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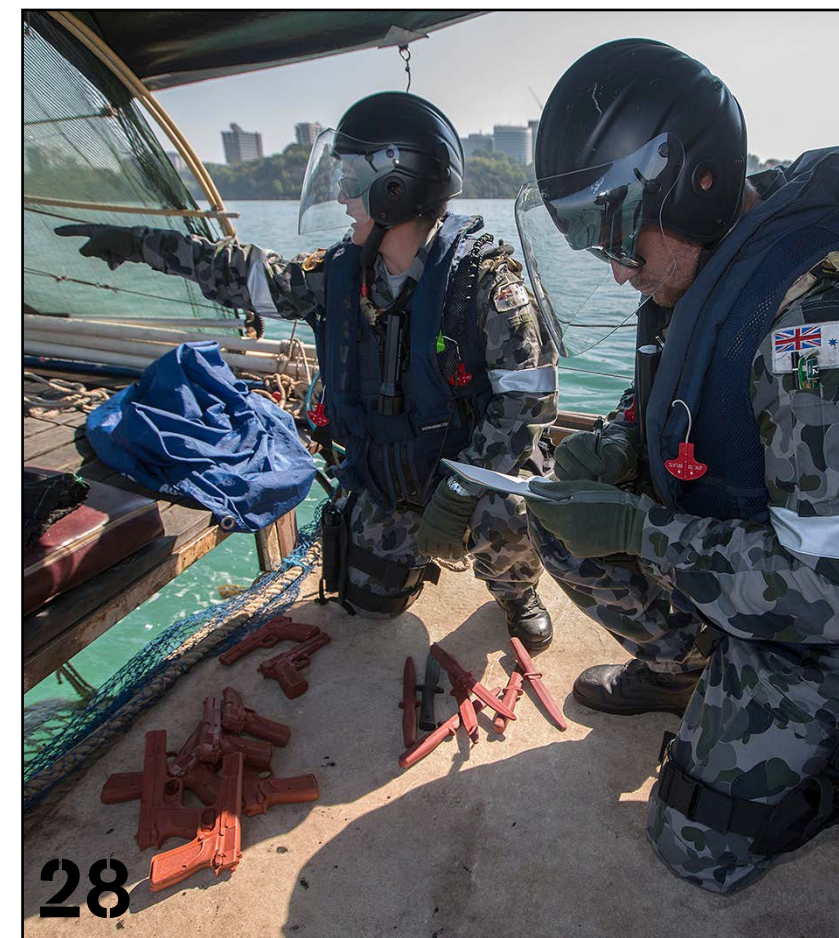
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Nightstalkers
Page 34

Photo by Sergeant
Christopher Prows
US Army

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Issue #10 of **COMBAT Camera** already – how time flies when you're
having fun!

Unfortunately, only issue #9 and #10 of **COMBAT Camera** are
currently uploaded to our on-line digital archive –
www.issuu.com/contactpublishing

While I do have plans to rectify that shortcoming, it will actually
take some time.

You see, you can also find several back issues of **CONTACT Air
Land & Sea** at www.issuu.com/contactpublishing and I am working
to upload all 40 back issues of that publication, as far as I can in the
order in which they were published.

I intend to upload four issues (a whole year's worth) of **CONTACT
Air Land & Sea** on the first day of the months in which I am not
publishing the new issues of both magazines – and I have already
uploaded issues #1 to #4.

This project means that subscribers should anticipate an email
from me on the first day of every month until it is complete. And,
because of the size of the backlog of back issues, this project will
actually take close to three years!

But, as I said earlier, time flies when you're having fun.

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you currently receive monthly emails from me announcing new
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Managing Editor

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NEWS

Guided 70mm rocket trial

Australian Defence Force trials recently proved the effectiveness of a system that turns ordinary 70mm rockets into precision laser-guided weapons.

BAE Systems' Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System laser-guided rocket for use on Army and Navy helicopters was trialed at Woomera, South Australia, in August.

The ground trial was the first time the APKWS technology was demonstrated on a Forges de Zeebrugge (FZ) rocket.

David Harrold, director of precision guidance solutions at BAE Systems, said APKWS had a long track record of success with the US military on Hydra rockets.

"This demonstration highlights the unique mid-

body design and versatility of the technology by showcasing the ease of deployment on the FZ rocket and its launcher," he said.

"Based on this successful test, the Australian Army intends to conduct a live-fire flight trial in November that could lead to the APKWS rocket fielding on the Tiger ARH and Navy's MH-60R Seahawk platforms beginning in 2015."

Conducted by the Australian Aerospace Operational Support Group, the trial was designed to qualify the APKWS rocket for use by the Australian military to bridge the current capability gap between unguided small-diameter rockets and larger-diameter anti-armor munitions.



PHOTO BY CORPORAL NICCI FREEMAN

Sergeant Tim Thompson and Trooper Cameron Hunter, 1st Aviation Regiment, prepare a 2.75-inch Advanced Precision Kill Weapon System rocket during trials at Woomera.

SASCAT

Australia's Special Operations Command has let a contract for the supply of new vehicle for their operators.

Supacat Ltd have been asked to supply 89 Special Operations Vehicle - Commando, which will be built in Australia.

Defence Minister Senator David Johnston said the contract would create 150 new jobs in western Sydney and Victoria.

"This will provide significant opportunities to Australian industry during the production, integration and through-life support phases of the project," Senator Johnston said.

"Approval has also been given to enter into a number of contracts for the provision of support vehicles, as well as various communication and networking systems that will make up a communications capability and provide additional opportunities for Australian industry.

"This acquisition will enhance our Special Forces' ability to maintain a capability edge over emerging threats to Australia's national interests.

"These are modern, highly mobile vehicles that can be re-configured to suit the individual mission and the communications on board will provide digital connectivity across the ADF."

Senator Johnston said the contract was valued at more than \$130 million.



Photo by David Ascoli for Supacat

A35-001 FLIES



AU-1 (factory designation) or A35-001 – Australia's first F-35 Lightning II Joint Strike Fighter is flown for the first time over Fort Worth, Texas, by Lockheed Martin's F-35 Chief Test Pilot Al Norman. Australia has committed to 72 F-35As, comprising three operational squadrons – two at RAAF Base Williamtown and one at RAAF Base Tindal – with a training squadron also based at RAAF Base Williamtown. The first few Aussie aircraft will join the pilot-training fleet in the USA with the first aircraft deliveries to Australia expected in 2018. It is hoped that all 72 Australian aircraft will be fully operational in Australia by 2023. The fleet of 72 aircraft is currently budgeted at \$12.4 billion, including associated facilities, weapons and training. Australia may also consider a fourth operational squadron, for RAAF Base Amberley, which would ultimately bring the fleet to 100.



Airbus' A400M performs an air-to-air refuelling hookup with an F/A-18 Hornet. The tanker recently completed a test campaign of five flights that included 33 dry contacts as well as dispensing 18.6 tonnes of fuel to an F/A-18 Hornet in 35 wet contacts. With a basic fuel capacity of 50.8 tonnes, which can be increased by the use of extra cargo-hold tanks, Airbus is pushing the A400M as the most capable tactical tanker in the market. The standard A400M aircraft has full provisions for air-to-air refuelling operations already installed as standard and only requires the installation of an optional air-to-air refuelling kit to become a tanker. Designed from the outset to be a dual-role transport and tanker aircraft, the A400M can provide air forces with a cost-effective way to acquire an air-to-air refuelling capability in addition to a versatile logistic and tactical airlifter.



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F: Phoenix-1 Combat (205 mm blade, Z60 high carbon steel 56-58 HRC, full leather sheath, Micarta handle) \$ 249

G: Sensei (220 mm blade. Available in AUS8 & D2 steels and also in TiNi black coated blade or stain polished finish. MOLLE compatible Kydex sheath, Kraton handle) \$ 179

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NEWS

F90 starts production



The new F90 is effectively ambidextrous

Thales has announced low-rate initial production of its F90 assault rifle ahead of introduction into the ADF expected to commence in the near future.

Vice President Armaments at Thales Australia Kevin Wall said it was a major milestone in the F90 story.

"Engineering and development of Australia's F90 has created a light, versatile weapon that has met the highest standards of performance and reliability," he said.

"Backed by over a century of military weapons experience, Thales's Lithgow facility will now begin manufacturing F90 rifles as part of a de-risking exercise designed to smooth the transition in production from the existing in-service weapons to the F90."

The Australian Army has already announced modifications to its current weapons-handling drills in anticipation of the new rifle, foremost among them being no requirement to remove the barrel to clear the weapon – because the F90 has a fixed barrel.

Thales says a recent modification to F90 deflects ejected shell cases forwards and downwards, so the rifle can be fired from either shoulder without modification.

GG visit

Governor-General of Australia Sir Peter Cosgrove visited Australian Defence Force personnel in the Middle East in October, thanking them for their dedication and resolve.

The retired general met with Australian troops at our main support base in the Middle East on 22 October, before travelling to Afghanistan where he met President Ahmadzai, before spending time with Australian servicemen and women in Kabul and Kandahar.

"It is my great privilege as Governor-General, Commander-in-Chief and as a fellow veteran to, on behalf of all Australians, thank you for your courageous and essential service to our nation," General Cosgrove said.

Governor-General Sir Peter Cosgrove speaks with a member of Australia's Special Operations Task Group training for a pending mission in Iraq. Photo by Sergeant Hamish Paterson



**WATCH TWO VIDEOS
FROM THE GG'S VISIT**



NZDF numbers up

The uniformed strength of the New Zealand Defence Force has grown by 530 since last year – on the back of plummeting attrition and strong morale.

Today there are 9035 sailors, soldiers and airmen in the NZDF, with 5081 civilian staff, an increase of six per cent – its highest staffing levels since 2011.

Chief of Defence Force Lieutenant General Tim Keating said that trade groups and ranks in the three services, which reduced during a one-off spike in attrition two-and-a-half years ago, continued to be restored.

"The training 'pipelines' of the three services are full and retention and re-enlistment efforts over the past year have continued to be successful," he said.

The most dramatic improvement was in the Navy, where attrition fell to 7.99 percent from 15.91 percent in June last year.



Corporal Aaron Horrell competing at AASAM 2014. Photo by Sergeant John Waddell, ADF

150 YEARS FOR QAMR

Queen Alexandra's Mounted Rifles celebrated its 150th anniversary in September.

The regiment, based at Linton Camp, paraded through Palmerston North on Saturday 20 September to commemorate 150 years of service and sacrifice.

The parade highlighted the unit's history and included Light Armoured Vehicles, horses, the Army Band and 200 foot soldiers in the Palmerston North Square.

There was also a display of past and present armoured vehicles.

QAMR Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Sholto Stephens said it was a great opportunity to connect with the wider community as the last remaining Mounted Rifles Regiment in New Zealand.

"It's also the right occasion to pay tribute to all those who have served in the regiment throughout its history, especially those who paid the ultimate price for their service," Lieutenant Colonel Stephens said.

The parade was attended and reviewed by Governor-General Lieutenant General Sir Jerry Mateparae.

A memorial service was also held on Sunday 21 September.



Photo from NZ Army Facebook page

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3rd Brigade's first



Australian Army's 3rd Brigade celebrated 100 years since it was first formed by making new history in Townsville on the first parade of its type ever held in Australia.

The parade through the streets of Townsville on Saturday 30 August 2014 is believed to be the first time in Australian history an entire formation has been granted Freedom of Entry to a city. Townsville City Council recognised the significance of 3 Brigade's centenary by conferring it with Freedom of Entry to the City of Townsville, an affirmation of the bond between the formation and the citizenry. Originally formed in August 1914 for service during World War I, 3rd Brigade took part in the fighting at Gallipoli and on the Western Front in Europe. Elements of 3rd Brigade were the first ashore at Gallipoli on 25 April 1915 and remained on the peninsula until December.

Today, 3rd Brigade is a multi-role combat brigade consisting of more than 4000 military and civilian personnel based at Lavarack Barracks.

Townsville Mayor Vernon Veitch said it was an extremely important day and a real honour for the city.

"This is a very proud day for Townsville City, the first in Australia to have a brigade-level Freedom of Entry parade," Councillor Veitch said.

Commander 3rd Brigade Brigadier Roger Noble said the honour was a recognition of the service of thousands and thousands of

PHOTOS BY LANCE CORPORAL KYLE GENNER AND CORPORAL DAVID COTTON

Australians who have served and are still serving their country.

"For this brigade, starting on the 25th of April 1915 when it went ashore at Anzac Cove, right up until today with guys serving in Afghanistan right now, this is a recognition of 100 years of service," he said. "It is a real honour."

"Never before has Freedom of Entry been granted to a whole brigade."

"It has always been given to individual units, but never to a whole formation."

WATCH PARADE VIDEO
↓



REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJOR OF THE 3RD BRIGADE, WARRANT OFFICER CLASS ONE BRUCE WALKER STANDS AT EASE DURING THE BRIGADE'S CENTENARY PARADE



COMMANDING OFFICER 1ST BATTALION, ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT, LIEUTENANT COLONEL EAMON LENAGHAN LEADS HIS MEN ON PARADE AT JEZZINE BARRACKS, TOWNSVILLE, AS PART OF 3 BRIGADE CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS



PHOTOS BY CORPORAL JANINE FABRE

With heads held high and swords firm, the first class of officer cadets marched out of the Afghan National Army Officer Academy (ANAOA) near Kabul in late September.

The first kandak (battalion) of 245 officers completed 12 months of training at the academy, with Coalition mentors, including ADF personnel, guiding ANAOA instructors along the way.

Acting senior Australian officer at Camp Qargha Major Andrew White said the first marchouts marked a significant step forward for the officer academy.

"I expect the quality of cadet will improve over coming years as we receive some of these cadets back, with operational experience, to become instructors in future years," Major White said.

After conducting a formal march past in their ceremonial uniforms, four cadets were recognised for high achievement with the presentation of ceremonial swords

donated by the various nations supporting the academy.

Australian, British, Danish, Norwegian and New Zealand

Defence personnel who mentor at ANAOA were guests at the parade.

There are currently 17 ADF mentors at the academy with 50 more in force-protection and support roles.

Australian mentor Sergeant Lloyd Harris said he was proud to see the cadets march out and said he had enjoyed his time working with them.

"The Afghans are really positive people and they're emotionally invested in this place," Sergeant Harris said.



AFGHAN OFFICERS GRADUATE



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KAKADU

Regional war games

The Royal Australian Navy's largest maritime warfare exercise for 2014 ended on 12 September after nearly three weeks of activities, culminating in free-play war games off the coast of Darwin.

MAIN: AN RAAF HAWK 127 SIMULATES A MISSILE ATTACK ON HMAS SYDNEY DURING AN AIR-WARFARE COMPONENT OF EXERCISE KAKADU 2014.
INSET: HMAS NEWCASTLE CONDUCTS A REPLENISHMENT AT SEA WITH PAKISTAN NAVY SHIP NASR.
PHOTOS BY ABLE SEAMAN TOM GIBSON



Exercise Kakadu, held from 25 August to 12 September, involved eight ships, 26 aircraft and more than 1200 people from 15 Asia Pacific and Indian Ocean navies.

The exercise concluded with a 'free-play' scenario where the participants were divided into two fictional enemy forces to battle at sea over disputed territory.

Exercise Director Captain Heath Robertson said the purpose of the final sea phase was to test each nation's ability to work together in a realistic and unpredictable warfare environment.

"The exercise controllers in the headquarters ashore injected intelligence feeds into each force – BlueLand and RedLand – to lead them down certain courses of action, and to test maritime interoperability," Captain Robertson said.

"Both forces did exceptionally well and proved that the collaborative tactical planning and graduated training during the first two weeks of the exercise enabled them to understand and improve how each other works.

"We are very grateful for the hard work of all exercise attendees, and also the Darwin community for making us welcome."

The fleet successfully conducted 19 helicopter operations, 18 air-defence serials, 18 simulated anti-submarine exercises, 11 gun tracking or firings, four replenishment-at-sea serials, two towing exercises and one light-line transfer.

Coalition participation included JS Hatakaze from the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force, PNS Saif and PNS Nasr from the Pakistan Navy and BRP Ramon Alcaraz from the Philippine Navy, along with personnel from Bangladesh Cambodia, Malaysia, Papua New Guinea, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Tonga and Vanuatu.

The Royal Australian Navy was represented by HMA Ships Sydney, Stuart, Newcastle and Arunta as well as S-70-B2 Seahawk, AS350BA Squirrel and MRH-90 helicopters.

Royal Australian Air Force assets included Hawks, Hornets, Wedgetail, Orion and Learjets.

Main: Members of HMAS Stuart and Philippine Navy ship BRP Ramon Alcaraz conduct boarding training on Sapphire Bay.

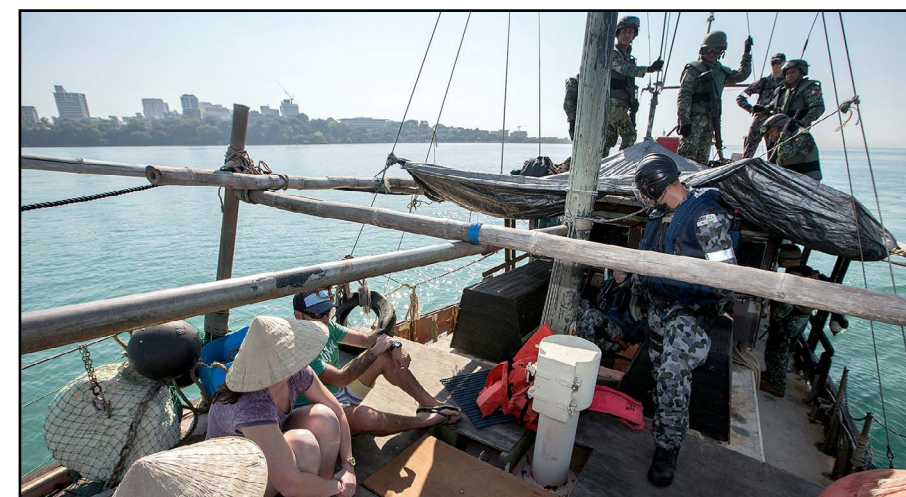
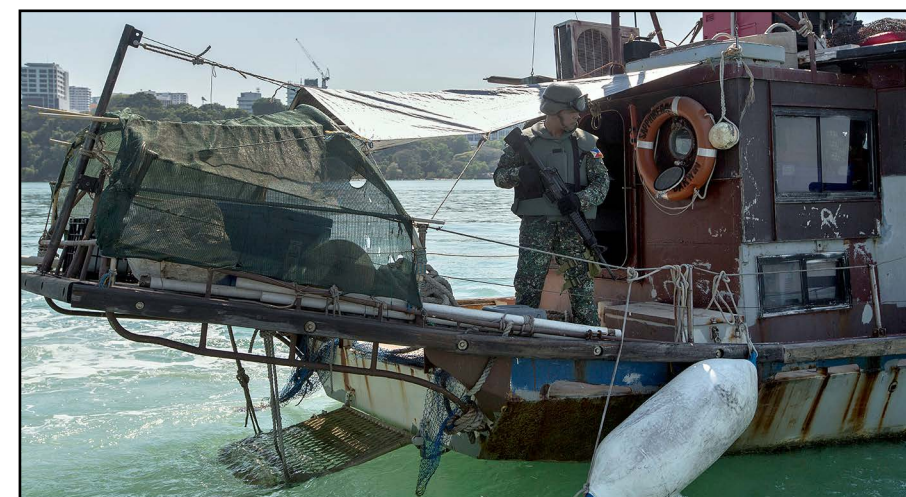
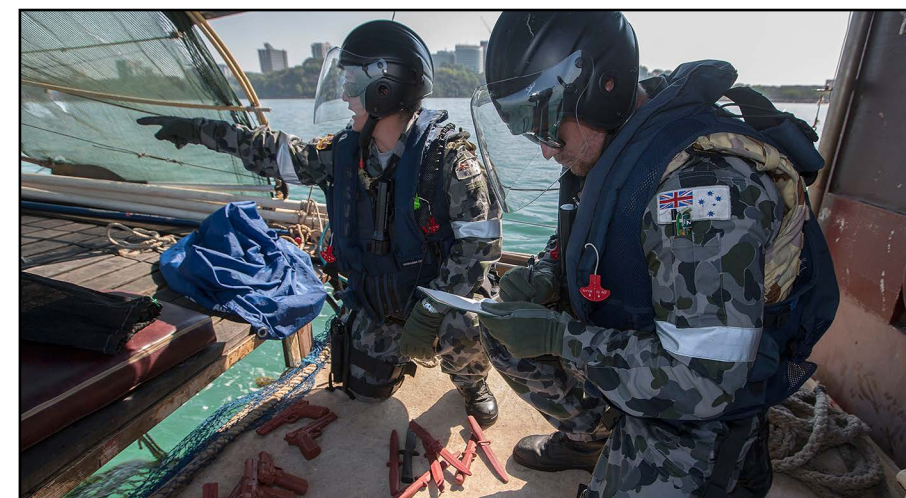
Right, top to bottom: Members of HMAS Stuart find a cache of simulated weapons during boarding training.

A member of the boarding party from Philippine Navy ship BRP Ramon Alcaraz stands watch during boarding training.

Members of HMAS Stuart and Philippine Navy ship BRP Ramon Alcaraz conduct boarding training on Sapphire Bay.

Petty Officer Bosun Chris Whittaker gives participants an after-action debrief.

Photos by Leading Seaman Paul McCallum



WATCH EXERCISE VIDEO WRAPUP





Clockwise from below: Able Seaman Adam Goodwin, Marine Technician and Swimmer of the Watch, onboard HMAS Stuart .
Pakistan Navy Ship Saif at sunrise.

Sub Lieutenant Haris Khan aboard Pakistan Navy Ship Saif.
Commodore Peter Leavy is given a tour of the machinery control room onboard PNS Saif.

Leading Seaman Stephen Courtney searches for an enemy aircraft onboard HMAS Stuart.

Photos by Able Seaman Nicolas Gonzalez



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US Army photo by Sergeant Christopher Prows
5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Special Warfare Combatant-craft Crewmen from Special Boat Team 12, stationed at Naval Base Coronado, California, with the help of aviators from 4th Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, stationed at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington, conduct a Maritime External Air Transportation System training evolution on Moses Lake, Washington.

MEATS is a way to move a watercraft from a point on land or water to somewhere else using an Army MH-47G Chinook helicopter.

The crewmen rig the boat to the helicopter as it hovers above, and then, as the boat begins to fly, they climb a rope ladder to board the helicopter as it moves to its new location, where they will slide down a rope to the boat before the helicopter disconnects the hoist cables.



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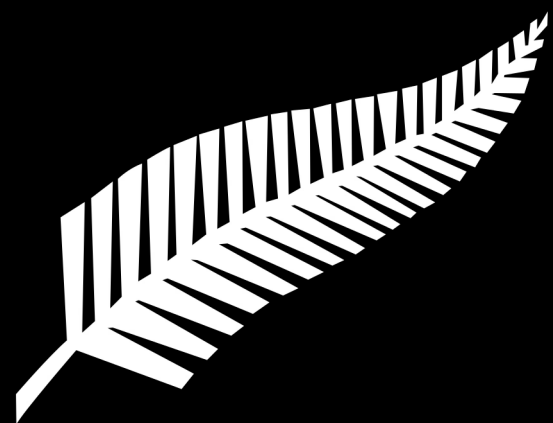
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NZDF RESERVIST OF THE YEAR



New Zealand Army Sapper Christopher Farhi was named the 2014 New Zealand Defence Force Reservist of the Year after a full day of demanding tests and challenges.

For his efforts, Sapper Farhi won the Sir Harold Barrowclough Trophy and a place in the Catafalque Guard at Gallipoli on Anzac Day next year – the centenary year.

At the day-long competition Sapper Farhi competed against 10 other junior reservists in a series of strenuous tasks which challenged them over a wide range of military skills. Tasks included shooting, swimming and other physical challenges, as well as a variety of general knowledge, leadership, problem-solving and first-aid tests.

Sapper Farhi serves as a combat engineer with the New Zealand Army and is a property developer in civilian life.

His win was marked by the impressive stamina and commitment he showed in the physical parts of the competition.

This was the sixth year the New Zealand Defence Force Reservist of the Year competition was held.



Clockwise from above:

The winner Sapper Christopher Farhi concentrates on his pistol shooting.

ASEA Blair Hesp powers through a police fitness test.

Corporal Adam Gane goes above and beyond during the police fitness test.

Private Michelle Goh and other competitors listen to a briefing.

OMTO Luke Prattley reviews his score with a safety officer after his pistol shoot.

Photos by Corporal Sam Shepherd



A US Marine Corps recruit of Fox Company, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, uses his rifle to hold up barbed wire on a combat training course at Parris Island. Week nine of the 13-week recruit course is dedicated to basic field skills.

Parris Island, South Carolina, has been a site for Marine Corps recruit training since 1 November 1915. Today, approximately 20,000 recruits pass through Parris Island annually for the chance to become a United States Marine. Half of all males and all female Marines do basic training here. The rest (those from west of the Mississippi) attend Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, California.

Photo by Corporal Caitlin Brink

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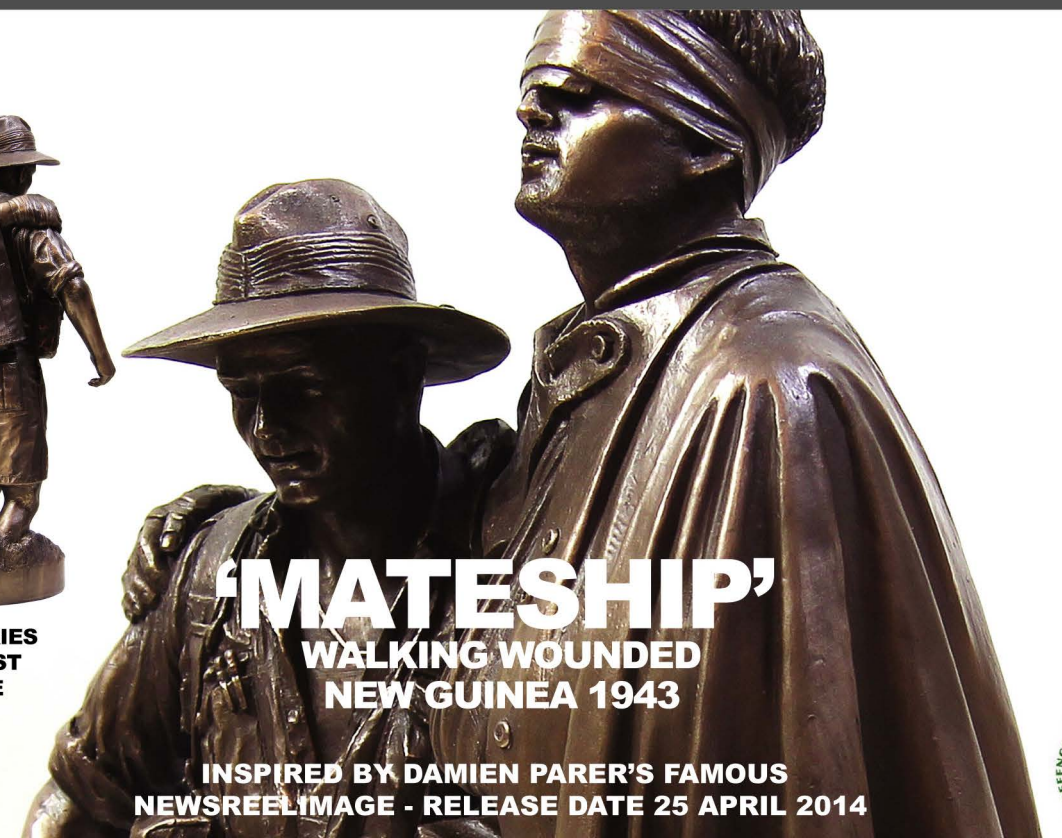


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IRAQ REDUX



A Royal Australian Air Force F/A-18F Super Hornet refuels from a RAAF KC-30A tanker above an Iraqi city. Photo by Sergeant Hamish Paterson, 1JPAU

Australian military forces have again been deployed to participate in yet another new Coalition war in the Middle East – returning to Iraq for another open-ended engagement. On the home front, while public support for our military and its mission is high, the battlelines are already forming on another familiar front – Defence v The Media. The following is an extract from a briefing given by Defence Minister David Johnston on 17 October, about two weeks after Australia's air task group began combat operations in theatre.

I have with me today Air Commodore Joe Iervasi. Joe leads, *on my behalf*, the way Australia conducts air operations. Not just limited to Iraq, but all the other places where we deploy air capabilities, Joe is the commander of many of those activities for me.

Over the course of this week, our air operations in Iraq in particular have surged.

We have been flying more missions than we ordinarily would so that the US and other coalition partners can support particularly Kobani.

Our missions have involved at

least one pair of Super Hornets and, often over the last few days, two pairs of Super Hornets, flying what remain quite long missions in the order of eight to 10 hours.

They are supported by the E-7 Airborne Earlier Warning and Control aircraft and the KC-30 tanker.



ABOVE: A Royal Australian Air Force F/A18F Super Hornet takes off for its first combat mission over Iraq, while another taxis towards the runway. Photo by Corporal Max Bree
RIGHT: A KC-30A maintenance technician conducts after-flight checks and servicing on an air-to-air refuelling drogue. Photo by Sergeant Andrew Eddie

276 flying hours - at least 2 targets hit

The Super Hornets have flown 39 sorties as of yesterday, and we had further missions last night. They have accrued 276 flying hours.

Over the same period the air-to-air refueler, the KC-30, has flown 14 missions and provided more than one-million pounds of fuel to coalition aircraft – predominantly the Australian Super Hornets but also French Rafale fighter aircraft.

A single mission by a Super Hornet could require it to refuel up to four times in a single flight.

The E-7 Wedgetail aircraft has flown 11 missions, accruing 126 flying hours.

That aircraft continues to provide a very important role managing airspace, deconflicting aircraft movements and reporting back to the Combined Air Operations Centre.

As we announced late last week, on 8 October, our Super Hornets struck an ISIL facility, which through subsequent battle damage assessment we have confirmed was destroyed, with a number of ISIL members killed in that attack.

Earlier this week we had two pairs of Super Hornets attack ISIL military equipment and facilities in northern Iraq, using their 500lb bombs, and our indication is that that was also successful.

I don't intend to be explicit in terms of the timing or the number of strikes, but what I did want to convey to you is that we have now done multiple strikes over a number of nights.

Question: Can you tell us how many of the 39 Hornet sorties have involved use of weaponry?

Answer: I don't intend to give that amount of detail, but it has been more than one now. I will continue to provide an indication to you of what we're striking and the type of tempo with it, but, since we last conducted a brief, it has now been multiple strikes.

Question: You've mentioned there was one before, so this is a second one. There's now been two?

Answer: There's at least two, yes.

Question: At least two?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Not specifically just two?

Answer: I'm remaining vague on that, hence my language. There's at least two.

Question: You mentioned 39 sorties as of yesterday, but you said there were some overnight.

Answer: We did fly missions overnight. They involved four Super Hornets and supporting aircraft. There were no targets struck overnight.

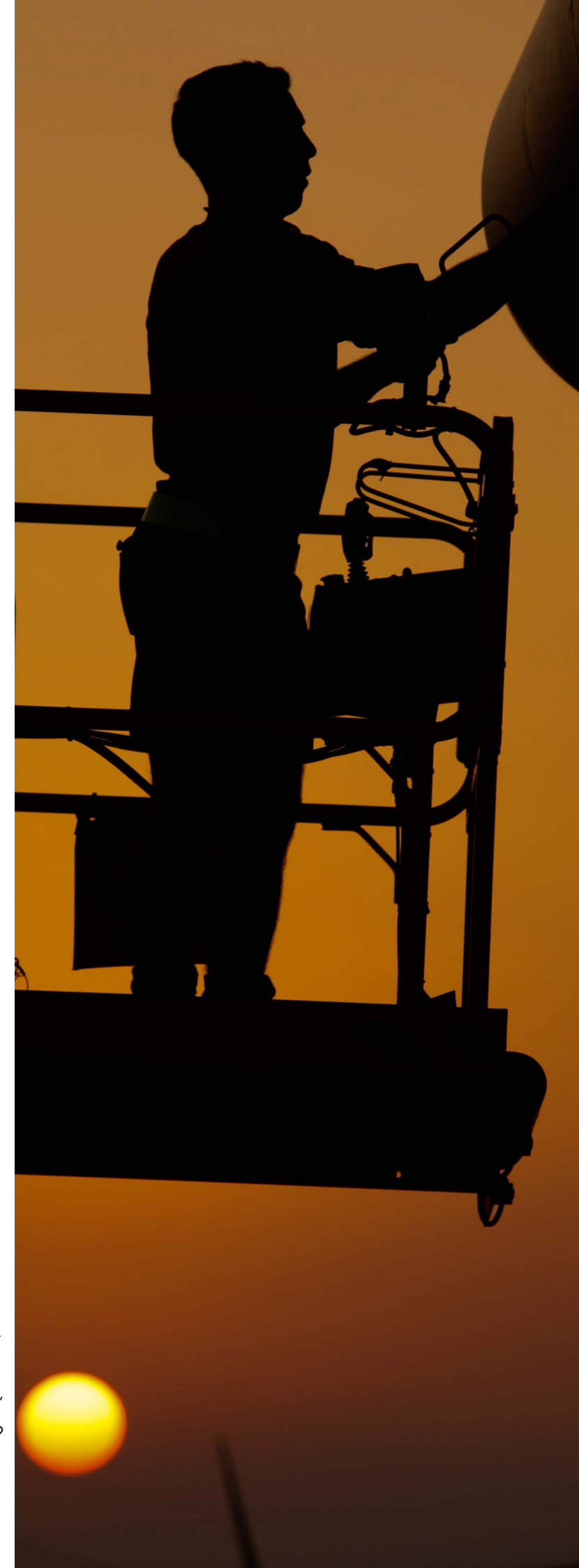
Question: Sorry – just to clarify – how many missions altogether now? You said 39 and then a couple...

Answer: My numbers were up until yesterday, but this morning, our aircraft have only just returned in the early hours, so we have flown an additional four Hornet flights through last night. So if you add 39 sorties up until yesterday, add four more to there, up to 43.

Question: Just on the ISIL casualties from the Australian air strikes – you said on that first one there were multiple, and you said that at least two strikes have taken place. Were there other occasions where there were casualties?

Answer: There were. There were casualties associated with the strikes that we had performed.

Question: At least two? **Answer:** Yes.





COMBAT CAMERA WISHES THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE ADF GOD SPEED AND A SAFE RETURN



Clockwise from above left: An RAAF Air Refueller Operator onboard the RAAF KC-30A Multi Role Tanker Transport refuels two F/A-18F Super Hornets above Iraq - photo by Sergeant Mick Davis; RAAF Armament Technicians transport bombs to an RAAF F/A-18F Super Hornet - photo by Sergeant Andrew Eddie; The crew of a RAAF F/A-18F Super Hornet depart on their first combat mission to Iraq - photo by Sergeant Andrew Eddie; An RAAF F/A-18F Super Hornet refuels from a RAAF KC-30A Multi Role Tanker Transport over Iraq - Sergeant Hamish Paterson; Flight Lieutenant Daniel White, a senior systems control officer, prepares for a mission on an E-7A Wedgetail - Photo by Corporal Max Bree.



STORIES BY CORPORAL JAMES GULLIVER, USMC
PHOTOS BY CORPORALS SCOTT REEL, USMC AND MAX BREE, ADF

An 81mm mortar landed in the nearby enemy position, marking the beginning of the assault for the Marines. Immediately they emerged from the tree line engaging the enemy targets at more than 100 yards with pinpoint accuracy. Within minutes the enemy position was destroyed and the Marines were pushing through to their next target.

The Marines with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Marine Rotational Force – Darwin, participated in a live fire range during Exercise Koolendong, August 14, 2014. The range was designed to prepare the Marines for the large-scale bilateral operations in the final section of the exercise.

During Exercise Koolendong, approximately 1500 Marines and Australian Defence Force personnel undertook a wide spectrum of infantry training activities including establishing an expeditionary operating base in austere conditions, company-sized helicopter and ground live-fire ranges, and a final capstone fire-and-maneuvre exercise executed bilaterally with members of 1 Brigade involving infantry, tanks, artillery and engineers.

"This range is a platoon-size assault designed to give our guys confidence at the platoon level," said Gunnery Sergeant Don Turner, platoon sergeant with Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines. "This helps them prepare for the company-sized assaults where we'll be using multiple assets from the entire rotational force."

AUSTRALIAN ARMY SOLDIER BOMBARDIER AARON COSTAS, A JOINT TERMINAL ATTACK CONTROLLER FROM 8TH/12TH REGIMENT, CALLS IN SUPPORT WITH UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS OFFICER FIRST LIEUTENANT SEAN SWALLEN (LEFT) AND CAPTAIN AARON BRUSCH, COMMANDING OFFICER BRAVO COMPANY, 1ST BATTALION, 5TH MARINES, DURING EXERCISE KOOLENDONG AT BRADSHAW TRAINING AREA, NT. PHOTO BY CORPORAL MAX BREE ARMY NEWS

Working at the platoon level allowed the commander a close look at his Marines, and enabled him to fine tune elements of his section that training at the company level did not allow, Gunnery Sergeant Turner said.

"My objective during the assault was to get my team through the breach created in the enemy position," said Corporal Daniel Espinoza, fire team leader with Alpha Company 1st Battalion, 5th Marines. "There is a lot of adrenaline in you when you're performing one of these ranges. The key is to stay calm and focus on making the right decisions for your section."

The Marines continually advanced in the size of operations throughout the exercise until ending the three-week training with a combined arms assault with the Australian Defence Force. Exercise Koolendong was designed to improve both forces interoperability and capacity to effectively respond to regional crises and contingencies.

"This exercise offers us a unique training experience that is hard to find in the US," Corporal Espinoza said. "The environment is very unique, forcing us to adapt to our surroundings. It also gives my guys the experience of training in a different setting."

Before the ranges began, Marines were given an opportunity to evaluate and modify them to suit their training needs, and created a set of obstacles to overcome.

"Letting us set up the ranges gives our command a lot of freedom in the type of training they want the Marines to perform," Gunnery Sergeant Turner said. "We do not get the opportunity to do this often and it's excellent experience for our Marines."



MAIN: USMC CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters come in to land at Bradshaw training area in the Northern Territory, during Exercise Koolendong 2014.

LEFT: USMC Lieutenant Sean Swallen, a weapons platoon commander with the Marine Rotational Force - Darwin, waits for a CH-53E Super Stallion to land.



The door of the Armoured Personnel Carrier slammed to the deck giving the signal for the infantrymen to exit and begin the assault. Under covering fire from both tanks and machine guns the infantrymen quickly set up their fighting position and begin moving on the objective. With precision, skill and a heavy volume of fire the position was quickly taken and the combat team settled into defence.

The combat team was composed of elements of the 5th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, 1st Armored Brigade and four Marines from 1st Battalion, 5th Marine

Regiment, designed to provide heavy fire support with the Shoulder-Launched Multipurpose Assault Weapon during Exercise Koolendong 2014.

"Our section's job was to assist the Australian infantry to provide suppressing fire and proving anti-armor assets," said Lance Corporal Westley Stone, assault man, 1st Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, Marine Rotational Force - Darwin.

"The SMAW that we use is a very effective weapon system and if used properly can change the course of a firefight," Lance Corporal Stone said.

During the exercise the Marines engaged in numerous dismounted patrols and live-fire ranges in support of the Australian combat team. 1st Armored Regiment used M-1A1 Abrams tanks for fire support, and PMV Bushmasters to transport the infantry.

The exercise gave the Marines an in-depth look into the Australian Army's structure, providing valuable information essential to future operations.

"I know that my guys have taken a lot away from this experience," said Corporal Andrew Hermann, assault man, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines.

"Whether it's their infantry tactics or seeing how their weapons systems function, we have not had a better opportunity to work this closely with the Australians.

"During this training phase it is our job to learn as much about the Australian military system as we can, so that when we get back to the States we can pass on information to other members at the battalion for any future operations we might have with the Australians," Corporal Hermann said.

"We are just grateful we had such a unique opportunity to work with the them. Training like this is extremely valuable and we are happy to be out here with our allies."

Exercise Koolendong was the culminating shakeout for the Marines at the end of their six-month deployment. They went home in October.



[VIEW MRF-D OVERVIEW VIDEO](#)



WAR DOGS THE BAY

MAIN: Soldiers from the 5th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, fire a Carl-Gustav 84mm.

Bottom, left to right: Lance Corporal Keith Hall, 6RAR, covers his mates during the obstacle course;
Privates Christian Verney and Tainui Kingi, 5RAR, in action on the obstacle course;
Soldiers from 8th /9th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, do a section attack in fading light;
Private Patrick Hampson, 8/9RAR shows aggression on the bayonet assault course.



The Duke of Gloucester Cup – or DoG Cup – is a prestigious event for infantry battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment.

Since its inception during the occupation of Japan in 1947, the DOG Cup has challenged its competitors in a series of activities that test infantry sections from

each battalion on their skills and expertise in the art of soldiering.

The event was run over five days in August, as usual at the School of Infantry, Singleton, with sections competing in a range of activities designed to assess team dynamics and individual soldier skills as well as endurance under

stressful conditions, to ultimately find the best RAR section.

And the winner this year was the section from 6RAR – who went on to represent Australia on the Cambrian Patrol in the UK, widely recognised as the toughest section-level skills test in the world.



Above: Private Siaosi Paseka from 8th/9th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, works his way through the 'bear pit'.

Left: Corporal Thomas McCammont, 8/9RAR, helps a team-mate over an obstacle.

Below: Private Thomas Windsor, of 8/9RAR, takes aim in the last of the evening light during the Duke of Gloucester Cup at Singleton, NSW.

Photos by Able Seaman Kayla Hayes



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PHOTOS BY ABLE SEAMAN STEVEN THOMSON

Left: Able Seaman Clearance Diver Rick Coote from Clearance Diving Team One takes up a defensive position on the beach at HMAS Waterhen during a demonstration for the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal. Below: Able Seaman Clearance Diver Eden Bradshaw emerges from Sydney Harbour.



Clearance Divers demonstrated their discipline and precision on Sydney Harbour in October in a display for the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal.

CD Team One demonstrated a range of capabilities from dive-tank operations to mine disposal.

Commander Damien Scully-O'Shea, Navy's Mine Warfare and Clearance Diving Capability Manager, said it was important to illustrate the working conditions and occupational risks clearance divers face in the course of their duties.

"Clearance diving is a specialist skill and provides the ADF with a flexible and valuable capability," Commander Scully-O'Shea said.

"Working with unpredictable explosives in cold and wet conditions brings with it unique risks.

"While we do everything we can to minimise them, it is important to illustrate the hazards so DFRT members have all the information they need as they review the allowance for specialist operations.

"During seven hours of demonstrations, two divers were inserted and recovered by Navy MRH-90

helicopter off Balls Head, helping to illustrate how we perform aerial mine disposal tasks."

DFRT members also visited the Navy's Diving School, Submarine and Underwater Medicine Unit and Mine Hunter Coastal HMAS Gascoyne.

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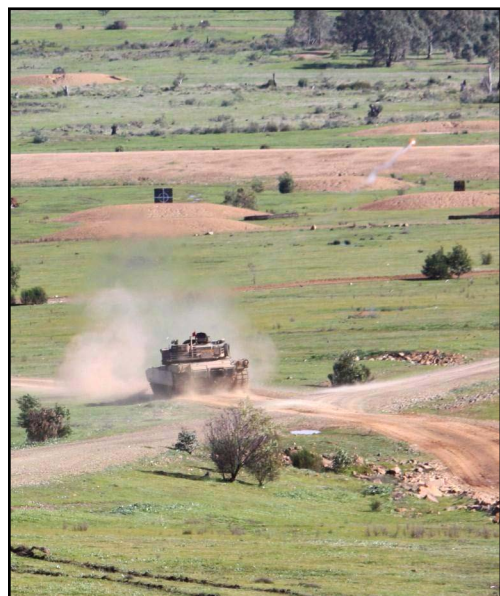
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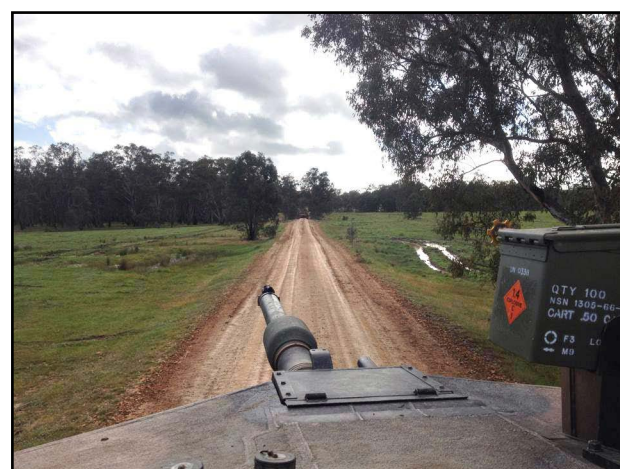


M1A1

Crew commanders' course



During August and September, an M1A1 Abrams tank crew commanders course was held by the School of Armour, Puckapunyal. After successfully conducting live-fire qualification practices, the students went on to complete intensive tactics training across the Puckapunyal training area. Photos courtesy School of Armour Facebook page.



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SHOOTER!

COMBAT Camera fan Leigh Atkinson of Redland Bay, Queensland, was one of the first people in Australia to get very-special behind-the-scenes access to Temora Aviation Museum's collection of beautiful warbirds – and filed this report...





There are numerous places where our proud history of military aviation is remembered and celebrated through the ongoing restoration, maintenance and operation of retired military aircraft. The public's familiarity and appreciation for these aircraft has grown over the years, thanks in part to their appearance at public air shows and displays.

there is a thirst for greater access to these aircraft

But, there is a thirst for greater access to these aircraft, particularly by photographers who appreciate them as the wonderful and dramatic subject matter they can be. The row of lenses along the fence at any airshow is testament to this.

In a clever move that looks to be kicking goals, Temora Aviation Museum (TAM) has launched a photography workshop called SHOOT! that gives photographers exclusive access to TAM's impressive collection. This workshop also focuses on arming participants with a higher level of expertise in their weapon of choice.

I was lucky enough to be one of the first to experience this workshop. And the word 'lucky' is not misused, as even TAM appears pleasantly surprised at the initial response to their workshops. One email sent out to the usual newsletter mailing list saw the first 15-person workshop sold out in just four hours and, by the time the first SHOOT! workshop kicked off on 19 September this year, a further two workshops were sold out and a waiting list of 65 eager photographers lined up.

While the workshop is hosted by the museum at their facility at Temora it is delivered by Penelope Beveridge, a Sydney-based commercial photographer with years of professional experience and a passion for aviation.

Penelope does not come across as your classic aviation geek or plane spotter but she certainly brings and delivers a substantial amount of technical knowledge to assist photographers at any level to gain value from her expertise.





The workshop focuses on providing participants greater knowledge in operating their equipment to get the best out of themselves and their gear.

It then presents them with lots of opportunities to get up close and personal with some of the country's most iconic aircraft, both on the ground and in the air.

To maximise the value of flying hours for the aircraft in TAM's collection, the workshops are structured around one of TAM's bi-monthly flying days where a selected part of the collection and some visiting aircraft are rolled out onto the tarmac, powered up and put through their paces.

The first SHOOT! workshop coincided with TAM's "Front-line fighter" display day and gave my fellow 'SHOOTers' and I complete ground access to their CA-27 Sabre, P-40 Kittyhawk, Supermarine Spitfire, CA-13 Boomerang and a selection of other aircraft.

The flying display for the day was delivered by a visiting Lockheed 12 dressed in US Army C-40 livery and the Boomerang followed by the Spitfire and Kittyhawk.

Participants at the first SHOOT! workshop ranged in skill and experience from those who had never flicked the switch away from auto through to one participant who had been broadly published.

I consider myself an emerging photographer on the cusp of a professional photography career and I found Penelope's instruction both creative and technically beneficial for me, while also delivered at an engaging and challenging level for all of the SHOOTers.

The workshop started on the Friday at 5pm and was jam packed through to midday Sunday. The workshop was intense, even hectic at times, however the result was very satisfying.

SHOOT! threw me together with a great bunch of likeminded and enthusiastic photographers, which helped make it even more rewarding.

Coming from my personal perspective of being neither a professional photographer nor journalist I found SHOOT! a wonderful experience that I would recommend to anyone with a passion for aviation photography.

For details and bookings at future Shoot! workshops at Temora Aviation Museum, visit www.aviationmuseum.com.au



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EXERCISE KOWARI

Australia China USA working together

PHOTOS BY CORPORAL JAKE SIMS

Exercise Kowari, the first land-based trilateral military exercise between Australia, China and the United States, held in October, marked a unique and important milestone in defence cooperation between the three countries.

Based out of Larrakeyah Barracks in Darwin, the exercise began on 7 October and ran until the 25th involved 10 participants from each country.

The exercise included field training and survival tests in remote inland and coastal areas designed to provide participants with an understanding of the basic principles, procedures, techniques and equipment that can enhance survival prospects in the harsh environment of Australia's north.

Minister for Defence David Johnston said Exercise Kowari also provided a template for regional defence cooperation into the future.

"Exercise Kowari is an example of how Australia can encourage deeper habits of defence cooperation and trust across the region," Senator Johnston said.

"I am sure that regional countries will be looking at what has just happened here in Australia and will be thinking hard about how they might conduct a similar activity in their own countries."

Senator Johnston, who visited China from 12 to 14 October, said China was a critical defence and security partner for Australia in the region, and globally.

"We must do more to broaden the scope and scale of our practical defence cooperation," he said.

"Exercises such as this enhance the ability of Australia and China to cooperate in the interests of regional security, as we did during the search for missing Malaysian Airlines flight MH370.

"Australia has extensive military training areas and a wide range of environments in which to exercise, and we welcome increased training and exercising with China in Australia.

"We'd also welcome increased training and exercising, whether bilaterally or multilaterally, with all our defence and security partners."

Above right: Australian Army officer Lieutenant Lachlan Joseph makes a fishing lure, while People's Liberation Army of China officer Lieutenant Huang Jin Long updates his journal during the survival phase of Exercise Kowari 2014 in remote Northern Territory bushland. Below left to right: Aboriginal elder Johnny Banjo welcomes US Marine Corps officer 1st Lieutenant Daniel Romans to the Daly River region; Australian, Chinese and US military personnel at their bush camp; and, with a string of catfish they caught in the Daly River; Aboriginal women from the Daly River region prepare bush tucker for soldiers and marines.

WATCH EXERCISE
BEGINNING





Above: US Army soldier Sergeant First Class Axel Nieves sharpens his machete.

Below clockwise from top left: People's Liberation Army of China soldier Corporal Zhao Fei roasts a bird on a campfire; People's Liberation Army of China officer Lieutenant Yang Zhong Hao succeeds in lighting a fire using traditional methods, watched by Commander North-West Mobile Force Lieutenant Colonel Matt Campbell; United States Army officer 1st Lieutenant Christopher Jones washes his hands before eating.

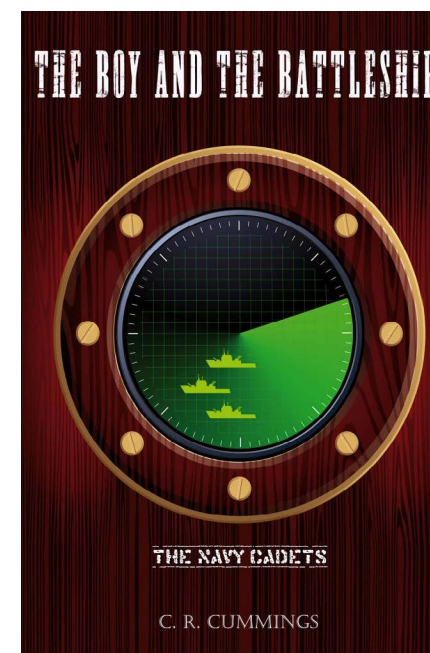


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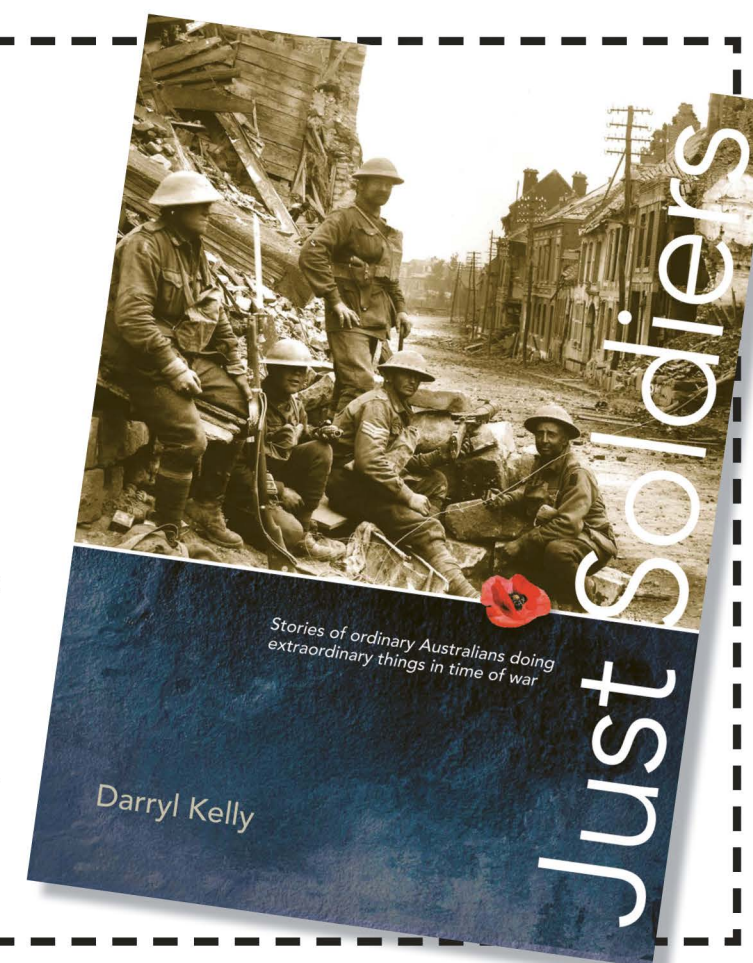
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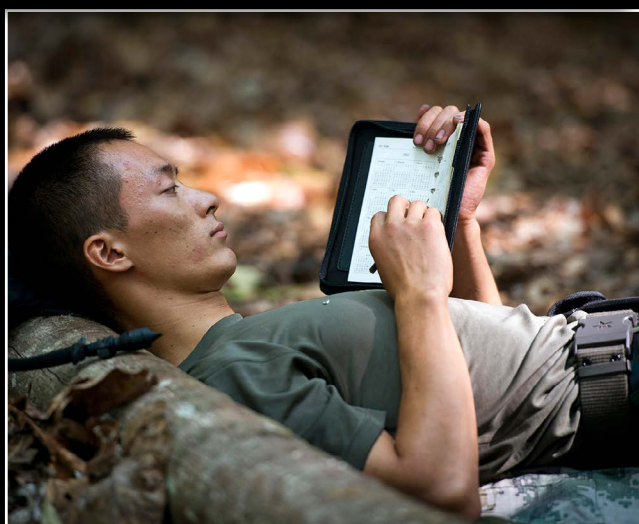


WATCH COMMANDER'S
SYNOPSIS



Above: Australian Army's Corporal Sean Williams and People's Liberation Army of China's Lieutenant Chen Shang display a turtle they caught during the survival phase of Exercise Kowari 2014 in remote Northern Territory bushland.
Below clockwise from left: People's Liberation Army officer Lieutenant Huang Jin Long poses with his new kukri knife and digging stick; People's Liberation Army of China's Lieutenant Song Quo Qing; Australian Army's Private Adam Keysecker and US Army soldier Staff Sergeant Sergio Morales relax in their camp; People's Liberation Army of China's Corporal Peng Cheng Zhi updates his journal.

WATCH PARTICIPANT
SYNOPSIS



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INVICTUS GAMES

Australian athletes claimed a total of 21 medals at the inaugural Invictus Games in London in September.

Invictus Games is a multi-sport competition for serving and former wounded, injured and ill military members and attracted more than 400 participants from Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Iraq, Italy, The Netherlands, New Zealand, the USA and the UK.

The Australian Defence Force and the Returned and Services League of Australia supported a team of 36 Australians who participated in four days of intense competition.

PHOTOS BY CORPORAL MARK DORAN, ARMY NEWSPAPER

FORMER AUSTRALIAN SOLDIER MARK URQUHART POWERS TOWARDS A SILVER MEDAL IN THE MEN'S 400M WHEEL IT4





Left: Former sailor Hannah Amigh competes in the pool.
Right: Former soldier Agnes Young throws a bronze-medal winning discus.

Below: Sergeant Nathan Verdane and former soldier Bronson Horan lead a 1500m Men's Open IT6 qualifying heat.

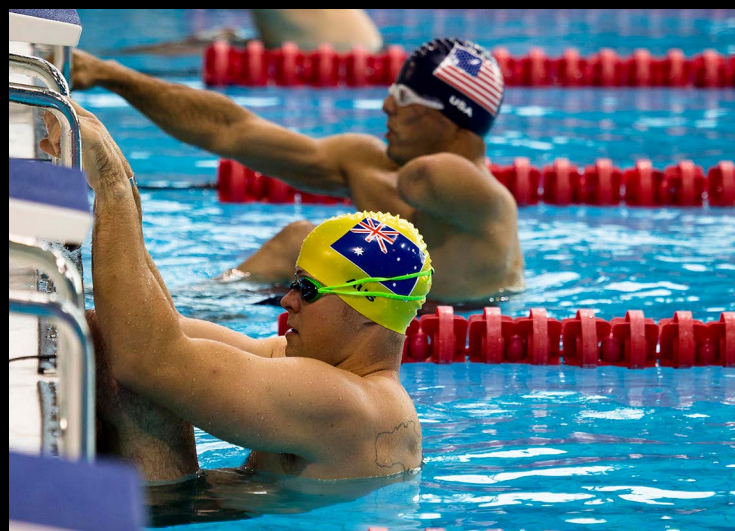
Bottom right: Former soldier and Australian team captain Curtis 'Kiwi' McGrath prepares for launch in the pool.

Bottom left: Leading Seaman Kirsty-Lee Brown throws a gold medal-winning Javelin.



INVICTUS

GAMES



Invictus Games is championed by Prince Harry who, at the closing ceremony, passed on a message from Queen Elizabeth that said she was deeply moved by the courage, determination and talent of the athletes.

"All of you have used the power of sport to enhance your own recovery and to raise wider awareness of the enormous challenges faced by wounded veterans," she said.

"The success of these games can be measured not by medals won, but by the

renewed sense of purpose and confidence in your abilities that you have gained."

Australia's Assistant Minister for Defence Stuart Robert congratulated the Australian competitors on their performances.

"Your participation in these games is a personal victory in itself," Mr Robert said.

"Each of you has overcome huge physical and mental challenges just to reach the competition in London.

"By taking on your counterparts from other countries, you have proven that you have an unconquerable spirit.



Left: Former soldier Dennis Ramsay throws a silver-medal winning discus.
Right: Private Clancy Roberts competing in the Men's 400m Open IT6.
Below: Squadron Leader Dan Jeffery of No. 81 Wing during a 400 metre qualifying heat.
Bottom right: Lance Corporal Craig Hancock competes in a rowing event.



INVICTUS

"Competitive sport can be a powerful support to recovery and rehabilitation.

"I hope that all athletes can draw on the passion and determination that you have shown at the Invictus Games."

The Australians won six gold, nine silver and six bronze medals in events such as athletics, cycling, archery, swimming and rowing.

First to score for Australia were Sapper Matthew Taxis, 5th Engineer Regiment, and former military policeman Sarah Archibald, who won gold in the first

event – the Jaguar Land Rover Driving Challenge.

Sapper Taxis said the prospect of competing at the Invictus Games gave him something to look forward to while recovering from a back injury incurred during military training.

"I was stuck in a rut but it is awesome to be involved in this event," he said.

"It has been fantastic to meet the wounded, injured and ill veterans, some of whom have severe injuries, so I am grateful mine are not as severe.

GAMES





Left: Former soldier Dennis Ramsay is checked during a wheelchair basketball event.

Right: Former soldier Mark Urquhart shows off his haul of medals at the Invictus Games.

Below: RAAF Sergeant Tony Benfer shoots during a wheelchair basketball event.

Bottom left: Former soldier Daryl Kirkhope and Private Clancy Roberts lead the peleton in a road cycling event.

Bottom right: Former soldier Paul Warren competes in a rowing event at the Invictus Games.



INVICTUS

GAMES



"I definitely hope the Invictus Games continue in the future as it is such a great event."

Sarah Archibald, a veteran of the Iraq war who suffers from post-traumatic stress disorder, said it was extremely important for her personal recovery to be involved in the Invictus Games.

"It is an opportunity for me to be involved with other veterans and be involved in the Defence community spirit again," she said.

Leading Seaman Kirsty-Lee Brown (who suffers chronic pain, PTSD, depression and

anxiety after being injured when SIEV 36 blew up in 2009, killing five and injuring 50) won another Aussie gold, in the javelin.

"It was an amazing feeling to win gold and I was really surprised to be congratulated by Prince Harry," she said.

"But most importantly, the Invictus Games is about meeting other people like myself who have been through life-changing experiences.

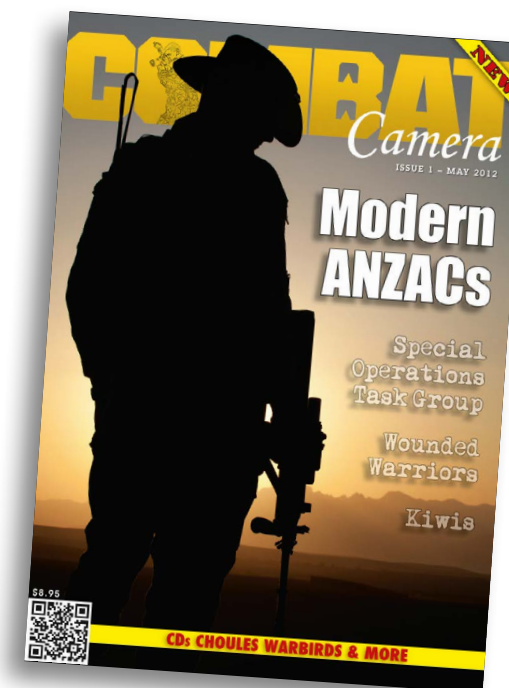
"We have been able to share these experiences and find out how others deal with their injuries or illnesses."

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IN FOCUS

WITH BRIAN HARTIGAN, MANAGING EDITOR

COMBAT CAMERA IS ALL ABOUT PHOTOS - SO WHERE BETTER TO GET TIPS ON TAKING PHOTOS THAT GET PUBLISHED?

Leigh Atkinson of Redland Bay, Queensland, wrote recently, "While I have what can only be described as an addiction to photographing military aircraft (particularly jets) I'm realising that publications seem to need 'human content' in images and that is something I am going to have to work on. Your thoughts on this would be appreciated".

In the previous issue of **COMBAT Camera** I attempted to 'muse' on this subject for a bit. I sincerely hope my musings cast just a little light on the thought processes that guide an editor when choosing photos to fill limited space in a publication.

To recap a little - placing aircraft into context is important. A photo of a Super Hornet flying through the air is 'just' a Super Hornet flying through the air, unless there's something else in the photo to give it context. Without the 'contextualising' element, I could take a photo of the Super Hornet in the sky over Avalon and then drop it into a story about Darwin's V8 Supercar event and you probably wouldn't notice. But, if I have audience heads or trackside V8-Supercar flags included in the composition, then we'd all have a much better idea of what's going on, especially with an explanatory caption included.

No rigid 'rules'

Of course, this is not a steadfast rule. If the photo contains only aircraft, with no context

whatsoever, it could still get a run - especially if it is 'an awesome shot' in its own right - like the corker at right by the aforementioned Leigh Atkinson, which he took at a special photo shoot at Temora Aviation Museum, NSW, in September (see page 60 for Leigh's account of this shoot, along with more photos).

Not all in the art

There are other factors aside from composition and artistry, however.

The physical limitations of camera equipment and the technical requirements of magazines can also render an otherwise beautiful photo useless.

For example, I have had photos sent to me for publication that were taken on an iPhone or a pocket instamatic, which I just couldn't use.

It's not that iPhone photos are always discounted, though. There are serious professional photography competitions run specifically for photos taken only on iPhone, or Samsung etc.

But, if you take a photo of a jet fighter on an iPhone, the jet is going to be little more than a speck in the overall photo.

Even with a 'proper camera', jets in flight can be very small in the frame unless you have a very big (and usually very expensive) lens.

I have also been sent photos where the jet takes up most of a very nice-looking photo - only to realise that the photo was cropped to remove a lot of 'dead space'.

Sometimes you can get away with that, but such photos are

usually limited by virtue of their reduced size to being presented small within a story. Such photos would never make it onto a front cover or a double-page spread.

But what can you do about that? In truth, not much, unless you can actually get yourself closer to the action or unless you have an aforementioned long lens - or you deliberately use the extra space in the frame to add the context I've been speaking about.

Getting technical

There are some technicalities of magazine publication that I should probably explore here too.

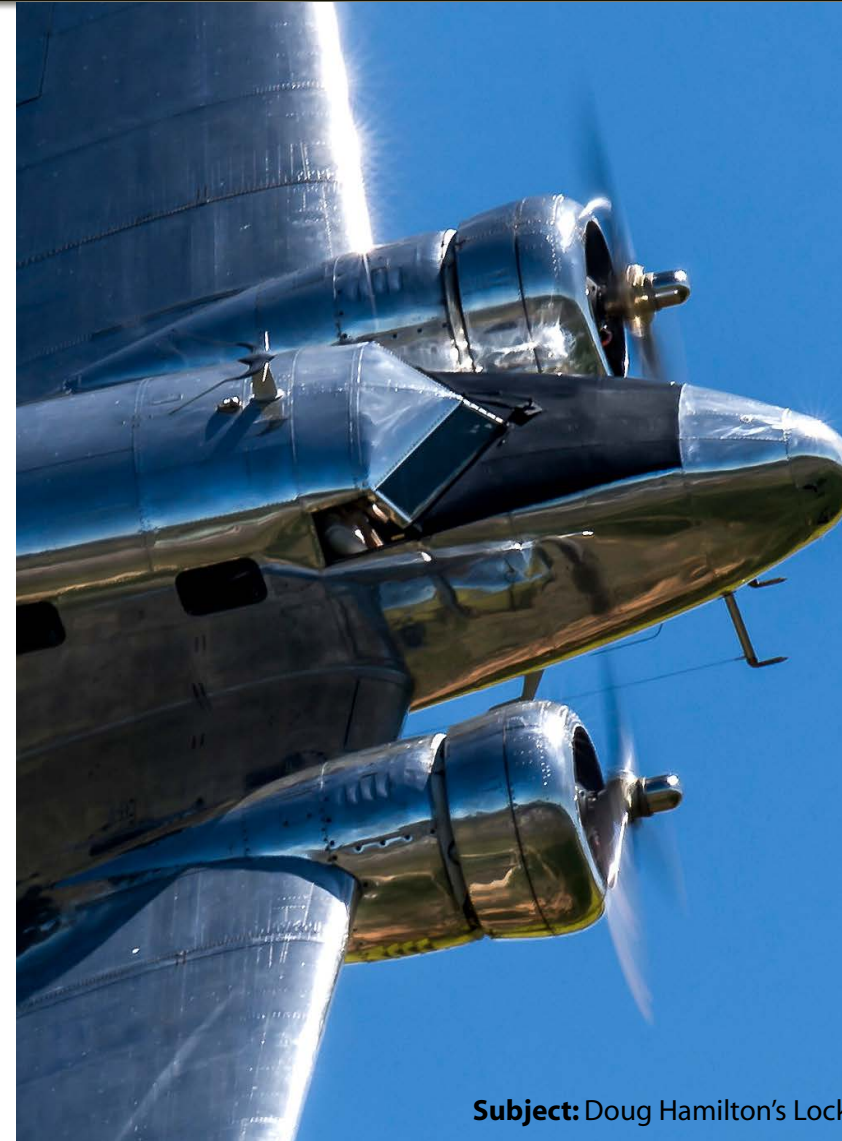
Strictly speaking, now that **CONTACT** and **COMBAT** are both e-magazines, the following shouldn't be as critical as it is in printed publications. However, on the off chance that **CONTACT** and **COMBAT** (and their back issues) may one day be printed again, I do still apply print-publication production standards to both magazines when I put them together.

This means that photos are reproduced at 300 dots per inch resolution.

Most cameras shoot photos at 72 dots per inch.

Taking a typical photo from one of my professional-grade cameras, the image comes off the camera at 72 dpi x 1372mm x 914mm. However, when that is converted to 300 dots per inch, the actual physical dimensions of the photo then become 329mm x 219mm.

So, even before I apply any cropping, that's not even enough to cover a double-page spread,



As is adequately proved by this stunning photo, the 'rule' that says an airplane photo must contain 'human interest' or must be photographed in context is not always true. A stunning photo of a stunning airplane is as interesting and 'sexy' on its own merits any day of the week.

Photo by Leigh Atkinson, Redland Bay, Queensland

Subject: Doug Hamilton's Lockheed 12 Electra Junior at the Temora Aviation Museum

which measures 420mm x 297mm.

Sure, I could actually enlarge (or 'blow up') the photo in Photoshop, but that has its limitations too. When you blow up a photo, any flaw in the photo is also blown up, but usually becomes disproportionately more obvious at the same time.

So, the physical dimensions of a photo are, by and large, the maximum size a photo can be 'printed' at.

Of course, not all (in fact few) photos are spread across two pages or the front cover. But the way I think about it is, I never know when a 'winning' shot will present itself, so I always strive for the best photo I can out of the camera. I NEVER take a photo thinking, "I'll fix that in Photoshop".

One other thing about photo

resolution, which used to be a big problem but I think nearly everyone has gotten over these days, but I will mention it anyway. All cameras have an option to turn down the resolution of the photos it takes - but I say, ALWAYS set your camera for maximum resolution, because you never know when a great photo opportunity is going to present itself. And when it does present itself, it's too late to be worrying about complex adjustments.

That too is why I always say, set your camera to P (which doesn't stand for 'professional', but Program = fully automatic) or choose either aperture priority or shutter priority.

When I put my cameras away after a shoot, I always leave them set to shutter priority and a standard set of parameters by default (with freshly charged batteries and formatted cards). That way, if the poo hits the fan, I can grab a camera and shoot an automatic burst, knowing what the settings are by default and not wasting time fussing about.

As they say in the Boy Scouts, be prepared.

If you have any particular questions about taking photos to improve your chances of getting published in **COMBAT Camera** or **CONTACT Air Land & Sea** (or any other magazine), I'd be happy to try and answer them, either here or privately. Write to me at editor@militarycontact.com or PO Box 3091, Minnamurra, NSW 2533.

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