

ISSUE 51

COMBAT



AIR LAND & SEA

SEPTEMBER 2016

THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

OPERATION
TIMBER
TRAC

PAGE 40



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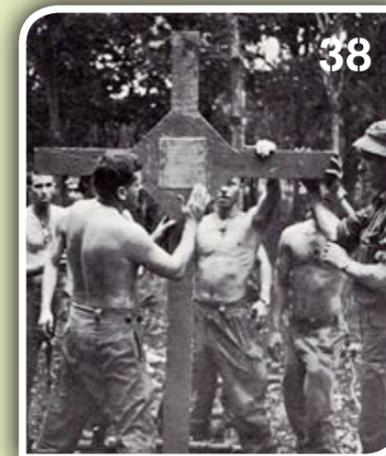
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EDITORIAL

Issue 51 – September 2016

CONTACT

AIR, LAND & SEA



RIMPAC



Cover photo by
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Story page 40

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appropriate.

You may have noticed that the CONTACT web site and Facebook pages have been relatively quiet this past month. That's because I'm on holidays in Ireland – having a fabulous time – and thought my spare hours were better spent keeping standards up in this magazine rather than on the web site. I hope you agree?

As an Irishman, a soldier and a reporter, I was fascinated and moved, in a surreal kind of way, to visit Northern Ireland and particularly Belfast for the very first time, on this holiday.

As a young man, when I was still living in Ireland, I never visited 'The North' – not because of 'The Troubles' or anything like that – more because when my family did go on holidays, we rarely toured our own back yard. I remember visiting The Somme and Ypres when I was a young teen and, while my Dad's stories of the slaughter that happened there are still in my head, they didn't have as much meaning for me then as they surely do today.

As I got older and became an Australian, 'going home' to Ireland was a family duty, with very little time for any more than just local tourism (of which there is plenty anyway). And with two families to visit (and dividing our time very diplomatically between them, unless we went separately, which Rosie and I have done several times), there was no time or excuse to go 'all the way up North'.

Of course, as a soldier in the Australian Army, I wasn't allowed north of the border anyway, for security reasons – because of 'The Troubles'.

But this year I'm older, wiser and celebrating the 25th anniversary of my marriage to Rosie – so I go wherever she wants to go, and she wants to go north to tick a couple of places off her bucket list. And I can now sincerely attest that The Giants Causeway, The Dark Hedges, Ballintoy Harbour (the latter two featured in Game of Thrones), Dunluce Castle and the Antrim coast generally are very worthy bucket-listers.

Semi-retired from the Army now, I didn't ask for permission to travel to 'The North' this year. There are no 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland now, so going there is no different to visiting England or France or Fiji or Bali.

However, there's no border when you drive from the Republic of Ireland to Northern Ireland – not even a marker. But there was no doubt we had entered a 'foreign country'. Speed limits were suddenly posted in miles-per-hour instead of kilometers – and Union Jacks, Red Hand of Ulster and Tri-Colour flags competed for prominence/dominance in a very surreal/curious way.

So, much the tourists, we even did an open-topped hop-on-hop-off bus tour of Belfast, which was fascinating – not just to visit the placenames I had heard of and seen on the telly for most of my younger years – The Falls Rd, The Shankill, The Bogside – but to listen to the tour guide point out this and that item of significance without emotion or bias, in language you'd expect to hear on any other 'battlefield tour' – combatants, non-combatants, fell in conflict, memorial to the fallen and so on. Except, on this 'battlefield' there are memorials of equal stature and reverence to both sides.

And, quintessentially Irish, the tour ended with the pronouncement, "there's no tips required or expected, but if you would like to show your appreciation, all donations will go towards the greater advancement of Mr Arthur Guinness, after 6pm this evening".

Sincerely,

Brian Hartigan
Managing Editor

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INCOMING

BROUGHT THEM HOME

Have you got a list of the 33 they brought home from Malaysia recently?

I compiled a booklet on the 500 Australians who died in Vietnam and I want to update it before the next print. Thanks

Ian A, via email

Hi Ian. Below is a list of Australian servicemen who were finally brought home from the Vietnam War on 2 June 2016.

But, please note....

- 521 Australians were killed or died because of their service in the Vietnam War
- bringthemhome.org.au listed 25 Vietnam War casualties as being interred overseas
- of the 33 bodies brought home in June, only 25 were service members
- and only 22 of those were Vietnam War casualties (*the three marked** in the list below were not killed in the Vietnam War)
- three soldiers who were casualties of the Vietnam War – Private Dal Abbot, Major Peter Badcoe VC and Gunner Thomas Simpson – were not brought home because their families said no to the government's offer.

Servicemen brought home 2 June 2016:

Private Norman George Allen
Private Gary Alan Archer
Lieutenant Robert Graham Birse
Corporal Robert Walker Bowtell
*Lieutenant David John Brian**
Sergeant Ronald Thomas Carroll
Private Thomas William Checkley
Private Christopher Clark
Warrant Officer Class Two Kevin George Conway
Private Ronald Eric Field
Warrant Officer Class Two John Garrigan
Warrant Officer Class Two Max Powell Hanley MM
Corporal Reginald Hedley Hillier
Trooper Tony Holland
Private Neville Wayne Horne
Second Lieutenant Alan Douglas Jellie
*Signalman Kenneth Charles Johnson**
Warrant Officer Class Two Ronald Victor Lees
Corporal John Gregory Stinson Pearce
Warrant Officer Class Two Thomas Dudley Phillips
Lance Corporal Thomas Ross
Lance Corporal Arthur Rudus
Corporal Francis John Smith
*Signalman John Darrell Tassell**
Private Mervyn Arthur Frederick Wilson

HAPPY 50TH

Since subscribing to CONTACT, you have been supplying me with very interesting military items. I used to buy ARMY magazine when it was available. It was good, but your CONTACT leaves it in the past (where it is!). Keep up the good work.

John, via email

Congratulations on achieving the Big 50! As always, a good read this morning. And thanks also for the great AAFC story in Cadet Corner. It's much appreciated.

Roger, via email

I love contact magazine mate. I share it with my son who is a RAAF Cadet. Keep up the good work.

Craig, via txt

A beaut read. Fond memories of other defence publications. Congrats on your 50th.

Greg, via email

MIXED FEELINGS

I have just returned from a week in Ireland where I experienced very mixed feelings as both an Irishman and an Australian.

My mother's family were very Irish in her father's and mother's line. I was brought up with many Irish beliefs and sayings.

That aside my personal feelings are that the 1916 uprising was a massive stab in the back to all the combatant nations and peoples involved in the First World War. The timing of the uprising, with much of the world (including Irish Australians) engaged in a life-and-death struggle was strategic and pig-headed in many ways.

In these circumstances, celebrating the rebellion is something my Irish side is not proud of.

Regards, Steve, via email

Loved your piece on the Easter Rebellion and impressed that you have your grandfather's medals.

It will be interesting to see the response from the ASOD brigade on your uniform piece.

Great work.

Regards, Maggie, via email

TARGETS UP!

This page is a great outlet for fans to vent or to praise. Please, let us know what you think of our magazines and Internet sites so we can deliver more of what you want. Feel free to write to editor@militarycontact.com about CONTACT or on any military topic – Ed

The Osprey has landed



A United States Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey lands on HMAS Canberra off Hawaii during Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2016.

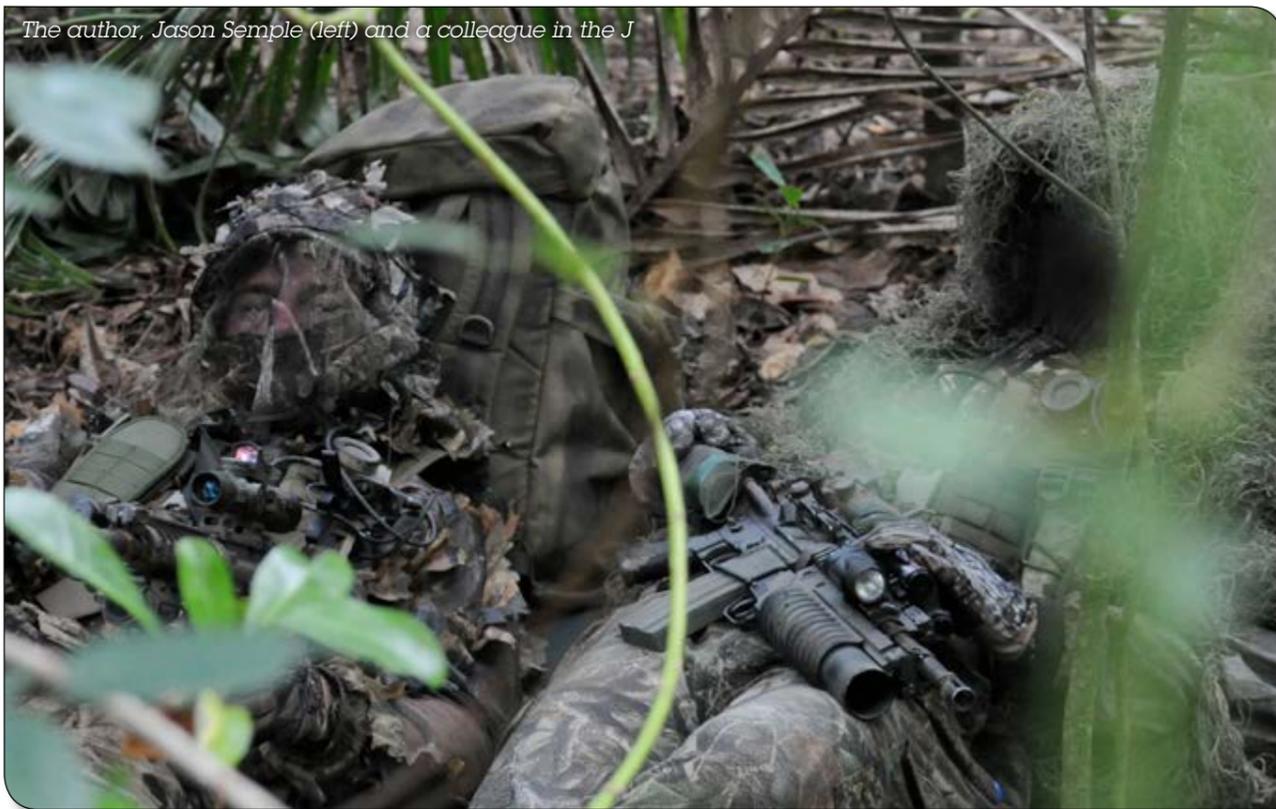
THE INNER SANCTUM

AN AUSTRALIAN POLICE SNIPER

BY JASON SEMPLE

JUNGLE THERAPY

The author, Jason Semple (left) and a colleague in the J



The author, Jason Semple (second from right) with colleagues in the Solomon Islands

I woke from sleep, if you want to call it sleep. I'm not sure how long it was since I had drifted off but rest assured there were no deep REM levels reached. Mosquitos were in the process of running their own AC/DC concert equivalent in and around my ears – the noise only abating when they stopped to suck blood. A few fire ants have taken the opportunity to bite me around my neck and near my armpit. Those little bastards can find their way through any clothing and they are potent with their stings, which stay with you long after you are back at base.

Its 1300 and the air is so dense with humidity that you feel like you're slowly drowning in it. The heat is relentless and your body in a constant flux trying to moderate your core temperature.

It had rained heavily a few hours before and, because of the jungle canopy where we had set up our LUP (lie-up point), I did not feel the potential relief of a single drop of H₂O. There was no direct sun in our position of course. I think this was the only positive that could be extracted from where the four of us lay.

I had a trusted stinky mini bed roll that I used to create a minute level of comfort for about 10% of my 112kg. The rest of me lay in direct contact with the jungle floor.

The area we were laying up in was very close to our target observation location and there were intermittent human movements near us. We chose our LUP wisely to ensure our position was avoided by all but the insects.

There is only so much you can do to create personal comfort in a tactical situation and

unfortunately there were very limited opportunities to get a brew on, if at all.

At any one time, two of us would monitor our communications and the immediate area, and the other two would attempt sleep.

On this job, this was our daytime activity, for the entire day! We only moved out and operated at night under NVG in this area or you would certainly be compromised. AN-PVS14's allowed total domination of the night.

That operation saw us spend five days laying up in this position during daylight and stalking around the villages after dark, all to gather info on the location and movements of the family of one of our top 10 most wanted.

That was the nature of the work – it was not always kinetic.

Guys had to exercise extreme patience during these ops. We would try to sleep and fight the boredom during the day, and at night we could be in a hut to see who was sleeping there, all the while making sure no-one ever knew we had been.

The targets we were trying to arrest were all over the island chain. This presented us with significant planning considerations. Operational orders were complex, even for simple tasks.

One operation that myself and a close buddy organised required significant tactical planning, logistical requirements and human organisation outside of our unit – all so that things might go smoothly in a country where things rarely did.

On this particular job we had met up with a 'gig' or informant in town for the fourth time where we finally confirmed some intelligence relating to the

whereabouts of an important target. It had been a frustrating and arduous process to this point.

We met the gig and gave him comprehensive instructions and timings we required of him for us to run the operation successfully. He was tasked with returning to the target location, which was a few hours boat ride away. Once there he would confirm the target was in the area of operations. Then he was required to send a runner back down the coast in order to get cell coverage and let us know. We were less than hopeful as usual.

Once the confirmation was complete we had also tasked him to set up some IR Cyalumes 3m off the ground and 20m apart in trees at the shoreline where we would rendezvous. We had an accurate GPS reference for this position. The Cyalumes would give our guys a good visual with NVGs.

We had conducted coastal appreciations to ensure we could get boats ashore in that area. Many times we could not.

We then got the green light for the assembled team of guys who were already briefed on the task, and at 2200 we left base covertly and set off on a 150ft vessel for the five-hour trip. We positioned the vessel 2km offshore from the target location where we embarked two RHIBs and moved the teams onto the beach.

The gig had set-up the Cyalumes perfectly within feet of our intended GPS location.

Once we were on land, we got some last-minute information from our gig and tabbed into the jungle for 5km, and set up a loose perimeter around our target's village. The gig knew where the target was sleeping, which allowed us to efficiently arrest the offender and make our way out of the location.

We often had to do this quickly due to the hostile area we were in.

Once back at the shoreline we put the target on a RHIB and out to a waiting police vessel that took him back to base for processing.

For once, it had worked like clockwork. We had done many arduous tasks where nothing eventuated – except us gaining experience, losing weight and maybe contracting some nasty disease.

We variously suffered from malaria, aggressive rashes, allergic reactions to poisonous plants, bouts of giardia and prickly heat, bites from fire ants, mosquitos, sandflies, mite infestations, flesh eating spider bites. We also had guys step very close to large crocodiles while patrolling in thick jungle spots near creek-lines.

And then there were the unknown illnesses that could not be explained by doctors.

But, I liked this style of job where we got a result, and it did not entail waiting around in the jungle for days on end.

I also liked using multiple insertion methods on a single mission. We also got to go in pretty light – no body armour or heavy packs required on this job. Light jungle kit, tactical comm's, personal weapons, NVG's, 3 or 4 litres of water and you were good to go. We really got to cut our teeth on jobs like this.

The nature of my profession in tactical operations and sniping has required me to work in many different environments over the years, and all of these environments present challenges that need to be overcome to see successful outcomes in operations. Some environmental challenges are easily overcome, and others literally dictate the terms of your deployment.

Urban operations are obviously the 5-star environments to work in, having access to all modern conveniences. How hard can a sniper observation task be if it's in a temperate environment with access to toilets, food, comfortable sleeping arrangements – and coffee.

Not all urban scenarios are comfortable mind you, rooftops and abandoned building sites present some very uncomfortable positions. But still, you are never far from resupply or the ability to withdraw without issue.

I have set-up positions in \$2500-per-day penthouses all the way down to covertly constructed hides in partially completed building sites. Much depended on the overt or covert nature of the task.

If the urban environment is seen as the 5-star experience, then the opposite end of the environmental spectrum would definitely be the



The author, Jason Semple (second from left) and his colleagues in the Solomon Islands

jungle, or the 'J' as it is commonly referred to. I'm not talking bush here either – I'm 100% talking JUNGLE.

I know that many of you reading CONTACT magazine have had a good dose of jungle therapy, whether at Tully, at Cannungra or over in Malaysia. Some more experienced readers will also remember their time in PNG and Timor. Those readers will readily understand much of the detail I'm talking about and are all-too-well acquainted with what 'jungle therapy' entails.

My sniper team and I were lucky enough to run tasks in the Solomon Islands. I say 'lucky' as the jungle there is easily the worst I have been exposed to anywhere in the world. In an international competition for putrid jungle environments, the Solomons easily outshines Australia, Timor and the Philippines. I am definitely not saying these other jungle environments are easy either, just that Mother Nature in the Solomons seems to have perfected her human-torture program.

During Solomons deployments, my sniper team spent considerable time running CTRs (close target reconnaissance) and observation posts in some horrendous jungle positions. Some of the tasks we undertook would vary from three or four hours to 10 days as proscribed by the operation's requirements. Some were deep-canopy positions, some the side of mountains and, on a number of occasions, we lived at the edge of swamps and creek beds.

The longer observation tasks meant making sure, through systematic examination of your kit, that all was where it should be, and that various operational gear was distributed amongst team members for weight distribution. One operator is often unlucky enough to be stuck with the Barrett if a job requires it, so various water and food from his kit is distributed among the others.

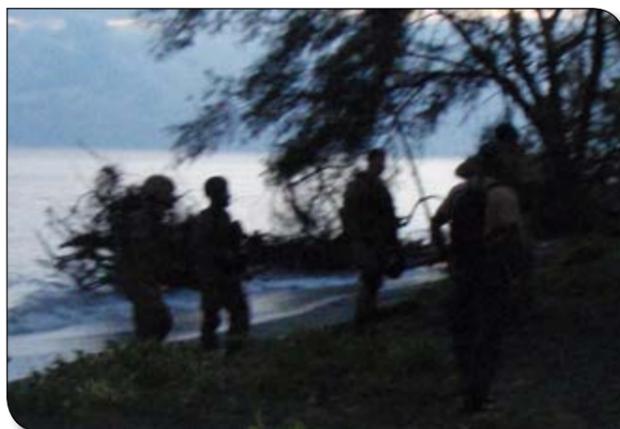
These tasks required varied insertion methods ranging from helo insertion (fast rope or rappel), covert vehicle drop-offs, maritime approach (RHIB or vessel), Klepper folding kayak insertions, swim-up assaults and the age-old foot stomp.

The insertion method was dictated by the environment and the tactical situation. Unfortunately, I cannot go into much detail on these methods as we still employ them today.

Our SF brother's have been very helpful over the years, sharing kit and tactics.

A lot of our covert drop-offs have morphed from police CT and covert surveillance work back in Australia. We got so many opportunities overseas to trial and perfect our tactics.

Food and water are obviously important logistical aspects of operations and require some expert planning when trying to remain covert. Water is the biggest issue, with guys requiring large amounts to stay healthy and hydrated. Any physical activity in the jungle ensures you sweat more and thus you need to drink more. If you listen to medical



opinion, guys need at least 8-10 litres a day in those conditions, even if doing minor movements. This means you're humping 8-10kg of water alone for each day of your operation. Water drops are not always an option, and so water considerations always played into the duration of an operation.

We stopped using ration-pack mentality for our food supply. We instead invested in both home-made and commercial jerky, dried fruit and assorted nuts. We could carry far more nutritious items to eat, with far less weight. We could easily work out what each guy required for a day and then shrink-wrap it into portions. We had this down to a science and guys functioned better and we required very little kit to maintain eating.

We developed an awesome understanding of what clothing worked best. To date, nothing works better than real-tree cammo gear designed for outdoor hunters in the United States. The clothing is of high standard, is constructed from porous materials that dry in minutes, comes in every color and is light to wear. My team always went in with different combinations of similar wooded cammo and we would literally disappear. Needless to say, we spent lots of money at Cabela's in the States.

One skill we became highly proficient at was conducting close target reconnaissance tasks. At one point on a deployment, my sniper teammate and I went out every second night on tasks and did this over a few months. This repetition gave us an incredible insight on what kit worked, what tactics worked best, and we also got to know the area intrinsically.

And we always had a QRF team in a vehicle not more than a few kilometres from where we were working.

We learnt that sniping also requires a high level of boldness at times, and that a keyhole observation point does not always cut it in the real world – we needed to be much more flexible than we had been taught on our initial sniper programs.

Operations and targets were mobile and fluid, and this meant we had to be much more mobile and fluid as well.

This pushed us to totally revamp our sniper programs to suit modern operations. I will explain this in depth in a future article on modern scenario-based sniper training.

I miss the jungle. I miss how you can disappear the minute you walk into it. I miss how you feel safe, hidden (your quarry can be 3 feet from you and not know it). I miss the jungle – right up until I've been back in it for an hour.

Then I wish I was back in the real world.

CONTACT is delighted to have Jason Semple on board for what promises to be a very enlightening series of articles. This is part four of an ongoing series.



Author Jason Semple in the Solomon Islands

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AMCU

ARMY IS ROLLING OUT NEW COMBAT UNIFORMS, JACKETS, THERMAL UNDERGARMENTS AND WET-WEATHER CLOTHING

Private Hamish Bell

Australian Defence Force members deployed to Iraq have been the first to receive Defence's two new high-tech Australian Multicam Camouflage Uniform (AMCU) uniforms.

AMCU comes in two unique styles: a combat version and a field version. The combat uniform is similar in form, fit and function to the Australian Multicam Pattern Operational Combat Uniform, (AMP OCU) used in Afghanistan for the past five years. The field uniform is similar in form, fit and function to the current Disruptive Pattern Camouflage Uniform (DPCU), with some alterations to enhance a soldier's mobility, and help them operate across a variety of environments.

This next-generation clothing is the result of continuous operations and observations of Army uniforms in harsh environments both domestically and overseas, as well as a continuous cycle of developing and testing in the field.



A decade or more of lessons learnt on operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have helped in the development of the new uniforms and production is well underway.

AMCU has been well received by deployed troops, who have given Clothing System Program Office very positive feedback.

The uniforms will use the AMCU print pattern – a multicam pattern and print using the DPCU colour scheme.

DPCU has served the ADF well over the past three decades, initially introduced in the mid-1980s and then upgraded in 2005 with Near Infrared (NIR) reflectivity management.

The new uniforms are designed with the needs of the soldier in mind. They are world class and are integrated with new defence technologies, such as body armour and load carriage.

This is a more high-tech camouflage, fit and design. It will be up there with the very best technologies and be up to date with current designs, fit and function.

The AMCU pattern contains a mixture of six colours, five from DPCU and an extra colour to enhance camouflage properties by day.

The final print pattern and colours were developed by the Defence Science & Technology Group and selected by Army after Digger Works-managed field trials.

Two new uniform designs have been designed to meet the needs of high-intensity combat operations, humanitarian and disaster-relief missions, exercises and for use when in barracks.

The combat uniform shirt is the ideal garment for the combat environment when body armour is required to be worn for extended periods. The combat trousers are very technical with a lot of fabric used for multiple pockets, and come with integrated kneepads.

The field uniform is simplified for those environments where you don't need as many pockets or the kneepads.

There is also a new AMCU general-purpose jacket, wet-weather clothing and new thermal undergarments.

Clothing Systems Program Office has developed this uniform so it fits a wider range of body shapes – male and female – an aspect not available in the previous uniform.

All of the recommendations received from the female-fit trial in 2013 have been incorporated.

Roll-out of the AMCU, which is manufactured by Australian Defence Apparel in Australia, commenced in earnest from January 2016.

First to receive the uniforms were all members deploying on global operations – Iraq, Afghanistan, South Sudan, Sinai and the Lebanon – and members posted overseas in representational positions.

First units in Australia are Headquarters 1st Division based in Brisbane and their direct

command units in Townsville, Sydney and RAAF Base Butterworth.

The rollout continued with all regular and reserve soldiers based in the Darwin region being issued the uniforms in July 2016, with Townsville to follow in July 2017, Brisbane in July 2018, finishing with regional areas and point-of-entry members in 2019.

It is worth noting that there is no discrimination between regular or reserve units in the roll out – all units by region will be issued at the same time.

Army should be fully out of DPCU and into AMCU by 2020.

COMBAT SHIRT

For use in combat situations when wearing body armour for extended periods on long patrols, the combat shirt has been designed to work in synch with the latest Soldier Combat Ensemble.

It features a high collar in woven fabric with zip closure and a knit-fabric body with no pockets to allow for comfort under body armour.

With an integrated elbow pad and woven-fabric raglan sleeves the shirt is designed to keep soldiers not only comfortable but also cool when worn under body armour.

It also features angled sleeve pockets with Velcro closures, adjustment tabs at the cuffs, which also include a Velcro closure, and a pen pocket on the left sleeve.

A fire-retardant (FR) version is available for Armoured Cavalry crewmen, Army Aviation, petroleum operators and EOD operators.

COMBAT PANTS

Designed for the dismounted close-combatant whose role requires them to go to ground.

The pants feature a stretch woven fabric below the waistband, crotch and around the knee to ensure maximum flexibility.

There is also an adjustable waist and padded waistband, button and zip front fly closure with an integrated saddle seat and cord-lock adjustment at the cuffs.

The pants also provides space for kneepads, which are integrated and held in the correct position by elasticised cord adjustments and Velcro closure tabs at the side of the knee.

The combat pants are also fitted with an abundance of pockets – two side thigh pockets with zip closure, two lower front thigh pockets with Velcro closure, two front pockets below the waistband and two lower-leg pockets with Velcro closures.

FIELD SHIRT

The field shirt has a five-button closure at the centre front, chest pockets with zip closure and sleeve pockets with button closure.

Craftsman Matthew McElhone





AUSTRALIAN MULTICAM CAMOUFLAGE UNIFORM - AMCU



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Combat Uniform (Shirt and Trousers)
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Socks

It also features a shorter coat length and increased width at coat hem compared to the DPCU shirt.

Other features include Velcro adjustment tabs at the cuffs and rank slides at the chest.

FIELD PANTS

The field pants, feature stretch woven fabric below the waistband and crotch and an adjustable waist and padded waistband.

The pants also feature kneepads, which are integrated with Velcro closure tabs, along with two side thigh pockets with zip closure and two internal front pockets below the waistband. Also included is a cord and cord-lock adjustment on the cuffs and a button and zip front fly closure.

A fire retardant version is available for Armoured Cavalry Crewmen, Army Aviation, Petroleum Operators and EOD Operators.

BUSH HAT

The bush hat provides protection from the sun through a one-size brim and a neck flap that can be worn up or down.

It has a draw cord to keep it in place in windy conditions.

GP JACKET

A new general purpose (GP) jacket also comes in the AMCU pattern.

It has been developed to provide warmth and protection against the cold and wind-chill in damp, windy and light-rain conditions.

The GP Jacket features an outer fabric with water-repellent and wind-resistant qualities, with a storable hood and a removable fleece liner to enable the wearer to adapt the jacket's use in a wide range of climatic conditions.

It is fitted with an abundance of pockets.

THERMALS

Undergarments consist of six items, all designed in olive green to blend with the AMCU garments.

Members will receive a modacrylic fire-retardant balaclava and neck warmer, medium-weight 'Norwegian skivvies', long-sleeve thermal under shirts, and light-weight longjohns, all in Merino-quality wool.

The garments are designed as a layer system to keep members warm down to -5 degrees.

The final item is a new combat high-quality cotton t-shirt that includes raglan sleeves, flat seams, tight-fitting stretch fabric and longer-length body.

WET WEATHER

Wet-weather outer garments – jacket and over trousers – complete the AMCU suite.

Made from a tri-laminate material, it provides protection from rain and wind and is waterproof and breathable for maximum comfort.

The jacket is mid-thigh length and has an integrated peaked hood and collar, which enables the hood to be stowed when not required. The hood is also designed to fit over the new combat helmet and has adjustments to fit over a bare head.

The jacket also features underarm slide fasteners with welts.

An internal map pocket on the left chest and two front lower patch pockets with flaps and drain holes are also included.

The liner from the GP jacket can be inserted into the wet-weather jacket for additional warmth.

The over trousers have an elasticised waistband with draw cord, action knees which provide extra fabric for when knees are bent, lower leg expanding gussets with Velcro closure tabs for easy use when donning and doffing boots.

Also included are two side openings to access combat or field-pants underneath.

There will also be a version that is anti-static and fire retardant for specialists.

COMBAT GLOVES

The glove is of a robust construction, dexterous, comfortable and provides reasonable protection from expected hazards. They are also fire retardant.

The gloves can be worn over a wide range of missions and tasks and are compatible for use with platforms, weapon systems and communications equipment.

BOOTS

For the first time, Army will also offer a range of combat boots for soldiers to select from.

The boots are designed to enhance soldier mobility in particular circumstances – general purpose, desert, littoral/tropical and where fire-retardant properties are required.



Private Pat Binyon



A long way from home

As NAIDOC Week was marked across Australia in July, 21-year-old Adymathna Yamitji man from the Flinders Ranges area of South Australia Private Jermaine Stuart was serving Australia a long way from home.

Currently deployed on active service near Baghdad in Iraq, Private Stuart said NAIDOC Week was a time to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements and to recognise the contribution that Indigenous Australians make to our country and our society.

"A lot of people, especially the oldies, go on about how NAIDOC Week is for remembering white oppression," Private Stuart said.

"But most of the young people celebrate that we're still here and we're still going strong.

"I like to remember my old nana who passed away four years ago.

"She was part of the Stolen Generation and used to tell us stories about what life was like when she was a kid.

"I think about those days, too."

In Iraq, Private Stuart and his colleagues are tasked with providing security for the Commanding Officer and the RSM of Australia's Training Task Unit when they go out to the Baghdad Fighting School to organise to train Iraqi soldiers to defeat Daesh.

The soldiers received a week of Iraqi cultural-awareness training before deploying in June.

"We were up at Murray Bridge and the Army brought in some people who were born and raised in Iraq," Private Stuart said.

"They told us about the country's history and religion, and taught us things to say and how to behave.

"When you meet an Iraqi soldier, you greet them by saying marhba, which is like g'day, and shake hands.

"If they offer you something, you should accept it.

"I thought the Iraqis were going to be pretty strange and different from us, but they turned out to be normal people – just like me pretty much.

"All they want to do is have a laugh, meet some new people, have a chat and go home at the end of the day.

"They love taking selfies with us. They want to show their brother or dad a photo of themselves with an Australian soldier."

Private Stuart was born in Port Augusta, and moved to Toodyay, a small town outside Perth, when he was eight. His mother is a Yamitji woman from the Cue/Mount Magnet area 600km north-east of Perth.

As a young man, Jermaine Stuart struggled to find work, and applied to join Defence's Indigenous Development Program run by NORFORCE in the Northern Territory.

"I went up to Darwin for the 10-day recruiting course and did all the physical testing and aptitude assessments," he said.

"The NORFORCE warrant officer told me I could go full-time straight away if I wanted to, so I went down to Adelaide and enlisted.

"A couple of weeks later I was off to Kapooka, then I went through Singleton, and on to Charlie Company at 7RAR.

"My family and mates keep telling me they're proud of me, and to keep doing what I'm doing.

"But it's not like I'm anything special. I'm just a digger like everyone else."



Songlines:

The living narrative of our nation

2016 National NAIDOC logo



Photo by Leading Seaman Jake Badior



Taking its name from a battle fought in France in 1918, Exercise Hamel is designed to develop, confirm and evaluate the foundational warfighting skills of an Australian ready brigade and assigned force elements within a joint task force setting.

This year, Darwin's 1st Brigade was tested.

Exercise Hamel tests men, machines and concepts to ensure they are ready for potential future deployments in support of every mission profile, from humanitarian assistance through to high-tempo war fighting operations against peer or near-peer forces.

For the past six years, Exercise Hamel has been conducted in Queensland. But this year, the newly and massively expanded Cultana Military Training Area in South Australia was chosen to host this major Army-centric activity.

With more than 9000 military personnel from the Australian Army, Royal Australian Navy, Royal Australian Air Force, along with personnel from the United States Marine Corps, the United States Army (Pacific Command) and the New Zealand Army, Exercise Hamel 2016 was a significant undertaking.

Director General for Army Training and Doctrine Brigadier Mick Ryan said Exercise Hamel was designed to test and evaluate the Australian Army's high-readiness deployable brigade.

Darwin's 1st Brigade has been in the 'readying' phase of the Army's force-generation cycle and, after successfully completing Exercise Hamel 2016 is deemed ready and prepared to deploy on any potential future operations.

"What we've got here are thousands of soldiers from brigades and units from all across Australia," Brigadier Ryan said.

"Over a period of several weeks, we assembled all the different army units, consisting of infantry, artillery, tanks, aviation, logisticians, communicators, HQ units and so on, and brought them here to see how they cope with a rather complex scenario we've laid out for them.

"This year we're witnessing a bit of a stoush between East Cultana and West Cultana, and there's a political situation and a military situation, with an underlying economic situation and an information environment they have to operate within so that our soldiers can get used to operating in a fairly complex environment.

"There are quite a few reasons we do this.

"First and foremost it's about exposing our soldiers and leaders to very contemporary environments – the types of environments they might have to deal with on real operations – which may well be a low-level humanitarian or disaster-relief operations, up to a fairly sophisticated near-peer warfighting environment with a very sophisticated threat.

"But it's also about developing interoperability with our allies.

"We have US Army, British Army, New Zealand Army and US Marines here. So we ensure that we are able to work closely together when we have to deploy on operations again, as we've done quite a lot in the past 15 years.

"It's about – in the Australian Army – building the cohesion of combined-arms teams where we link together infantry, armour, engineers, artillery, logisticians, communicators and so on, in a single team, focused on a single mission, where they can be successful.

"But, finally, and I think most importantly – this kind of activity is where we evaluate our high-readiness organisation. And in doing so, we provide a level of assurance to the Australian government that, should they call on the Australian Army for any mission, regardless of where it is, that we are ready and able to do that."

Brigadier Ryan said getting the different armies to work together so closely took a lot of time and planning.

"We have people embedded in different armies around the world, in their training schools, as they do here. Especially the US Army and the British Army.

"We work together on a daily basis in many parts of the world.

"Developing that interoperability is about learning how to work together, how our logistics systems interlock, how our communications systems connect.

"But the most important thing we share that helps all of this happen is that we share common values. We all come from societies that have very strong democratic values, that have very strong professional military ethos – and that helps us work together.

"Even though we may have different weapons, different uniforms or different radios – that common set of values underpins a strong working

relationship and interoperability that we practice here on exercise Hamel."

He said this was the first time an exercise of this size and type was held in Cultana, where a large-scale expansion, which massively increased the size of the training area, was recently opened.

"This is very different to where we traditionally conduct Exercise Hamel, on the east coast, and that difference is good for our soldiers – it gets them used to different operating environments.

"This year as well, we've also integrated the live exercise with a large-scale simulation so that there's a live and virtual combination within the scenario that we're applying here.

"Another first is that we've brought our divisional headquarters into the exercise.

"So, we're elevating scale, size and complexity. It's the largest Exercise Hamel we've done."

Another significant element of Exercise Hamel – and of 1 Brigade's makeup – is Battle Group Jacka, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Tom Biedermann.

"Battle Group Jacka is a 707-soldier-strong infantry battle group comprised of three infantry companies, two of which are supported by protected mobility vehicle lift capability provided by Armoured Corps – plus we have a light artillery battery, an engineer squadron, a combat services support squadron providing our administration and logistics," Lieutenant Colonel Biedermann said.

"We also have detached to 1 Armoured Regiment a light cav scout platoon who work with 1 Armoured Regiment in 1 Brigade as part of the integration piece for Battle Group Jacka – plus 40 logistics soldiers who work with the 1st Combat Services Support Battalion providing logistics to 1 Brigade.

"This is all part of the integration and reinforcement Battle Group Jacka brings to 1 Brigade."

But, what's so different about Battle Group Jacka – why have we singled them out for special mention?

Three phases of the Australian Army's force-generation cycle:

Phase 1 – Ready – is when the brigade is ready and certified to deploy on operations.

Phase 2 – Reset – is when the brigade is released from operational readiness and conducts equipment remediation as well as individual training including promotion courses.

Phase 3 – Readying – is when the brigade recommences collective training, prepares for missions and is evaluated during a major exercise, such as Hamel.



"Aside from a couple of regular army in key positions that the Army Reserve cannot fill, essentially this is a group of Army Reservists from Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia, who have trained over the past two-and-a-half years to be

The Battle of Hamel – 4 July 1918:

The Battle of Hamel was a successful attack launched by Australian and American units against German positions in and around the town of Hamel in northern France. Lieutenant General John Monash, in his first action as a corps commander, employed new and innovative combined-arms tactics to overwhelm the enemy in just 93 minutes, paving the way for allied victory in the First World War. The Battle of Hamel was primarily an infantry assault with tanks, artillery and aviation support.

ready, not only for Exercise Hamel, but also for the Plan Beersheba 'Ready' cycle and potential operational deployment with the 1st Brigade," Lieutenant Colonel Biedermann said.

"Essentially Army reservists get trained and, through the collective-training sequence we have put the battle group through over the past two-and-a-half years, those skills get refined and enhanced so that we have part-time soldiers who are capable of full-time work.

"But not only that, from their civilian occupations, these men and women bring us quite a range of other skills – be they chefs to lawyers to senior management. This is particularly important in Battle Group Jacka's role with 1 Brigade where we dominate the rear area for 1 Brigade and provide security in the rear area where there are a number of civilian populations, simulated on this exercise.

"With their training, we start with everyone being individually qualified for their rank and for their trade. We seek to achieve that in what's called the 'Reset' year, where we're concentrating on individual competencies.

"Then we go into the 'Readying' phase, which is the culmination of small-team-level training where they get the collective skills needed to work together.

"From there we start matching those up so we can command and control those elements for larger tasks.

"This is all part of a carefully crafted series of exercises with training outcomes that lead us to three 'gate exercises' we have to pass through to get to Exercise Hamel.

"At Hamel, the expectation is that we are fully collectively trained to do our job.

"It's been a long journey for us, and even longer for the 1st Brigade, because they've done considerably more training time.

"However, we've made the best we can of the training time we've been allocated.

"I have a pretty simple message for my soldiers – we've all done the training, we've all done our individual competence training, and now it's all got to come together and everyone's got to give it their best, understand what they're being asked to do, and understand the bigger picture of what 1 Brigade is trying to achieve and where we fit in to that.

"This exercise is considerably longer than any other experiences to date. This brings a hardship and a resiliency element which the soldiers may not have been exposed to at any time before in their career.

"But, the soldiers have leaders and the leaders need to get those guys onto a work pattern, where they work, rest and are good to go on any task they get.

"For myself, this is a culmination in my career as an infantryman over the past 20-or-so years.

"I am working to bring it all together in the battle group – that everyone does their job, leaders lead, soldiers follow and we complete our tactical tasks at the battalion level.

"What I'm also doing is concentrating on what Battle Group Jacka brings to the 1st Brigade. They rely on us to bring a substantial amount of capability. And already that's been well used on this exercise.

"I want to continue to bring that reinforcement to the 1st Brigade by providing them with well-led, well-trained men and women to do work for 1 Brigade.

"I also want to see soldier continue to learn and benefit from their experience and for them to see what they bring to 1 Brigade – but also that they see the bigger picture of what 1 Brigade brings to the army.

"There's a lot for my soldiers to see here. The reserves don't have tanks for example. But it's not just a visual experience – we can learn a lot through signal trades, combat services support, engineers and artillerymen in particular about how the full-time army goes about their business – and if we, Battle Group Jacka, the part-time army, can learn something from that, that's what I'd seek to achieve on this exercise.

"The reserve force is definitely integral to what they're trying to achieve on Exercise Hamel.

"Under Plan Beersheba, when the combat brigade was formed, the reinforcing battle group, of which Battle Group Jacka is one of three in the Army Reserve, was perceived as integral to providing not only soldiers to perform tasks that may not be present in 1 Brigade, but to bring a capability.

"And the capability we bring is three infantry companies, a light artillery battery and an engineer squadron.

"And that is an integral part of 1 Brigade's scheme of manoeuvre, which is well factored into the tasks we perform.



"So what we do is very meaningful to the way 1 Brigade does operations."
 Brigadier Ryan said this year's Exercise Hamel was further complicated by Mother Nature.
 "The landscape here in Cultana – we've got large expanses of relatively flat land and not a lot of vegetation in large parts of the training area. But, over the past few weeks, we've had a bit of rain, so it's a little bit boggy, which poses challenges for cross-country movement, whether for wheeled vehicles or tracked vehicles – all of which reinforces the importance of our helicopters and our tracked vehicles.
 "The variety and conditions here forces our commanders to really think about managing their detectability to the enemy force – ensuring their signature is as low as possible, whether it's a visible signature by day or a heat signature at night.

"So camouflage, concealment, deception and all of these things, which are within the intellectual domain, are very very important in this exercise.
 "Conditions here have been very tough on the soldiers too. But, it's all about developing individual and team resilience.
 "That resilience is not just about being able to deal with different climatic conditions, it's also the resilience to be able to respond appropriately when things go poorly on the battlefield.
 "When you're surprised, that engenders shock – and a resilient individual or a resilient team is able to overcome that shock quickly, adapt and move on and be successful with whatever their mission might be.
 "Exercise like this test individuals and teams at almost every level, from platoon all the way through to the divisional level.

"We test their capacity to anticipate. We test their ability to plan and respond to unforeseen events. We test their capacity to undertake the most basic drills – whether it's the conduct of a patrol, the conduct of a resupply mission, the conduct of an aerial reconnaissance mission.
 "There's multiple levels of testing.
 "And we underpin that with a Combat Training Centre, which has observer-trainers and instruments to not just make real-time observations, but we record what we see and we're able to play it back over and over and undertake after-action reviews so we can learn the necessary lessons that a professional military organisation like the Australian Army must learn as it continues to seek to hone its capability.
 "What all this does is provides the foundational skill sets that our soldiers can use on whichever operation they go on. The ability to plan, the ability to command, the ability to move, to shoot, to see, to logistically support themselves – and then those foundational skills can be adapted across a range of different scenarios and environments.
 "But, at its heart, it gets back to building that individual and team resilience that is applicable regardless of where we find ourselves.
 "For me, this exercise is about bringing a wide range of units from all around Australia – indeed from all around the world – orchestrating them within the scenario of the exercise, and having our soldiers go away knowing that they've participated and succeeded in a very demanding activity that should give them the confidence and knowledge as individuals and teams that they are well trained and well prepared for whatever operation we might send them on."
 One participant on Exercise Hamel who was prepared for any eventuality, real or virtual, was Captain Roslyn Glass, the officer in charge of the emergency department at the lead medical facility on the exercise.

Originally from Adelaide, Captain Glass initially joined the Army 21 years ago as a signaller, after leaving school, but transferred to the Royal Australian Nursing Corps after a couple of overseas deployments.
 "I wanted to give back to people so I decided to study nursing," she said.
 "Now, as the officer-in-charge of the emergency and evacuation departments, I have 22 people working for me.
 "We are working in a pretty austere environment, so getting the right equipment to the patient at the right time can be a challenge.
 "Despite that, we have had a couple of very sick patients come through here and we've been able to stabilise them and get them to the right facility in the right amount of time so they made full recoveries quite quickly.
 "It's rewarding seeing the difference we can make."
 Another officer making a difference at Exercise Hamel was Major Kelly Dunne, Officer Commanding Close Health Company.
 Major Dunne studied management at ADFA, specialising in health management, specifically emergency and disaster response.
 "That delineation between the management role and the clinical expertise was really tricky to get my head around when I first came into the Medical Corps," Major Dunne said.
 "I certainly joined with a far more military focus than a medical focus in my training, whereas the clinical specialists – the doctors, nurses, physios, medics – come in from their normal civilian universities with very little military experience.
 "So, bridging that gap, I speak army to the warfighters and they worry about the patient.
 "But that also makes the divide pretty clear. The specialists don't have to step into the management side and, equally, they know I'm not the best person to go to if someone's bleeding or needs resuscitation.



"It takes a little while to get used to at first, but with their focus on putting the casualty first, we get a pretty good mix and very rarely is there any conflict between the two."

Major Dunne said that as the officer commanding, her role was to control the health assets as well as to provide advice to commander 1 Brigade on how to deploy his health assets.

"My company has about 140 people, mostly in Darwin, with a small element in Adelaide, and quite a number of those staff are here on Hamel.

"While they are out there doing their business, my role is to provide them with the guidance and direction they need to prioritise casualties, get logistic support and to understand the warfighting plan.

"Commander 1 Brigade will come up with his plan involving all the manoeuvre elements – infantry, armoured, artillery and so on, doing their bits and

pieces – and my job is to understand his plan and factor in what medical support he will need around those elements, and move my assets around to meet the plan.

"If someone is going a really long way forward, I need to make sure that they've got some medical assets close to them, so that if something were to happen, they don't have to travel back many many kilometres to get care.

"It's a fine balance. There are never enough assets to go around, to cover as much as you'd like. So one of the things we do is try to get it right between making sure everyone's got a little bit of something and that anywhere where there's a high risk, we always try to put a larger health element there.

"That's what my guys are out there doing right now, and I try my best to support them while they are out there."

Major Dunne said her medical staff joined the army with this sense of wanting to serve and they would always go above and beyond to make sure that casualties are well looked after.

She herself also joined the army wanting to help people.

"I had a very keen interest in high school to study medicine, but that didn't quite work out for me, so I joined the army, still wanting to get as close to that side as possible.

"I didn't think I had the physical makeup to be a warfighter but saw a lot of my friends on that side of the house and was very happy to be allocated to the Medical Corps, so I could help them.

She said Exercise Hamel was the culmination of everything her unit had been learning over the past year.

"Back in barracks we've been learning medical serials and military serials.

"This exercise is more a demonstration of the capability we can provide and a demonstration of what we could do if we were deployed on operations.

"It's critical for us to come out here and practice what we preach and show that we are up to the task.

"But, one of the good things about Medical Corps I guess is that we get practice at our core skills every day.

"People are always being injured or getting sick, so, we're actually doing our business all the time.

"The sad part about that, I guess, is that when we're getting our best educational opportunities is when someone else is having the worst day of their lives."

Out on the 'battlefield' Lance Bombardier Tim Muhammad, 8th/12th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery, had just completed a road move.

"We've completed the first stage of Hamel in old Cultana and we've now moved across to the new range on the other side of the highway," he said.

"Our gun position is currently situated in a hide, waiting for the rest of the brigade to cross the highway to continue with the rest of the exercise.

"I'm a detachment commander of Bravo gun. I have a detachment of guys underneath me and we deliver indirect fire with the 155mm M777 Howitzer.

"It's a real rush firing those big rounds. The noise they make and the kick and percussion from the gun itself really gets you – wakes you up in the morning.

"These exercises are really good because, obviously, we can't really train on the M777 in barracks.

"So this gives us a good opportunity to get out and deploy the gun in different positions, like hides or hasty positions.

"It also gives us time out on the ground among all the other elements and gives us good experience working with them for future exercises or if we were to deploy as an artillery unit."

Lance Bombardier Muhammad said the weather played a big role on Exercise Hamel this year.

"It's really cold at the moment – we've had lows of minus 1 – and we're normally based up in Darwin where it's really hot.

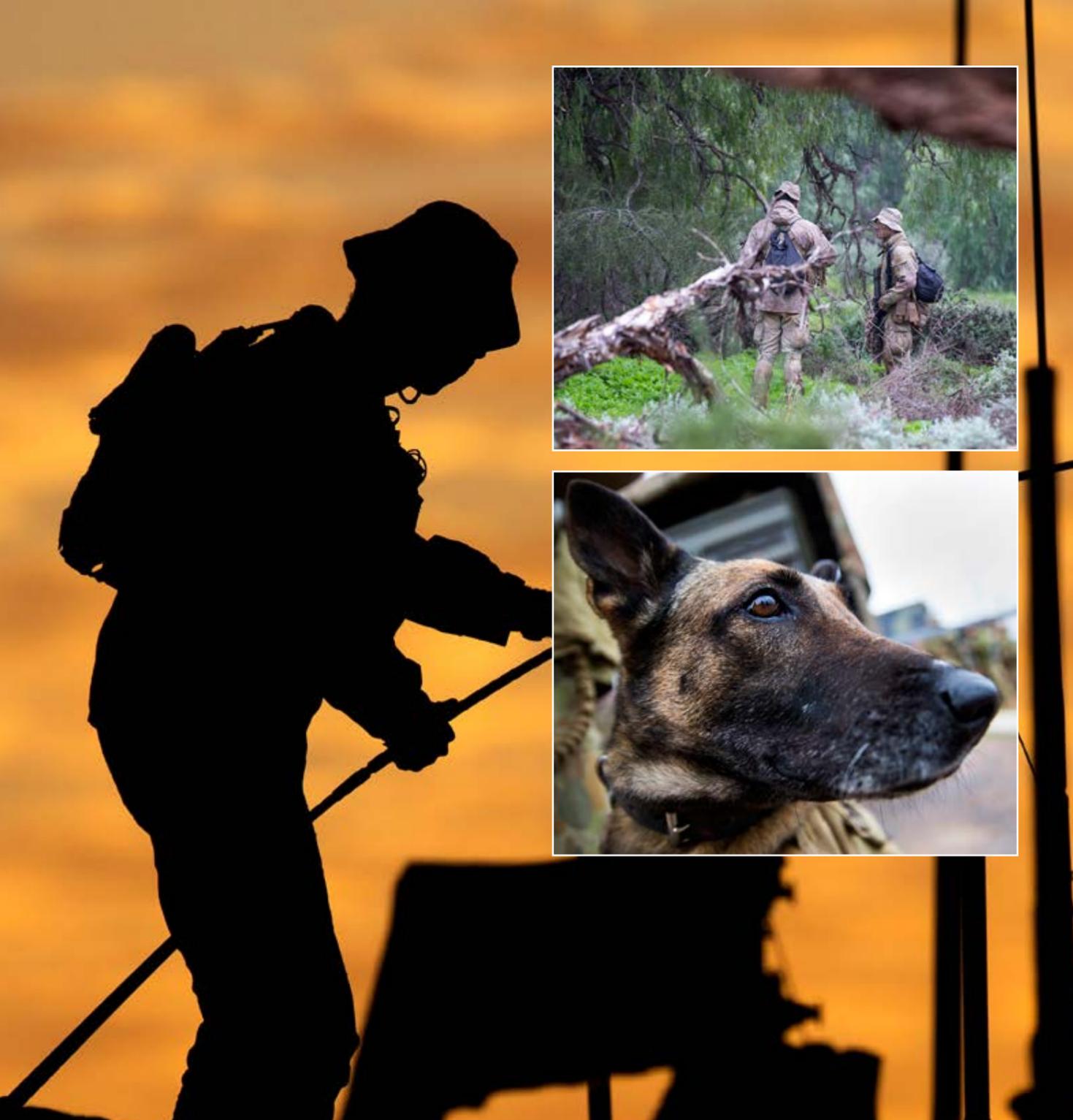
"Coming from the tropics, we've encountered cold and rain down here, but I think the boys have adapted really well.

"Also living on hard rats [rations], sleeping in the dirt, firing from different positions – all give us really good experience and is probably the closest simulation we could get to the real thing.

"It's given us other good training values too, like recovering vehicles from washouts and bogs for example. It's really been a challenge.

"The sheer scale of this exercise also makes it different.

"Being an Army-wide exercise, we've got choppers flying overhead, we've got tanks rolling by at night, and we have an actual enemy picture,



which puts us in a good perspective for possible real-life scenarios to defend the gun position from direct targets as well as indirect targets.

"So, we've been practicing infantry minor tactics – digging pits, using small arms as well – it's all really good training.

"Some other challenging aspects to this too are that most of our movements have been done under the cover of darkness.

"That means long days for the boys on the gun line, followed by long nights, which can really test you mentally.

"If you're not mentally prepared for the late nights, it can really show the true character of the boys out here."

Lance Bombardier Muhammad, a Torres Strait Islander who suffers from seasickness – and copped

significant ribbing from his 'salt-water-people' peers growing up – said he always wanted to join the army as a kid.

"Artillery really stood out to me – the heavy weapons and the role really appealed.

"I'd like to progress through the ranks in artillery and eventually be an Indigenous recruiter and spread the word about how the Defence Force can really benefit indigenous Australians looking for a pathway to a good career.

"That's really important to me. Who better to defend Australia than its first people."

While the Battle of Hamel paved the way for allied victory in WWI, Exercise Hamel 2016 was the Australian Army's capstone exercise that proved 1 Brigade's 'Ready' status as Australia's on-call formation, ready to defend Australia.

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The original LONG TAN CROSS



The original Long Tan Cross was knocked down, repurposed as a headstone, its brass plaque used as a BBQ plate, and was claimed by the Vietnamese government as a war trophy – yet it stands (or at least a detailed replica) stands today as a potent symbol of Australia's War in Vietnam and of the growing respect afforded Australian soldiers by the Vietnamese people.

Despite last minute restrictions by authorities which prevented many veterans from visiting the site for this year's Vietnam Veterans' Day, on the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, the site is revered by soldiers of both sides and is a popular destination for Australians visiting the country.

The original concrete cross and plaque, first erected in 1969 amid the devastated rubber plantation where the battle was fought on 18 August 1966, now sits in Bien Hoa's Dong Nai Museum, with a replica at the battle site.

Long Tan was Australia's most costly single battle of the Vietnam War. Eighteen Australians died and 24 men were wounded. It was also one of the fiercest against-all-odds fights in our military history – 108 men of Delta Company 6RAR against a force of more than 2000 Viet Cong and North Vietnamese regulars.

Enemy's losses are not well documented but estimates suggest at least 600 were killed.

Dave Sabben, commander of 12 Platoon, D Company, 6RAR at Long Tan says that, after the battle, the area was noted by those who visited or patrolled through it as a place of reverence – hallowed ground and a sombre place – where each fresh rainstorm exposed more equipment and remains.

6RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Battalion, on its second tour of Vietnam, mounted 'OPERATION LONG TAN' on 18 August 1969. Amid the ongoing war, a 9-foot unpainted concrete cross was helicoptered into the plantation and set at the site where 11 Platoon had dug in for most of the battle.

The cross was intended to honour the Australians who gave their lives in the battle but, over time, it has come to represent all who served in the war.

Corporal Barry McAvinue, 6RAR Pioneer Platoon, constructed the cross, supervised by Sergeant Allan McLean. A brass plaque, with wording by RSM WO1 Jim Cruickshank read:

"In memory of those members of D Coy and 3 TP 1APC Sqn who gave their lives near this spot during the battle of Long Tan on 18th August 1966. Erected by 6RAR/NZ (ANZAC) Bn 18 August 69."

Once in place, the men held a service, with 10 soldiers who had been at the battle in 1966 or in D Company at the time, lined on either side of the cross as two pipers played a Lament.

For the remainder of the war in Phuoc Tuy Province the cross stood safe in the rubber plantation. Patrols swept the area occasionally, but the battlefield remained otherwise untouched. The final patrol by 6RAR in May 1970 went to the cross and, after checking for mines and booby traps, washed it down, polished up the brass plaque and held a farewell service.

After Saigon fell in 1975, authorities had the original cross knocked down, and the history of the cross gets hazy. What is accepted is that the cross was retrieved by locals and used as a headstone, though for whom or by whom is not definitively known. The brass plaque was said to have been used as a cooking plate.

It is accepted that in the 1980s that the cross and plaque were reunited, most likely by a Vietnamese veteran, and placed in Bien Hoa's Dong Nai Museum where they are displayed as 'war trophies'.

When Australian authorities requested the cross be repatriated to Australia the request was refused.

In 1989 the Long Tan Peoples' Committee erected a replica cross at the battle site. A memorial plaque to the Vietnamese soldiers of D445 was also added.

While the rubber plantation was cut down in 1991 to make way for a corn crop (though it has since reverted to rubber) the cross and site was left standing and more and more Australian Veterans started making pilgrimages to the site.

Over the years a number of individuals and groups – Australian and Vietnamese – took it upon themselves to maintain the site.

In April 2002 the Vietnamese government handed custodianship of the cross and site to the Australian Vietnam Veterans Reconstruction Group (AVVRG), which has maintained the site since. In the same year a sand jar was added for joss sticks to honour the Vietnamese dead.

The site now serves as a reminder of the price both sides paid in the battle and the war.

In most years, services are held at the site on Anzac Day and Vietnam Veterans' Day with the approval of Vietnamese authorities, although strict protocols apply, such as not wearing medals or carrying military-related materials.

People wanting to visit the site should always do so through a registered tour provider or risk breaking the protocols that have allowed this splendid memorial to stand as one of only two foreign-military memorials in the country.

This article is based on materials provided by Long Tan veteran Dave Sabben. To read Dave's detailed history of the cross and to learn about tours to Vietnam visit www.sabben.com

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AgriVets is a recruitment program placing former Australian Defence Force personnel in the agriculture industry, proving a successful skill-set snap – applying military skills and can-do attitude to a dire shortfall in rural labour

Discharged Australian veterans are being helped by the Agri Veterans programme to transition from military to civilian life, with meaningful and skills-appropriate work in agricultural jobs around the country.

More than 5000 Australian defence staff were discharged in the last year.

Agri Veterans is helping them get jobs where their skills – technical, mechanical and/or clerical – are transferable and much needed by the rural employers.

Veterans learn new skills, gain financial security and get back a sense of purpose and connection to the land, working in the peace and quiet of the countryside.

It's a great fit for what the nation's agricultural industry needs now and in the future.

Agri Veterans was started in 2015 by Goondiwindi-born Casey Brown, Managing Director of Agri Labour Australia, the top privately owned agricultural recruitment company, with specific emphasis on labour for agriculture, aquaculture and horticulture.

Casey Brown had seen similar programmes in the US successfully placing ex-servicemen and women from both infantry and clerical roles.

"We have a unique understanding of the challenges faced by military personnel when transitioning back into civilian life," Casey said.

"It can be particularly difficult for those with injuries, especially when those wounds are on the inside.

"Agri Veterans presents an excellent opportunity for agricultural businesses to not only give quality jobs for quality people, but it can revitalise rural communities, provide a stronger, younger workforce and give something back to those who've made huge sacrifices for Australia."

Josh Donnelly, grain handler and Agri Veteran, discharged from Army in 2012 after suffering PTSD in Afghanistan deployment, said, "I want to be a normal, positive citizen again and I feel fully supported in this by Agri Veterans, who take a personal interest in you. They are not just trying to fill the (job) seats. They make the seats fit you".

Timothy Westera, former soldier, now grain handler at Roma, said, "AgriLabour has been very helpful with supplying me with work. They didn't just throw me out there and leave me. They came out a few times to visit me and make sure I was going all right".

If you are a veteran seeking work in the agricultural sector, or an employee looking for hard-working, dedicated Australian workers, find more details at www.agrilabour.com.au/veterans



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TWENTY-SIX NATIONS, 45 SHIPS, FIVE SUBMARINES, MORE THAN 200 AIRCRAFT AND 25,000 PERSONNEL PARTICIPATED IN THE BIENNIAL RIM OF THE PACIFIC RIMPAC EXERCISE FROM 30 JUNE TO 4 AUGUST, IN AND AROUND THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS AND SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA.

THE WORLDS LARGEST INTERNATIONAL MARITIME EXERCISE, RIMPAC PROVIDES A UNIQUE TRAINING OPPORTUNITY THAT HELPS PARTICIPANTS FOSTER AND SUSTAIN COOPERATIVE RELATIONSHIPS CRITICAL TO THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF THE WORLDS OCEANS AND SEA LANES.



Clockwise from top left: Royal Australian Navy clearance diver Able Seaman Brett Hain dives into RIMPAC at Pearl Harbour. US Navy combat camera photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Charles E. White: An ASLAV from 2nd Cavalry Regiment moves through the Pohakuloa Training Area. ADF photo by Corporal David Said: Boatswains mates on HMAS Canberra conduct a .50cal machine gun practise at night. ADF photo by Able Seaman Steven Thomson: Soldiers from 2RAR relax in Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii, after a convoy drive. US Marine Corps photo by Staff Sergeant Jesse R. Stence.



Clockwise from left:

Australian soldiers from 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, land ashore from HMAS Canberra at Kawaihae Pier, Hawaii. US Marine Corps photo by Staff Sergeant Jesse R. Stence.

A US Navy Landing Craft, Air Cushion (LCAC) from amphibious transport dock USS San Diego enters the well dock of HMAS Canberra. ADF photo by Leading Seaman Helen Frank.

A US Marine Corps CH-53E Super Stallion from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 463 lands on the flight deck of HMAS Canberra. ADF photo by Leading Seaman Helen Frank.

Soldiers from Townsville-based 2RAR conduct a live-fire shoot from HMAS Canberra's flight deck. ADF photo by Leading Seaman Helen Frank.

Australian Army Light Armoured Vehicles from the 2nd Cavalry Regiment queue on the wharf at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in readiness to load onto HMAS Canberra during Exercise Rim of the Pacific 2016. ADF photo by Corporal David Said.



This year's exercise included forces from Australia, Brunei, Canada, Chile, China Colombia, Denmark, France, Germany, Holland, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Tonga, the UK and USA.

This year was the first time Denmark, Germany and Italy participated.

Proving it was a truly integrated exercise, various senior command positions were shared around. Vice Admiral Nora Tyson, USA, was the Combined Task Force Commander. Royal Canadian Navy Rear

Admiral Scott Bishop served as her deputy commander, with Japan Maritime Self Defense Force Rear Admiral Koji Manabe as vice commander. Other key leaders included Commodore Malcolm Wise of the Royal Australian Navy commanding the maritime component, Brigadier General Blaise Frawley of the Royal Canadian Air Force commanding the air component, with the amphibious task force led by Royal New Zealand Navy Commodore James Gilmour.

Australia's Chief of Joint Operations Vice Admiral David Johnston said the

biennial RIMPAC provided valuable training opportunities to validate Australian Defence Force capabilities and enhance interoperability with international partners.

"RIMPAC strengthens international maritime partnerships and improves the readiness of participating forces for a wide range of potential operations," he said.

"ADF personnel will exercise across a broad spectrum of scenarios from humanitarian assistance and disaster response to maritime security operations, sea control and complex war fighting."

He said Australia had participated in every RIMPAC since 1971 and this year featured the first deployment of our Navy's flagship HMAS Canberra and the last deployment of the RAAF's AP-3C Orion.

HMAS Canberra featured heavily in reporting back home, achieving some remarkable and spectacular interoperability firsts, especially with US Marine Corps assets – landing an MV-22B Osprey (see page 12) and a CH-53E Super Stallion (below) on her helicopter deck, and receiving an LCAC (above)(Landing





Clockwise from left:

Members of an Australian Army fireteam, attached to Golf Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines, prepare to breach a door during an urban assault. US Marine Corps photo by Lance Corporal Robert Sweet.

Australian and New Zealand soldiers with United States Marines look take a ride in an MV-22 Osprey over Marine Corps Base Hawaii. Photo by Corporal Matthew Bickerton.

Soldiers from Townsville-based 2RAR conduct a live-fire shoot from HMAS Canberra's flight deck. ADF photo by Leading Seaman Helen Frank.

Australian soldiers attached to Golf Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines, wait for a signal to secure a building during an urban assault. US Marine Corps photo by Lance Corporal Robert Sweet.

Australian clearance diver Able Seaman Sam Lau from the Australian Maritime Explosive Ordinance Disposal Element, searches a compound for improvised explosive devices. ADF photo by Leading Seaman Lee-Anne Mack.

An Australian soldier runs for cover during a squad fire and maneuver exercise at Pohakuloa Training Area, Hawaii. US Marine Corps photo by Corporal Natalie A. Dillon.



Craft Air Cushion) and several Amphibious Assault Vehicles in her well deck below.

Commander Air on HMAS Canberra, Commander Adrian Capner said landing the big American aircraft on Canberra's flight deck was very rewarding.

"It demonstrates that we are capable of interacting with our coalition partners, in particular the United States," he said.

"It also shows that we can adapt and remain agile to operate a whole range of international aircraft, not just the aircraft in the Australian fleet."

USMC liaison officer Major Brandon Woods was pre-positioned in Canberra's Flight Command for the Osprey arrival.

"In the future, when the United States and Australian navies are operating together, we can fluidly land on our respective ships and conduct missions, whatever that tasking may be," Major Woods said.

"After today's success, we are well on our way to doing this organically."

Canberra crewmember Leading Seaman Aviation Support Michael Wenzell said the Osprey's size was impressive.

"Directing such a large aircraft to land and take off was daunting at first," he said.

"But, once we got it on board and sized it up, it was excellent. We treated it just like any other aircraft."

Amphibious Assault Vehicle crewman Lance Corporal Ryley Sweet said it was exciting to swim into HMAS Canberra.

"When we go into USS San Diego our tracks hit the deck and we start to drive like we're already on land," he said.

"But when we enter Canberra we're still in deep water, so we're using our marine

propulsion system instead of tracks. But I feel as if I did pretty well, since no one has done it before."

Amphibious Advisor Gunnery Sergeant Chad Solomon said it was a big win.

"It means that in future we'll be able to use a combined Australian/American landing force and share a stronger relationship between the two navies."

Standing on the 'island' that divides Canberra's long well dock to guide the LCAC on board was Royal Australian Navy Petty Officer Bosun Michael Hammond, who





Clockwise from left:
 HMNZS Te Kaha at sea in the live firing range during RIMPAC. RNZDF photo by Petty Officer Chris Weissenborn.
 Sailors on Arleigh Burke-class guided-missile destroyer USS Howard hold a pilot's ladder for sailors from Anzac-class frigate HMAS Warramunga during a visit, board, search and seizure drill. US Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Siobhana R. McEwen.
 HMAS Warramunga, HMNZS Te Kaha and HMAS Ballarat conduct officer-of-the-watch manoeuvres. ADF photo by Lieutenant Commander Darren Mallett.
 HMAS Ballarat launches her MH-60R Seahawk. ADF photo by Petty Officer Yuri Ramsey.
 An RNZAF P-3K2 Orion during a live-fire torpedo-drop mission. RNZDF photo by Petty Officer Chris Weissenborn.



said the task was a bit intimidating at first because of the size, noise and spray.
 "It's a really tight fit in the well dock and there's a lot of wind and spray. I basically got drenched," he said.
 "It was a big highlight for me to be the first person to ever do that in this class of ship.
 "But, now we've proved we can operate with the LCACs and other nation's landing craft – so that gives us a lot more versatility and enhances our capability."
 Canberra also had embarked Australia's Amphibious Ready Element, based on

Townsville's 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment – the construct and MO of which was discussed in detail in issue 48 of **CONTACT** (in our web-site Archives page).
 Section 2IC, 1 Platoon, A Company, 2RAR, Lance Corporal Joel Baron said motivation didn't come hard while deployed on Exercise RIMPAC.
 "We are working with the US Marines and other nations conducting some really great training," Lance Corporal Baron said.
 "The training we've been doing includes surf negotiation on small boats, training

with the Amphibious Assault Vehicles, conducting urban clearance operations and helicopter underwater escape training.
 "The training has been really professional and has provided a great opportunity for us all to learn from each other and better understand how each operates.
 "I'm really grateful for this experience."
 Small Boats Platoon section commander Lance Corporal John Lambrinakos said surf conditions in Hawaii offered a testing environment for Australian's amphibious soldiers.

"Unfortunately, in Townsville there's not a lot of surf, so to get out here and train in different conditions is awesome," he said.
 "It's a great opportunity to be able to hone our skills and drills. Training in unfamiliar environments provides more of a challenge."
 Exercise Rim of the Pacific 2016 – RIMPAC – the world's largest maritime exercise – wrapped up on 4 August and will be held again around the islands of Hawaii and in southern California in 2018.



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PITCH BLACK

Exercise Pitch Black 2016 is the Air Force's largest training activity this year and will be conducted in the Northern Territory from Friday 29 July to Friday 19 August.

The exercise includes up to 115 aircraft operating primarily from RAAF Darwin and RAAF Tindal and up to 2500 personnel from 10 countries: Australia,

Canada, Indonesia, France (New Caledonia), Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Singapore, Thailand and the United States of America.

Pitch Black Commander, Air Commodore Vincent Iervasi said the exercise recognises Australia's strong relationship with each of the participating nations and the high value it places on regional stability and

fostering closer ties throughout the Asia Pacific region.

"The training and integration of forces that occurs at exercises such as Pitch Black directly supports our ability to conduct operations, such as current missions in the Middle East against Daesh," Air Commodore Iervasi said.

"Exercise Pitch Black gives the Royal Australian Air Force a valuable opportunity to exercise our high-end warfighting capabilities, including new platforms and systems."

Several high-end technologies will be exercised at Pitch Black for the first time this year, including the Heron unmanned aerial vehicle.



Story by Corporal Nicole Zurbrugg

For two and a half years, US Marine Corps Major Alexander Goodno has flown F/A-18 Hornets for No. 75 Squadron of the Royal Australian Air Force through the Marine Corps Foreign Personnel Exchange Program.

This program enhances worldwide security cooperation by continuing long-term presence and association among military counterparts.

Every two years, the Marine Corps accepts applications for the exchange program, offering qualified pilots the opportunity to serve in Australia, Canada, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom.

Among the qualifications for an Australian spot, F/A-18 pilots must be a fighter-attack instructor and division lead. Pilots who have completed Top Gun or Weapons and Tactic Instructor course are looked upon as more desirable.

Exceeding these requirements, Major Goodno jumped at the chance when he realised there was an opening for Australia, and within a month of completing the package, he was selected.

"The exchange program provides a unique opportunity to experience how another force operates both tactically and within a squadron in similar platforms," Major Goodno said.

"That's what is really cool about serving with 75 Squadron – the airframe itself is very similar to the Marine F/A-18."



US Marine Corps Major Alexander Goodno

Over his three-year tour, Major Goodno gained ample experience, absorbing all the differences while expanding his wealth of knowledge.

While the Marine Corps' focus is aircraft support to the Marines on the ground and amphibious assaults, RAAF's goals are to gain control of the air, so there was an adjustment period for Major Goodno when he first arrived.

"It's important for me as an exchange pilot to remember that while the Marine Corps does



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operations differently than the RAAF, it doesn't necessarily mean it's right versus wrong.

"Over time, you build a rapport where you feel comfortable interjecting to suggest a different strategy, but I've also had quite a few Wow!-that's-a-really-good-way-of-doing-business moments."

Major Goodno also said a bonus of the exchange was that he could take his newfound knowledge back to the Marine Corps.

Flight Lieutenant Tobias Liddy-Puccini, a 75 Squadron pilot who has worked with Major Goodno throughout his exchange, said it was amazing to work with a pilot with such aircraft experience.

"Being fellow Hornet dudes, we're basically the same breed, so it's easy to integrate, especially when Exercise Pitch Black rolled around."

Exercise Pitch Black 2016 is one of Australia's biggest exercises providing a large-force exercise to multiple nations.

Flight Lieutenant Liddy-Puccini said the first thing he noticed about Major Goodno was the militant and professional way he carried himself and organised his work.

Still carrying himself as a Marine, Major Goodno sports a RAAF flight suit and No. 75 Squadron patches. His regimented style and focus on physical fitness has been a great example for the young pilots according to Liddy-Puccini who, said he was inspired to also apply for the exchange program.

"I think there is a significant responsibility that comes with being an exchange pilot," Major Goodno said.

"I am certainly here to have a great time and do everything I can to help out, but at the same time, I am a foreigner representing not just the Marine Corps, but the United States."

Reflecting on his time at RAAF Base Tindal, Major Goodno said socialising outside work was also a big thing for him.

"The tactics and training are a big piece, but the alliances and friendships acquired here are what bring the nations together to develop strong bonds."

During Exercise Pitch Black 2016, Major Goodno served as a liaison officer to participating US units, explaining 'foreign' jargon and procedures to bemused visitors.



GIVING BACK FINDING PEACE

Later this month, September 2016, a group of eight ADF veterans will head to Dili, Timor-Leste to deck out a mobile learning centre for kids – and hopefully find some closure for their own demons.

In September a group of eight veterans, who deployed to Timor-Leste during their time with the Australian Defence Force, will head over to Dili, Timor-Leste to participate in a volunteer program. The program is funded by Thales and is organised by national not-for-profit organisation, Soldier On, which is focused on helping veterans impacted by their service transition from the Defence Force and successfully re-integrate into civilian life.

Anna Vandierendonck, activities coordinator at Soldier On said the group of eight veterans, who include a former infantry soldier and a former UN aviation support officer, would join up with a team from Mary MacKillop International in Dili to convert an old bus into a mobile learning centre.

"The mobile learning centre will be fitted out with Tetum literacy books, music equipment and other educational resources," Anna said.

"The bus will then be used each day by experienced Mary MacKillop International trainers to visit a range of pre-schools, primary schools, orphanages and disability centres in the wider Dili area.

"They will conduct fun and interactive activities with children, such as craft, music, puppet shows and group reading activities."

Improving literacy skills and interest in education amongst children is essential for the long-term development of Timor-Leste because, as a nation, Timor-Leste has an extremely high illiteracy rate.

But, much more than just a program to benefit the people of Timor-Leste, Soldier On's Timor-Leste volunteer program provides a range of benefits to those who take part.

The veterans heading to Dili with Soldier On have in one way or another been impacted by their service, and more specifically impacted by their time spent in East Timor.

Brett Rufus, clinical psychologist at Soldier On, said the program could often provide closure for those taking part.

"Not only do they feel positive about giving back to a community, but they have the chance to re-visit Timor-Leste and see firsthand the difference Australia made as a nation and they made as individuals," Brett said.

"People who deployed to Timor-Leste during the early intervention in particular, would have seen it at its worse and may not have seen how things have changed since then.

"They may have wondered all these years about what's changed and if their efforts made a difference.

"This program allows them to go back there and witness the progress made."

Brett said re-exposure to an experience can be very important to recovery.

"One of the things that keeps trauma alive is the avoiding of reminders and memories of the traumatic experience or experiences.

"This makes sense as people want to avoid remembering the trauma, but what it does is



Last year's participants on the job in Dili

prevent those experiences from being integrated into memory in a constructive way.

"By allowing veterans to return to Timor under professional supervision and at an appropriate point in their recovery, they are often able to progress towards making peace with what they have seen and experienced."

This is the second time Soldier On has run the Timor-Leste volunteer program. Last year's participants thoroughly enjoyed the experience, with many admitting they found closure.

Let's hope it is the same experience for those heading to Dili this month.

CONTACT hopes to have a post-activity report in the next issue, out 1 December.



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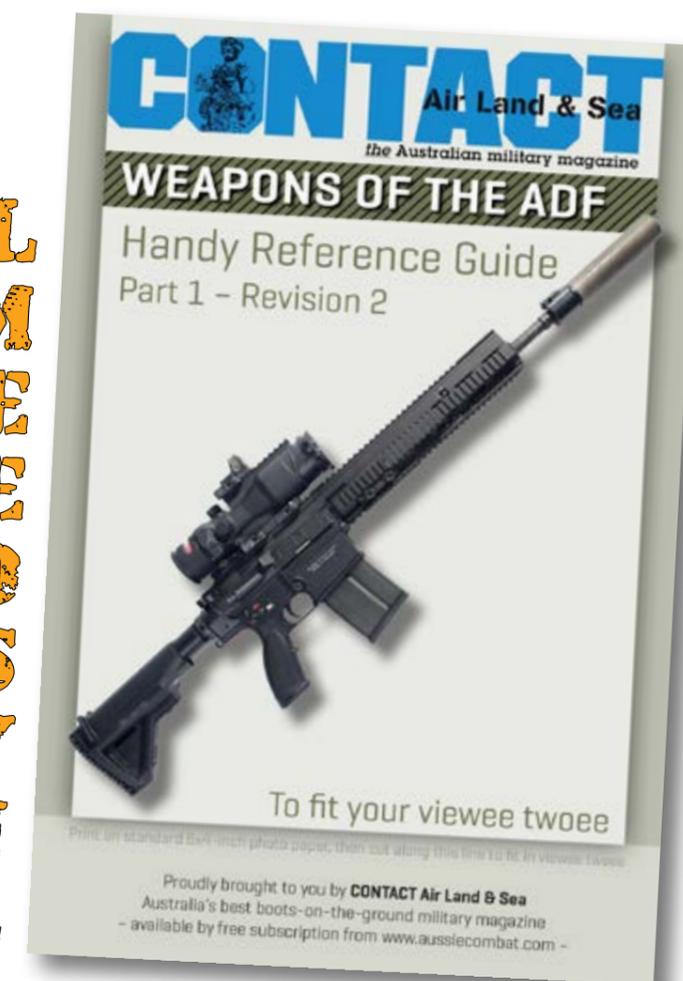
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Corporal William Joseph Bannister DCM, 45th Battalion AIF

LEWIS GUNNER

The wounded NCO lay there as the stretcher-bearer bandaged his wounds. "We'll get you back to the aid post – the doc will get you fixed up," the stretcher-bearer promised.

Bill Bannister was born on 9 July 1895. Following school, he knocked about the inner parts of Sydney, working as a labourer. He enlisted in the AIF on 15 January 1915 and was allocated as a reinforcement to the 3rd Battalion¹.

Bill underwent some of his initial training at Liverpool. Then, in mid-April the trainees received their movement orders. As the men marched proudly down the wharf towards the waiting troopship *Kyarra*, families and friends cheered and waved as the band played a variety of patriotic tunes.

Bill Bannister had time to say a quick goodbye to his mother, who was waiting nearby.

"Please take care of yourself Bill!" she begged.

"Don't worry mum, I'll be right. I've got to be in it, eh?"

Giving her a quick hug and a final kiss on the cheek, he ran towards the gangway.

In Egypt, they underwent final stages of training. But it wasn't all work and the soldiers were able to get into nearby Cairo for a bit of leave. The sights, sounds and smells of a new country intrigued the young blokes, many who, up to this time, had not even seen a big city back home.

The Diggers were also hearing stories coming out of Gallipoli – the casualties, the courage and the tenacity of the Turks as first-class fighters. It was a sobering thought for the young Aussies.

On 14 June 1915, Bill was one of 134 reinforcements who stepped ashore at ANZAC Cove, but lucky enough to remain in the rear area to undergo final musketry training². This

was a lot different to the rifle ranges they'd experienced in Australia and Egypt.

Bill had arrived at the worst of times. The summer heat, the stench of decomposing bodies and the big black-and-green flies were nauseating to the extreme. He took his turn in the front lines and on the carrying parties that ran the gauntlet of snipers going to and from the beach.

He was one of the lucky ones who survived the attack on Lone Pine. The 3rd Battalion went in with 27 officers and 856 other ranks and, after three days of continuous fighting, only six officers and 277 other ranks answered their names at the roll call².

Despite doing his best to keep fit and healthy, Bill unfortunately came down with severe dysentery in early September. His condition was that serious he was first evacuated to the island of Mudros, then to Cairo where he was admitted to Number One General Hospital¹.

Full recovery took months. In early October, he was well enough to be transferred for light duties, at the convalescent camp at Zeitoun.

In February 1916 Bill was attached for duty to the Mounted Military Police, based in the Cairo suburb of Heliopolis. On 17 April, he marched into the 1st Training Battalion, based at the AIF Camp at Tel-el-Kebir¹.

In early May, Bill had learnt that the Australian Army was to be expanded by an extra two divisions. The four brigades of the 1st Division would split to form the nucleus of the new 4th and 5th Divisions, whilst the 3rd Division was still being formed in Australia. Men were needed and Bill found himself posted to the new 45th Battalion, part of the 12th Brigade¹.

Just after Bill's arrival, the battalion was deployed into the desert. The Turks were active within the Sinai Peninsula and the British High Command was under belief that the enemy's objective was the capture of the Suez Canal. The 45th Battalion was allocated a defensive position covering a three-mile front. The likely enemy approach was determined and the battalion spent its time erecting barbed wire entanglements and an energetic defensive posture. Gradually though, the threat of attack diminished and on 11 May, the 45th handed over its position to the 50th Battalion³.

Bill was impressed with his new unit. They were fit, focused, well manned and equipped and most of all, keen to fight³.

In early June, the 45th Battalion moved by train to the Egyptian port of Alexandria and embarked for France. Following their arrival at Marseilles on 8 June, the Diggers boarded trains that would take them to northern France. After a three-day journey, they detained at Bailleul³.

After a quick period of orientation and issue of helmets and gas masks, the battalion readied itself for its first stint in the front line. Training was conducted under the supervision of



Australian Lewis gunner in training

the NCOs, while the CO took his company commanders and junior officers to visit the nearby Armentieres sector – dubbed The Nursery – to look at the front line first hand. Then the order came down, the battalion was to move to the preparation area at Sailly-sur-Lys, then move into the Fleurbaix sector.

Late on the night of 4 July, Bill and the remainder of the 45th moved into the line and ironically took over from his old unit, the 3rd Battalion³. During their week-long stay in the sector, the Diggers experienced the full range of what the Germans had to offer, including sniping, random artillery and mortaring. Although considered a quiet sector, the battalion lost five of the other ranks killed and a further seven wounded³.

Their bleeding over, the 45th was moved to a new area. It was one that no Digger who was there would ever forget – Pozieres.

As the 45th moved up towards their assigned area, the communication trenches leading towards the front were simply a mad house. Bill was astonished as he looked at the wounded and bloodied forms of the 5th Brigade, who had been devastated during their time in the forward trenches, being evacuated to the rear³. Diggers headed rearwards stumbled along crowded trenches as if in a trance, many with what was later called – 'the thousand yard stare'.

If there was ever hell on earth, then Pozieres was it.

German artillery pounded the Diggers almost continuously around the clock. Within the first 24 hours in the line, the 45th lost two officers and 30 other ranks killed and 70 other ranks wounded, the majority attributed to shell fire³.

Over the next month, the 45th was caught in a savage cycle of manning the front line with alternative time in support trenches, but precious little time in the rear area. Carrying parties, salvage collection and patrolling became common practice.

Bill proved himself a most capable soldier, his Gallipoli experience shone through and he had the respect of those around him.

The battalion did however enjoy a brief rest at the village of Bertheaucourt³, which was sufficiently far enough from the front to offer a degree of safety. The battalion licked its wounds following Pozieres. In the second half of 1916, the 45th was in and out of the line and at all times, gave a good account of itself.

But winter was coming – and turned out to be the worst for 40 years. Freezing temperatures, cold driving rain and sleet, allied with putrefying, vicious, knee-deep mud, was a daily occurrence. Newly issued sheepskin coats were a benefit, as was a daily issue of a tot of rum. Bill read the letters S.R.D. on the stone demijohns containing the spirit – 'Service, Rum, Distilled'. Unfortunately, everyone seemed to pilfer more than their cut as the rum made its way from the supply depots to the front line. One bloke remarked dryly, "I think it should be re-titled Seldom, Reaches, Destination"³.

Christmas came and went, as did their turn into and out of the front lines. As the battlefield was a complete bog, little gain was made. Yet the casualties continued to mount, attributed to both weather and sudden spurts of spiteful enemy action.

In February the weather improved marginally and they started to prod the enemy. On 21 and 22 February, the 45th launched two successful raids at a position dubbed 'Stormy Trench'. The raids were a great success, with over 450 yards of trench taken and 61 prisoners captured³.

Bill was promoted to lance corporal in March 1917.

It was a god-send when, in late April, he was able to take a bit of local leave.

In May, the 45th was again in battle, this time in Belgium at a place called Messines.

In early June, Bill went to see the medical officer. The doctor had Bill drop his pants and to examine the affected area.

"So Corporal Bannister, you obviously had a good time on your leave?"

"Yes sir, pretty good", the red-faced soldier answered.

CLOSE BUT NOT CLOSE ENOUGH

Australians recommended for the VC but not awarded

BY MAJOR DARRYL KELLY



"Yes, I can see that. You've got yourself a nice case of venereal disease. Looks like a stay in hospital for you!" the doctor said, looking sternly over the rim of his glasses.

Bill was evacuated to Bulford in England, which specialised in the treatment of venereal disease. He felt more like a prisoner than a patient, with the VD wards being surrounded with barbed wire and Bill was not sorry to leave Bulford Hospital after a four-week stay.

Over the next six weeks, Bill staged through a series of Training Battalions, to prepare him for overseas. On 6 August 1916, he moved to the southern English port of Folkstone where he embarked for France, and rejoined the 45th in the field on 25 August¹.

Bill was appointed as a temporary corporal on 31 October 1917.

In January 1918, Bill decided to give himself a bit of 'self-approved leave' to the nearby village of Bailleul. When he was pulled up by Military Police, they demanded his pass.

"Haven't actually got one mate!" Bill replied.

The MP's then asked for his number and name?

"1900, Eurich J.E.", Bill boldly stated.

The MP corporal looked Bill up and down and pondered – "I think you better come with us!" and grabbed Bill by the arm.

Bill jerked his arm free and was off like a flash. A couple of days later he stood at attention in front of his company commander as three charges were read. He was awarded a severe reprimand¹.

In early April 1918, the 12th Brigade was locked in battle around the village of Dernancourt. On 4 April a document taken from a captured German prisoner revealed that the enemy was planning to launch a big attack against the village the next day.

Bill's battalion moved up into a support position west of the village, overlooking the vital railway embankment. Despite being shelled on the way, they reached the area and, under cover of a dense mist, they dug in.

At 0700hrs the next morning, the Germans launched a huge artillery barrage on the 45th Battalion's position, consisting of mixture of high-explosive and gas shells. The barrage lasted for two and a half hours, but the Diggers held their ground, huddled in the bottom of their pits. As the barrage lifted, enemy infantry surged forward, trying to catch the Australians unawares. Under the pressure of the attack, the battalions were slowly being forced back from

the embankment. Bill's C Company was held in reserve and ready to support the 47th Battalion, positioned to their front. Bill checked and re-checked his Lewis Gun. His No2 made sure the drums were ready and the straps on his haversack were done up tight.

Then the order came down for C Company to move up to counter the German onslaught.

Bill chose his position well and started to put effective fire on the enemy. The injection of C Company did the trick and started to stifle the attack in that sector. But the Hun was not going to be troubled by such a small and insignificant force and they redirected the main effort of their machine-gun and artillery fire against the company position.

The Germans advanced from the flank behind the screen of incoming fire. Bill could see them but, because of the lay of the land, he couldn't bring his gun to bear.

He turned to his No2, but found he was dead. He reached back and grabbed a fresh drum of ammunition from the dead man's satchel, then lunged up and tried to engage the enemy by firing from the shoulder, but his fire was erratic and ineffective. He looked around and signalled for Lance Corporal Alf Squires to come over to him.

"Alf – I can't get a bead on the enemy. I need to put the gun on your shoulder, we stand up and I'll get some rounds onto the bastards or we'll be stuffed" Bill said.

"Is that your only plan? There's bloody lead flying in all directions up there!" Alf replied.

"I'm open to suggestions, mate!" Bill said with a chuckle. The pair braced themselves, then Bill ordered "Go" and they stood up and began firing.

The steadiness of the gun now made all the difference. The .303 rounds started to find their mark, inflicting heavy casualties on the enemy and forcing the remainder to take cover. Every time the enemy tried to move, Bill and Alf brought fire against them.

The pair kept up the pressure for two hours despite knowing that every time they stood up they were fully exposed to intense enemy artillery and machine-gun fire.

A runner crawled forward to the pair with a sandbag full of ammo drums.

"We're pulling back to a better position, the boss wants you to cover our withdrawal!" the runner said.

"Yeah, no worries – just don't bloody forget us".



Two Australian soldiers man a Lewis Gun in an anti-aircraft role

Suddenly a round slammed into Bill's leg, but he remained on his feet and continued to fire. Then he was hit in the arm. It was only when he was wounded for a third and more serious time, did he relent and hand over the gun to his mate.

Bill's attention then turned to his wounded mates from his section who lay around him. The stretcher bearers were continually coming forward and dragging wounded men from the front. Then they came to Bill.

"Your turn, mate!" one of them said.

"No way. Make sure you get everyone of my blokes back, before you take me!" Bill said.

The German advance continued against the position and the Diggers knew that if they didn't withdraw soon they'd be surrounded and cut-off. But Bill was adamant the others needed to go before him. The stretcher bearers reluctantly agreed and carried the last of the wounded Diggers out.

Bill pulled the revolver from his holster and waited for the Germans but luckily they missed him as they assaulted through the position.

As he lay there and awaited a bullet he contemplated life and thought of home.

He could hear the battle raging nearby and the crescendo increase. It had been about four hours since his mates withdrew and now, out of the corner of his eye, he could see the Germans falling back as the Aussies counterattacked and reoccupied the position.

"You still with us mate?" a stretcher bearer asked as he knelt beside Bill and started to cut away his tunic.

The heroic actions of Bill Bannister and Alf Squires, were instrumental in holding up the enemy so that the Australian companies could withdraw and consolidate in new positions, where, with ammunition re-distributed they were able to counterattack and retake the original ground¹.

Bill's wounds were serious and he was evacuated to England for treatment.

What he didn't know was that he had been recommended for the Victoria Cross⁴. Unfortunately, this was downgraded to the Distinguished Conduct Medal. Alf Squires picked up the Military Medal, for his work.

It was 16 August before Bill was well enough to rejoin the battalion¹. With the Hindenburg Line now breached, the Australian's were hard on the heels of the fleeing enemy.

Following the armistice, Bill waited his turn to be sent home. He left France for England on 3 January and was ordered to report to the camp at Hurdcott, where those men who had joined in 1915 were being assembled for their return home.

On 9 March, Bill boarded the troopship Kashmir and sailed for Australia, and arrived in Melbourne on 23 April¹. He was discharged from the AIF on 1 July 1919¹.

Bill married Olive Stamford that year and the couple settled in the southern Sydney suburb of Bexley. He passed away on 20 July 1929 and his ashes were scattered at Rookwood Cemetery.

Ironically, Bill never claimed his war medals and his son John made claim for them in February 1939.

Notes

- 1 National Archives of Australia: B2445, WW1 Service Records, 1912 Bannister, William Joseph
- 2 Wren E. Randwick to Hargicourt; History of the 3rd Battalion, AIF, McDonald, Sydney, 1935
- 3 The Chronicle of the 45th Battalion AIF, Major J.E. Lee DSO, MC
- 4 AWM 28, Recommendation Files for Honours and Awards, AIF, 1914-1918 War



Toughest challenge



Australian Army Cadets National Adventure Training Award 2016 was completed at the Singleton Army Training Area in cold, wintry conditions during the July school holidays.

Rather than staying at home during their school break, 127 Army cadets from across the country successfully completed the challenging week-long activity and were awarded the Adventure Training Award (ATA) badge for their efforts.

Commander Australian Army Cadets Brigadier Wayne Budd said the ATA was the toughest activity the cadets would face during their time in the youth development organisation.

"This week has been a defining moment in the lives of the cadets because of its arduous and challenging nature," Brigadier Budd said.

"The ATA will also be one of the highlights of their young lives due to its hard physical nature."

During the week, cadets trekked around 100km cross country, using their navigation skills, during which they were exposed to activities to test initiative and skills to achieve complex tasks.

Brigadier Budd said each participant on the ATA was tested and assessed individually on activities including casualty evacuation, radio communications, first aid and field engineering.

The cadets also underwent individual tests of courage with a 20m-high ropes course activity.

Dux and highest point scorer for the ATA was Cadet Under Officer Zachary Steele, 18, from 312 ACU Puckapunyal, Victoria.

He said the ATA really pushed the cadets and himself to their limits.

"If you really didn't want your [ATA gold boomerang] badge, you wouldn't have made it through the week," CUO Steele said.

"Every moment you were being pushed and challenged as you competed on each of the seven or so activity stands.

"One of the hardest challenges for me was the high-ropes activity where individual courage was tested."

CUO Steele said if a young cadet asked him why he should participate in the ATA in the future he would tell them, "No matter how difficult it is, pain is temporary and victory is forever".

In addition to Army-Cadet staff and regular and reserve soldiers posted to the AAC, the activity was supported by staff from ADFA and the School of Military Engineering.

The Australian Army Cadets is a leading national youth-development organisation with the character and values of the Australian Army, founded on strong community partnership, fostering and supporting an ongoing interest in the Australian Army.

Army cadets are provided excellent opportunities to develop individual self-esteem, to work in a team environment and to develop individual skills including leadership, initiative and problem solving, in a safe, challenging and fun environment.

There are around 16,000 Army cadets in 212 units spread across all States and territories of Australia.

50 years in cadets

Peter Frost is a quietly spoken man who knows how to engage with young people – he's been doing it for more than half a century.

Then again, you'd expect this from the Assistant Head of College at Sydney's Waverley College.

Lieutenant Colonel (AAC) Peter Frost is one of the country's longest-serving members of Australian Army Cadets.

He became a cadet when he was a 13 year-old Year 8 student at Waverley College when the Commanding Officer asked students to volunteer to join a year earlier than normal.

"I made the inevitable step of volunteering when the Commanding Officer came into my classroom and said he had a shortfall of approximately 15 spaces and he'd like some of us

to volunteer to go into Cadets," Lt-Col (AAC) Frost said.

"Cadets helped me to discover some of the strengths I had, plus an abiding love of teaching, because it was through cadets I went into teaching. I discovered in cadets that I could become an instructor and, once I found that particular niche, it went on from there.

"The other element for me as the years went on was the opportunity for planning and management and other things that make up a leader. It's a wonderful skill if you can get hold of it."

Lt-Col (AAC) Frost said Army Cadets gave him a great military experience and skills, such as military systems, protocols, procedures, analysis, implementation and even

looking at what went wrong and learning from it.

One of his own classmates was the current Governor General, Sir Peter Cosgrove.

He said both were in the same debating team and shared a number of military experiences together.

"Peter became the adjutant while my role was as the training officer."

Waverley College Cadet Unit averages around 400 cadets with about 200 in uniform compulsorily in Year 8.

The College has taken out top honours a number of times in military skills and military drill competitions.

Lt-Col Frost (AAC) will be applying for his Federation Star to round out his other military awards

Lieutenant Colonel (AAC) Peter Frost, centre, with Waverley College Cadets – Cadet Lance Corporal Joshua Gleeson, Cadet Under Officer Tom Kossenberg (Senior Under Officer), Cadet WO1 Max Petrov (RSM) and Cadet Lance Corporal Cameron Dawson – showing off an AAC plaque recognising his 50 years of service.





Promotion Courses

While 'normal' schoolkids were roaming around public places looking for Pokemons during recent school holidays, dedicated, motivated teenagers of the Australian Air Force Cadets (below) at RAAF Base Forrest Hill, Wagga Wagga, NSW, Australian Army Cadets (right) and (presumably though we didn't get any reports or photos) Australian Navy Cadets gave up their school holidays to successfully participate in promotion courses. Congratulations to all these fine young Australians.



Nijmegen March 2016

A group of Australian Air Force Cadets left Australia on 15 July to take part in the 100th Four Days Marches Nijmegen, in Holland.

The largest multiple-day marching event in the world, Nijmegen this year attracted more than 60,000 competitors, who self-nominate to march roughly 30, 40, 50 or 55km per day for the four days.

The AAFC team tackled the 40km course, which saw them officially cover 160.4km from 19-22 July – but, walking to and from their hostel each morning and afternoon added another 27km to their total.

For their efforts, each person who finishes the event receives a Four Days Marches Cross – an official Dutch medal.



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75th Anniversary AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE CADETS 1941-2016



A Discussion of the value, training and future of the Australian Air Force Cadets, and a short history of the broader cadet movement in Australia.

By Gary Martinic – abridged by CONTACT

Since 1941, hundreds of thousands of young Australians have undertaken training in an organisation that was originally founded as the Air Training Corps (ATC), later (circa 1976) to become the AIRTC, and which since 2001, has been known as the Australian Air Force Cadets.

AAFC is the air element of the Australian Defence Force Cadets. Operating overwhelmingly as a volunteer organisation, the ADFC today boasts approximately 27,000 young Australians aged between 13 and 20, supervised, trained and mentored by a small, professional force of some 2600 volunteer instructors and officers.

Approximately 6400 cadets and 900 staff comprise the AAFC service, which is administered and actively supported by the Royal Australian Air Force.

Formed with the key aims of providing training in leadership, initiative and self reliance; developing an interest in aviation, history, air-force knowledge and discipline and, in its widest sense, developing Australian youth into responsible young adults of good character.

Many famous Australians, including former Prime Minister John Howard, champion golfer Greg Norman, popular actor Russell Crowe, Chief of the Defence Force Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin, the former Chief of Air Force, Air Marshal Geoff Brown, and of course a host of

famous career army officers of the past including Generals Sir Thomas Blamey and Sir Frank Berryman have been cadets.

In fact, approximately 18% of the lower ranks of the ADF and up to 50% of key senior officers began their military careers serving in a branch of the ADFC.

Despite being formed in wartime and from very modest beginnings, the AAFC has evolved to become highly respected. Despite changing fortunes over 75 years, the AAFC (and the broader ADFC movement) have become important national institutions that have contributed much to the history of our country.

History of the Air Training Corps

Formed with the aim of earmarking and providing pre-entry training for air and ground crews for the RAAF during WWII, the Air Training Corps was officially 'born' in February 1941, when the War Cabinet authorised the establishment of this new 'Cadet Corps' which was, during the interwar years, a part of the RAAF Reserve.

It formally commenced operating on 11 June of that year, under the leadership of Group Captain WA Robertson and a small number of staff.

In August of that same year the first Wing was formed. By October, most of the states and



territories of Australia had their own Wings, formed by a small group of dedicated volunteers, most of whom were WWI veterans, many of whom were members of the Royal Flying Corps or the Australian Flying Corps and all of whom were now RAAF personnel.

Its aims worked magnificently – so much so that by October 1943, the ATC boasted some 12,000 cadets in training.

A significant number of ATC cadets completed aviation-related training and went off to fight as air or ground crews in the war in Europe. Many did not return.

By the time the war in the Pacific had ended, the number of ATC cadets had dropped to just over 7500 and had dropped to just 3000 by the end of 1949.

In the context of peace it was made clear that cadets were no longer obligated to enlist in the RAAF, but that 'should they desire to do so, their enlistment would of course be welcomed'.

Up to the early 1970s, a period of mild to moderate growth ensued, despite only moderate support from the ADF and little if any from government. This was also a period in which school-based and non-school-based cadet units became more distinct.

Disaster was struck for the organisation when in 1975, the ATC was officially disbanded by the then Whitlam Labor Government, heavily

influenced by a strong public anti-war sentiment. Despite this, the core of the ATC survived, mostly thanks to a strong base of RAAF reservists, volunteers and parents.

The Fraser Coalition Government, which came into power after the famous 'dismissal', completely reinvigorated and reformed the ATC in 1976, though largely as a non-military organisation – and renamed AIRTC.

A few years later, in 1982, girls were encouraged to join and many were admitted.

Over the next decade or so, the numbers of both cadets and staff dramatically increased.

In the year 2000, the first signs of enhanced government support were initiated with the important Topley Review, which led to the formation of the Directorate of Defence Force Cadets (DDFC) – a tri-service policy-support directive – and a \$6m Cadet Enhancement Program.

In 2001, AIRTC changed its name to Australian Air Force Cadets.

Despite the new name change, which seemed to suggest a nationally cohesive organisation, there were actually eight separate entities based on essentially state boundaries, with systems and standards of training across ground and air subjects varying significantly and, while AAFC cadets and staff wore identical uniforms, they still were not fully supported by the RAAF.



This all changed in April 2005 when the AAFC was reorganised into operational and functional wings, with a central national policy with command authority.

Early History and Changing Fortunes of the Cadet Movement

The cadet movement has had a profound impact on many generations of Australian men and women. Many fondly remember the time they spent in uniform learning simple skills such as field craft, navigation, survival and first aid, as part of a popular movement that also developed important life skills such as initiative, confidence, self-discipline, leadership and, of course, a team spirit.

During the years of WWII the instruction to cadets was more of a military nature, in which they were taught tactics such as defence and attack drills using weapons, often in an effort to make the training as 'realistic' as possible, and in the hope they would later go on to enlist into regular military service, which many did.

Today, the cornerstone of the training is aimed at character development and adventurous training that fosters qualities of leadership, cooperation and self-reliance.

Originally formed with the intention 'to train their boys for national defence in a time of national emergency', which at the time grew out of a fear of war with Napoleon in the late 1850s, the very first cadet corps were formed at many famous English schools such as Eton, Harrow, Shrewsbury and Winchester.

The (army) cadet movement as it was then, specifically focused on strict discipline, particular military skills, and ceremonial drill lessons.

An ever-present fear of war with France, as well as the popularity of rifle-shooting competitions (which were used as an incentive to encourage young cadets to join) actually helped the cadet corps to become very popular.

Of course it wasn't long before the cadet movement was established in Australia, with the introduction of the Commonwealth Military Cadet Corps, which prospered until the depression years of the 1890s, when a number of schools were forced to close their cadet units.

Earliest records seem to indicate that the honour of being the oldest army cadet unit belongs to St. Mark's College in Sydney, which was originally established in 1866, although many other units were similarly formed in Australia's eastern and southern colonies.

In contrast, the naval cadets were not established until the beginning of the 20th century.

Many years later a resurgence returned to the cadet corps. In fact, compulsory cadet service was introduced in 1911, and Australian youth could serve either at school or community-based units, with first-stage enrolments peaking at around 100,000 cadets.

Like many large-scale organisations, cadets have suffered from financial ebbs and flows over the years.

The community also became increasingly uneasy about youth undertaking tactics and war-like training, which many considered a form of 'youth militarism', especially at the time of the Vietnam War.

A Strong Program of Formal Training

AAFC cadets undertake formal classroom instruction in a range of subjects during weekly parade nights. Some of these include military service knowledge, aviation, fieldcraft and survival, drill and ceremonial.

Each of these subjects are taught at four separate levels – recruit, basic, proficiency and advanced.

Once cadets have passed advanced levels of training they are eligible to undertake specialist elective subjects that are normally undertaken as special projects.

Additionally, highest ranking cadets such as cadet under officers and cadet warrant officers are able to accrue 2.0 ATAR points towards their Higher School Certificate, and also towards a Certificate IV in Frontline Management.

Once core subjects are completed, senior cadets are offered specialist elective subjects to study. These include but are not limited to; air traffic control, fire safety, radio communications, field operations, hovercraft technology, motor vehicle awareness, aircraft engines, meteorology, rocketry, air navigation, basic visual tracking, and aviation weapons.

Types of Activities Offered

AAFC cadets are offered a broad range of activities to undertake, which include remembrance marches and services on Anzac Day, Remembrance Day, Vietnam Veterans Day, and Servicemen's Day.



They are also offered opportunities to undertake weekend field exercises concentrating on survival in the bush, fieldcraft techniques, navigation and leadership.

Of course, cadets can experience gliding and powered flight, as well as exchange opportunities with overseas cadets on the International Air Cadet Exchange program.

From a team-building perspective, they are also regularly offered fun activities such as white-water rafting, rock climbing, I-Fly indoor parachuting, abseiling, carving, and a ropes-over-water course at ADFA.

Flying - a Cornerstone Activity

The AAFC has always provided opportunities for flying activities to both its cadets and its staff members, in the form of both powered and glider aircraft.

The purpose of this has been to train and test members in aeronautical skills, and to help expose AAFC cadets to aviation training and flying skills in general.

This was first introduced in the 1950s and was popular from the start.

Approximately 66 gliding scholarships and 20 powered-flying scholarships are awarded every year in the AAFC, which are financed and supported by the RAAF.

Many cadets and staff have achieved their training goals and their 'wings' in this way, and continue to train and mentor junior members.

Recently, the AAFC has been very fortunate, with the RAAF providing the newest gliders to use in its training program. Eleven ASK-21 Mi

self-launching gliders and eleven DG-1001 Club soaring gliders were officially handed over to the AAFC by Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence Darren Chester and Chief of Air Force Air Marshal Geoff Brown in March 2015.

The RAAF has also financed the construction and development of a new National Aviation Centre for the AAFC in Bathurst.

Comments from former cadets

A huge majority of those who have served in any branch of the cadets have only positive things to say about the movement. For example, an oft-quoted remark by ex-members is how serving in the cadets has 'transformed' their lives for the better, going on to explain that their cadet experience was extremely valuable because of the military-orientated training to build self-reliance, resourcefulness, endurance and a sense of service to the community.

Many said they felt a part of 'one country', as the types of activities that cadets regularly run promote and build a sense of teamwork and togetherness, often achieved not only via military-style bivouacs, but also through teamwork and bonding activities such as various sports, and even orchestras. These experiences work to set them up for success in later life and also provide many with a sense of patriotism.

Another ex-member of cadets recounted how the organisation didn't just teach him how to be competent using a rifle, and how to navigate, but it also taught him how to think quickly in challenging situations. Most importantly, he said that it set him on the 'straight and narrow',



making him understand right from wrong, and thereby instilling a sense of worth and respect for both himself as well as others around him. This same person went on to contribute as an adult staff member for 17 years to 'give something back' to the organisation that had such a positive affect on his life.

Another ex-army cadet fondly remembers the discipline, training and education he was given, much of which he subsequently used during his 30-year-long career in the regular army, and felt very strongly that similar opportunities should be provided to school-age teenagers today.

Another went on to a long and rewarding career in the RAAF (as did many others). This ex-member recounts that his very positive experience in the AAFC would stay with him for the rest of his life, and concluded by asking, "Which other youth organisation gives you the chance to learn to fly or glide, to compete in target shooting, to navigate in the field - including at night - to learn a musical instrument, or to participate in team sports?"

It was also strongly felt that many of these ex-members of cadets had done more with their lives than had they not been cadets, and that the friendships made during these formative years remained throughout their lives.

Many parents of cadets comment on the high levels of discipline and personal responsibility they see in their kids.

The importance of quality adult staff

The scale and scope of the cadet activities is only as good as the quality and calibre of the staff who plan and implement them. It is no good having myriad interesting subjects to learn, or activities in which to participate, unless you have the staff who have the knowledge and experience to teach, train and supervise them adequately. The cadet movement is fortunate to be run mostly by RAAF reservists and a number of non-military adult volunteers, some of whom were cadets themselves.

Both groups provide a significant wealth of knowledge and experience that directly contributes to whatever class is being taught, or whatever activity being run.

Also, it is interesting how quality staff can have a positive influence on cadets during their

service. The consensus of many former cadets is how it was the work of adult staff that often set high standards, and inspired them to achieve greater things, and even to bring out very hidden talents, through constant encouragement and mentoring.

Summary

Regardless of the changing fortunes of the AAFC and the broader cadet movement over time, it is clear that 'cadets' have been an institution that has touched the lives of a significant proportion of our population over the past nearly 150 years. It is also clear that throughout the history of the cadet movement there have always been four key pillars that have been vital to operations in the past, and will likely do so in the future. These have been a combination of factors including important educational and community interests, financial resourcing, the level of government and military support, and the inherent outlook of both on the cadets.

As has been evident in the past, any disproportion between these pillars will likely weaken the future structure of the organisation.

The Brewer study conducted in Australia and two earlier studies from Canada and the UK have all led to the same general conclusion - that 'government-sponsored school-aged military cadet schemes are valuable', in terms of national, military, educational and sociological benefits.

Another substantial Australian study by McAllister assessed all three elements of the Australian cadets also found that, 'by any standards, the [ADF cadets] is an important recruiting ground for the Australian military'. And, Huston, in his research into Australian Army Cadets saw the value of the scheme as it gave the cadets a foundation of military knowledge and discipline, developed leadership qualities, self-reliance and initiative, as well as a sense of tradition which encouraged cadets to continue in some form of military service. While he did feel that training wasn't sophisticated, it did provide a solid understanding of rank structure, barracks routine, discipline, fieldcraft and military organisation, which placed former cadets at a significant advantage over non-cadets undertaking training at either ADFA or RMC.

Huston argued it was not only important to reinvigorate the Cadet Corps, but indeed to

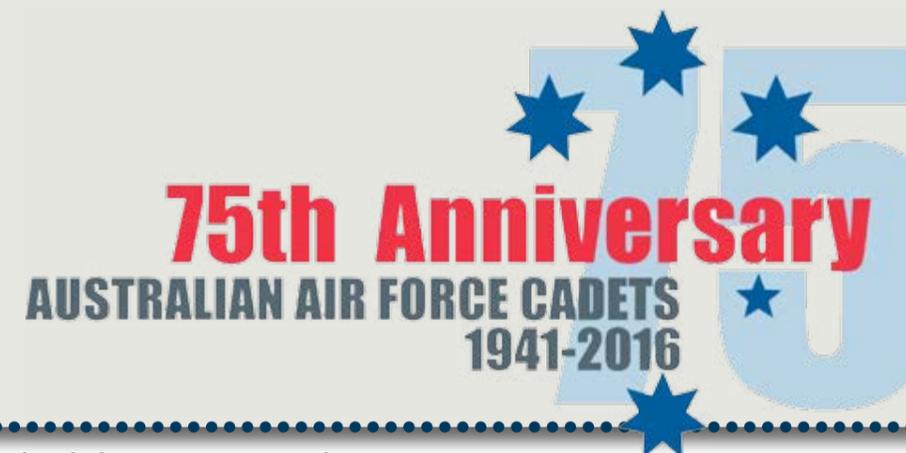


regularly maintain their numbers at high levels because of the inherent value they bring to the ADF. In the end, he affirmed that the cadet scheme should be considered an investment rather than an expense.

In the electronic age of video games, sedentary lifestyles, record rates of obesity and other lifestyle influences, it has never been more important to engage Australia's youth and make them aware of the wide range of healthy activities that the AAFC, and the broader ADFC can offer.

The author

In his civilian role as Laboratory Manager and supervising scientist, Gary Martinic manages the Centre for Infectious Diseases & Microbiology and the Marie Bashir Institute of Biosecurity & Infectious Diseases at the Westmead Institute for Medical Research. Wearing his 'other hat', Flying Officer Martinic works as Training Officer-Operations, Firearms Quality Manager and Unit Safety Coordinator at 307 (City of Bankstown) Squadron, Australian Air Force Cadets, Lidcombe, NSW.



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AND WILL SURVIVE
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FIXED BLADE KNIVES FOR COMBAT AND SURVIVAL
APPLICATIONS. WITH THE STRONGARM'S MODULAR SHEATH
SNAP-TOGETHER COMPONENTS, THE OPERATOR CAN MOUNT THE
KNIFE VERTICALLY ON MOLLE, HORIZONTALLY ON A STANDARD 1.75"
TACTICAL BELT, OR IN A TRADITIONAL DROP-LEG BELT MOUNT FASHION.

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