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Issue 13 – August 2015

COMBAT Camera



CATA

3 Brigade's
Combined-Arms
Training Activity

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Have you visited our web site recently? We put some effort into giving it a whole new look and feel.

If you haven't, check it now – www.militarycontact.com

It is now a dynamic news-style site, updated as news comes to hand, and linked closely with our other on-line real estate – Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

Oh yeah – we now also have a Twitter account, so if you like us there too, you'll get our news and updates on the go.

And, by linking our site to Pinterest, we can offer you one more option to find all our news stories (as well as our archived magazine stories) in one, easy-to-navigate, like-and-share space.

Linking our web site to Facebook is also proving to be a major bonus for our lifeblood statistics. In the first month of operation, the new site attracted more than 24,000 unique visitors – 32,000 visits – 102,000 page views – and more than 1 million hits – IN JUST ONE MONTH!

So I'm happy to report that we think the extra admin is well worth the effort.

Speaking of Facebook – In the last issue of **CONTACT**, I made mention of a particular survey I intended to conduct on Facebook. The question was, 'would you buy a paper-based copy of **CONTACT** number 50, if we printed it?'

In the last issue of **CONTACT**, I said this idea would need 1000 likes on Facebook before I'd even consider taking this idea to the next stage.

Because I was pretty keen on the idea myself, I actually downgraded the likes target to 500 when I eventually asked the question on Facebook.

A big thank you to those of you who are still so keen and passionate about paper magazines – but, unfortunately, I received fewer than 300 likes, comments, page visits and any other stat I could scrape together in hope.

"Never say never again" as the fella said – but, for now at least, I'm sorry to say, that particular idea is officially on ice.

Sincerely,

Brian Hartigan
Managing Editor

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DUTCH BUSHIES

A dozen Australian-made Bushmasters are in production at Thales' Bendigo plant destined for export to the Netherlands.

When delivered mid next year, the new vehicles will complement the 86 Bushmasters previously purchased by the Dutch between 2006 and 2009.

Thales Australia CEO Chris Jenkins said Bushmaster had proven itself on operations with Australian and Dutch forces in Afghanistan and was a vital component of the Dutch Light Brigade.

"This export order shows their continuing confidence in the Bushmaster, its ability to protect troops in theatre and save lives," Mr Jenkins said.

"It's also a tribute to the unique skills and in-depth expertise we have at our Bushmaster production facility in Bendigo, Victoria.

"Generating exports like this is good for us, good for local suppliers and good for the economy."

Holland's new troop-carrier variants will be fitted with additional composite armour, remote weapon stations and Thales' SOTAS intercom system.

Photo Richard Frigge for Defence NL



HARS rescues 707

On 22 July 2015, volunteers from the Historic Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS) collected the forward fuselage of former RAAF Boeing 707 A20-627 from RAAF Base Richmond, transporting it by road to the HARS collection at Albion Park near Wollongong, NSW.

The aircraft, known as 'Windsor Town' in RAAF service, was constructed by Boeing in 1967 as the 707th Boeing 707 from their production line.

It served with Qantas Airlines before being acquired by the RAAF in early 1979 as the first of its eventual fleet of six Boeing 707s.

In Qantas livery, the plane set a world record (since broken) for the most number of people on an airplane when it evacuated 673 people from Darwin in the wake of Cyclone Tracy.

The RAAF operated A20-627 from RAAF Base Richmond as a transport and later as an air-to-air refuelling tanker, before retiring the airframe in 2001 and using the aircraft as a source of spare parts for other Boeing 707s, the last of which was retired from RAAF service in June 2008.

On joining the HARS collection, the forward fuselage will be put on display and restored while on display.



WATCH VIDEO OF PICKUP





MAIN PHOTO: A No 35 Squadron C-27J Spartan flies low over Aussie bush shortly after departing RAAF Base Townsville before the aircraft was formally welcomed into RAAF service at RAAF Base Richmond on 30 June 2015.

Initial Operational Capability for the C-27J fleet is planned for late next year, with Final Operational Capability expected within the following two years.

Australia acquired 10 C-27J Spartans to replace the DHC-4 Caribou, which was retired in 2009 after more than 40 years service.

The C-27J Spartan fleet will initially be based at Richmond near Sydney until their permanent home at RAAF Base Amberley in Queensland is completed.

INSET: A RAAF KC-30A MRTT (multi-role tanker transport) trials its boom refuel system by hooking up with an E-7A Wedgetail.

The RAAF's MRTT fleet will be boosted from five to seven airframes after the government agreed to buy and convert two former Qantas A330-200s to KC-30As.

The project cost for the two 'new' aircraft is \$408million Australian.

The RAAF also received its seventh C-17A Globemaster III on 29 July, with one more to round out its fleet expected by year's end – and it's first EA-18G Growler a day later.





The flagship of the US Navy's 7th Fleet, USS Blue Ridge (right) being moved to a position behind Australia's newest and largest warship, HMAS Canberra, at Garden Island Naval Base in Sydney.

In the leadup to Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015, USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19), and the embarked US 7th Fleet staff, arrived in Sydney on 3 July for a port visit.

USS Blue Ridge is a command and control ship and is forward deployed to Commander Fleet Activities, Yokosuka, Japan.

Blue Ridge will operate alongside Australian naval assets, including HMAS Canberra, as part of Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015, with close to 30,000 Australian, American, New Zealand and Japanese military personnel involved.



A PASSING TRADITION THAT'S NOT GOING AWAY

When the CO shakes the hand of his or her counterpart from the American forces; or the ship's Captain is met by dignitaries in a foreign port; chances are a coin will quietly be slipped from one hand to the other during the greeting. And in most cases the recipient will have a coin of their own to pass back.

The tradition of passing special commemorative coins or medallions to mark operations, visits, postings, commands or most any association of our armed services is growing, and so is the expectation of thousands of avid collectors worldwide, according to the head of commemorative design at the Military Shop in Canberra, Lindsey Davie.

"When we first started producing coins for defence groups around 30 years ago it was usually for big events, the chiefs' offices or part of a big public relations program like Army's 100th, but over time the value of these beautiful mementos as an icebreaker has grown massively," Ms Davie said.

"There is something very tangible about holding a coin and when they are passed it is instantly appreciated. Nowadays they are one of the most anticipated and collected military keepsakes in the world. There would not be one serving member who doesn't have at least a couple they keep to remind them of an operation or the people they've met."

After years of creating coins Military Shop has built up the most comprehensive collection of coins and Australian military insignia and designs. But according to Ms Davie in most cases people ask for something unique, something 'special'.

"We really love helping create unique coins and after so many years of working in the defence environment our designers know just how to apply the official Service insignia so that the design protects and enhances each Service brand."

Ms Davie says one of the key products requested when Military Shop created the Operation Slipper commemorative collection for the Chief of Defence's office was an affordable coin.

"The Op Slipper coin, or as we refer to it Op Slipper Medallion, is one of the most popular items in the collection. It tells a story of service and is an interesting piece that is meaningful to both those who served as well as those who simply believe in the work of our armed forces."

People wanting more information or advice on creating coins should contact Military Shop on 1300 883 130 or visit www.militaryshop.com.au

UK's third A400M



PHOTO BY ANDREW LINNETT. CROWN COPYRIGHT

The British Ministry of Defence announced it had taken delivery of its third A400M Atlas in July.

The next-generation transport aircraft took off from the assembly plant in Seville, Spain, and landed at its new home at RAF Brize Norton in Oxfordshire last on 5 July after a two-and-a-half-hour flight.

Third of 22 A400M Atlas to be accepted by the UK, the aircraft is part of a £2.75 billion programme which the MoD says is on track to meet the UK's future air mobility requirements.

Britain's A400M Atlas is due to replace the C-130 Hercules when it goes out of service in 2022.

Printed UAV

Southampton engineers have test flown a 3D-printed UAV off the front of a Royal Navy warship.

The aircraft later landed safely on a Dorset beach.

HMS Mersey provided the perfect platform for the University of Southampton to test their SULSA unmanned aerial vehicle, which weighed just 3kg and measured 1.5m and carried a small video camera to allow researchers to monitor the flight from a control van.

The flight, which covered roughly 500m, lasted less than five minutes but demonstrated the potential use of small, lightweight UAVs, which can be easily launched at sea, in a maritime environment.

Professor Andy Keane, from Engineering and the Environment at the University of Southampton, said he believe their pioneering use of 3D-printed nylon had advanced design thinking in the UAV community worldwide.



LA(PHOT) Guy Pool. Crown Copyright

HATS off



Airbus Helicopters' photo

Airbus Helicopters has achieved Factory Acceptance of HATS01, the first of 15 helicopters of the H135 family (EC135T2+) for the ADF's Helicopter Aircrew Training System (HATS).

Representatives of Boeing Defence Australia, as the prime contractor for the new training system for the ADF, joined with members of the Royal Australian Navy and the Australian Army in Donauwörth, Germany, on 23 July, for a Factory Acceptance Ceremony for the new airframe upon which future Australian Navy and Army helicopter pilots will train.

Airbus Helicopters said the EC135 T2+ was a consummate military training helicopter, offering a glass cockpit with high visibility, a multi-axis auto-pilot, twin-engine performance and safety, plus other advanced technologies to help students and instructors perform training missions safely.

Dogfight revival

Photo by Corporal Jimmy Wise, RAF Crown Copyright



A Royal Air Force Typhoon and an Indian Air Force Flanker fly together on Exercise Indra Dhanush – a dogfighting exercise in the UK.

Designed to reinforce the strategic relationship and enhance the mutual operational understanding between the two air forces, pilots and ground forces from both nations are participating in a series of increasingly complex training scenarios.

The IAF flew its Russian-built Flanker jet fighters, along with transport and tanker aircraft, across three continents to train with their RAF counterparts in England.



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Tested overseas

The Royal New Zealand Air Force's 3 Squadron spent a lot of time testing their bird, honing skills and mixing with their allies and neighbours at the Shoalwater Bay Military Training Area on Queensland's central coast during Exercise Talisman Sabre, Australia's largest warfighting exercise.

Air Commodore Kevin McEvoy, Acting Commander Joint Forces New Zealand, said Talisman Sabre marked the first time New Zealand's NH90s have been taken overseas and was a great opportunity to use the helicopters to their full ability in a coalition environment.

The New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) was invited to participate fully for the first time in Talisman Sabre this year.

The exercise ran from 5-21 July in multiple training areas in Australia and the United States.

It was preceded by several work-up exercises and activities by all participants, including the Kiwis, for whom just getting to the event was a major exercise in itself – embarking two NH90s and around 45 military vehicles, including 22 Light Armoured Vehicles, aboard HMNZS Canterbury for the hop across 'the ditch'.

Air Commodore McEvoy said exercises such as Talisman Sabre provided excellent training to further hone warfighting capabilities and New Zealand's ability to respond to a wide variety of contingencies.

"It is also an opportunity to train with key partners – Australia and the United States – so we can enhance our ability to operate alongside them," he said.

"NZDF can use learnings from Talisman Sabre to develop our Joint Task Force, which can deploy, operate and sustain combat forces from Army, Air and Navy away from New Zealand.

"The Joint Task Force makes NZDF an expeditionary force able to fully deploy overseas, and is targeted to be fully operational by the end of 2015."

NZDF deployed two ships, two NH90s, a Seasprite helicopter, a C-130 Hercules, around 45 military vehicles including 22 Light Armoured Vehicles, and 620 personnel for Talisman Sabre.

The Air Force's 3 Squadron, led by Wing Commander Scott McKenzie, operated as part of the Australian Army's 16th Aviation Brigade during the exercise.



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3 Brigade

CATA

Combined Arms Training Activity

Over the period 1 to 18 June 2015, Townsville-based 3rd Brigade conducted a combined-arms training activity (CATA) in the Townsville Field Training Area, which this year saw the integration of a wide range of non-brigade elements. For the first time, Australian Army reservists bolstered the brigade as a demonstration of Plan Beersheba integration. US Army and Marines as well as Japan Ground Self Defence Force soldiers were incorporated in the concurrently run Exercise Southern Jackaroo – and British soldiers on the concurrent Exercise Morlancourt. In all, more than 2000 personnel took part in the exercise.

PHOTOS BY CORPORAL MARK DORAN

Private Luke Murdock, 3RAR – less than a year in the Army before experiencing the pace and thunder of a brigade-sized CATA



Private Stefan Cee, 3RAR



2nd Cavalry Regiment
ASLAVs



Soldiers from 3RAR fire an 84mm
M3 Karl Gustav anti-tank weapon



Lance Corporal
Oosterhuizen,
3RAR



Warrant Officer Class Two Jeffery Fraser,
Company Sergeant Major Bravo Company, 3RAR



Private Aaron Ford (left)
and Lieutenant Kyle Tilse
3CSSB

PHOTOS BY LEADING SEAMAN JAYSON TUFREY

DIAMOND STRIKE

Thousands of troops from the Brisbane-based 7th Brigade swarmed the Shoalwater Bay Training Area in June to certify the formation as Army's ready brigade

As the combined-arms training activity – **Exercise Diamond Strike 2015** – wrapped up at Queensland's Shoalwater Bay, Commander 7th Brigade Brigadier Adam Findlay was satisfied.

"Chief of Army told me to get the brigade ready by July 1. Well, they're ready. And, trust me, they have been tested," Brigadier Findlay said. Detachments from 6 Brigade, 16 Aviation Brigade, 17 Combat Service Support Brigade and about 500 soldiers from the New Zealand Army's 1st Brigade bolstered the numbers on Exercise Diamond Strike to more than 3000 personnel. The exercise included three battlegroups – Heeler, Ram and Waratah – and was the culmination of a 12-month training continuum that began with CATA 2014.

Certification as the ready brigade means 7 Brigade now possesses the skills necessary to deploy at short notice to any region to conduct any type of operation, including combat, stability or humanitarian assistance, with joint or inter-agency partners if required.

With the hard work and intensity of Exercise Diamond Strike still ringing in their ears, the soldiers of 7 Brigade rolled straight into Exercises Hamel and Talisman Sabre.



DIAMOND STRIKE

WORDS CORPORAL MARK DORAN, ARMY NEWSPAPER



Photo by Lance Corporal Kyle Genner

The strength of the Australian and US alliance in the Pacific region was demonstrated during Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015.

The sixth biennial, bilateral exercise involved about 30,000 Australian and US troops, along with participants from the New Zealand Defence Force and the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force in a multi-faceted and challenging air, sea and land warfighting environment from 4 to 19 July.

The combined joint task force included close to 9500 soldiers, 1000 Air Force personnel, 12,000 sailors, 1300 special forces and 4600 marines.

The exercise incorporated force preparation and special forces activities, large-scale amphibious landings, parachuting, land force manoeuvre, urban operations, air-mobile and maritime operations and live firing from small arms, artillery, naval vessels and aircraft.

Chief of Joint Operations Vice Admiral David Johnston said Australia had partnered many times with the US military, he was pleased to see this year's Talisman Sabre continue to build on the partnership to ensure both countries were

ready to go where they may need to when required.

"It was an extraordinary exercise and I congratulate all of those who have been involved both in planning and participating. It has been one of the safest we have performed and one of the most complex we have conducted," Vice Admiral Johnston said.

Virtual and live realistic training was conducted on land from the Shoalwater Bay Training Area in Queensland to Fog Bay and the Bradshaw Field Training Area in the NT.

Airpower included F/A-18F Super Hornets from the US Navy, supported by the RAAF's E-7A Wedgetail and KC-30A Multi Role Tanker Transport, which conducted high-intensity land strike training on the Delamere Weapons Air Range.

The maritime areas of the Coral Sea, Timor Sea, Arafura Sea and Indian Ocean featured 21 ships and three submarines, while more than 200 aircraft took part in the exercise designed to advance Australian and US troops' skills,

preparedness, interoperability and their ability in high-end combat.

As part of the Expeditionary Strike Group, Australian and New Zealand ships HMAS Choules and RNZNS Endeavour worked alongside the US Navy Seventh Fleet's USS George Washington carrier strike group and the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, both of which are based in Japan.

Commander 1st Division Major General Stuart Smith was the deputy commander of the task force and said the 2015 exercise was his third. Talisman Sabre, which was, "Easily the most demanding, but most successful because of the staff interaction and high levels of interoperability that were demonstrated".

"HQ 1 Div integrated with the US Seventh Fleet to form the combined joint task force that commanded the entire exercise.

"The staff integration was first class and was assisted by efficient information systems, good placement of the ADF's quality staff and good integration training in the leadup to the exercise."

WATCH THE AMPHIBIOUS
BEACH INSERTION



WATCH TALISMAN
SABRE OVERVIEW

TALISMAN SABRE 15



WATCH THIS
TACTICAL
MOVE



United States Marine Corps V-22 Ospreys from 265th Tiltrotor Squadron, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, land at Fog Bay Northern Territory. Australian soldiers from 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, and marines from the United States 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit were airlifted from Fog Bay after completing an amphibious assault phase of Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015.

Photos by Lance Corporal Kyle Genner



TALISMAN SABRE 15



WATCH THE
LCAC IN
ACTION



WATCH
BEACH
ASSAULT



19 HOURS FOR A JUMP

FROM A STORY BY DAVID VERGUN, US ARMY

"You come to battle under a canopy of a parachute and it gets your adrenaline up and you've got to keep your adrenaline up to keep moving" Lieutenant Colonel Matt Hardman said. "And, after a 19-hour flight and jump, it's just started"

Suffering jetlag and the general fatigue of their non-stop 19-hour flight on 8 July 2015, Lieutenant Colonel Hardman and about 400 of his soldiers from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, parachuted onto Kapyong Drop Zone, Williamson Airfield, Shoalwater Bay, Queensland, Australia, to join 30,000 fellow warfighters on Exercise Talisman Sabre.

The Soldiers, part of 3rd Battalion, 509th Parachute Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division, jumped from seven C-17 Globemasters, two of which belonged to the Royal Australian Air Force, and all of which needed to be refuelled in the air during the epic flight.

For many of the soldiers, this would be one of just a handful of jumps they've done in their careers to date.

On the other hand, Sergeant 1st Class Jonathan Alexander, first sergeant of D Company, 3-509 had 108 jumps in his log book - the most of anyone on the aircraft - spent the final hours of the long-haul flight checking and re checking the straps, harness assemblies, buckles and helmets of the more junior soldiers under his charge, to make sure they were ready for this unique jump.

"Army parachutists don't like last-minute surprises," he said.

"A safe and effective mission requires a team effort.

"Soldiers check each other's gear often, and offer words of encouragement when needed.

Sergeant 1st Class Bobby Caron, platoon sergeant 3rd Platoon, said, "No one admits it, but deep inside everyone is scared before going out the door, but the moment you're relaxed, you put yourself and others in danger.

"Every jump is different and it's natural to experience anxiety about not knowing how the jump will go or what you'll land in and how you'll land," he said.

Sergeant Caron's own anxiety was mixed with excitement - and more so than normal. This jump would be his 100th - and into Australia from an Australian aircraft.

"It doesn't get better than that," he said.

Three hours before the jump, the paratroopers secured their weapons and rucksacks and about 20 minutes before jump, they attach their parachute-opening strap to static lines in the aircraft.

Then the jump lights turn from RED - to AMBER - to GREEN - and the soldiers exit through doors on each side of the C-17, just one second apart.

Once outside the plane, each soldier counts to six, by which time they should have felt the tug of their chute opening.

They look up to see that their chute is open, isn't damaged or tangled, and look to see if their rate of descent is comparable to others around them.

Jumping from 1000 feet should give them enough time to decide if all is well or if their reserve parachute needs to be deployed.

Once Soldiers hit the ground, they release their canopy harness assembly so the chute doesn't drag them off in the wind, then get their weapons out ready to seek out and engage the enemy.

After securing the 'expeditionary airfield' and a further objective 4km away, these same soldiers were back on C-17s for the return trip to Alaska - and a parachute return to home base.

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OPS ENGINEERS
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A RUNWAY



WATCH THE
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US Air Force photo by Senior
Airman Stephen G. Eigel
Modified by COMBAT Camera

TALISMAN SABRE

Australian soldiers from Mortar Platoon, 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (2RAR), fire an 81mm mortar in support of a platoon attack, at Bradshaw Field Training Area, Northern Territory, during the final phases of Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015.

Photo by Lance Corporal Kyle Genner

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Now 72, Ken Cocks has finally decided to retire - and sell his very profitable business

A business opportunity YOU could be proud of!

The Cocks family of Blackwood, South Australia, have a medal-mounting business they would like to sell.

"We came into the business knowing very little about medals and, while it was a steep learning curve, it did not take us long to get a handle on it," Ken says.

"We meet some wonderful people and hear some amazing stories. Our customers range from very old WWII people to current-serving personnel.

"We mount original and replica medals and we also prepare heritage military frames when people want to honour a relative or to showcase their own service."

Ken feels now is a great time to buy this business, what with the 100th anniversary of Gallipoli

fresh in our memories and loads more milestones ahead over the next four years.

But the business is well established and solidly grounded regardless.

"During the almost eight years we have had this business we have built an excellent reputation and a very solid client base," Ken says.

"For anyone buying the business, if they continue quality service to our clients, they cannot fail to succeed.

"Our turnover for 2014 was more than \$190,000 with a trading profit of nearly \$90,000."

So, if the business is going so well, why is Ken selling?

"We want to sell the business because, at nearly 72 years of age, it is time to properly retire.

"But we would be more than happy to spend time with any new owner to get them 'up to speed' in the business - especially in the lead up to their first Anzac Day, as the three months prior can be exceptionally busy.

"After that, our son, Craig, has offered to help as a subcontractor to the business if the new owner needs a hand."

Ken is confident he has a, "lovely business that would be ideal for a serving member retiring early".

"We have about \$60,000 to \$70,000 worth of stock on hand and we're asking \$225,000 for the business but that price is negotiable."

**Contact Ken Cocks on
(08) 8278 8530 or 0411 415 817
for more information.**



Australian soldiers from 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (2RAR) conducted a live-fire attack at Bradshaw Field Training Area (BFTA) in the Northern Territory as part of their final phase of Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015.

The battalion initially set up a defensive position in the area before commencing platoon-level live-fire assaults through a simulated enemy defensive position.


The activities were unique in so much as Support Company provided Direct

Fire Support Weapons (DFSW) Platoon and Mortar Platoon capabilities to enable platoon commanders to draw upon assets that would typically only be used in company-level attacks.

Photos by Lance Corporal Kyle Genner



TALISMAN SABRE 15



Australian soldiers from 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (2RAR), conduct 'fire and move' during a live-fire platoon attack at Bradshaw Field Training Area, Northern Territory. Photo by Lance Corporal Kyle Genner

AL ISMAN SAR



ABOVE: US MARINE 1ST LIEUTENANT BENJAMIN J. MOORE EXPLAINS THE WORKINGS OF HIS HIGH MOBILITY ARTILLERY ROCKET SYSTEM (HIMARS) TO AUSTRALIAN SOLDIERS GUNNERS CONNER FARRUGIA, ALEXANDER EDWARDS AND JARRYD BROWN, 8TH/12TH REGIMENT, ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARTILLERY.

BELOW: A HIMARS ROCKET TAKES OFF AT BRADSHAW FIELD TRAINING AREA, NORTHERN TERRITORY.

PHOTOS BY CORPORAL MARK DORAN




WATCH HIMARS
IN ACTION



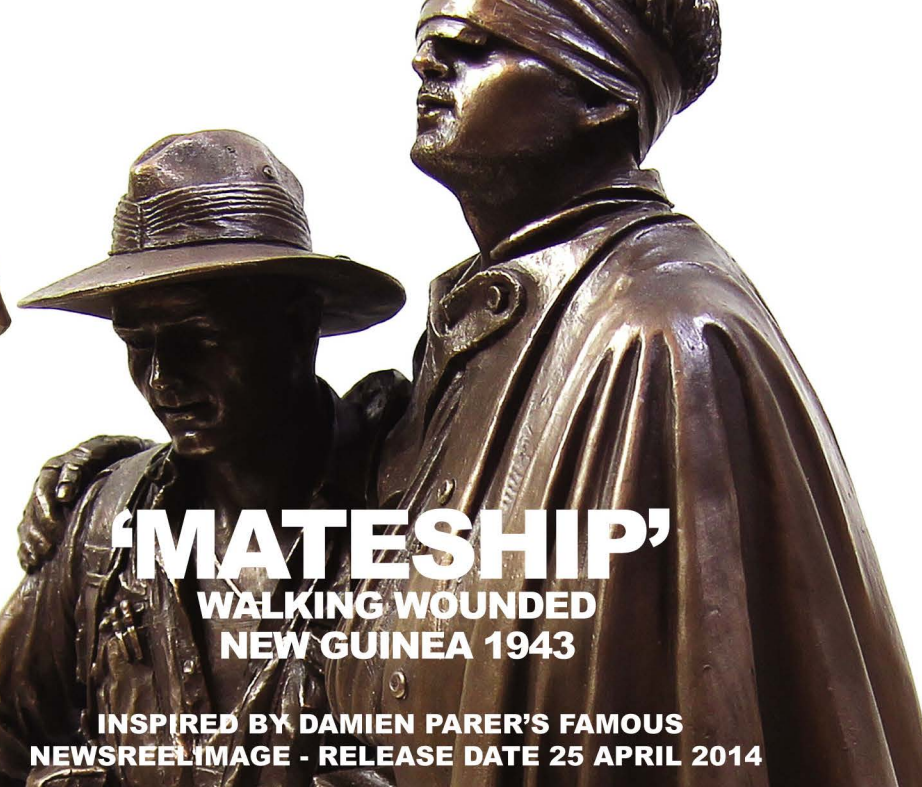
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THE US MARINE CORPS' 1ST BATTALION 4TH MARINES AND MARINE HEAVY HELICOPTER SQUADRON 463 TOOK PART IN A REGIMENTAL-SIZED VERTICAL ASSAULT DURING EXERCISE TALISMAN SABRE.

MAIN: A CH-53 SUPER STALLION PREPARES TO LIFT AN AUSTRALIAN ARMY M-777 HOWITZER AT BRADSHAW FIELD TRAINING AREA, NORTHERN TERRITORY.

ABOVE: US MARINES PREPARE AN AUSTRALIAN ARMY M-777 HOWITZER FOR AIR LIFT.

LEFT: COMMANDING OFFICER 1ST BATTALION, 4TH MARINE REGIMENT, LIEUTENANT COLONEL ERIC DOUGHERTY (RIGHT OF PICTURE) FIRES AN M-777 FROM THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY'S 8TH/12TH REGIMENT.

PHOTOS BY AUSSIE CORPORAL MARK DORAN



TALISMAN SABRE 15



Royal Australian Navy Lieutenant Commander Paul Johansen observes flight operations on amphibious assault ship USS Bonhomme Richard (LHD 6).



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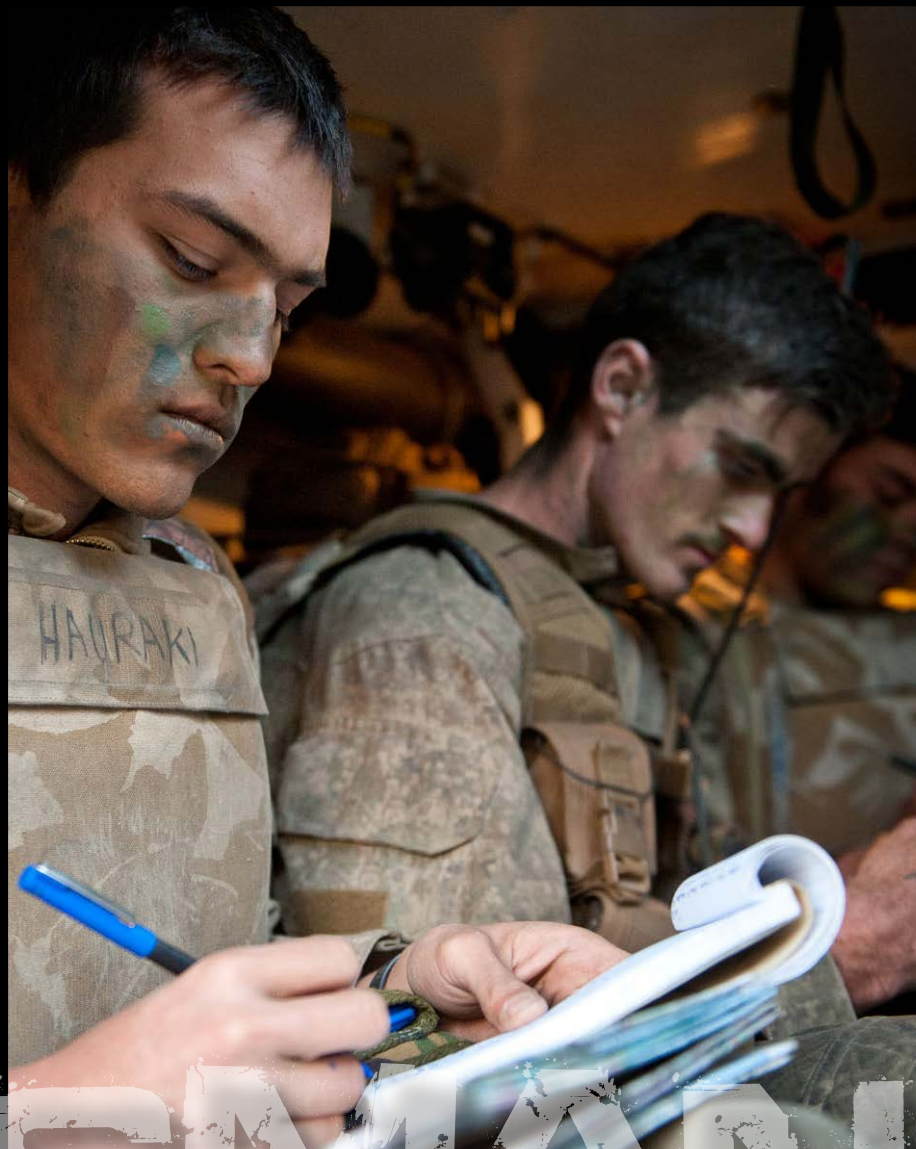
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The New Zealand Defence Force took part fully for the first time in Talisman Sabre 2015, deploying around 620 personnel, two ships, four aircraft including, 22 Light Armoured Vehicles and 23 other military vehicles to Shoalwater Bay and Fog Bay. Major General Tim Gall, Commander Joint Forces New Zealand, said the training that NZ personnel were getting in Exercise Talisman Sabre helped the NZDF better understand how it can work together with its partners as well as within its own Defence Force. While the battles fought during TS15 may have been 'mock conflict', senior ADF officers said they were honoured to 'fight' alongside their New Zealand peers. "In the centenary of the ANZAC landings at Gallipoli, it is a poignant reminder that New Zealand and Australia share a common bond in adversity through war," Australian Army Lieutenant Colonel Dean Thompson, Commanding Officer Battle Group Griffin said. "As it was 100 years ago, it is an honour and privilege to serve and fight alongside the New Zealand Defence Force."

Photos by Corporal Amanda McErlich



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OF KIWI
INVOLVEMENT



TALISMAN SABRE 15

Orion's reach

The Royal New Zealand Air Force is about to celebrate one year conducting anti-piracy maritime surveillance in the Middle East.



RNZAF P-3K2 aircraft and crew are deployed as part of the Combined Maritime Forces multinational partnership to promote security and stability in the waters surrounding the Middle East.

The first Orion and crew left Base Auckland on 1 August 2014, with several rotations of aircraft and crew over the past 12 months.

The latest rotation of aircraft and crew left Auckland on 23 July 2015.

Chief of Air Force Air Vice-Marshal Mike Yardley said the New Zealand contribution to operations in the Middle East was highly appreciated.

"The Orion is a hugely popular asset for the Combined Maritime Forces. The information provided by our aircraft and intelligence personnel has helped locate and intercept vessels involved in illegal activities including piracy and drug smuggling," Air Vice-Marshal Yardley said.

Recently the Orion helped the Royal New Zealand Navy frigate HMNZS Te Mana

intercept 260kg of heroin worth NZ\$235 million from drug-smuggling vessels in the Western Indian Ocean.

"Over the past 12 months, the Orion has conducted more than 120 maritime surveillance flights in the region.

"With flights lasting between eight to 10 hours each, the crew are able to provide a comprehensive real-time picture to the operation headquarters about what is happening on these waters."

Air Vice-Marshal Mike Yardley said the deployment of New Zealand's Orions contributed to New Zealand's security and prosperity through its role in the protection of a vital route for global commerce.

"Eighty-five per cent by value of New Zealand exports are transported by sea," Air Vice-Marshal Yardley said.

PHOTOS COURTESY 'PELORUS JACK' ON HMNZS TE KAHAKA

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ANZAC TRAINED READY TO FIGHT



More than 700 soldiers from Iraq's 76th Brigade, which is part of the 16th Division of the Iraqi Army, marched out on 28 June at the conclusion of their training – the first cohort trained by the Australian and New Zealand training mission at Taji.

After graduation, the group were slated to leave Taji Military Camp to join the fight against Daesh.

Commander Joint Forces New Zealand Major General Tim Gall said the eight-week training programme had been well-received by the Iraqi troops.

"Our trainers have covered a range of individual and military skills, including basic weapons handling, small-group tactics, urban operations as well as the planning and conduct of operations – including medical and logistics support," Major General Gall said.

"The aim from the start was to get these soldiers to a standard agreed by the Iraqi Ministry of Defence, and we have achieved that."

Major General Gall said it was encouraging to watch the confidence of the Iraqis grow as they received their training.

"It is also good to hear from them that they are feeling confident and motivated to take on Daesh."





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2nd Division marked a century of service

24/07/2015 0

Seventh Globemaster arrived in Australia today

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HMAS Newcastle seized 139kg of heroin

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BACK ON THE FRONT LINE

Australian force protection soldiers look out over Qalat from FOB Eagle.

PHOTOS BY CAPTAIN CHEYNE ALLEN
(on iPhone 5C (main photo) and Canon Rebel (right))

Amateur photos recently released by the Department of Defence without fanfare show Australian soldiers operating on the front lines of the war in Afghanistan on and around ANZAC Day this year.

The soldiers found themselves back on the front line in Afghanistan in April and May when the ANA headquarters they were mentoring launched an offensive against insurgents in Zabul province.

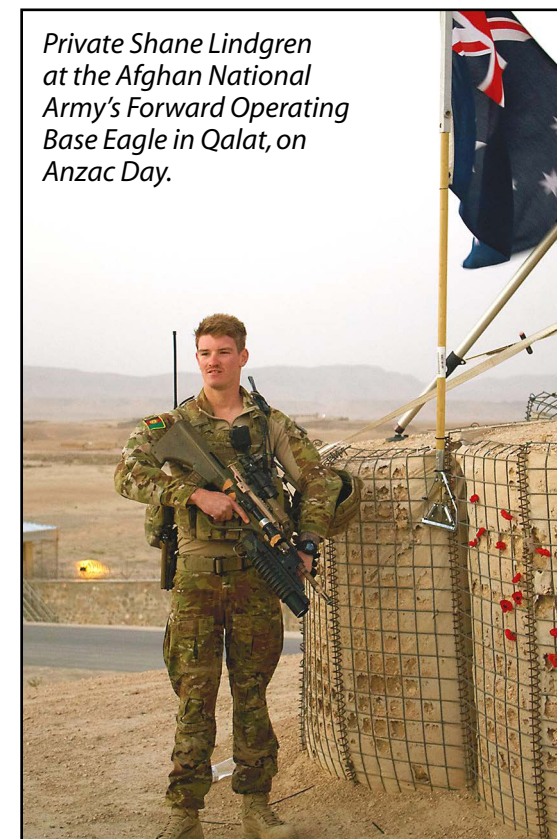
Advising the Afghan National Army's 205 Corps, the Aussie soldiers went forward with the corps HQ from 18 April to 15 May 2015 to continue advising their mentees near Qalat during an ANA mission to clear insurgents from key terrain along Highway One and along the 'Zabul-Ghazni seam' – the eastern boundary with their sister 203 Corps.

A team of four Australian advisors and eight guardian angels was maintained with 205's forward HQ during the month-long operation.

The Australian-led 205 Corps Coalition Advisory Team (205 CAT) provides advice, training and assistance to the Afghan National Army's 205th Corps headquarters staff at Camp Hero in Kandahar province.

Made up of about 20 Australians as well as Americans and Bulgarians, 205 CAT's mission is to support independent Afghan National Army operations.

Private Shane Lindgren at the Afghan National Army's Forward Operating Base Eagle in Qalat, on Anzac Day.





MAIN: AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY OFFICERS
CONDUCT A 'REHEARSAL OF CONCEPT' DRILL FOR
OPERATION NEJAT NEAR QALAT.

LEFT: PRIVATE ZACK MURRAY

RIGHT: PRIVATE LIAM KWASHA

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BELOW: CAPTAIN CHEYNE ALLEN AND PRIVATE BRIAN AMBER
ABOARD A US ARMY CHINOOK HELICOPTER PLEASED TO BE
LEAVING FORWARD OPERATING BASE EAGLE AT QALAT.

BACKGROUND: A VIEW FROM THE AFGHAN NATIONAL ARMY'S
FORWARD OPERATING BASE EAGLE IN QALAT ON ANZAC DAY.

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Extreme

Since last year, HMAS Arunta has been in correspondence with Ocean Reef Primary School in Perth's northern suburbs, WA.

The relationship began when some classes from the school attended a ship tour and wrote a letter of thanks which included a small booklet.

This booklet showed how Ocean Reef Primary School operates like a ship, running routines and classes like a school but with a Naval theme.

The relationship between Arunta and Ocean Reef Primary School has continued to develop with further correspondence including newsletters and visits from members of the ship's company to official school ceremonies such as graduation and Anzac Day Service.

In July 2015, the Principal of Ocean Reef Primary School invited HMAS Arunta to participate in the school's book week from 25 to 28 August.

As part of their book week, the school is conducting an extreme reading challenge, which includes taking pictures of students reading in 'extreme' places.

In celebration of the event, HMAS Arunta's ship's company set about taking their own photos while conducting extreme-reading of thier own.

The photos will be delivered to the school for the enjoyment and amusement of the children – and some crewmembers will spend time at the school reading with the students.



Book Club



Mephisto takes Canberra

Mephisto – the pride of the Queensland Museum – has been loaned to the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and will remain on display there until April 2017 as part of commemorations of the Centenary of the First World War.

Tony Bellino of BellStar Productions, who is working on a documentary of Mephisto's incredible story, said the move to Canberra was another great milestone in the history of the German tank.

"This is quite a coup because it will be the first time both types of tanks engaged in the first tank-v-tank battle have been in the same vicinity since 1918," Mr Bellino said [AWM also has a Mk IV British tank in its collection].

Panzerkampfwagen 506 'Mephisto' is the only surviving

A7V tank anywhere in the world and this is the first time it has been displayed outside Brisbane since it was transported from Europe at the end of WWI.

Mephisto took part in the first German tank attack at St Quentin, France, on 21 March 1918.

Its second, and final, battle was at Villers-Bretonneux on April 24, 1918, when it was disabled and abandoned on the battlefield – before being trophied under fire by soldiers from the 26th Battalion, AIF.

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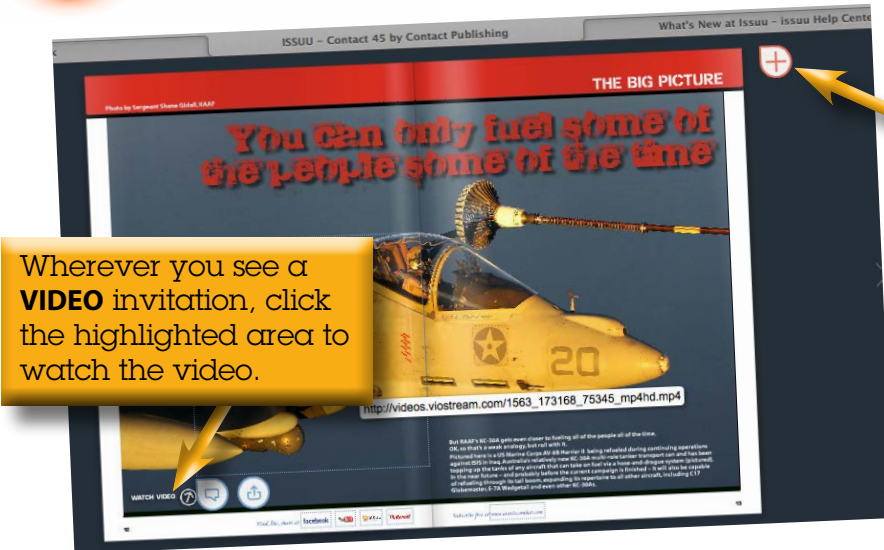
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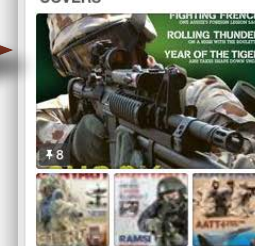
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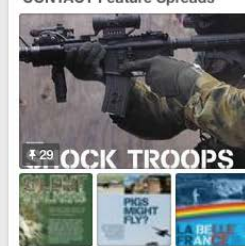
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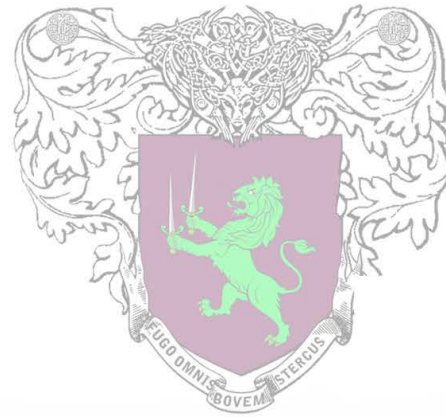
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NUMQUAM LET
VERITATEM IMPEDIANT
UN NARRATIO

Never let the truth get in the way of a good story

I thought there was a fascinating element to the Recent Exercise Talisman Sabre – where 400 US troops flew aboard seven C-17 Globemasters non-stop from Alaska and parachuted directly into the exercise in Shoalwater Bay.

I thought that was an interesting sidebar to the bigger story of the exercise, so I kept my eyes and ears open for more detail.

In the end, I think I've heard six different people discuss this flight – and how long it took.

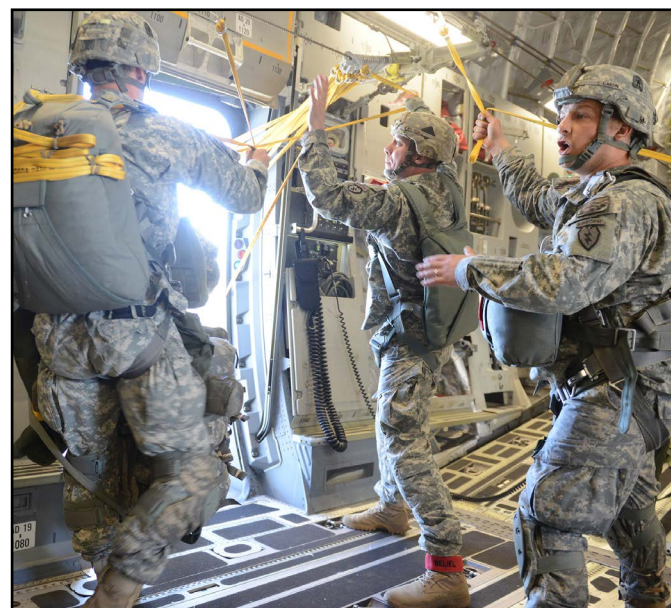
The flight was long enough that the Globemasters needed in-air refuelling along the way.

So how long did the flight actually take?

Well, depending on which high-ranking officer you want to pin the medal on, the flight took....

- 16 hours
- 17 hours
- 18 hours
- 19 hours

Or, you might believe one of the soldiers who actually jumped out of one of those planes when he said, "It's kinda hard to get excited about a 16-and-a-half-hour plane ride, but the opportunity to go to Australia is pretty cool, so it paid off".



Defense Media Activity - Army photo by David Vergun

Anyway, in this case I'm happy to say the [inaccuracy of the] reported 'facts' shouldn't get in the way of such a good story.

And, to make the story even more awesome – the same soldiers flew home the same way, parachuting back into home base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska.

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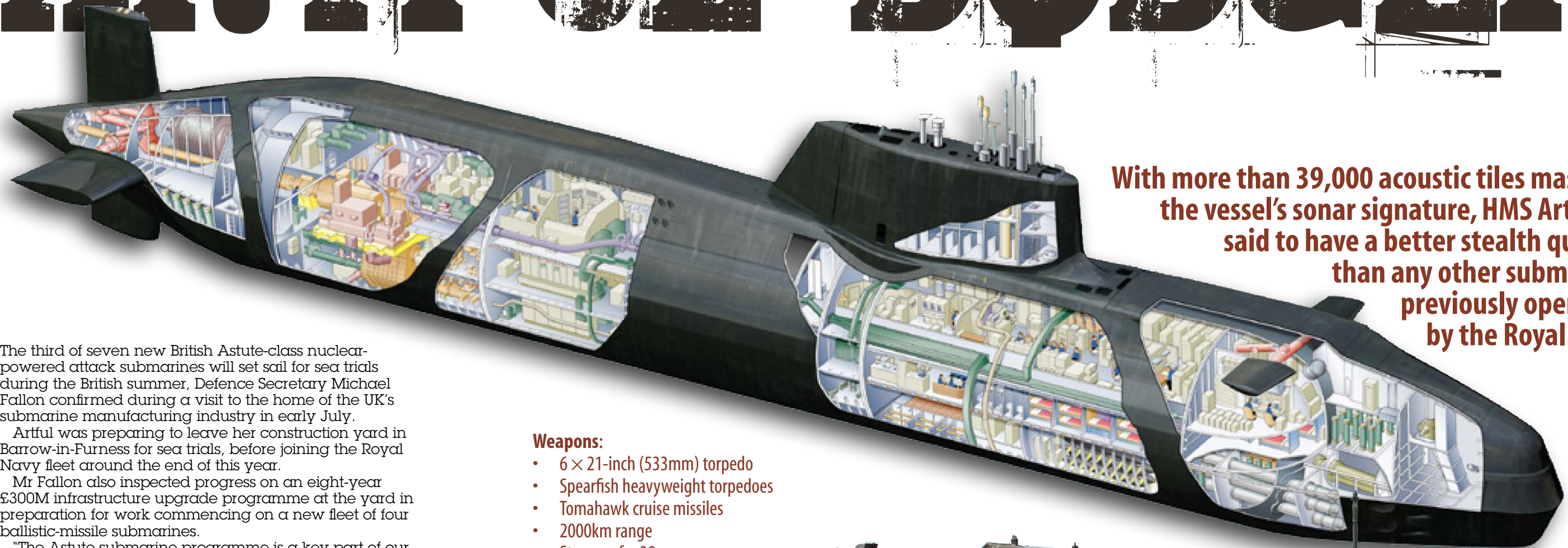
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ARTFUL DODGER



With more than 39,000 acoustic tiles masking the vessel's sonar signature, HMS Artful is said to have a better stealth quality than any other submarine previously operated by the Royal Navy

The third of seven new British Astute-class nuclear-powered attack submarines will set sail for sea trials during the British summer, Defence Secretary Michael Fallon confirmed during a visit to the home of the UK's submarine manufacturing industry in early July.

Artful was preparing to leave her construction yard in Barrow-in-Furness for sea trials, before joining the Royal Navy fleet around the end of this year.

Mr Fallon also inspected progress on an eight-year £300M infrastructure upgrade programme at the yard in preparation for work commencing on a new fleet of four ballistic-missile submarines.

"The Astute submarine programme is a key part of our £163 billion plan to ensure that our armed forces have the equipment they need," Mr Fallon said.

"Artful will now join Ambush and Astute, helping to keep Britain safe."

The next four boats are already under construction.

Director Submarines at MoD's Defence Equipment and Support organisation, Rear Admiral Mike Wareham, said the Astute-class are among the most advanced submarines operating in the world.

"We have learned many lessons from the build of the first two Astute-class submarines and Artful will soon be ready to leave Barrow and to commence operations as the newest submarine in the Royal Navy.

"Lessons learned from the construction of HMS Astute and HMS Ambush will allow Artful to progress to contractor sea trials in a significantly advanced material state than her predecessors.

"The 7,400-tonne Astute-class submarines are the most advanced and powerful submarines Britain has ever sent to sea.

"Featuring the latest nuclear-powered technology, they can circumnavigate the world submerged, manufacturing the crew's oxygen from seawater as they go.

"They also have the ability to operate covertly and remain undetected in almost all circumstances despite being 50 per cent bigger than the Royal Navy's current Trafalgar-class submarines."

Weapons:

- 6 × 21-inch (533mm) torpedo
- Spearfish heavyweight torpedoes
- Tomahawk cruise missiles
- 2000km range
- Stowage for 38 weapons

Vital Statistics:

Power	Rolls-Royce PWR 2 reactor + MTU 600kw diesel
Speed	30kts (56km/h) submerged
Depth	300m tested
Range	limited only by food and maintenance
Crew	98 (max 109)
Length	97m long
Weight	7400 tonnes

No optical periscopes – employs high-spec video
Makes its own oxygen and fresh water from sea water

Engineering Technician Sean Cantwell and Leading Seaman Karl Richardson, two of the crew of the future HMS Artful, stand proud of their new submarine at Barrow-in-Furness.

Photo by Andrew Linnett. Crown Copyright.



Six survivors of the Battle of Britain joined The Queen and other members of the Royal Family at Buckingham Palace on 10 July to mark 75 years since the start of the famous battle. The Royal Air Force marked the anniversary by joining an enhanced Change of the Guard Ceremony followed by a flypast of the palace.

After the Guard Mounting by the Queen's Colour Squadron – the first time the Royal Air Force has mounted consecutive Queen's Guards – four Spitfires, two Hurricanes and four Typhoons showcased the RAF aircraft protecting UK skies then and now. This was followed by a Feu de Joie – 'Fire of Joy', a celebratory cascade of rifle fire – and Three Cheers for The Queen, led by Air Vice-Marshal Richard Knighton, Assistant Chief of the Air Staff.

The ceremony also involved 10 Standards of Battle of Britain squadrons still serving in the RAF today, as well as the RAF Central and Regiment bands. Leading the flypast in a Spitfire was Squadron Leader Duncan Mason, officer commanding the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight at RAF Coningsby.

He said it was an incredible honour for those taking part in the event. "Events like these don't happen often, but today gave us – the RAF and the nation – the opportunity to commemorate and recognise those extraordinary feats 75 years ago," Squadron Leader Mason said.

"Knowing that six Battle of Britain veteran pilots were watching us as we flew the very same aircraft they won the battle in, was humbling and I hope we did them proud."

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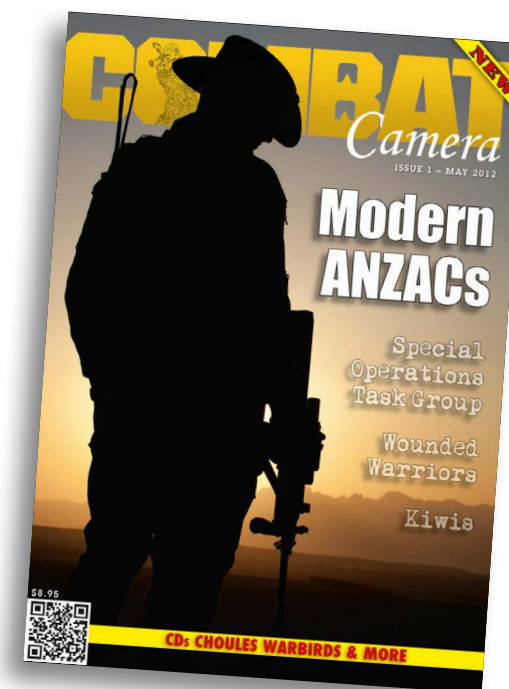
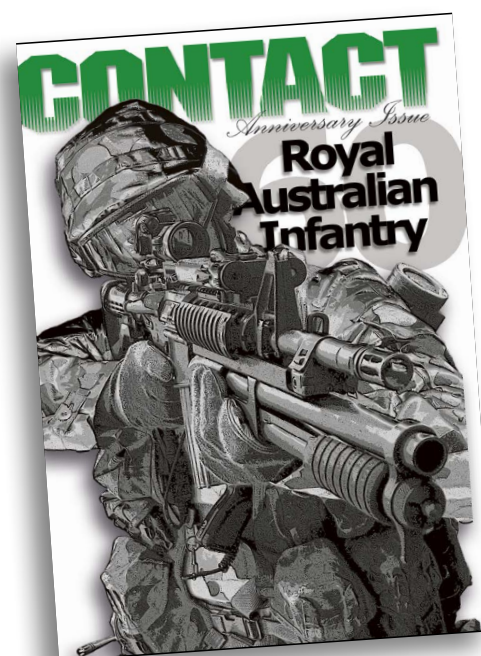
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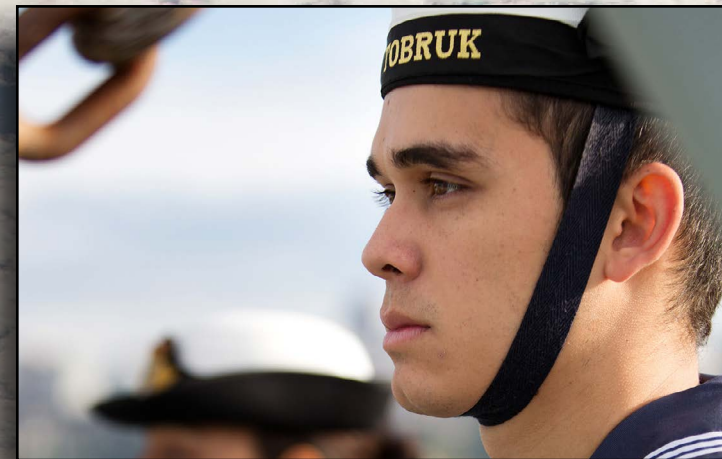
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Photos by Ableseaman Kayla Hayes, Able Seaman Steven Thomson and Leading Seaman Helen Frank

A fond farewell

HMAS Tobruk (II) sailed through Sydney Heads to her home port at Garden Island for the last time on 25 June.

The amphibious heavy-lift ship was formally decommissioned on 31 July, after 34 years of service in the Royal Australian Navy.

Commanding Officer Commander Leif Maxfield said the final passage was an emotional time for the ship's company.

"Today signifies the end of the ship's seagoing life is near," Commander Maxfield said.

"The people who have served on Tobruk over the years have performed admirably, responding to the call of duty whenever tasked by government.

"Current and former ship's crews have absolutely lived up to the motto of the ship, *Faithful and Strong*.

"There was a reflective mood onboard as we crossed the threshold of Sydney Heads for the

last time, realising the extent of what the ship has achieved in the 35 years of service to her country," he said.

Tobruk (II) was commissioned on 23 April 1981 and is the second ship to bear the name. During her service life, the ship has supported a number of humanitarian-aid and disaster-relief missions including the most recent, Operation Pacific Assist 2015 following Tropical Cyclone Pam which hit Vanuatu earlier this year.

Commander Maxfield said that while the RAN would sadly farewell HMAS Tobruk, it was also an exciting time to be in the Navy.

"We now look to the future with a bold new capability, having had the first of our two Landing Helicopter Dock ships, HMAS Canberra, entering into service in December 2014," he said.

NUSHIP Adelaide, the second LHD is scheduled for commissioning later this year.

PHOTOS BY CORPORAL PETER BORYS

HI-POWERED FAREWELL

Warrant Officer of the Navy Martin Holzberger (left of picture), Regimental Sergeant Major – Army Warrant Officer Dave Ashley and Warrant Officer of the Air Force Mark Pentreath (also below) were taken for a flight in F/A-18 Hornets to mark the culmination of their individual roles as Service Warrant Officers.

The trio spent the morning in pre-flight medicals and briefings before takeoff with aircrew from No. 77 Sqn at RAAF Base Williamtown on May 25.

Warrant Officer of the Air Force Mark Pentreath said he was apprehensive about the flight, but excited to be showing off Air Force to his Army and Navy counterparts.

Service newspapers reported (in varying degrees of political correctness) that all three NCOs made it through the flight without vomiting, which apparently is quite uncommon, especially as they were thrown around a fair bit and subjected to 7G.

The familiarisation flights were ostensibly conducted as part of a campaign by the warrant officers to better understand the roles of Army, Navy and Air Force and to improve the way the services work together.



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