road under a sheet of plastic. All had been numbered,

During the whole afternoon, I never saw a single tear shed over the loss of a loved one or a friend.

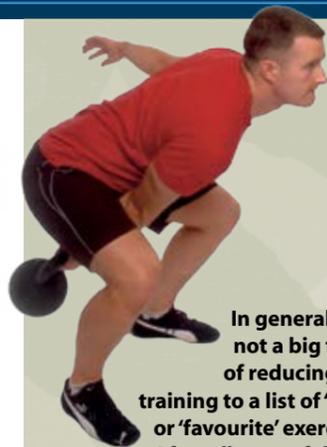
As a group, we had seen a lot of freaky stuff in Somalia. One day, while searching a village for weapons, we found a young girl shortly after her grandmother had botched her female circumcision. Her family unemotionally looked on as she slowly bled to death. Another day, a father eagerly negotiated his compensation as a son lay broken after an APC's track locked up and crushed him against a wall. Or, leaning against the side of an APC in the shade, eating lunch, and realising that the smell is not from our unwashed bodies but from the human remains now embedded in the APC's tracks as well as from the unmarked shallow graveyard we had unknowingly driven over.

There are simply too many bizarre things to list, even if I wanted to. But, for me, the truck wreck probably takes the prize. Until the day I die, the smell of diesel will give me the heebie jeebies.



The kettlebell Snatch

King of Combat Conditioning



In general, I'm not a big fan of reducing training to a list of 'best' or 'favourite' exercises. After all, part of the fun of working in strength and conditioning is the infinite variety of tools, exercises and programs that can be used to develop fitness. But, every time I run a kettlebell workshop, inevitably I'm asked about my favourite drills and programs.

What people really want to know when they ask this question is, what I think are the few key exercises they should be doing to get the maximum benefit out of kettlebell training with the least amount of wasted time.

It turns out that, for combat conditioning, the answer is pretty simple. I believe you can achieve a very high level of combat fitness even if you were to reduce your program to just three exercises – kettlebell

Turkish get-ups, pullups and kettlebell snatches. Turkish get-ups and pullups will cover your upper body and core strength and kettlebell snatches are easily one of the best drills for developing lower back and leg power, shoulder and grip strength and aerobic/anaerobic conditioning. In fact, I think kettlebell snatches are the king of combat conditioning exercises.

Kettlebell snatches make an excellent addition to any combat conditioning program because of their brutal difficulty and also because they are low impact compared to running, which makes them ideal for anyone recovering from shin splints or knee injuries.

In this article, I want to show you how to perform kettlebell snatches and also outline some short but brutal workouts you can add to your current program so you can reap the benefits of this awesome drill.

Performing the kettlebell snatch

The kettlebell snatch is essentially a one-arm swing to overhead, combined with a punch-through to get the kettlebell on the back of the wrist before you lock out. I suggest that you practice swings for a few sessions before attempting the snatch.

1. The key to performing snatches is to use the hips and legs to drive the weight up. Start by holding the kettlebell in one hand and push the hips back so that the kettlebell swings between the knees.
2. As the kettlebell swings back, it will load up the glutes and hamstrings. Drive the kettlebell up by snapping the hips forward and extending the legs fully.

3. Once the kettlebell is at about head height, pull the hand in slightly toward the shoulder. This will pull the kettlebell back toward you and allow you to get the hand back under the kettlebell before it gets overhead.
4. As the kettlebell continues to travel upward, punch the hand through under the ball of the kettlebell. If you time it right, the kettlebell will end up resting on the back of the forearm before your arm locks out and you will feel minimal impact on your wrist.
5. Lock out at the top by punching the hand toward the sky. This is critical for shoulder safety!
6. To reverse the movement, push the hips back slightly and push the hand forward. The kettlebell will automatically flip over the hand and swing back between the legs into the start position for the next rep.
7. Repeat steps two to six for sets of 10 to 20 reps each arm.

Tips for performing the Snatch

When performing the snatch, it is important to get into a rhythm. If the kettlebell flips over and hits your wrist you may need to punch through with more force and speed or you may be keeping your arm too straight during the initial swing. Practice with a light weight initially and work on getting the technique correct.

The momentum required for the weight to reach the overhead position comes primarily from the legs. The arm simply guides the kettlebell into position and stabilises it at the top.

Once you've mastered the snatch and can perform 10 good reps each arm, try adding the following mini workouts to your program. I promise that, despite being short, these workouts will lead to noticeable improvements in your fitness in just a few weeks.

Workout #1 – Density Snatches

The ultimate in simple but effective workouts. Pick a fixed time and perform as many snatches as possible in that period. Resting, hand changes and putting the kettlebell down are all permitted but quitting is not! I suggest starting with five minutes and adding time each workout until you reach 10 minutes, then try to complete more reps each time you perform this workout. Some numbers to aim for (men 24kg kettlebell, women 12kg) are, 10 minutes, 150 acceptable, 200 good, 230+ very good, 250+ world class.

Workout #2 – Tabatas

Perform as many snatches as you can for 20 seconds, rest for 10 seconds, switch arms and repeat for 8 intervals in total (4 minutes).

Workout #3 – High-rep Challenges

Pick a number – 100, 200, 500 or even 1000 reps (yes 1000!) – and aim to complete them all without putting the kettlebell down or resting, except in the overhead lockout position. The gold standard is 1000 reps with a 16kg kettlebell in less than 1 hour.

Want to know more about kettlebell training? Visit www.octogen.com.au and check out the "Kettlebell Power Secrets" DVD and Manual.

Evolution of Combative Behaviour



Aggression

The two basic forms of human combative behaviour are affective and predatory.

Affective combative behaviour is rooted in our evolution as a group-social animal. Affective aggression is displayed 'intra-species' – that is, within species.

Three components make up affective aggression – posture designed to intimidate, verbalisation and eye contact. This behaviour is associated with establishing dominance within the pack, tribe or group. This type of aggression is designed for self preservation of the group. The classic bar-room brawl commences with a lot of chest poking, verbalisation and eye contact. The participants usually puff out their chests and try to dominate through intimidating their opponents. This behaviour is similar to other species of animals fighting over a female.

Affective behaviour is linked with emotions and, usually, when two participate in this type of behaviour, an aroused response is achieved.

Predatory combative behaviour is rooted in our evolution as a hunting mammal.

Predatory aggression involves inter-group behaviour (predator versus prey) that is, the aggression displayed by hunting animals that stalk and kill prey. It's all about the efficiency of the kill. The predator does not communicate with the prey. There is minimal eye contact, no verbalisation and little posturing. Predatory aggression involves the use of a cool, calm mindset. Being a predator in today's society has negative connotations. Yet, having a predatory mindset – one that is cool and calm under pressure – is what we require of our soldiers. Training with weapons elicits a hunting/predatory mindset.

Vision

Interpersonal close combat makes full use of any available sensors to achieve success. A key sensor is vision. Vision enables the combatant to observe and interpret the situation that is unfolding, which will ultimately assist in the decision and action. Vision is used to gain information and communicate with other players.

The two types of vision we are interested in is ambient and focal. Ambient or peripheral vision is tied to balance, upright movement and gross motor skills. Focal vision is tied to hand and eye coordination and static posture, and is used when we have time and distance. It may result in 'tunnel vision'.

As combatants, there is a natural tendency to use ambient vision. This involves a softening of your eyes (relaxing your focus) to see the spread or scatter of the movement. This vision fits well with using gross motor skills such as elbow and knee strikes.

Combative Behaviour and Close Combat Training

Recently, the Australian Army Military Unarmed Combat Cell hosted Hunter Armstrong in an intensive course of combat mindset training. This article contains a summary of the theoretical concepts, themes and aspects of the training developed, with permission from Hunter Armstrong.

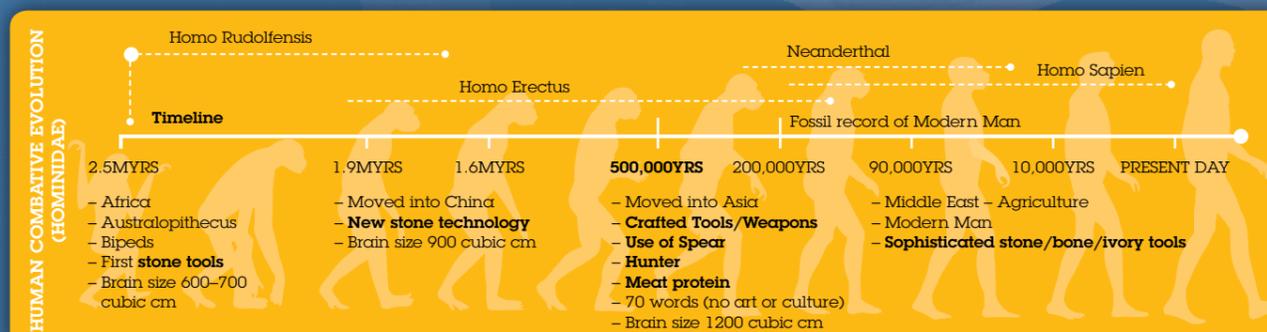
Hunter is a leading authority on the study of hopology. Hopology is the study of the evolution and development of human combative behaviour. Hunter provides this training for the United States Marine Corps, as part of their Marine Corps Martial Arts Program second- to fifth-degree black-belt training.

The Military Unarmed Combat Cell is intending to incorporate aspects of this training into their instructor development program as an advanced form of training.

Evolution – Use of Weapons or Tools

The foundation of human combative behaviour is rooted in our evolution.

The evolution of human combative behaviour is integral with the use of weapons. That is, behaviour and performance is intrinsically linked to and reflects the use of weapons. Human evolution has occurred over the last 2.5 million years, each advancement in species from primitive Australopithecus through to Neanderthal and modern man, homo sapiens, has seen increases in brain size and use of tools – from primitive stone flints to more advanced, sophisticated tools. Man's evolutionary distinguishing features that have enabled him to survive and dominate has been the use of the brain, tool-making capability and effective communication skills. Man is not the fastest animal, nor the strongest, yet is arguably the smartest and has built strategies and tools that have made him the most dominant animal. Man is one of the few animals to hunt and kill its own kind. Usually this trait does not benefit the long-term survival of a species!





on the MARCH

Last month I was approached by a unit commander who was looking to improve his personnel's ability to march over long distances. He had recently been given the responsibility of standing up a new Reserve SOF (Special Operations Force) unit, drawing on existing mechanised and motorised infantry units for prospective unit members.

During initial assessments, he identified a distinct weakness in candidates' ability to deal with the unique strains that forced marching with full kit places on a soldier's body. Many of his soldiers suffered from extreme fatigue in both the leg and lower back muscles, leading to considerable back pain.

An operational requirement of the new unit is that its members be able to force march distances greater than 30kms in BDUs, full load-bearing equipment (webbing), helmet and boots while carrying both their individual weapon and a pack weighing approximately 25kg.

Initially, the unit's PTIs made the common mistake of believing that the only way to get better at marching over long distances with weight was to ... 'march over long distances with weight'. As a result, a large percentage of the soldiers began suffering from over-training injuries and joint pain.

The program we devised for the unit had two specific goals – increased lower body muscular endurance and increased core and lower back strength.

Lower body muscular endurance

To reduce the risk of overtraining, we introduced the unit's trainers to the concept of pre-exhaustion. In simple terms, soldiers were put through a series of lower-body exercises, before heading out on a forced march of no more than 30 mins.

Pre-exhaustion workout

All exercises should be completed in full marching order, plus weapon. Using the



Tabata Protocol (as described in issue #17), soldiers will complete as many repetitions as possible in 20sec, then rest for 10sec. They will repeat each exercise eight times.

- Wide-leg squats
- Rifle dead-lift
- Step ups
- Step back lunges
- Box squats

As soon as the soldiers finish the last set of box squats, they commence marching.

The PTIs were also instructed to work in as many inclines into the march as possible, increasing the intensity, without adding to the duration.

Core conditioning

These exercises should be completed in PT gear. Again, the soldier will adhere to the Tabata Protocol.

- Wide knee crunches
- Dorsal raises
- Plank hold
- Table-top hold
- Military sit-ups

With the increased focus on urban warfare, many units discount the importance of preparing for the possibility of an extended endurance march. By integrating the described workouts as part of your unit's long-term PT program, your soldiers will always be ready for "Packs on. Move out."

Contact chief@tacticalconditioning.org for more info

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the Beersheba charger

BY WO1 DARRYL KELLY

PART ONE

In the frenzied patriotic fervour that greeted the outbreak of WWI, the cream of Australia's youth rushed the recruiting depots across the nation. In the Victorian city of Geelong, a fresh-faced 21-year-old engine driver with a distinct Irish accent took the oath to serve his adopted country. His name was Sloan Bolton, although he preferred to be known by his quirky nickname, 'Scotty'.¹

Allocated initially to the 14th Infantry Battalion, Scotty Bolton was sent to the vast training camp that sprawled like a small city over most of the Broadmeadows area. On their arrival, Scotty and the other new recruits were tasked to rig their tents. They were a bell-shaped design, meant to sleep four men, but to their amazement they were to be the sleeping quarters for 10 men.¹

Sleeping on the cold hard ground proved difficult for the recruits on their first night. Scotty was initially allocated to B Company, but the day after his arrival, he was, to his surprise, assigned to the military police (MPs). He was even more astounded to learn this posting was for 14 weeks.¹

The primary role of the MPs was to watch the hotels and discourage Diggers from becoming drunk. Secretly, Scotty would have preferred to be one of those being watched. He despised his role as a policeman and applied to return to B Company but it was too late as the battalion had a new commander.

In an adjacent camp, within sight of the infantry soldiers, were the light horse regiments. Scotty noted with deepening interest the cocky swagger of the troopers and the spit and polish of their leather as they rode their Walers over the grassy paddocks.²

Eventually, driven by envy and inspired by the sight that greeted him daily, Scotty applied for a transfer to the 4th Light Horse Regiment, which was designated as Divisional Cavalry.³ His request granted, Scotty became a member of a unit that saw itself as one of Victoria's finest.

Bolton soon received his first taste of the grand overseas adventure for which he had volunteered. The 4th Light Horse went into training in a makeshift camp spread across the shifting sands of Egypt, in the shadows of the pyramids.⁴ Here, the light horsemen

sharpened their skills and refined that fighting prowess later to make them famous. In their off-duty hours the troopers indulged in the sights, sounds and various forms of entertainment that nearby Cairo had to offer.

No sooner had the sands of Egypt acquired a familiar feel than there was a stirring within the Division. The camp was awash with rumours of impending action. Stores were packed, orders were despatched, the soldiers were on the move. Just as the excitement reached fever pitch, the troopers of the light horse were told they were to remain in Egypt. Their disappointment was tangible. Irritated by the jeers of the departing infantry, Scotty pondered his decision to transfer to the light horse – had he relinquished his only chance of taking part in this war?¹

But the infantry had not fared well at Gallipoli and urgent reinforcements were needed. The light horsemen were to get their chance, but as infantry – the horses were unsuited to the terrain of the Gallipoli Peninsula so would stay behind in Egypt.

The 4th Light Horse landed on Gallipoli in early June 1915 and the troopers quickly realised that they had arrived on Hell's doorstep. Scotty was to spend his first, but sleepless night at Gallipoli on the slopes of a place aptly named Dead Man's Valley.⁴

Disease was rife amid the squalor of the ANZAC trenches, with a large proportion of casualties the victims of dysentery and diarrhoea, rather than the bullets fired by Johnny Turk. Characteristically loath to report sick, many soldiers attempted to hide their illness, others had to accept that evacuation to a hospital was the grim eventuality.

The ANZAC Diggers firmly believed that leaving the line was akin to deserting their mates. Bolton, almost crippled by disease, fought on until late August when he could barely stand and eventually had

to be evacuated as far as the 2nd Australian General Hospital in Alexandria, Egypt. Two weeks later he was released from the hospital and sent to the reinforcement depot at Helouan on light duties.

The 4th left the peninsula on 11 December 1914. Back in Egypt, as they licked their wounds, the troopers faced the grim reality that 41 of their own lay beneath the rugged landscape of Gallipoli.

Trooper Bolton rejoined his regiment on 2 January 1916, but the reunion was short-lived as Scotty was again stricken with disease – on 6 January he was readmitted to the hospital with mumps.

In early 1916, the 4th Light Horse was split to serve on two fronts. Two squadrons were despatched to fight the Hun on the Western Front, while Scotty and the other troopers remained in the Middle East – convinced they were destined to be held perpetually in reserve or used to perform odd jobs at the whim of the British High Command.

Disease and sickness, particularly malaria, continued to spread through the light-horse ranks. Yet again, Scotty Bolton fell victim. On his release from the hospital, Scotty returned to find the Desert Mounted Corps had been engaged in successive, but unsuccessful, attacks on the Turkish bastion of Gaza. General Allenby, Commander-in-Chief of the forces in Palestine, now turned his attention to the nearby town of Beersheba.

The strategic value lay not only in its proximity to Gaza, but also in the huge wells within its precincts (water, as always, remained the currency of the Middle East. In the deserts of Palestine, wells were marked and valued in terms of the number of camels they could water. Some wells were marked as 100, some 1000, but the wells of Beersheba were marked as unlimited.)⁵

'Z' Day was scheduled for 31 October 1917. On the afternoon of the 28th, Bolton was among the crowds of troopers who stood

before the canvas water troughs, urging their mounts to drink. Their desperation was fuelled by uncertainty – the next source of water was by no means assured and might be more than a day's ride away.¹

The Commanding Officer of the 4th, Lieutenant Colonel 'Swagman Bill' Bouchier, screwed up his orders. Clutching the crumpled paper in his hand, he scowled at his officers. It seemed the 4th was designated reserve yet again.

In the cool, clear night, the lines of horsemen, four abreast, moved out. The snakelike column of regiment behind regiment extended for more than 16km.

They rode all that night and into the next day. When they finally came to a grinding halt, the engineers moved out to assemble the watering troughs. They stopped in their tracks as the order came to mount up again. The troopers' angst increased as they forced their thirsty horses on through the night.

Dawn on the morning of the 31st found them surveying a bare plain about 4km across. Beersheba glimmered, a veritable treasure trove, shining in the early morning sunlight. Like all hoards of riches, however, Beersheba was well guarded – two fortified hills, bristling with strongpoints, covered the approaches to the town.

Any attack against Beersheba was precluded by the dangerous necessity to secure these two hills. Tel el Saba would be attacked by the New Zealanders, while Tel el Sakati would be the 2nd Light Horse Brigade's objective. The remainder of the horsemen would have to sweat out the day in a dust-filled wadi beneath the blazing sun of Palestine.

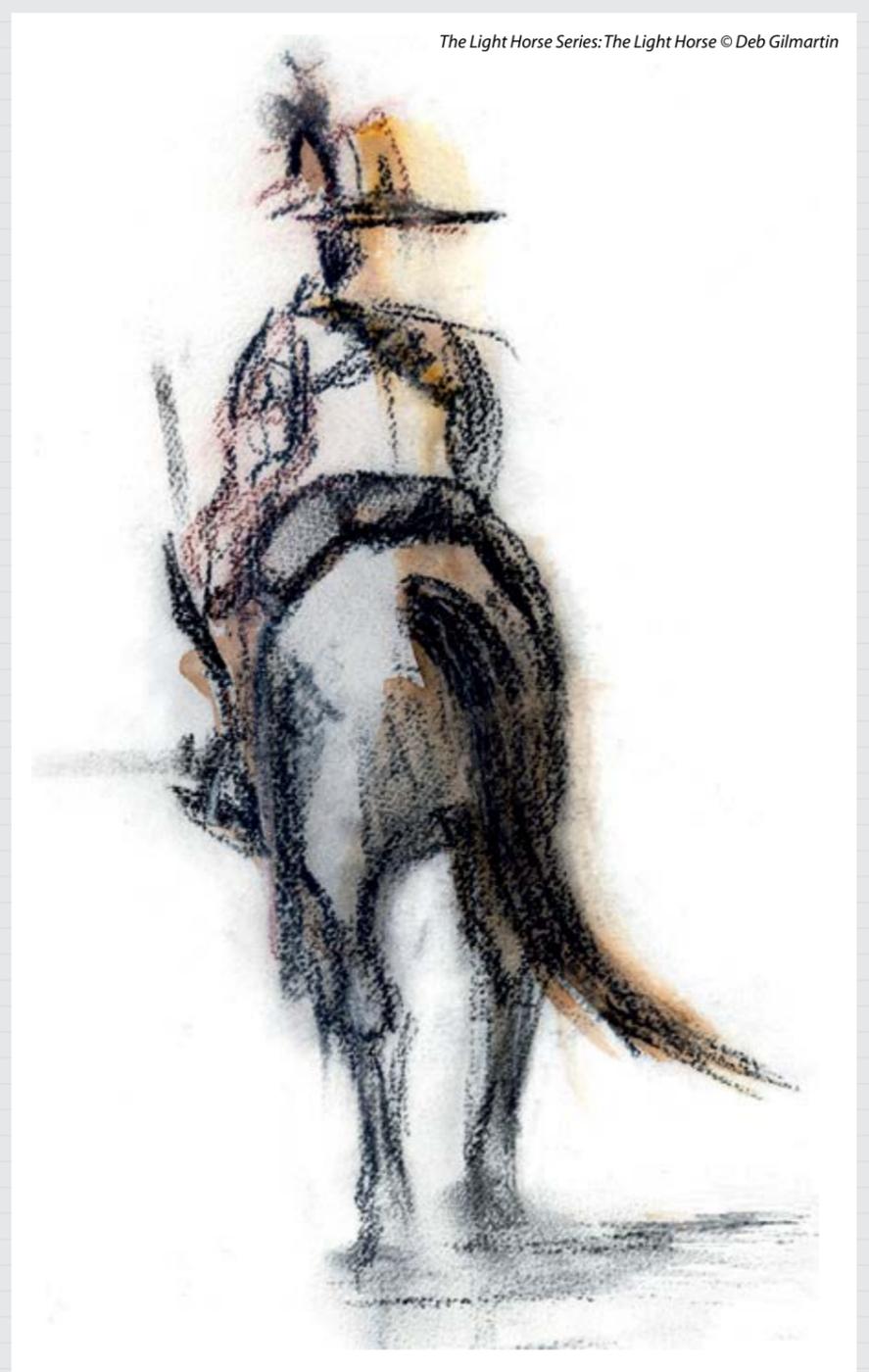
The battle for the guardian hills ebbed and flowed throughout the afternoon in a vicious cycle of hand-to-hand combat. By late afternoon, the entire plan hung precariously in the balance. If Beersheba could not be taken soon, the action would have to be abandoned. Some horses had been without water for more than 60 hours and it was 12 hours' ride to the next well capable of watering the force.

The commander of the Desert Mounted Corps, the legendary Lieutenant General Sir Harry Chauvel, assembled his commanders on the hill overlooking the stark plain. Together they dissected the situation, looking for answers. The commander of the 4th Light Horse Brigade, Brigadier William Grant, boldly proposed an audacious plan that boasted as its coup de main a massive cavalry charge. Two regiments, the 4th and the 12th would thunder across the plain and charge the city.

Chauvel pondered the situation for a moment. The time was now 4pm and the sun would set at 4.50. With a furrowed brow, he gave his assent.⁵

While Grant and his commanders looked for an area to form up for the charge, the regimental sergeant major galloped along the wadi calling his men to prepare for action.

The Light Horse Series: The Light Horse © Deb Gilmartin



Bolton tightened the girth on his horse, took a final gulp of water from his bottle and mounted.

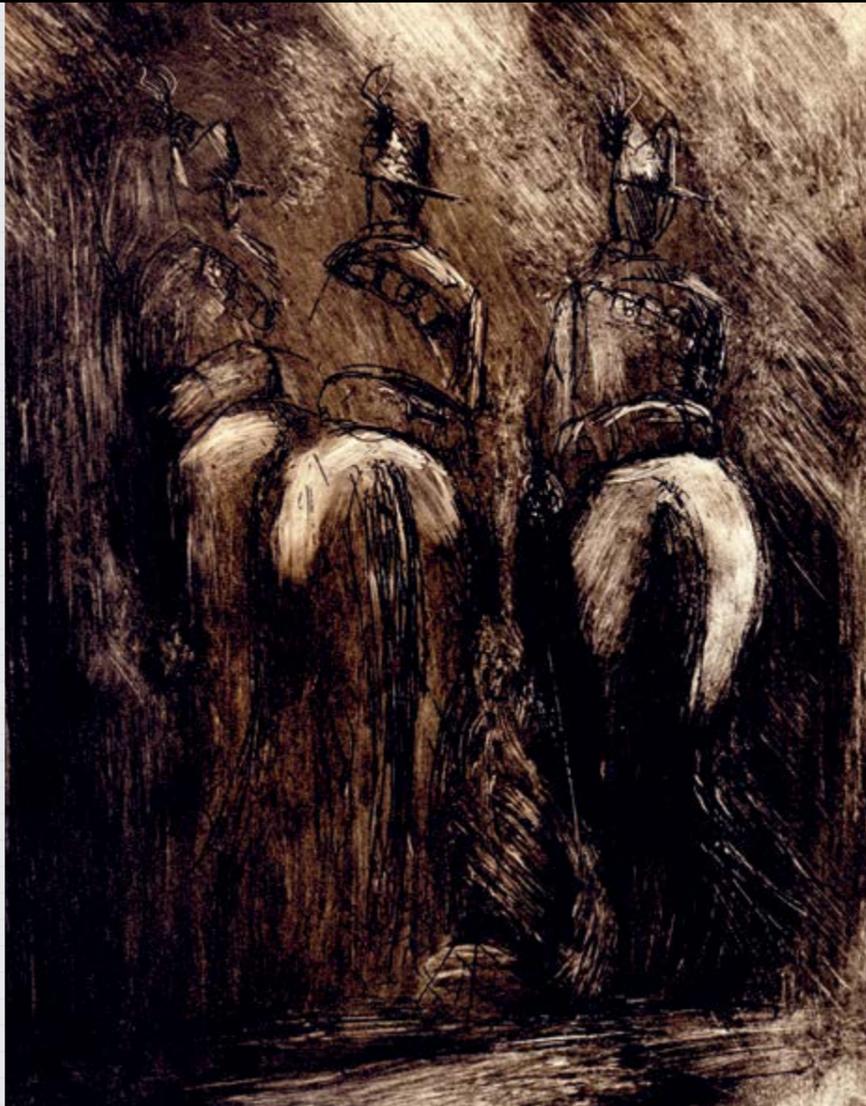
The regiments moved out into a patch of dead ground on the plain. With mounting astonishment mixed with feverish excitement, the troopers realised that they were about to attempt one of the great cavalry charges of modern times – an attack on Beersheba.

The 4th Light Horse formed up on the right, with the 12th on the left. The 11th was still attempting to reach the plain and would form the depth regiment, if it arrived in time. Bouchier would lead both regiments in this 11th-hour bid.

Facing the 800 horsemen were 4400 soldiers, supported by 28 field guns and a deadly mass of machine-guns.

Bouchier glanced at his watch – the time had come. He raised his arm above his head and waved it forward in one slow, deliberate motion. The horses stepped off. He gave the signal for the trot, then two minutes later, the canter.

In the presumed safety of their trenches, the German non-commissioned officers calmly gave their orders to the Turkish soldiers. Being familiar with the light-horse tactics, they ordered their soldiers to wait until the light horsemen dismounted, before opening fire.



At a distance of 2.5km from the forward trenches, Bouchier commanded his men to charge. The steady canter of the horsemen reached the crescendo of the gallop and, hooves thundering, they bore down mercilessly on their hapless foe in a deadly, destructive wave.

As the horsemen surged forward, the Turkish batteries opened fire with a mixture of shrapnel and high explosive. The projectiles burst among the forward ranks.

Men were blown from their saddles and some horses fell, but the charge did not falter. The Turkish gunners watched the charge, lowering the barrels of their guns, waiting for the dismount that never came. Suddenly the Light Horse regiments were below the trajectory of the guns.⁵

Pushing his Waler at full gallop, Trooper Bolton reached down and grasped the handle of his bayonet, extracting the 18-inch blade from its scabbard.¹

The Turks now set their rifle sights to a range of 1600 metres as the riflemen and machine-gunners readied themselves. The volley of lead cut through the lines of horsemen, but the thirsty horses could smell the water – there was no stopping them.

Bolton's horse, Monty, careered wildly and the trooper fought hard to regain control of his plunging beast. He was later to find that a bullet had narrowly missed his own leg, hitting instead the pannikin hanging from the saddle. This had deflected the round, carving a 12-inch gouge along the horse's rump.¹

The Turkish riflemen fired wildly at the approaching horde. At the sight of the rampaging Australians, some Turks threw down their weapons and ran towards the town, others chose to fight to the end. The defenders were ordered to save the guns and the Turkish horse teams galloped forward to salvage what they could.

The first wave of the light horse now reached the forward enemy line. As the horses leaped across the open trenches, many of the Turks crouched and thrust their rifles and bayonets upward to disembowel the horses in mid-flight. The remnants of the first wave carried on to engage the support trenches.

The scene had become a bloody shambles of rifle and revolver fire. The rip and slash of welded bayonets punctuated the air and

one horse was seen to join the fight, rearing and striking out with its fore-hooves.⁵

Scotty galloped through to the second line, attacking two Turks with his bayonet. As he rode towards the centre of town, he spotted a Turkish soldier running towards a house. Galloping over, Bolton kicked the Turk, forcing him to the ground, retrieving his revolver as his enemy lay dazed.¹

Elements of the 12th Light Horse were already weaving their way through the streets, and some were watering their horses in the captured wells. One trooper fell to his knees in a Turkish canvas water trough and drank side-by-side with his horse.⁵

Suddenly, a well exploded, then another and yet another, the last blast almost throwing Bolton from his horse. On the ground he noticed a number of wires leading to a building. Bolton peered through an open window and caught sight of a German officer operating a switchboard. He sprang from the saddle and burst through the door. The startled German tightened his grip on the detonation handle. Bolton cocked his revolver and put it to the German's forehead, overcoming the language barrier with one decisive stroke.

Bolton's mate, Trooper Ray Hudson, came through the door and took charge of the prisoner.¹ Although some wells had been destroyed and a few had been damaged, most were still intact, including reservoirs holding more than 400,000 litres.⁵

Darkness was now settling over the captured town. Scotty emerged from the building into the growing dusk and remounted. A sudden movement caught his eye and, turning in his saddle, he saw a Turkish field gun and its six-man detachment, led by a German officer, galloping away from the town.

Digging his spurs into the Waler's side, he set off in pursuit of the gun, calling for help from an Australian officer who was dismounted nearby. He rode up alongside the German officer and called for him to halt, but was ignored. Scotty took aim, pulled the trigger and heard the click of an empty chamber.

Part 2 in next issue (#20)

- 1 A Dream of the Past, Diary of Trooper Sloan Bolton DCM, privately printed by the family.
- 2 The 'Waler', the horse favoured by the light horsemen, was commonly used as a stock horse in NSW at the time. It was bred from a mixture of English thoroughbred, draught horse, Timor pony, Welsh pony and brumby and was noted for its incredible stamina and ability to survive long periods without water.
- 3 National Archives of Australia: B2455, WW1 Service Records, 858 Private Sloan Bolton.
- 4 AWM 8, Unit Embarkation Nominal Rolls, 4th Light Horse Regiment AIF, 1914-1918 War.
- 5 Jones I, The Australian Light Horse, Time-Life Books Australia in association with John Ferguson, Sydney, 1987.

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MASS EFFECT

EA (PC Version)

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If a game's ability to make it through the OFLC unscathed and be granted a rating (under Australia's arcane system that maxes out at MA15+) but still attract every ill-informed social-fabric commentator in the country to spit vitriol at game developers and cry "what about the children!" at the top of their voices, is a measure of success, then *Mass Effect* has enjoyed that success unlike any game in recent history. And, more importantly, unlike many of the games that come to the attention of Today Tonight in their vitally important role as guardians of all that is good, *Mass Effect* is actually good, bloody good in fact. It's even better than bloody good – it's excellent. Originally released on X360 last year, EA have worked their magic and created a PC version of *Mass Effect* that stays true to the console version that has seen gamers lose days as they become absolutely absorbed in the gaming universe.

A bloody big universe it is too. Playing *Mass Effect* is like smashing together all of the good bits of the *Star Wars* franchise, with all of the good bits of *Star Trek* and throwing in a bit of *Babylon 5* character interaction to blur the fault line in between. It is a sci-fi epic in its own right that not only plays out as you would expect from this genre, it draws the gamer in and makes them part of the whole universe. And, of course, the very thing that makes it such a good game, is the thing that has the moral crusaders up in arms. *Mass Effect* is, in essence, about choices. Players make the choice to become a certain type of character. They make the choice to react to situations

in certain ways, and they make the choice to learn more about the environment they are in. These choices, like life, are not simple black-and-white decisions. Everything in *Mass Effect* is 100 shades of grey and, as the player, you must decide – to borrow a George Lucasism – just how 'dark' you will let that grey get. One of the great moments in the game is based around a command decision in which you must decide which of your squad mates won't survive the mission in order that the rest of the team lives. To make it just that bit harder you can't sacrifice yourself. So, do you pick the token, hot, Marine chick on the team that your character is obviously attracted to or do you let an alien, possibly one of the last hopes for his species, take the hit? Likewise, do you get romantically engaged with a member of your squad? If they're human and the opposite sex? What if they're human and the same sex? What if they're not human at all? *Mass Effect* lets a player travel down all of these narrative paths while still saving the universe as we know it. *Mass Effect* truly is vintage sci-fi in a new interactive form.

Those who have played Bioware's previous epics, the *Knights of the Old Republic* or *Jade Empire* will be immediately familiar with the overall style and tone of the game. At the same time, they will be absolutely enthralled with the new real-time combat interface and the level of detail that has gone into character development, voice acting and scripts. *Mass Effect* even includes Seth Green as the actor for one of the key characters in the game. But, like all titles in this genre, adventure is only as good as the story supporting it. The *Mass Effect* team have created a game around a narrative, rather than trying to fit a



narrative to a game, and the result really shines through.

Drew Karpysyn, an author of several successful sci-fi novels, is the guy behind the *Mass Effect* storyline. His vision, coupled with the creative excellence of the Bioware team, has delivered a game that is nothing short of brilliant. In my first run, my total game time was well in excess of 30 hours. In my second I'm up to twenty already and I'm still finding things I can't remember from last time. The options (there's those choices again) means that no two experiences with this game will ever be totally alike and with the choice of character classes available and the constant decision as to which shade of grey you will head for, a player could quite easily play through *Mass Effect* more than 10 times and still have a different experience. Bioware also recently released some new

downloadable content, adding another system to explore and more missions to undertake.

For fans of sci-fi, *Mass Effect* is a must. Those who are indifferent to the genre should still take up the challenge just to see a combat-orientated adventure game done extremely well.

Score: 5/5

P.S. For those who don't know, and remain intrigued, the Reverend Niles' of this world got all hot under the collar about a game that would let a relationship develop through meaningful dialogue, interaction and shared experiences. Who would've thought adults would do such a thing and then dare to seal the deal by, as they say in the G-rated programs, 'make love'? I nearly went blind! Oh hang on it wasn't blindness. It was the blurry pixels.

BATTLEFIELD: BAD COMPANY

EA

<http://badcompany.ea.com/>

PS3 - Xbox 360

There's something strangely therapeutic about knocking over trees with a sustained burst of .50cal, or removing the façade of a multi-storey building, section-by-section, with well lobbed 40mm grenades. Now don't get all greeny on me – it's only a virtual affliction I have and in no way am I condoning mowing down the tea trees next time you're in Shoalwater Bay (well OK – maybe I am just a little). Anyway, EA's latest title in the phenomenally successful *Battlefield* franchise has followed its major rival, *Call of Duty*, into the current age. Gamers of some note out there are now throwing their hands in the air and shouting "sir, sir, SIR!" (say it with a lisp – fits the moment better) at this point to remind me of *Battlefield: Modern Combat*. On X360 at least, we'll just pretend that one didn't happen and move along – nothing to see here.

Battlefield: Bad Company blends explosions with humour in a game that is heavily influenced by cinema classics *Three Kings* and *The Dirty Dozen* and, to my mind at least, could even hold Sven Hassel up as an inspiration. The storyline is simple, if somewhat farcical. Four US Army soldiers save the world by blowing stuff up, killing lots of the enemy and, conveniently, attempt to get rich in the process. The title might give it away a little but, *Bad Company* is not your average US Army Infantry Company. It's also not your standard fare [insert generic special-forces unit title here]



highly trained killer unit that seems to dominate games these days. *Bad Company* is a home for the expendables – those soldiers not worth shipping to Leavenworth when the world is on the brink. And because they're expendable, they get to do everything. First. Without support. Or else.

Despite the clichéd premise it's actually pretty cleverly done, and the team have obviously worked hard to ensure the humour fits both the characters and the environment portrayed in the game. This is good, because in reality, when you get tired of landscaping, the humour is about the only thing to make *Battlefield: Bad Company* really stand out from its rivals. It has all the elements of a successful, main-stream, squad-based shooter. Cool guns. Lots of things to blow up. Challenging enemy. Immersive environments. Squad mates who don't actually contribute much and never die. Yep, it's all there in spades and, unlike the game everyone is comparing it to – *Call of Duty 4* – in the end, while satisfying, it's not that memorable. In fact the most memorable scene for me was watching one of my squad mates wet-willy the other while orders came though on

the radio. Admittedly, the scene resonated as one of those stupid things that soldiers through the decades have done (sort of like testing to see what you can feel while wearing a helmet) and probably wouldn't get the same response from a civilian, but it does highlight that despite all the technical wizardry of the highly destructible gaming environment, *Battlefield: Bad Company* just doesn't have the impact of some other recent titles.

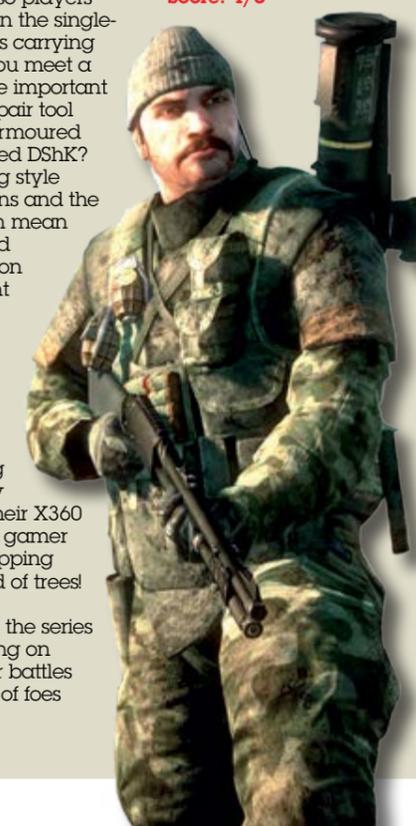
Having said that, there are some innovations in *Battlefield: Bad Company* that I'd love to see in other titles. Your character in this game is not a pack mule and can pretty much carry one weapon and limited ammo. It means scrounging and swapping for the weapons of your dead foe becomes a major part of the gameplay. Likewise, only one specialist item can be carried at any one time, so players need to prioritise in the single-play campaign. Is carrying an RPG in case you meet a surprise BMP more important than a vehicle repair tool to maintain the armoured car with a mounted DShK? A gamers' playing style drives these options and the wrong choice can mean a quick death and restart. The focus on finding equipment has also resulted in *Battlefield: Bad Company* becoming the latest 'achievement-whore' title with gamers searching for each and every gamer point for their X360 profile. I even got gamer points just for chopping down a shed-load of trees!

Battlefield: Bad Company follows the series tradition of focusing on mass multi-player battles against a variety of foes

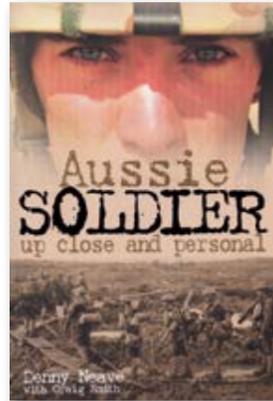
but has successfully managed to port the free-spawning, large-map environment into a credible, single-player, campaign – something significantly lacking in *Battlefield: 2142*. Online, it is the normal large-scale hoot with multiple deaths and respawns before the map is won and you're moving on to the next battle wondering what just happened. Clans haven't really kicked in yet, so any semblance of teamwork is yet to be found, but, over time, this is likely to emerge as the *Battlefield* online armies move into in the modern era.

I liked it. *Battlefield: Bad Company* appealed to my sense of humour and of course, I knew what I was getting into. It doesn't try to be a *Call of Duty* and nor should it. But, it does succeed in being the next *Battlefield*.

Score: 4/5



BOOK REVIEWS



AUSSIE SOLDIER: UP CLOSE AND PERSONAL

Denny Neave with Craig Smith
330 pages, illustrated throughout
www.aussiesoldier.com.au
RRP \$34.95

Compassion, mateship, courage, initiative, loyalty, integrity and trust are the core values that bind the Australian Defence Force and many other organisations together. But when your very life depends on these values, not only in yourself, but in everyone else around you, then they take on a whole new level of importance.

As such, they are all dealt with individually and in depth in *Aussie Soldier: Up Close And Personal* – a magnificent and insightful read.

These headings, as well as 'the larrikin', 'doing it tough', 'close calls in battle' and a few others form the chapter headings in this well-conceived book that looks into the heart and soul of what it is to be a soldier generally, but an 'Aussie Digger' specifically.

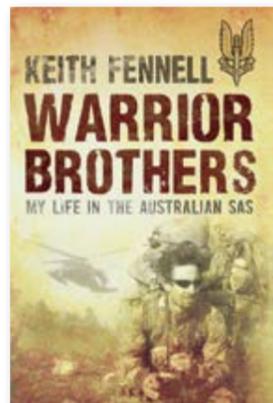
Drawn together mainly from extracts of personal letters, diaries and anecdotes, each chapter explores its heading through the personal experiences of Aussie soldiers over the past century. What struck me most when reading each chapter was the fact that, if you read each extract through to the end without scanning down to see who wrote it or what period it was written in, it was often difficult to guess – thus attesting to the endurance of these values throughout every generation of Aussie soldiering.

I found *Aussie Soldier: Up Close And Personal* a

thoroughly enjoyable read with just a couple of minor criticisms to level at it. First, the use of 'pull quotes' – (sometimes not so) short, attention-grabbing extracts from the text, reproduced in a standout font, designed to add interest – were way over done. With sometimes up to three of these pull-quotes to an opening, and sometimes placed on a page removed from the source, they quickly became an annoyance, and went unread. I figured I wouldn't miss anything by skipping over them, since they were extracts from the text anyway – until very near the end I found a couple of long spiels in the same style that weren't replicated in the text.

My second minor criticism is that the final chapter, synopsising all the battles dealt with in the book, would have served far greater purpose up front, contextualising what was to come. Instead it felt more like a space filler than a useful guide.

These (I stress again, minor) criticisms aside, I loved this book and unreservedly recommend it for anyone seeking an insight into the personality of the Aussie soldier – modern or otherwise, they are all the same.



WARRIOR BROTHERS: MY LIFE IN THE AUSTRALIAN SAS

Keith Fennell
335 pages, 36 photos
www.randomhouse.com.au
RRP \$34.95

Keith Fennell is someone you won't have heard of before, unless you circulate in the secretive circles surrounding Australia's Special Air Service Regiment.

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Who better to ask than someone who has been there and done that and is not embittered – but radically changed – by the experience.

In 1995, aged 21, Keith Fennell was already sick of changing oil in his father's garage and decided he needed a challenge. He joined the Army and, before even completing recruit training, had his heart set on the ultimate challenge of all – being a trooper in the most revered, respected and selective regiment in the Australian Army.

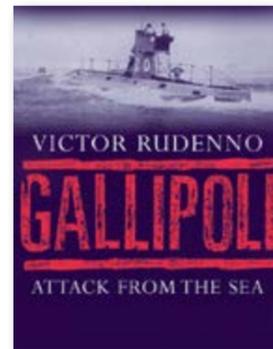
Over the next 11 years, he saw action in East Timor, Afghanistan, Iraq and on the high seas. His missions forced him to stare death in the face – to kill or be killed. What he saw, did and learned along the way changed him forever. Reflecting on his first kill, Fennell writes, "I would love to hate him. This might relieve the sickening feeling that envelops my stomach when I think about the incident in detail. But I don't. Nor can I respect the mayhem that he might have been part of. I do, however, respect the fact that he had the courage to come after us. Unlike dated World War II films, where enemy soldiers are depicted as faceless automatons, these men, just like us, had lived, laughed and cried. They were human. I wasn't the victor in this battle. There is no gloating or glory. I just get the chance to keep on living".

Keith Fennell has retired from the Regiment and the Army and lives a quiet life with his wife and kids on the NSW south coast. But switching off from his old life has not been easy. Nightmares aside, "making a smooth transition from a life of adrenaline-charged experiences as an Australian SAS soldier to one of a civilian is near impossible. The thirst for that moment of heightened senses, of racing pulse – caught in the moment, your entire body stretched tight with effort and adrenaline – leaves an indelible mark on

your soul and psyche. Getting into the SAS was tough, but that was nothing compared to saying goodbye".

Getting permission from 'the system' to publish this book does not seem to have detracted from the openness and honesty of Fennell's narrative. This is as powerful and addictive as it is a rare insider's look at life as an SAS trooper.

I'm not a big reader (I don't have time), but this has got to be one of my favourite books ever.



GALLIPOLI: ATTACK FROM THE SEA

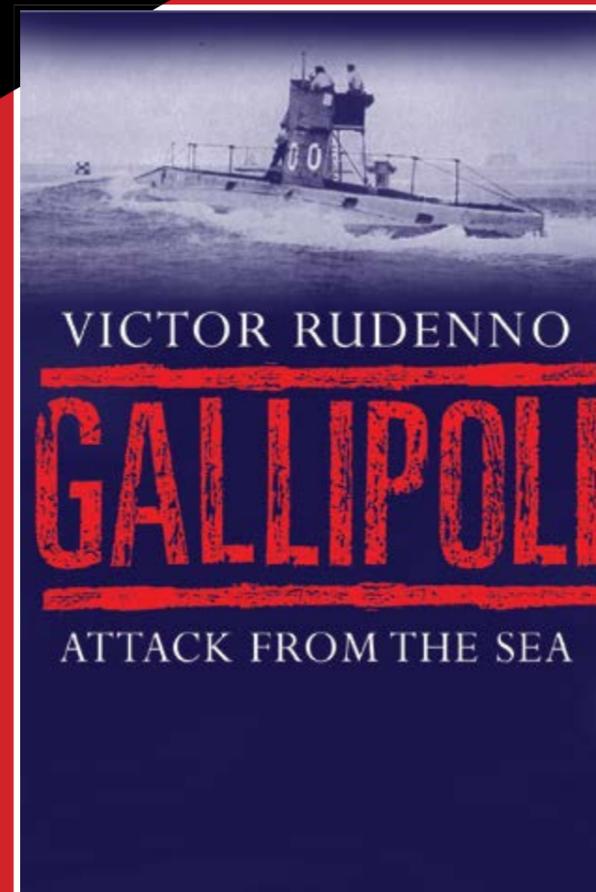
Victor Rudenno
316 pages, maps, tables
www.unswpress.com.au
RRP \$44.95

Gallipoli is a name and an event in Australian history that continues to seize imaginations today. Of particular fascination, and until now largely overlooked in historical accounts, are the naval dimensions of the campaign.

This book seeks to provide a comprehensive account of the complete Allied submarine and related German U-boat activity, integrated with a thorough analysis of the strategies and actions of all land, sea and air forces.

Incorporating patrol and technical reports and personal testimonies, Victor Rudenno's narrative tackles some of the lesser-known, dramatic and inspirational battles in the Dardanelles.

I confess I haven't actually read this book, but, a quick flick through it suggests it is an academic work of considerable depth that should delight the naval-history fan as well as those who want to broaden their knowledge and understanding of Australia's 'baptism by fire'.



The Gallipoli campaign of 1914–15 is one of the events of the First World War that continues to seize imaginations today. Of particular fascination, and until now largely overlooked in historical accounts, are the naval dimensions of the campaign. This absorbing book provides the only account of the complete Allied submarine and related German U-boat activity, integrated with a thorough analysis of the strategies and actions of all land, sea, and air forces. Incorporating patrol and technical reports and personal testimonies, Victor Rudenno's gripping narrative does full justice to the dramatic and inspirational battles in the Dardanelles.

GALLIPOLI: ATTACK FROM THE SEA
Victor Rudenno

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more than TAKING the HEAT

There is one job like no other, a job requiring employees to be educators, counsellors, safety advisers, community workers, public speakers and instructors as well as rescuers.

The job is tough – the job is being a firefighter.

The responsibilities of firefighters are diverse – firefighters don't just fight fires.

A main emphasis of the job is fire prevention.

In addition, firefighters conduct rescue operations including those associated with motor vehicle accidents.

Disaster response is also an integral part of the job.

Furthermore, firefighters are required to undertake ongoing training, skill maintenance and study towards career progression.



as a sure-FIRE career SAVING lives

Since joining the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service in January 1999, Firefighter Jodie Lynch has experienced more in her career than most people experience in their entire lifetime.

But as tough as Jodie's job can be, she says if she'd known how rewarding being a firefighter is, she would have joined much sooner."

But as tough as Jodie's job can be, she says if she'd known how rewarding being a firefighter is, she would have joined the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service much sooner.

"No situation is ever the same, which is exciting as well as challenging," says Jodie.

"The diversity of the job is fantastic. The job ranges from teaching kids about safety to cutting people out of motor vehicles when there has been an accident.

"The ongoing training and the opportunity for career promotions are also good."

Jodie says she enjoys being a part of a team and putting in the hard yards.

"When I first started out I was like a wound up spring.

"They said my eyes were like dinner plates when I was called out to my first incident."

Even though being a fire can be thrilling, Jodie stresses there are downsides to her job.

"Seeing people lose everything they own in a house fire is hard.

"There are also some really dreadful accidents.

"You just have to remember that you are there to help."



CONTINUOUS recruiting
T 131 304 www.fire.qld.gov.au

initial requirements FOR application

Before an applicant can apply for a position as a firefighter with Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, the following requirements must be met and evidence provided:

- > One year C class manual driver's licence or manual Medium Rigid Vehicle (MRV) licence;
- > Australian resident status;
- > Current Senior First Aid Certificate;
- > Successful completion of year 12 or year 12 equivalent; and
- > Minimum two years full time general work history or equivalent.

Once an initial application has been accepted, applicants are asked to undertake a number of assessments – Aptitude Assessment, Characteristics Assessment, Fitness Assessment and Physical Assessment.

In the final stage of the recruitment process, applicants must provide evidence of the following:

- > Current Advance Resuscitation Certificate;
- > Current Manual Medium Rigid Vehicle (MRV) licence; and
- > Final medical assessment.

For a full explanation of the requirements visit www.fire.qld.gov.au/employment.



firefighter application PROCESS

Step 1 The applicant obtains an Information Kit from www.fire.qld.gov.au/employment or by contacting ph: 131 304 .

Step 2 The applicant completes and submits the application form with all required certified documents.

Step 3 A letter is sent to the applicant advising that their application has been accepted. The letter includes assessment information and dates.

Step 4 Assessments are completed in any order that is convenient. The applicant receives a letter advising of their progress after each assessment.

Step 5 As vacancies occur, the applicant's entire application is reviewed for shortlisting.

Step 6 Shortlisted applicants attend interviews and medical assessments.

Step 7 The most suitable applicants are chosen for further consideration and final checks are undertaken. Applicants also participate in a Clinical Psychological Assessment.

Step 8 QFRS undertakes final checks – Criminal History Check, confirmation of current Senior First Aid Certificate, certified copy of current manual MRV licence, certified copy of current Advanced Resuscitation Certificate and approval of Clinical Psychological Assessment results.

Step 9 Successful applicants receive a Letter of Appointment.

Step 10 Applicants commence employment with QFRS and begin recruit training.

For information regarding firefighter recruitment phone 131 304 or visit www.fire.qld.gov.au/employment.



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