

ISSUE 11 – FEBRUARY 2015

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**Forced Entry**  
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# COMBAT

## Camera

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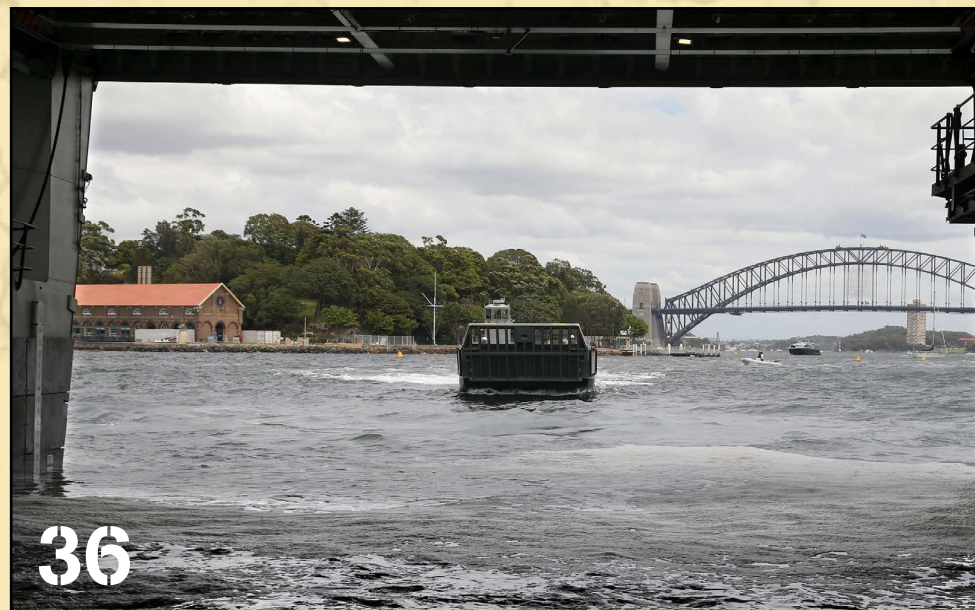
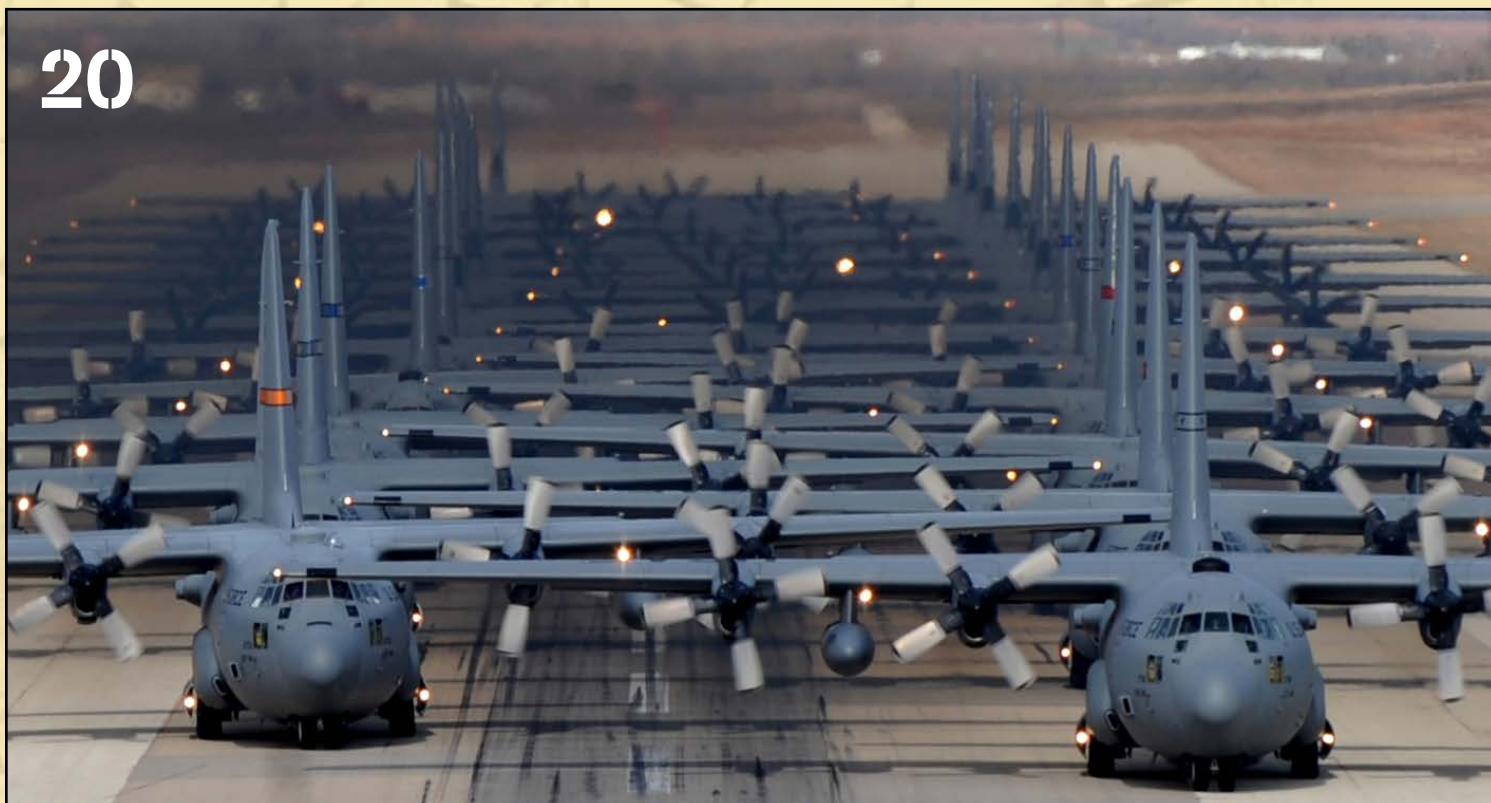
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YEAR IN REVIEW



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## EDITORIAL

Issue 11 - February 2015

### COMBAT Camera



**YEAR IN REVIEW**  
Look back at 2014  
Page 40

Photo by Able Seaman  
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So, while I thank you all profusely for being one among the thousands (as they say, "every vote counts"), I also have to ask you to help us push on towards this year's target of 15,000.

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Also, check page 68 for advice and instruction on how to get the most out of our expanding presence on the Internet.

And, thank you in anticipation for another big year in **COMBAT!**

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Managing Editor

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# ADF Gap Year returns

The ADF Gap Year program returned on 12 January with hundreds of eager young Australians signing up for their first experience of life in the Australian Defence Force.

Assistant Minister for Defence Stuart Robert welcomed the first intake.

"This is a proud and special moment for these new recruits and represents a significant shift in their lives," Mr Robert said.

"Their 12 months of service will give them the chance to experience an exciting and rewarding role with the ADF that will hopefully encourage them to join the Defence Force after they complete their 12-month program."

At recruiting centres around Australia, 60 enlistees joined the Royal Australian Air Force

to begin recruit training at RAAF Base Wagga Wagga, while 61 new soldiers caught the bus to begin training at Kapooka.

All up, 260 participants signed on for 2015 with Army and Air Force, with Navy returning to the program next year.

"The life skills and training acquired during the Gap Year experience will be valuable regardless of what career they ultimately choose," Mr Robert said.

"Those chosen for this program will learn practical and leadership skills, enjoy a healthy and varied lifestyle, and make friends for life – all while getting paid around \$45,000, living in subsidised accommodation, with full medical and dental coverage."



Participants in the Australian Defence Force Gap Year 2015 program pose for a photo at Defence Force Recruiting, Melbourne, before heading to their respective training establishments near Wagga Wagga, NSW. Kit Haselden Photography for DFR

# Irish sniper training

A recent cold spell in Ireland allowed Private Mulligan, Sniper Section, Reconnaissance Platoon, 28 Infantry Battalion, Irish Army, to conduct re-currency sniper training in adverse conditions in Donegal.

Captain Liam McDonnell, Sniper Instructor, 28<sup>th</sup> Infantry Battalion said sniper's must function in a variety of conditions from desert to jungle to arctic.

"Each environment provides it's own unique challenges," Captain McDonnell said.

"In an arctic environment the surrounding conditions have a higher chance of killing a sniper than the enemy.

"At below zero, basic tasks become difficult; water cannot be consumed without heating due to risk of hypothermia; lubrications on weapons freeze rendering them inoperable; and, battery power is reduced in communication equipment.

"Snipers are trained in simple techniques and procedures to overcome these obstacles, ensuring their information is accurate and relayed to the unit commander in a stealthy manner.

"Discipline is also paramount. Snipers will take care that condensation from perspiration, or mouth vapor, does not betray their location, just as much as covering their tracks in the snow."

Phoyo by Captain Liam McDonnell







A World War II-era P-51D Mustang makes a low pass in front of a US Air Force C-17 Globemaster III at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, on 26 July, during the biennial air show Arctic Thunder, which features more than 40 Air Force, Army and civilian aerial acts and draws crowds of more than 200,000 people.



# *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red*

In 2014, the Tower of London wept forth 888,246 handmade ceramic poppies, each representing a British fatality during World War I, in a major art installation by ceramic artist Paul Cummins and stage designer Tom Piper titled 'Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red'. The installation marked the centenary of the outbreak of the First World War, which began on 28 July 1914 and lasted until 11 November 1918. It is estimated that more than 9,000,000 combatants and 7,000,000 civilians died as a result of the war.







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## Evidence gatherer

### NZ Navy's southern patrol

The Royal New Zealand Navy offshore patrol vessel HMNZS Wellington concluded a maritime surveillance patrol in the Southern Ocean in January.

The ship stopped off at Dunedin for a quick resupply on 19 January before heading home to Devonport.

She arrived back in Auckland having been away for eight weeks.

NZDF Maritime Component Commander Commodore John Campbell said the ship and her crew had done an excellent job in a challenging environment.

"The Southern Ocean is one of the most remote and inhospitable areas in the world," Commodore Campbell said.

"During this patrol the captain and crew have encountered a range of difficult circumstances and have risen to those challenges safely and professionally every time.

"In particular, they have found and intercepted several vessels fishing illegally and obtained valuable evidence to pursue international actions to bring down the syndicates responsible."



## Up-armoured

The Afghan Air Force has engaged McDonald Douglas Helicopters to weaponise its fleet of 17 MD 530F helicopters.

Valued at a fixed-price US\$44.2million, the contract will see the heretofore trainers carrying FN M3P™ .50 cal machine guns mounted in all-in-one pods with 400-round capacity.

The contract also includes strengthened undercarriage, ballistic armour, upgraded radios and new fuel cells.

All modifications and testing will be carried out at MD Helicopters' facility in Mesa, Arizona.

The Afghan Air Force has operated five MD 530F helicopters for initial-entry pilot training since 2011 and expanded its fleet last year.



An Afghan Air Force MD 530F flies over Kabul



## S&R-role takeover

A Royal New Zealand Air Force 3 Squadron NH90 helicopter saved a missing tramp in a debut rescue mission in mid December – on the first day the type took over responsibility for RNZAF search and rescue tasks from the long-serving Iroquois.

The Austrian tramp went missing in the Otaki Forks area and the NH90 spotted him in a valley late the next day and winched him to safety.

Chief of Air Force Air Vice-Marshal Mike Yardley said that as of 19 December, the NH90 was now the primary aircraft responsible for search and rescue missions, casualty evacuation in association with search and rescue, as well as transport for NZ Police and other military personnel for national security requirements.

"NH90 is now sufficiently developed to respond to this type of operation," he said.



File photo – New Zealand's first NH90, by Sergeant Lucy Jordan

## Airtrainer retires

It was the end of an era as five Royal New Zealand Air Force CT-4E Airtrainers flew over Manawatu and Whanganui for a final farewell on 4 December.

Flying in close formation, the CT-4Es have been a familiar sight in the regions' skies since the model was introduced at RNZAF Base Ohakea in 1998, with more than 190 students successfully completing their wings course on the type.

Officer Commanding Pilot Training School Squadron Leader Ben Stephens said it was great to be part of the final formation flight.

"For me, it was important to recognise the contribution of the aircraft and to share the experience with the Pilot Training School team," Squadron Leader Stephens said.

"It's the end of an era, for sure, and it's goodbye to a long-serving aircraft."

Future pilot courses will be carried out on the Beechcraft T-6C Texan II with seven of 11 new aircraft having been received by the Air Force.

RNZAF aerobatic team the Red Checkers will also fly the T-6C and a competition has been launched to rename the team to fit their new aircraft. Suggestions can be made on the NZ Air Force Facebook web page.



File photo of Red Checkers in action - by Aircraftwoman Judith Watts

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# FORCED ENTRY

**More than \$8 billion worth of assets and 1000 personnel participated in a Joint Forcible Entry Exercise over Nevada, USA, on 6 December**

Joint Forcible Entry Exercise, or JFE, is a US Air Force Weapons School large-scale air mobility exercise in which participants plan and execute a complex air-land operation in a simulated contested battlefield.

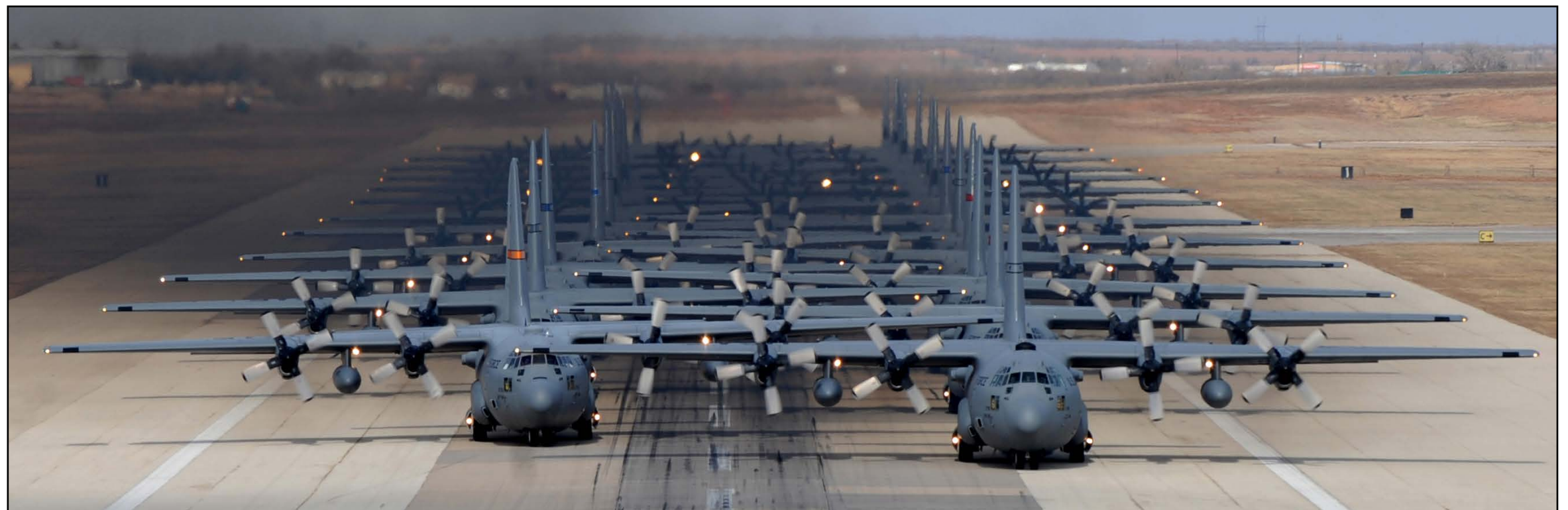
JFE exercises participants ability to synchronise aircraft movements from geographically separated bases, command large formations of dissimilar aircraft in high threat airspace, and tactically deliver and recover combat forces via air drops and combat landings on an unimproved landing strip.

The December exercise tested the Air Force's ability to tactically deliver and recover combat assets via airdrops in a contested environment.

Entry operations enable broader strategic goals, such as removing threats to the free flow of commerce, interdicting weapons of mass destruction, demonstrating US resolve in response to a crisis, showing support for international mandates, deterring aggression, or when necessary, defeating enemy forces on foreign territory.

In all, 14 C-17 Globemasters, 27 C-130 Hercules and 59 other aircraft, including ground attack and support aircraft from bases across the country, participated.

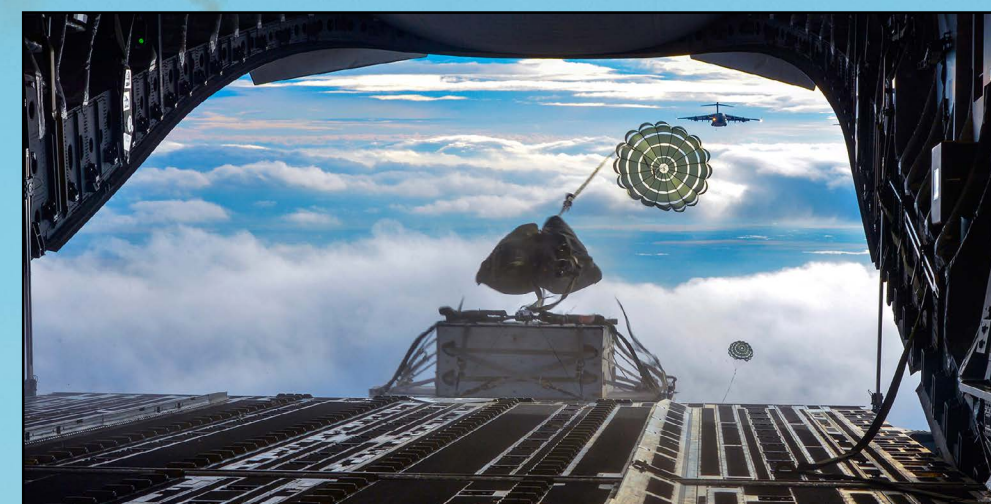
It was estimated that more than \$8 billion worth of assets and more than 1000 total personnel, including six general officers, participated, with thousands of simulated paratroopers also factored in.







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# SHOW OF POWER

## Soldiers put on a fiery show at Puckapunyal during Exercise Chong Ju

Sergeant Brian Hartigan reports

**Diggers at the Puckapunyal Military Area in Victoria got to show off the power and might of a combined-arms combat team attack on October 15-16 to packed galleries of spectators.**

Exercise Chong Ju is an annual firepower demonstration and a key component of the Army's Combat Officer's Advanced Course (COAC) at the Combined Arms Training Centre (CATC).

COAC provides future Army leaders with tactical and technical training in the employment of weapons and support systems and Chong Ju, as part of their course, gave them a close-up taste of the tactics and firepower that can be brought to bear in a combined-arms environment.

Incorporating many elements of the ADF's impressive arsenal, Chong Ju included armour, artillery, engineer and infantry elements, as well as air-to-ground attack by Tiger ARHs and F/A-18 fighter jets.

Other capabilities showcased at Chong Ju included M1A1 Abrams, ASLAV, M113AS4, 81mm mortar, M777 155mm artillery and Javelin anti-armour missile.

While most of the action was directed at a notional enemy emplacement more than 2km away, many elements of the combined-arms attack were positioned close to spectators, in some cases literally giving all a taste of the action as the main-gun shock wave from an M1A1 Abrams tank kicked up clouds of dust at very close range.

Commandant CATC Colonel Anthony McIntyre said the exercise was essential for training the Army's next generation of commanders.

"Chong Ju is an excellent opportunity for young officers and soldiers to see first-hand how all the ADF systems work in unison, in a potential operational scenario," Colonel McIntyre said.

The exercise is named after a battle in North Korea in 1950 when 3RAR, supported by tanks and artillery, attacked and captured a large North Korean defensive line on the Yalu River.

The annual exercise is run by the School of Armour with support from the School of Artillery and elements of 4 Brigade at CATC.

Aerial support was provided by 16 Aviation Brigade and the Royal Australian Air Force.







**CLOCKWISE FROM BELOW: SOLDIERS FIRE A JAVELIN ANTI-ARMOUR MISSILE; AN AUSTRALIAN ARMY TIGER ARMED RECONNAISSANCE HELICOPTER DISCHARGES ANTI-MISSILE FLARES; A ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE F/A-18 HORNET MAKES A LOW PASS; TIGER ARMED RECONNAISSANCE HELICOPTER FIRES ITS CHIN-MOUNTED CHAIN GUN.**







To gain maximum value from Exercise Chong Ju, a wide range of other spectators were also invited, including prospective new recruits and participants in a Defence Indigenous Development Program (DIDP).

Crystal Carter, a participant in the DIDP, enjoyed the experience, which she said would go a long way to help her decide if she would like to pursue a military career.

Tamara Downey, who is going through the Defence Force Recruiting process and hoping to be commissioned as an education officer, was another impressed spectator.

She said the exercise gave her an excellent appreciation of the professionalism of the Army.

"It was very impressive from a power point of view, but, as someone who is still going through the recruitment process, I think the overall impression I got was that the Army is highly professional," she said.

"I've been getting that impression throughout the process, but today really reinforced that for me."



TAMARA DOWNEY

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# OC OC OC OC

US MARINE SERGEANT RUSSELL MIDORI PUT HIS BODY ON THE LINE FOR A FIRST-HAND REPORT OF A VERY PAINFUL (BUT HUMUROUS TO THE OBSERVER) TRAINING DAY IN BULGARIA

US and Romanian soldiers lined up to receive a concentrated spray OC to the eyes – then had to run through elements of a military-self-defence course before relief was allowed. The exercise late last year forced the soldiers to make quick decisions and remember their training while under duress. Only after they completed all tasks were they allowed to flush their eyes with water. OC spray – Oleoresin Capsicum – is a non-lethal weapon, designed to target the eyes and is used in riot-control scenarios. The reporter covering the activity, Sergeant Russell Midori, bravely accepted the challenge and put himself in the firing line for the sake of a complete report.



WATCH THE VIDEO



REPORT BY SERGEANT RUSSELL MIDORI  
MAIN PHOTO BY LANCE CORPORAL RYAN YOUNG  
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# Seamanship SUPER SATURDAY

## HMAS CANBERRA GIVES BERTH

**HMAS Canberra's four new landing craft (LLC) embarked the ship's well dock via the stern door for the very first time in December.**

Canberra's first lieutenant, Lieutenant Commander Michael Nipperess described the day as a "Super Seamanship Saturday".

"We have achieved so much in just one day. We conducted anchorage preparations for entering harbour, conducted boat drills, and then secured to a buoy in Sydney Harbour – a first for the landing helicopter dock – then embarked the four craft," said Lieutenant Commander Nipperess.

The four landing craft made their way from HMAS Waterhen to Canberra with Sydney Harbour Bridge and Opera House as a backdrop.

The vessels came into station approximately 100 yards astern of Canberra, where they waited for the first lieutenant to give the order to come into the dock, one by one.

Lieutenant Commander Nipperess said it was a very exciting day with a few healthy nerves.

"Canberra's boat crews have spent the past 18 months in a graduated training program to drive and manage these new craft.

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PHOTOS LEADING SEAMAN HELEN FRANK

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"As a team, we were very excited to be able to bring them into Canberra's dock for the first time.

"I couldn't be happier with the performance of the team today. From the engineering side of docking down the well dock, to the way in which the boat coxswain's handled the craft to get safely into the dock – it was all done calmly and professionally. They did a great job."

Being part of a landing craft crew is a responsible position, particularly for the leading seaman in charge of the vessel.

Landing craft can be used to transport vehicles, equipment, stores or armed forces from and to the ship by day or night, and in potentially dangerous environments.

Landing craft coxswain Leading Seaman Frederick Foster said the day felt great.

"It does feel good to be the first person in the fleet to do this – I am excited to be the first coxswain to drive into the well dock of HMAS Canberra," Leading Seaman Foster said.

"However, it's not as daunting as it could have been as we've done a lot of training and we now feel quite comfortable and confident in being able to manoeuvre these craft into the well dock of the LHD.

"The craft is very capable and to be a leading seaman in charge of the vessel when it's away from the ship is quite a unique situation and I feel quite proud to be in this position."

Other members of Canberra's ship's company lined the quarterdeck and the heavy-vehicle deck to watch the ship's docking operations and see the vessels come into the ship for the first time.

Once the four craft were inside the ship and secured, the stern door was closed and the well dock was drained, leaving the LLCs in their resting places while the ship conducted a reduced activity period over Christmas.



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# PHOTOS OF 2014



17 FEBRUARY – HMAS MELBOURNE HEADS FOR OPEN OCEAN TO BEGIN A ONE MONTH JOURNEY HOME TO AUSTRALIA, LEAVING PORT SULTAN QABOOS, OMAN, BEHIND.  
PHOTO BY WARRANT OFFICER CLASS TWO ROB NYFFENEGGER

IT WAS A COLD START TO THE YEAR FOR AUSSIES AT CAMP BAKER, KANDAHAR, AFGHANISTAN AS FEBRUARY SNOW TRANSFORMED THE CAMP FROM MUD SPLATTERED TO PRISTINE.  
PHOTO BY WARRANT OFFICER CLASS TWO ROB NYFFENEGGER







**Clockwise from left:**

15 April – HMAS Toowoomba searches in the Indian Ocean for missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370. Photo by Leading Seaman James Whittle

11 April – HMAS Darwin's Seahawk winches Leading Seaman Stephen McGreal and a suspected heart-attack patient from a French trawler off the coast of Africa. Photo by Able Seaman Sarah Williams

2 March – HMAS Darwin rescues shipwrecked fishermen off the coast of Pakistan. Photo by Petty Officer Cameron Devenny

1 April – Lieutenant Stefan Stuart keeps watch on the bridge of HMAS Toowoomba during the search for Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370. Photo by Leading Seaman James Whittle

28 March – Able Seaman Matthew Oxley searches for missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 onboard HMAS Success. Photo by Able Seaman Julianne Cropley





**Main photo:** 20 June – MRH-90 and CH-47 helicopters from 5<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment approach Cormorant Airfield at Townsville Field Training Area to pick up soldiers from 1RAR and 2RAR during 3 Brigade's CATA (combined-arms training activity) 2014. Photo by Corporal David Cotton

**Top row left to right:** 3 May – Corporal Michael Wex and Private Drew McClean, 6RAR sniper team,, rehearse before competing at the Australian Army Skill at Arms Meeting (AASAM). Photo Sergeant John Waddell

25 April – The ANZAC Day Dawn Service at Camp Baker, Kandahar, featured 40 rifles and helmets in honour of the 40 Australians killed in action in Afghanistan. Photo by Warrant Officer Class Two Rob Nyffenegger

15 May – Soldiers from 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery, pose for an 'action' shot at AASAM. Photo by Sergeant Brian Hartigan

**Bottom row left to right:**

9 July – 7<sup>th</sup> Brigade soldiers fire a Carl Gustav 84mm recoilless rifle at Shoalwater Bay during a CATA. Photo by Leading Seaman Jayson Tufrey

11 October – an SOTG soldier gets some target practice in the Middle East before deploying to Iraq. Photo by Sergeant Hamish Paterson

24 April – Soldiers from 1RAR rehearse ballistic entry in Townsville. Photo by Lance Corporal Kyle Genner







**Far left top:** 8 December – An RAAF F/A-18F Super Hornet prepares to refuel from a US Air Force KC-10A tanker over Iraq. Photographer unknown

**Far left middle:** 6 November – An RAAF F/A-18F Super Hornet ignites its after-burners over Iraq. Photo by Sergeant Andrew Eddie.

**Far left bottom:** 12 December – An RAAF KC-30A multi-role tanker transport leads an F/A-18F Super Hornet and an E-7A Wedgetail airborne early warning and control aircraft on a sortie in the Middle East. Photo by Flight Lieutenant Harry Hayes

**Top left:** 12 August – A No. 1 Squadron technician prepares an F/A-18F Super Hornet for a mission during Exercise Pitch Black. Photo by Corporal David Said

**Bottom left:** 15 August – A Royal Thai Air Force JAS-39D Gripen (right of formation), a United Arab Emirates Air Force Mirage 2000-9 (left), and RAAF F/A-18A Hornet (front) and FA-18F Super Hornet (rear) during Exercise Pitch Black. Photo by Corporal David Gibbs

**Right:** 15 August – RAAF personnel get an unusual look at a Republic of Singapore Air Force F-15 Eagle at RAAF Base Darwin during Exercise Pitch Black. Photo by Corporal Craig Barrett







**MAIN:** 4 October – “Great Wall of Fire” display during an air show aboard Marine Corps Air Station, Miramar, San Diego, California. USMC photo by Lance Corporal Trevor Statz (altered by COMBAT Camera)

**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:** 25 September – Combat engineers with 2<sup>nd</sup> Combat Engineer Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Division set off a wall charge during a demo aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, North Carolina. USMC photo by Corporal Andy J. Orozco

7 February – Aircrew Survival Equipmentman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Nicholas Casamassa, makes a requalification jump over San Diego, California. US Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Eric Coffey

20 March – An MV-22 Osprey approaches the San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock ship USS Anchorage off the coast of southern California. US Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2<sup>nd</sup> Class Christopher Lindahl

21 August – An F/A-18 Super Hornet refuels from a USAF KC-135 Stratotanker over Mosul, Iraq. US Air Force photo by Staff Sergeant Shawn Nickel

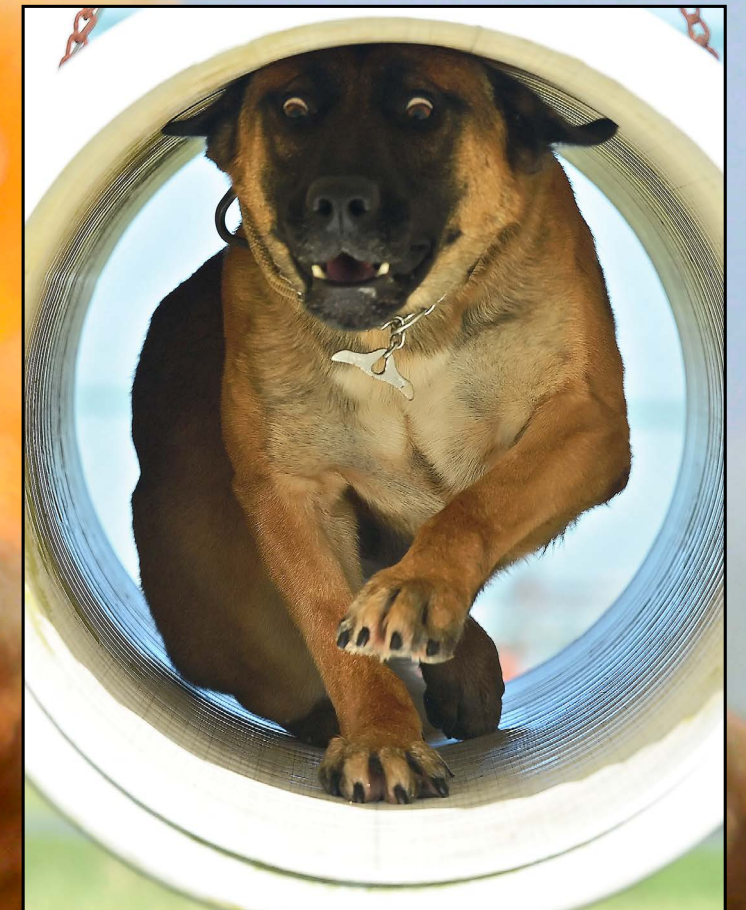
25 April – Landing support Marines assigned to Combat Logistics Battalion 22, 22<sup>nd</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit, prepare to hook supplies to a CH-53E Super Stallion during a US/French bilateral exercise in Djibouti, north Africa. USMC photo by Sergeant Alisa J. Helin

23 September – Major Gena Fedoruk and 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Marcel Trott take off in a KC-135 Stratotanker in support of airstrikes over Syria. US Air Force photo by Senior Airman Matthew Bruch

27 September – Sailors on USS Halsey take a swim in the Philippine Sea. US Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialists 3<sup>rd</sup> Class Bradley J. Gee







**MAIN:** 29 April – Marines with 1<sup>st</sup> Combat Engineers Battalion fire M58 mine-clearing line charges rockets from an M1 assault breacher vehicle to clear IEDs near Camp Leatherneck, Helmand province, Afghanistan. USMC photo by Staff Sergeant Jonathan T. Spencer

**CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT:** 27 October – A heavily laden 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 2<sup>nd</sup> Marine Regiment Marine prepares to leave Camp Bastion, Helmand province, as the Marine Corps ends operations in Afghanistan. USMC photo by Staff Sergeant John Jackson

21 January – US Navy SEALs conduct 'surf passage' during basic training at Naval Amphibious Base Coronado, California. US Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1<sup>st</sup> Class Michael Russell

1 October – Air Force athlete Daniel Crain takes aim in an archery qualification round during the Warrior Games in Colorado Springs. US Air Force photo by Airman 1<sup>st</sup> Class Scott Jackson

28 January – Captain Philip Gunn, 336<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron, takes a selfie over The Pentagon during a flyover of an internment ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia.

15 September – Military working dog Johny crouches down while running through a swinging pipe at the 436<sup>th</sup> Security Forces Squadron's obedience course on Dover Air Force Base, Delaware. US Air Force photo by Greg L. Davis

19 June – An LS3 (legged squad support system) follows Lance Corporal Timothy Knaggs, India Company, 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Regiment, at Bellows Field, Hawaii. The LS3 operates in three modes; joystick mode, which allows for manual operation; go-to mode, in which the pilot sets a waypoint for it to travel to; and, follow-me mode, where the machine uses sensors in the operator's backpack. USMC photo by Corporal Matthew Callahan







*All photos Crown Copyright  
by Corporal Daniel Wiepen*



**MAIN PHOTO:** 14 August – Lance Corporal Sean Kneller, Queen's Royal Hussars, returns to Camp Bastion caked in Afghan dust after a patrol in a Warthog armoured vehicle in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

**THIS PAGE TOP TO BOTTOM:** 25 August – Cororal Amy-Jane Harrop and her military working dog Troy rest during a patrol in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

Date unknown – Corporal Jones, 5 Rifles, takes the chance to rest his legs during a brief halt in a patrol in Helmand province, Afghanistan.

12 June – On the final day of their last deliberate operation in Afghanistan before returning to the UK, soldiers from C Company, 2 Royal Anglian, wait for a Chinook-ride back to Camp Bastion.





# SQUASHHEAD

17 June – A Challenger 2 tank from the newly amalgamated Royal Tank Regiment fires a 'squash-head' practice round on Castlemartin Ranges in Pembrokeshire, Wales, for the first time since reforming. Photo Crown Copyright by Corporal Si Longworth

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# FIRST AUSSIE PILOT STARTS TRAINING — ON AUSTRALIA DAY

The first Australian F-35A pilot commenced his pilot course on 26 January – Australia Day – at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida.

Squadron Leader Andrew Jackson said he was excited to be given the opportunity to take a leading role on the F-35's introduction.

Squadron Leader Jackson will undergo intensive theory and ground-based training before he takes his first flight in coming months.

"I am looking forward to the training challenge it will present," he said.

"This aircraft will give fighter pilots a level of situational awareness that far exceeds legacy platforms.

"Experiencing this level of capability first hand is something every pilot dreams of."

After his personal training, Squadron Leader Jackson will have an important future role as an instructor for other Australian as well as international F-35A pilots.

He was selected to be the first Aussie for his operational flying skills, extensive experience and leadership.

The second Australian F-35A pilot, Squadron Leader David Bell, will begin his training later this year. Squadron Leader Bell is a qualified test pilot.

The first F-35A aircraft will arrive in Australia at the end of 2018 with the first operational squadron to be established by 2020.

Photo by Liz Kaszynski/Lockheed Martin

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# TORTUOUS TESTS

For the past four months, an F-35 Lightning II has endured tortuous temperature variations and extreme simulated weather conditions in a program designed to certify the fleet to deploy to any corner of the world.

The F-35B from the Patuxent River F-35 Integrated Test Force in Maryland has undergone rigorous climatic testing at the US Air Force 96<sup>th</sup> Test Wing's McKinley Climatic Laboratory located at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida.

The laboratory supports all-weather testing of weapon systems, including vehicles and aircraft, to ensure they function regardless of climatic conditions.

With 13 countries currently involved with the program, the F-35 must be tested in meteorological conditions representative of all locations from which it will operate, ranging from the heat of the Australian outback to the bitter cold of the Arctic Circle above Canada and Norway.

McKinley Climatic Laboratory technical chief Dwayne Bell said they had designed an environment at the chamber where they could simulate virtually any weather condition, all while 'flying' the jet at full power in either conventional or vertical takeoff modes.

The F-35B Lightning II was ferried to Eglin AFB in September last year to begin a six-month assessment of its performance in wind, solar radiation, fog, humidity, rain intrusion/ingestion, freezing rain, icing cloud, ice build-up, vortex icing and snow.

Test pilot Billie Flynn, who performed extreme cold testing on the aircraft said that while they were testing in the world's largest climatic testing chamber, they were pushing the F-35 to its environmental limits, ranging from 49 degrees celcius to minus 40 – and every possible weather condition in between.

"To this point, the aircraft's performance is meeting expectations", Mr Flynn said.

"In its final days of testing, it will fly through ice and other conditions such as driving rain with hurricane-force winds.

"We are learning more and more about the aircraft every day."

"The future warfighters can be confident the F-35 will perform in any condition they find themselves in in the future."





# THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY'S NEW PHYSICAL EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ASSESSMENT

Same standard all ages and gender – but not corps\*

PHOTOS BY SERGEANT CHRIS DICKSON  
AND CORPORAL MATT BICKERTON

Australian soldiers from Army headquarters at Russell Offices, Canberra, carried out the new physical employment standards assessment at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, on 8 December 2014.

The test was designed in response to research conducted over six-years by the Defence Science and Technology Organisation and the University of Wollongong on the range of tasks likely to be encountered in Army service.

The test begins, as all military fitness tests do and should – with a warm-up session.

Then soldiers begin the test proper with a 55-minute 5km march wearing protective equipment and webbing, and carrying weapons.

They then carried two 22-kg jerrycans for 150m, mirroring the effort it takes to carry a casualty on a stretcher.

Participants then demonstrated the basic tactical skill of fire and movement before finishing with a box lift of 25kg to a height of 1.5m, comparable to lifting stores onto a truck.

The assessment was carried out after six weeks of lead-up training overseen by physical training instructors and combat fitness leaders, to ensure correct techniques were adopted and to prevent injuries.



ABOVE LEFT: LIEUTENANT COLONEL ANTHONY DUUS RAISES A 25KG WEIGHTED BOX ONTO 1.5M PLATFORM. FAR LEFT: THERE'S NO CONCESSION FOR GENDER, AGE OR STATURE. TOP: 5KM MARCH IN 'PATROL ORDER' INCLUDING ARMOUR. ABOVE RIGHT: 'FIRE AND MOVEMENT'. BELOW: SIMULATED STRETCHER CARRY.





# SOLDIERS MUST STILL PASS A BASIC FITNESS ASSESSMENT (BFA) BEFORE ATTEMPTING THE NEW PHYSICAL EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS ASSESSMENT (PESA)



FAR LEFT: MAJOR SARAH MACARTHUR-KING CARRIES WATER JERRYS, SIMULATING A STRETCHER CARRY.  
LEFT: ARMY HEADQUARTERS COMBAT FITNESS LEADER CORPORAL LISA ANDERSON DEMONSTRATES THE FIRE-AND-MOVEMENT COMPONENT OF THE ASSESSMENT.



WATCH VIDEO HERE



MAJOR MATTHEW LEWIS  
AWAITS THE SIGNAL TO  
MOVE DURING THE  
'FIRE-AND-MOVEMENT'  
COMPONENT OF THE  
ARMY'S PHYSICAL  
EMPLOYMENT  
STANDARDS  
ASSESSMENT



**\*THERE ARE NO CONCESSIONS FOR AGE, GENDER, ABILITY OR STATURE.  
HOWEVER, COMBAT-ARMS-CORPS SOLDIERS MUST ATTAIN A HIGHER STANDARD OF FITNESS.**

ASSESSMENT	ASSESSMENT	ALL-CORPS	COMBAT ARMS
Weight Load March	March with load at 5.5km/hr (11 minutes/km)	5km march with 22kg load in 50-55 minutes	10km march with 38kg load in 100-110 minutes
Fire-and-movement	Complete six bounds to a 20-second cadence	12 x 6m bounds	16 x 6m bounds plus 18m leopard crawl
Lift and carry	Carry 2 x 22kg jerrycans to a cadence	6 x 25m legs	11 x 25m legs
Box lift and place	Lift a weighted box from ground to 1.5m platform	25kg	30kg

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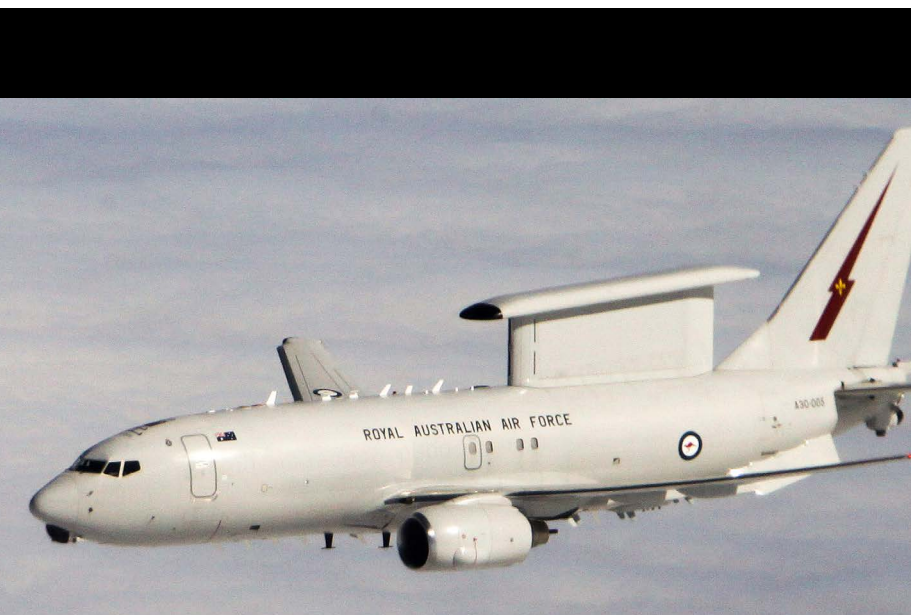
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A ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE E-7A WEDGETAIL AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING AND CONTROL AIRCRAFT IN THE MIDDLE EAST (ABOVE) AND IN THE COMPANY OF FOUR RAAF F/A-18F SUPER HORNETS (BELOW).  
PHOTOS BY SERGEANT ANDREW EDDIE

RIGHT: A VIEW FROM THE COCKPIT OF A RAAF E-7A WEDGETAIL AS IT PREPARES TO REFUEL FROM A US AIR FORCE KC-135 STRATOTANKER OVER IRAQ.  
PHOTO BY MAJOR GENERAL CRAIG ORME



# RECORD BREAKER

## 16-hour-18-minute mission



WATCH VIDEO - WHAT  
WEDGETAIL IS AND DOES



The Royal Australian Air Force E-7A Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning and Control aircraft currently operating in the Middle East made history recently when it set a record for the longest Australian command and control mission in a war zone.

At 16 hours and 18 minutes, the E-7A Wedgetail's mission entailed the command and control of large numbers of Coalition aircraft operating in Iraqi airspace as part of the multi-national air campaign confronting ISIL.

Commander of Australia's Air Task Group Air Commodore Steve Robertson said the endurance mission was a fine endorsement of Australia's air power capability.

"After already being 'on station' for a number of hours, the Australian Wedgetail crew was advised that the Coalition aircraft due to relieve them was delayed," Air Commodore Robertson said.

"In response, they quickly assessed their ability to coordinate necessary air-to-

air refuelling and agreed to substantially extend their mission."

In fact, the Wedgetail crew completed two air-to-air refuels during the record flight.

Air Commodore Robertson said the crew's ability to 'go above and beyond' was a clear demonstration of Australia's important contribution to the air campaign.

The actual date the record was set was not released, but it occurred in the first Air Task Group rotation.



# JUST BEING SOCIABLE

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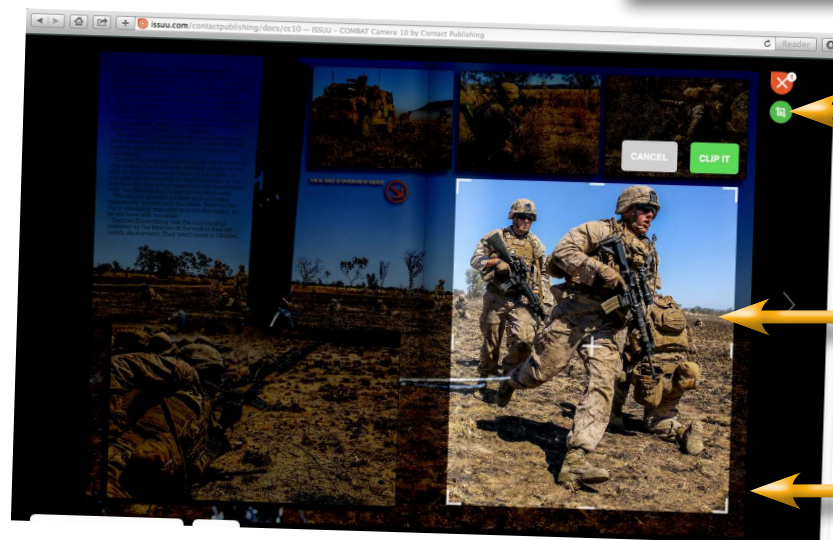
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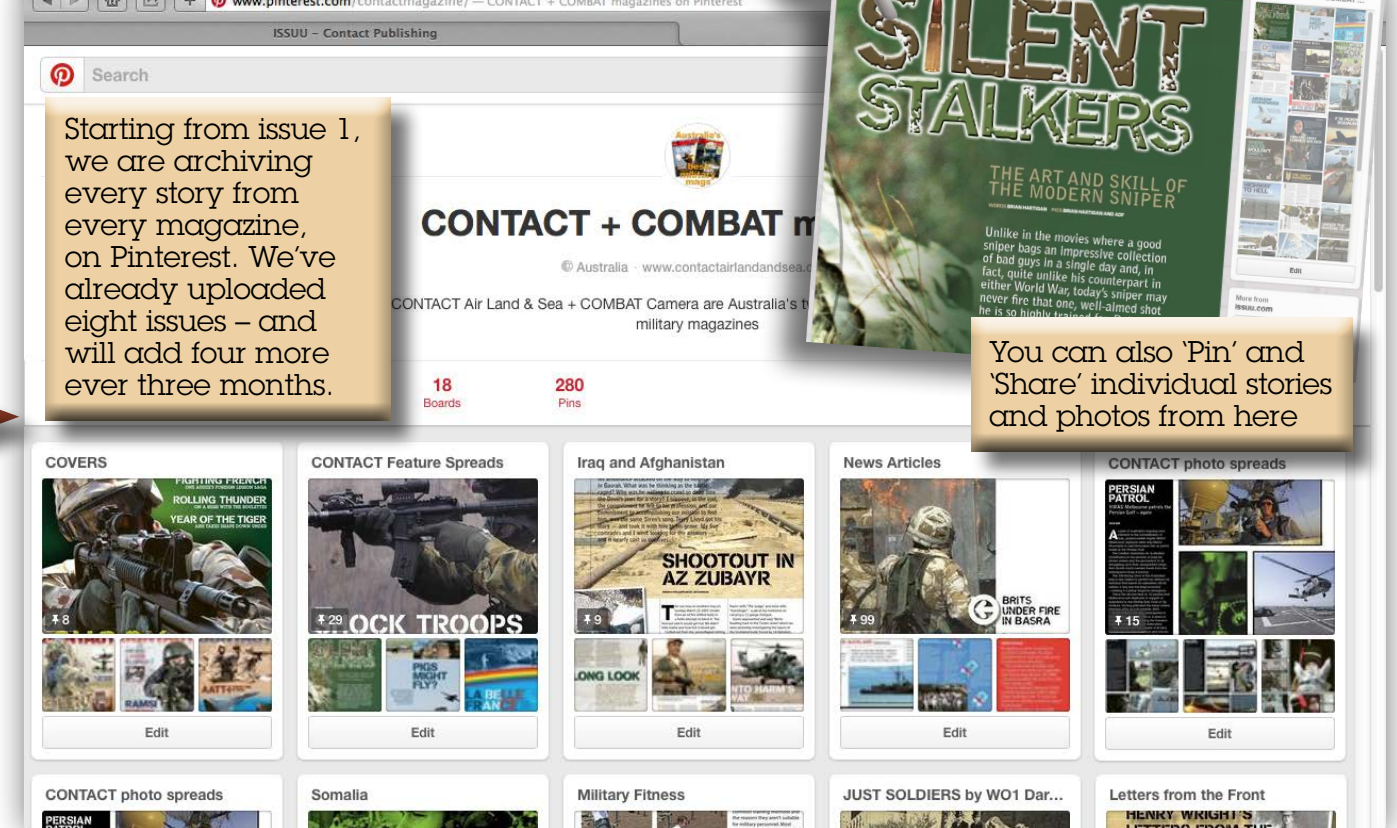
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# FUGO OMNIS BOVEM STERCUS

*Ruminations, by Sir Jeffrey Armiger*

*Find more on Facebook.com/sirjeffreearmiger*



Interestingly, almost 12 months ago, I was ruminating on this page about the BE (bovine excrement) produced by RAAF spin doctors in relation to their new uniform. This time it's Army's turn.

The caption that accompanies the photo below describes, "The Australian Army Tier 2 soldier combat ensemble in the new Australian multicam camouflage uniform pattern..."

So my question to you is, if the load-carry equipment photographed here is in "the new Australian multicam camouflage uniform pattern", why does it not match the shirt, which is also in "the new Australian multicam camouflage uniform pattern".

The simple answer, of course, is that they are not the same.

I believe the load-carry equipment photographed is actually what they used to call 'interim multicam pattern' – the one before some eejit came along and said, "let's use the same colour pallet as the old DPCU".

Unfortunately, however, they had already started manufacturing the load-carry

equipment with the older pattern before they decided to change the colour pallet on the uniform – so the Army ends up with a miss-matched ensemble.

Then, of course, there's the still-vexed question of why we needed to ditch the old DPCU in the first place if we're sticking with the same colour pallet?

CONTACT magazine's Gear Insider had much to say on that topic across issues 42 and 43, so I won't rehash that here – except to say one is a long way from convinced that the change was necessary, or, if the change was necessary, that the best result was achieved.

But that's just my opinion – and what would I know.

Anyway, like it or not, the ensemble will begin to roll out to the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade at Robertson Barracks in Darwin in May this year.



## ARM YOUR FEET.

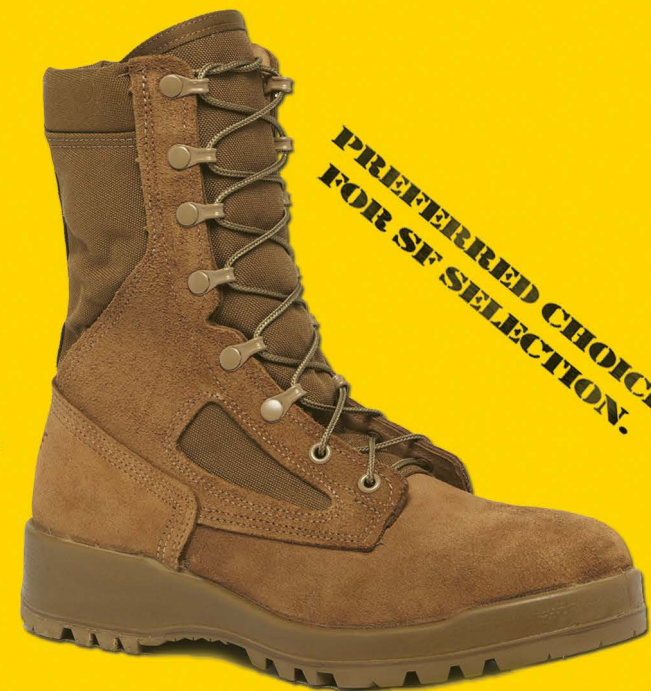
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# KIWI KORU

POUATU ST  
WATCH KIWI KORU  
VIDEO HERE

New Zealand's South West Pacific partners the US Marine Corps Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC) and US Army Pacific (USARPAC) joined forces with 1st (NZ) Brigade and the Royal New Zealand Air Force for Exercise Kiwi Koru in November. Involving LAV, infantry, artillery, engineers, signals and combat service support personnel, as well as specialist capabilities from the USA, the troops were tested in realistic peacekeeping scenarios.





The New Zealand Defence Force, Royal New Zealand Air Force, US Army and US Marine Corps combined efforts during the main assault of Exercise Kiwi Koru.

Kiwi Koru is a bilateral exercise between US and New Zealand militaries on the North Island of New Zealand designed to enhance defense relations through joint training and advancing interoperability between both forces.

The multinational force was tested in counter improvised explosive device techniques, combat lifesaving skills, overwatch and detaining procedures as well as other scenarios.

Exercise Kiwi Koru is designed to provide soldiers with a realistic training experience said New Zealand Armored Corps Warrant Officer Class 2 Hone Dalton, Queen Alexander's Mounted Rifles senior weapons instructor and Exercise Kiwi Koru exercise controller.

"Kiwi Koru is based on a free-play exercise, or a box exercise, which means that anything that happens within the box is played out for real in real time as it would be on operations," WO2 Dalton said.

"I use my experience to look at the situation and decide the outcome.

"I think the key thing that the participants have got out of this is collective cohesion. Whether or not they've achieved that at every level, they've all experienced an element of it.

"So the collective aspect of the exercise is the most important part of the training they're retaining."

The integration of US forces during the exercise benefited both military forces, said US Army Major Anthony Forshier, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division, and executive officer of battle organisation and Kiwi Koru army force commander.

"The biggest thing we're getting out of this is a partnership with the New Zealand Army," Major Forshier said.

"We are learning some tactical and procedural things from the New Zealand Army but they are also learning some things from us."

"Lessons learnt during the exercise are intended to increase readiness for both forces.

"Speaking with some of their leadership, some of the things they are still trying to ingrain into their operational process is the after-action review process.

"What we intend to do at the end is do an after-action review to show



# KIWI KORU





things that we think they can do a little bit differently, improve on some of the successes they have already had and also to solicit feedback from them as well."

Working with the New Zealand Defence Force and operating alongside them gives US Army soldiers a unique opportunity said 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Bryan Silva, Alpha Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, 14<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division platoon leader.

"The biggest lesson we can pick up from Kiwi Koru is working with another nation," 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Silva said.

"There are a lot of young soldiers out here who haven't had an opportunity to work with someone outside of the US Army.

"You need to expect, when you go to another country that there might be a scenario like this."

At the end of the final scenario the targeted area was cleared and simulated opposing forces were detained or eliminated.

WO2 Dalton said soldiering was such a serious business, that if you didn't look at how other armies operate, then you're probably not soldiering properly.

"You have to be able to experience how others do things, then make up your own mind what tactics you employ.

"Working with the Americans gives us a wider picture of what our people are doing well and gives us ideas on where we can improve."

Exercise Kiwi Koru demonstrated the commitment of both the United States and New Zealand to regional partnerships.

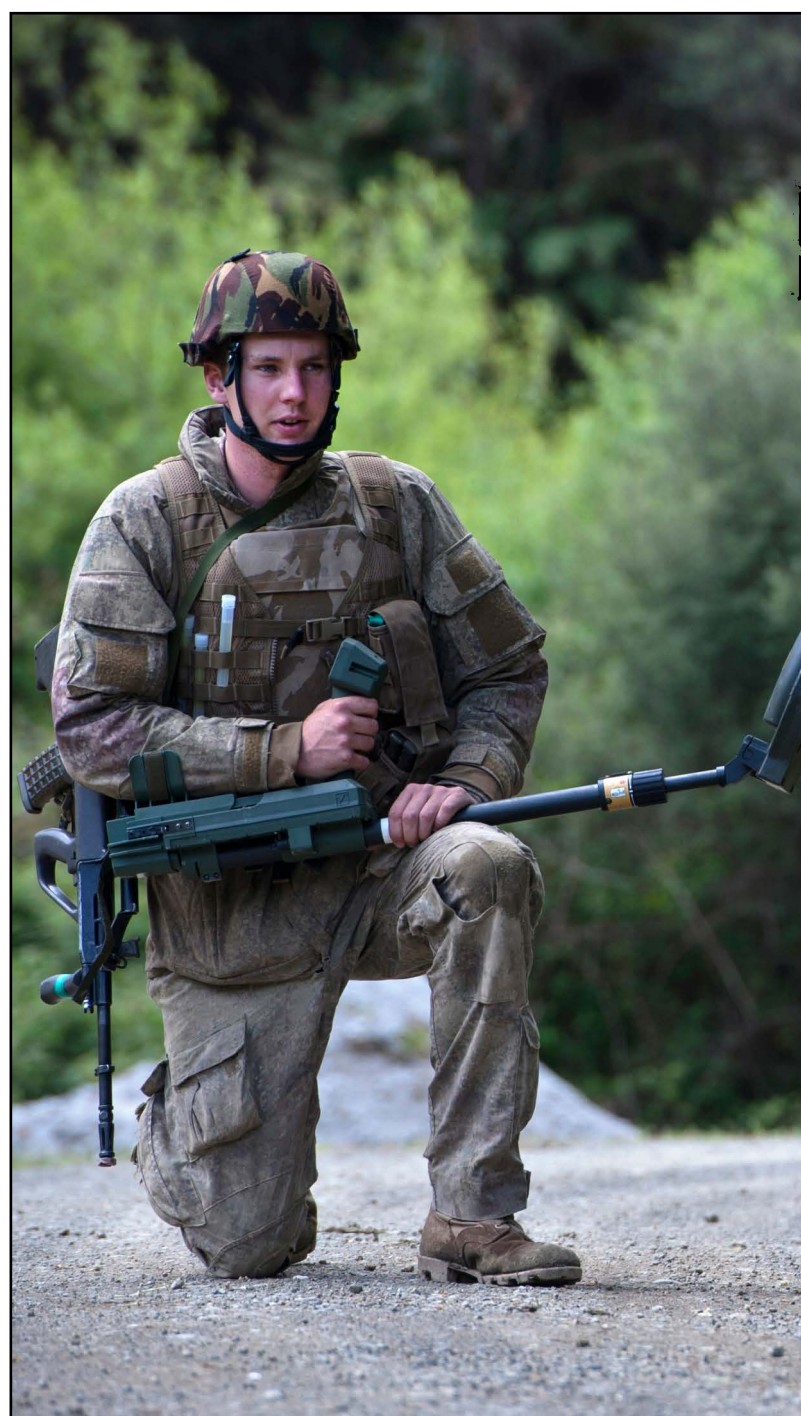
The exercise was a preparation event in support of Southern Katipo, an exercise occurring in alternate odd years.

Southern Katipo is also designed to enhance defense relations with New Zealand through multinational training and advancing interoperability between New Zealand and US forces.

Exercise Kiwi Koru was also the first time the NZ Air Force's new NH-90 helicopter was used to transport light gun artillery as part of a sling-load operation.

Three light gun artillery batteries were moved to a small country airstrip from where they were deployed to combat a simulated insurgency threat.

The US and New Zealand have longstanding history of military allegiances, with 2014 marking the 72<sup>nd</sup> anniversary of the arrival of US forces in New Zealand to assist with national defense during WWII.



# KIWI KORU





# EXISTENTIAL

A new spread for 'real' photos by real military members. This issue, we threw out an invitation to our Facebook fans to submit their "bestest shootn' shots". So thank you to the guys who sent these. If you've got a cracker you'd like to share (any theme), send it to [editor@militarycontact.com](mailto:editor@militarycontact.com)

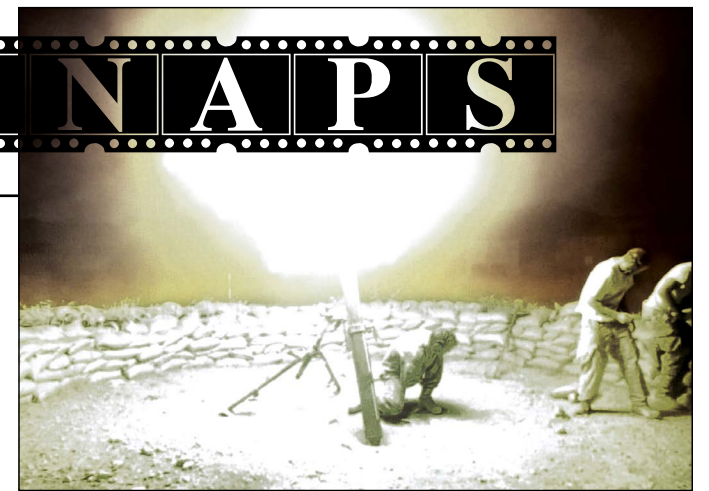


**LEFT:**  
84 FIRING NOW!!!  
SUBMITTED BY  
CHRIS COOTE  
"MYSELF PULLING  
THE BIG TRIGGER ON  
A RANGE SHOOT, MTF  
1, 2010. I WAS WITH  
COMBAT TEAM DELTA.  
NOTE THE PLUME  
OFF THE FRONT -  
COULDN'T HAVE BEEN  
A BETTER SHOT."

**BELOW:**  
M79 PHOTO BY  
DALE WILDE.  
"I WAS DEPLOYED AS  
A CHOCO (AUSTRALIA  
ARMY INFANTRY  
RESERVIST) IN 2010 TO  
OPERATION REGIONAL  
ASSISTANCE MISSION  
TO SOLOMON  
ISLANDS (RAMSI). WE  
WERE CONDUCTING  
A NIGHT SHOOT OF  
40MM PARA FLARES  
ON THE AUSTRALIAN  
ARMY RANGE."



# HAPPY SNAPS



"HEY MATE, 2  
RIPPING PICS FROM  
2RAR MORTARS  
MTF-3."  
BY DARCY  
THURSTON

RIGHT AND  
ABOVE RIGHT:  
120MM FIRING HE  
IN SUPPORT OF  
ASG CHECKPOINTS.

2 X INSETS:  
SAME PHOTOS  
WITH A LITTLE  
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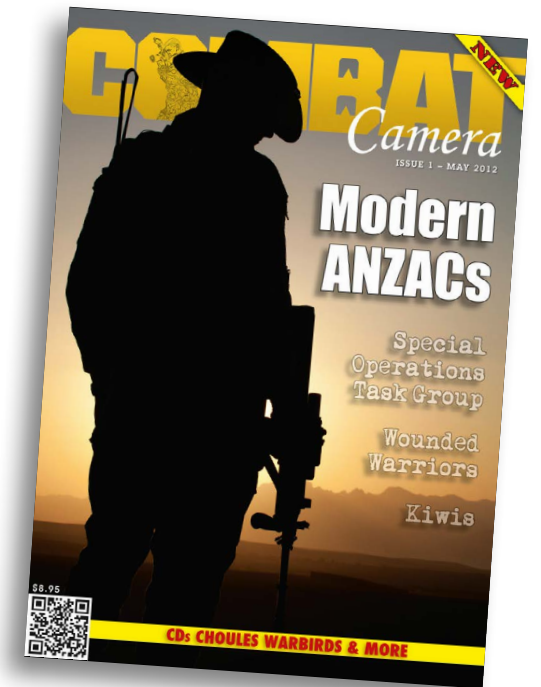
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***THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE***

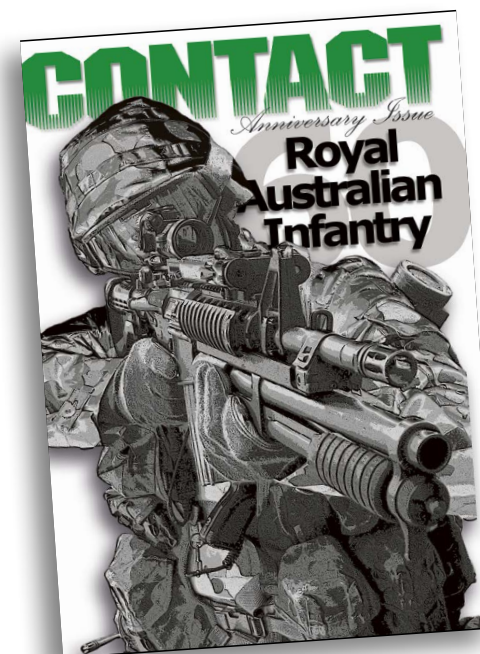
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# Australia's two best boots-on-the-ground military magazines



**COMBAT Camera** is a photo-essay-based magazine with the same DNA as **CONTACT**. **CC01** is available in print only.

To mark the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Royal Australian Infantry Corps, **CONTACT** produced an '**Infantry Special**' issue as a collectors' item not to be missed.



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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?

After publishing a few of what I consider to be my own best range-practice photos on Facebook recently, I threw out an invitation to our Facebook fans to submit their "bestest shootn' shots" for publication in **COMBAT Camera** - the results of which you can see on pages 78-79.

Regular readers of this column might know that none of those photos are 'up to snuff' as per the 'rules' for getting published in **COMBAT Camera**. So why did those photos get a run then?

I had to mull the answer to that question long and hard myself.

And, of course, there are several reasons why I published those photos - and why I gave them as much space as I did.

Number one was that my initial invitation actually said 'to be published in the next issue of **COMBAT Camera**' - so that promise had to be honoured.

When the photos were submitted, I was initially startled by the poor technical quality of the photos - and started to look for excuses not to publish them.

But then, reading the enthusiasm of the owners of those photos got me to thinking about photos in a more existential way.

### What is a photo anyway

For me, as a magazine editor, photos are an immensely important element of storytelling.

Military endeavour is a serious business. Everyday training can be dangerous and 'deployed on ops' can

ultimately mean a death sentence.

For those who participate in military endeavours - and survive - the experience is often profound.

The mateship and comradeship of military service are, in most cases, life-long emotions, and the 'action' can be intense.

Memories of military service are often fond. Even those who suffer trauma will often cite their military service overall as "the best days of my life".

Soldier's photos (even technically poor ones), therefore, are not just snapshots of moments in time, but gateways to treasure troves of memories and emotions.

Looking at his "two ripping pics from 2RAR Mortars", I'm guessing Darcy Thurston doesn't see two pieces of paper printed with badly exposed images with little discernible detail - I'm guessing he sees moving images, hears the noise, feels the percussion and smells the cordite of each of those shots.

More than that, I'm betting he recalls the exhilaration (and/or other) emotion of those exact moments - and

several moments before and after each bomb was dropped.

If he stares at them long enough, he will 'see' and 'feel' more in those two pictures that most of us would ever see in Mona Lisa or some such 'masterpiece'.

For these reasons, it is my duty to respect those photos as much as I would the most technically perfect photograph.

Nonetheless, however, I can't just willy nilly drop technically poor happysnaps into a story spread populated by otherwise 'professional' photos.

### Open invitation

After judging the submitted photos as technically inferior but existentially important, I think it was appropriate, therefore, for me to invent a new spread where these important pics can find their own niche.

And so, if our fans want me to, I am happy to keep an open invitation to any and all serving or ex-serving military members to send me their photos (on any theme) for publication on those two pages.



Canon EOS 1D Mk III  
1/8000<sup>th</sup> of a second  
f2.8 ISO 800  
70-200mm lens at 200mm

An Australian soldier in action on the range, during Exercise Southern Jackaroo 2013. Defence-owned photo by Sergeant Brian Hartigan

### Rules of engagement

In all good conscience, I can't open that invitation, however, without telling you what I know about the rules that govern you as military members.

As a part-time sergeant in AAPRS (Australian Army Public Relations Service) I can tell you the official bottom line is something effectively meaning, "Thou shall not speak to the media".

But, as a 'media man' and an independent publisher, I can tell you I am not bound by Defence's rules in this civilian capacity.

So, if you send your photos

to [editor@militarycontact.com](mailto:editor@militarycontact.com), you should expect that I will assume you mean for me to publish them.

You can, of course, opt to send your photos but ask to have your name, unit etc withheld. I will endeavour to honour your 'protected identity' status :-)

At the end of the day, as with all aspects of this magazine (and the other one), I am not here to throw stones

or to undermine national security - but equally, I am not here to defend 'the establishment' or PR-spindoctor-generated rules around political sensitivities.

Nor am I here to push any kind of bandwagon.

I am a proud Aussie soldier whose only desire is to shed a little limelight on the great work of the brotherhood of arms, and to give a little credit where credit is due.

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



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