

ISSUE 42

THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



JUNE 2014

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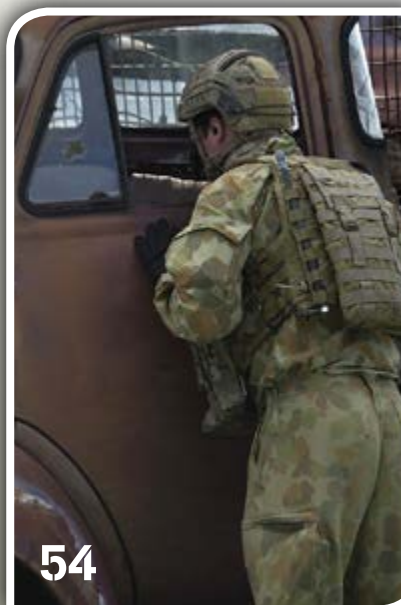
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Issue 42 – June 2014

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Page 12

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enquiries should be addressed to the editor.

Our Gear Insider is always informative and educational – and in this issue, he's somewhat controversial.

It seems the Australian Army is almost ready to tell the world that it is dumping its longstanding Disruptive Pattern Camouflage Uniform for something new.

Gear Insider has plenty to say on how this came about. However, as this is a fast mover, it was difficult to keep GI up to date as we approached deadline. So, as I have an opinion or two on this topic, I'll use this space to tell you the latest.

DPCU is very Australian and works in most situations. Soldiers the world over acknowledge both facts.

But it didn't work too well in desert situations in the MEAO – and the Desert-Pattern Camouflage Uniform, while great in the desert, didn't work in green areas.

So we sought an inbetweenie and, after aborting our own poxy Mid-Point, settled on multicam.

But then politicians, committees and other interferers had to have their say, and it seems the new uniform is going to be a 'uniquely Australian' design, using the same colour pattern as DPCU (with two extra colours added).

I've seen the new uniform. And I've seen soldiers in DPCU standing beside it. And, from 30m away, with my glasses on, I found it very hard to tell them apart.

So the big question is - WHY?

Why are we going to the bother and considerable expense of changing an entire army's uniforms to something that is all but indistinguishable from the old?

And why are we dumping something that IS uniquely Australian for something that's uniquely spin doctored?

And if Defence tries to flog the 'cost neutral' BS line when they announce the new cams – I'll really dummy spit.

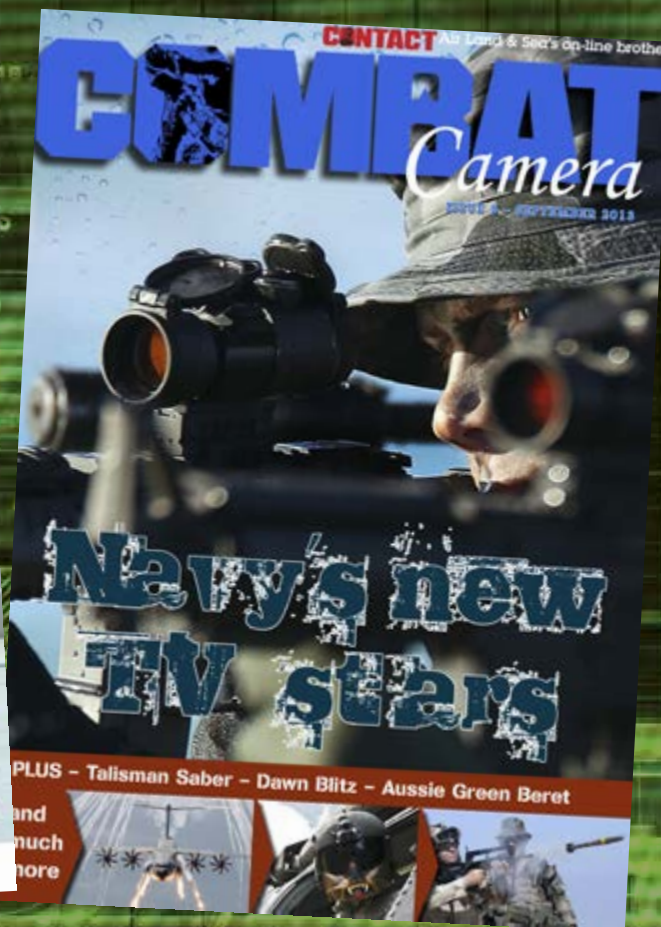
Sincerely,

Brian Hartigan  
Managing Editor

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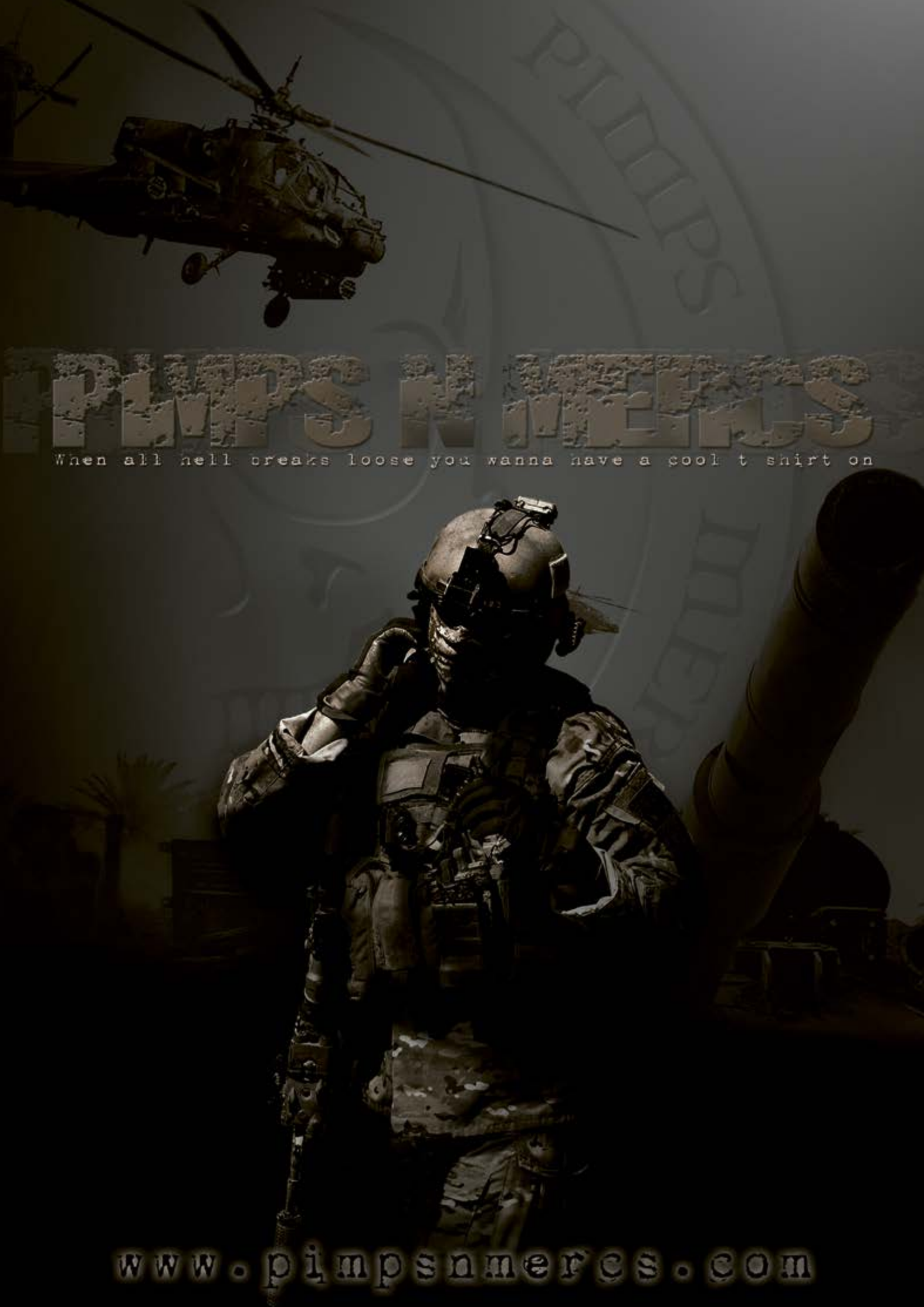


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# INCOMING

## STILL GREAT

After reading the first magazine I am very impressed with the quality and the information provided.

What goes on in the world of a military person is not often understood and your magazine might just help change that mindset.

My hat is always off to the men and women of the various services.

**Adam N, by email**

I think it is great that I can subscribe free to both magazines on line, because I think they are great reading.

I used to purchase them from our local newsagent. Now to be able to go on and read them as they come out is just great.

I hope you keep up the great work put into these magazines.

**Tony D, by email**

## MY STORY

I am an ex-serving member of 14 years 'till recent and I was interested to see what the content of your magazine was.

I do have some amazing pictures in my own album. Perhaps you would be interested in having a look for a mag one day?

**Nathan F, by email**

Thank you Nathan. We are always interested in good photos and good yarns – especially from the 'boots-on-the-ground' perspective – Ed.

## SNAP PRACTICE

I Enjoyed #41 – you dig up some interesting stories. I liked the one on Canine Tactical Combat Casualty Care and Damien Mander's UAVs.

**Mark B, via email**

Replying to say I love the mag. I'm just an infantry reservist in my military capacity, but I love reading the mags and getting a look at stuff from a more knowledgeable perspective than my own.

**Jim M, via email**

Hi Jim. Thanks for the feedback. I'd just like to say, there's no such thing as 'just an infantry reservist' – everyone's contribution adds to the rich tapestry of the ADF – Ed.

I love both magazines, especially CONTACT, as I have joined the RAAF as an airfield defence guard and love reading about the various issues in the ADF as a whole.

**Adrian H, via email**

Thanks for the digital copy of the mag, but I'm sorry to see it go out of print – I used to buy it on trips to Aussie, which are unfortunately pretty few since I moved back to NZ after leaving the ADF in 2004.

Anyway, keep up the good work on the mag.

I have to say, reading the statement by the Baird family brought a lump to my throat.

**Murray S, sent from iPad**

I have been a long-time fan of CONTACT back in the hard-copy days. It filled those waiting times on the range perfectly.

Hopefully we'll see some photos from AASAM in the coming issues of both magazines. Might cost a few boys some beers! Thank you, along with Sergeant Waddell, for putting in your time to document such an amazing international military event.

**Steven D, via email**

Hi Steven. I enjoyed covering the Australian Army Skill at Arms Meeting – AASAM – (as a Reserve reporter) again this year, and am pleased to say, yes, it should get a decent run in the 1 August issue of COMBAT Camera – Ed.

## TARGETS UP!

This page is a great outlet for fans to vent or to praise. Please, let us know what you think of our magazines so we can deliver more of what you want. Or feel free to write to [editor@militarycontact.com](mailto:editor@militarycontact.com) about any other military-related subject – Ed

*The Editor reserves the right to abbreviate and otherwise edit letters for any reason, including to make them fit.*



Chief of Defence Force General David Hurley participates in a 'method-of-entry' demonstration during 1RAR's Coral Week commemorations at Lavarack Barracks on 9 May.



Bring your boss  
to work day?



# HEADS UP



## WATCH JASSM IN FLIGHT



## JASSM OPS READY

Final Operational Capability (FOC) status has been achieved by the RAAF's Project AIR 5418 – the AGM-158A Joint Air-to-Surface Stand-Off Missile (JASSM).

Chief of Air Force Air Marshal Geoff Brown said FOC was a great achievement for Air Force and was a major milestone for Australia's air combat capability.

"JASSM is designed to attack high-value, heavily defended targets such as hardened bunkers, or pinpoint objectives such as radar and communications sites," Air Marshal Brown said.

"This long-range, highly accurate missile can be released far from enemy targets, keeping RAAF aircrew out of harm's way without compromising mission objectives."

JASSM is a guided missile with a 1000-pound penetrator/blast conventional warhead, capable of precisely striking targets more than 300km from the point of release.

## PP14 FROM JSDF SHIP

ADF medical specialists embarked in a Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force ship, JDS Kunisaki, as part of Pacific Partnership 2014 – while ADF medical specialists and engineers joined regional partners on the ground in East Timor.

During the annual multi-national, US-sponsored program, ADF personnel will work with regional partners and agencies to run clinics, health workshops and provide medical training and assistance in Vietnam, Cambodia, the Philippines and East Timor, while engineers will construct several projects in Dili.

This year's mission is unique in that it is the first time the primary mission will be commanded from a non-US Navy platform.



CO JS Kunisaki Captain Hideo Sasano, Pacific Partnership mission commander Captain Brian Shipman and PP14 chief of staff Lieutenant Colonel John Cronin, pose for a photo after a press conference on the Japanese ship.



Airbus Group delivered the 300<sup>th</sup> UH-72A Lakota helicopter to the US Army on 14 May. The company says that every Lakota has been delivered on time and on budget by an American workforce that is more than 50% US military veterans. The Lakota is manufactured at the company's US-based facility in Columbus, Mississippi.

Photo © Diane Bond

## TACLOBAN'S SIX-MONTH CHECKUP

Two Australian soldiers returned to the area devastated by Typhoon Haiyan late last year, to lend a hand to locals still struggling to recover.

They were among seven ADF members who spent a day in Tacloban, providing medical, paediatric, physiotherapy and veterinary care as part of Exercise Balikatan.

Warrant Officer Class One Shane Campbell, who deployed last November on Operation Philippines Assist, said the area had recovered significantly in the six months since the typhoon.

"From what it was to how it is now, the area has come forward in leaps and bounds and it is fantastic to see the progress," he said.



## CDF'S LAST VISIT

General David Hurley completed his final visit to the Middle East Area of Operations as Chief of the Defence Force on 19-20 May.

The CDF visited Kandahar and Kabul where around 400 Australian personnel are currently deployed to train, advise and assist the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

The CDF also met personnel at Al Minhad Air Base in the United Arab Emirates.

General Hurley will retire in July after a career in the Australian Army spanning more than 40 years, which included an operational deployment to Somalia (1993) where he earned a Distinguished Service Cross.

General Hurley will hand the ADF over to current Vice Chief of the Defence Force Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin in July.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### FROZEN BLOOD

ADF in collaboration with the Australian Red Cross Blood Service field tested the development and supply of frozen blood products in May.

Assistant Minister for Defence Stuart Robert said the aim was to dramatically extend the shelf life of blood components.

"This is critical to ensuring a constant and stable

supply can be provided to ADF personnel regardless of location," Mr Robert said.

"The shelf life of fresh blood components varies, making it difficult to stockpile for deployments."

He said techniques developed by the Red Cross would allow blood to be stored for up to 10 years.

### BOAT FOR TONGA

DMO awarded a contract worth almost \$5 million

in May to Newcastle-based shipbuilder Forgacs Engineering to manufacture a 30m landing-craft medium to be gifted to the Kingdom of Tonga.

The contract was announced just weeks after media reports suggested Forgacs Engineering would have to close if new work wasn't forthcoming.

Minister for Defence Senator David Johnston said the awarding of the

contract to Forgacs was a modest but important step in sustaining their operations.

### NEW SUPER

New superannuation arrangements for the ADF were announced in this year's Federal Budget.

'ADF Super' will be established on 1 July 2016 and will apply to everyone joining the ADF from that date, and to current or

returning MSBS members who choose to transfer.

It will allow ADF members to choose which super fund they belong to and, for the first time, allow them to transfer accumulated benefits to a new fund if they leave the ADF.

More info is available here.

### DARWIN AFFECT

HMAS Darwin intercepted a suspected drug smuggling vessel on 19 May and seized

786kg of narcotics with an estimated street value of \$30 million.

Darwin's boarding parties boarded the suspicious dhow in the Arabian Sea and spent approximately 23 hours searching for and uncovering the drugs.

The latest seizure brings Darwin's total drug haul to just over 6 tonnes.

Darwin is the 57<sup>th</sup> RAN ship deployment to the MEAO since 1990.

### RAAFIE RECORD

An RAAF military working dog deserves a medal after giving birth to a litter of 17 live puppies – 11 males and six females.

Osha, a four-year-old Belgian Malinois is a first-time mum.

Her litter was born just before Easter at the RAAF Security and Fire School Military Working Dog Training Flight, Amberley.

It is believed Osha may have set an Australian record for live births, and has equalled a world military working dog record held by a US Department of Defense dog.







Able Seaman Stacey Butson farewells her grandfather.  
Photo by Able Seaman Sarah Williams

A sailor has honoured the memory of her grandfather, who served in the Navy during WWII, by scattering his ashes while on deployment.

A moving ceremony was conducted on the flight deck of HMAS Darwin on 20 April.

## FAMILY'S NAVY SALUTE

Able Seaman Stacey Butson said the ceremony was very special.

Stacey's grandfather, John Mortimer Butson, served in the Royal Australian Navy from 1943 to 1945.

He died in 2006.

"It is a proud moment for me being able to do this, not only for my grandfather, but also for my family," she said.

Able Seaman Butson is continuing a family history of navy service. Her great grandfather joined the RAN on 15 April 1913 and served on HMAS Australia for five years, including during WWI.

## FROMELLES IDS

A further 20 previously unidentified Australian soldiers who died at the Battle of Fromelles in 1916 have been identified.

Assistant Minister for Defence Stuart Robert said that in the lead up to the Anzac Centenary, it was fitting to recognise and remember those soldiers who left for war almost 100 years ago, never to return to loved ones.

"They made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our nation and we honour their sacrifice by identifying as many of these brave men as possible," Mr Robert said.

The newly identified soldiers were among 250 remains recovered from pits near Fromelles and reinterred at Fromelles (Pheasant Wood) Military Cemetery in 2010 – with 67 still unidentified.



Private John Edwin Crocker



Sergeant David Samuel Anderson



2nd Lieutenant Reginald Theodore Griffen

## JORN TO BE ALIVE

Phase Five of Joint Project 2025 – the Jindalee Operational Radar Network has achieved Final Operational Capability.

Defence Minister Senator David Johnston said Phase Five had improved JORN's over-the-horizon performance and integration with the wider command-and-control and intelligence networks.

"JORN contributes to Australia's security environment by providing wide-area surveillance of Australia's northern approaches," he said.

"Achieving FOC means the system's components are fully operational and fully developed and meet the final standards required by Defence."

JORN consists of a network of three radar sites, at Longreach, Qld, Laverton, WA, and Alice Springs, NT, and is operated by 1 Radar Surveillance Unit, RAAF Base Edinburgh, SA.

JORN's reach easily covers the track taken by Malaysian Airlines Flight MH-370, but no reports, official or otherwise, that JORN saw the plane has been heard by CONTACT.

JORN is reported to have cost more than \$2 billion to date.

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Sappers Tom Williams, Sam Clark, Clem Duval, Chris Foster and Daryl Metcalfe.  
Photo by LAC Maria Oosterbaan

## PARK HUT BUILDERS

Battling nasty weather and hard conditions was all in a day's work for soldiers from the New Zealand Army Engineers as they completed a new tramping hut for the Department of Conservation in May.

The hut at Maropea Forks in the Western Ruahine Forest Park is popular with trampers, hunters and fishers but was suffering from disrepair and a threat of destruction after changes in the Maropea River's path.

The team from 2<sup>nd</sup> Engineer Regiment, Linton Military Camp, included a plumber, builders and an apprentice, who doubled as a medic, transported to the remote site by helicopter, spending 10 days at a time for two months.

Corporal Paul Cassidy said it had been a great experience working with agencies outside the military.

"It is always interesting to see how other agencies conduct tasks such as this," Corporal Cassidy said.

"It provides us with a lot of experience and knowledge when dealing with non-military organisation."

Department of Conservation's Chris Lester said his department was impressed by the work and morale of the soldiers.

"Army are an excellent partner for DoC and are delivering a great hut that New Zealanders will be able to enjoy for many years to come," he said.



NZ Army personnel deploy RHIBs from HMNZS Canterbury. Photo by Corporal Judith Watts

## RIMPAC READY

New Zealand will be one of 23 nations participating in the largest international maritime military exercise in the world, from 26 June to 1 August.

Exercise RIMPAC 14 off Hawaii will provide training varying from maritime security, sea control and complex war-fighting to disaster relief.

Commander Joint Forces New Zealand Major General Tim Gall said the NZDF's ability to make a valuable contribution in times of need was directly related to training in a variety of scenarios.

"These missions require training and preparation in a multinational environment, and Exercise RIMPAC provides this at a very high level," he said.

HMNZS Canterbury will deploy with a SH-2G Seasprite helicopter, the Operational Dive Team, the Mine Counter-Measures Team, an Army platoon and 32 staff officers for headquarters positions. A P-3K2 Orion will also deploy.

## CASINO NO ROYALE VISIT

Nearly 40 WWII veterans left New Zealand on 13 May bound for Italy to commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battles of Cassino.

The veterans, all in their 90s, were accompanied by a medical support team from the New Zealand Defence Force and Veterans Affairs New Zealand.

In Cassino they attended a Service of Remembrance at the Cassino Railway Station, and the New Zealand National Commemorative Service at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Cassino.

They also attended a private service at the Abbey of Monte Cassino, and took part in a guided battlefield tour.

His Royal Highness Prince Harry, New Zealand Governor General Lieutenant General Sir Jerry Mateparae and Chief of Army Major General Dave Gawn met and mingled with the veterans at various activities.

Veteran Colin Murray, of Te Awamutu, said he was delighted to be part of the delegation and was looking forward to meeting the other men who served at Cassino.

A member of 24<sup>th</sup> Battalion New Zealand Expeditionary Force, Mr Murray said he felt lucky to survive the war in Italy, where he lost several mates.

"This visit will bring back memories both good and bad," he said before departure.

New Zealand Army medic Sergeant Jeremy Boyd, who accompanied the tour, said he was inspired by the 38 war veterans.

"They were really great guys to talk to, and full of fun," Sergeant Boyd said.

"They enjoyed themselves at the commemorations, and we enjoyed being with them.

"If I have as much energy and enthusiasm for life as they do when I'm in my 90s I'll be very grateful."



Above: WWII vet Eric de Lautour walks with Sergeant Jeremy Boyd through the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery, Cassino, Italy. Photo by Corporal Brad Hanson

Below: Casino veterans and their supporters prepare for departure. Photo by Corporal Judith Boulton

A total of 456 New Zealanders are buried at Cassino, with the names of another 55 listed on a memorial, their final resting place unknown.





# NZ HEADS UP

## NEW PAY SYSTEM

The NZDF has rolled out a new pay and HR system that services almost 14,200 people.

Based on the SAP Human Capital Management (SAP HCM), the new system is said to offer greater accuracy and efficiency as well as being able to produce better HR data to help leaders manage the New Zealand Defence Force.

Chief of Defence Force Lieutenant General Tim Keating said that while it was still early days, it was clear that SAP HCM was working as designed.

"Importantly, from a payroll perspective the system is performing to expectations, with error rates significantly lower than were experienced with the legacy

system," Lieutenant General Keating said.

"We've been running the new system [since early April] and during that time we have run three military and three civilian payrolls.

"The average error rate for pay has been less than 0.5% with the majority of these resulting from issues with data or process.

"As with any new system there are a few things we need to iron out and our people need time to get used to it and how to exploit it to best effect.

"Extensive training and robust early life support has been put into place to enable this.

"We are very pleased with the way this project has gone and the outstanding results we are now achieving."

## SERVING OF FISH AND SHIPS

The Royal New Zealand Navy supported the Wellington City Mission on 16 May with 'Fish and Ships' – a fish-and-chips lunch onboard HMNZS Canterbury, at Queens Wharf, Wellington.

Three-hundred guests enjoyed lunch, with entertainment provided by an element of the RNZN band.

Chief of Navy Rear Admiral Jack Steer said the Navy was delighted to support the fundraiser.

"The Navy and HMNZS Canterbury are often involved in humanitarian and disaster relief operations overseas, so it's great to share our ship to support the local community and raise money for the Wellington City Mission's vital community work," he said.

HMNZS Canterbury's next deployment is on the biennial Exercise RIMPAC.

Canterbury is the Navy's sealift and amphibious support vessel, with capacity for up to 250 embarked personnel in addition to her regular crew.

**Wellington City Mission CEO Michelle Branney enjoys lunch with Lieutenant Commander Mark Hadlow at the 'Fish and Ships' fundraiser onboard HMNZS Canterbury.**



## YOUNG GRADUATES



*Corporal (Retd) Willie Apiata VC greets trainees after their parade.*

The latest graduates of the Limited Service Volunteer (LSV) program proudly march out in front of friends and family on 17 May in Wellington.

LSV is a six-week residential course providing life skills to unemployed young people run by the NZ Defence Force on behalf of Work and Income and funded by the Ministry of Social Development.

Participants undergo a course of intensive lectures, workshops and physical activities designed to develop respect, teamwork and trust to boost their self-confidence and self-esteem.

All LSV activities are geared toward assisting participants to confidently enter the workforce.

Officer Commanding the course Lieutenant Commander Andrew Lincoln said the parade was an acknowledgement and celebration of achievements and provided a challenge to families, friends and the wider community to continue to provide an environment for on-going growth in these young people.

"The past six weeks is only one small part in their path to on-going success," he said.



## SOLDIER ON HELPING OUR WOUNDED WARRIORS



**SOLDIER ON** IS ABOUT AUSTRALIANS COMING TOGETHER TO SHOW THEIR SUPPORT FOR OUR WOUNDED. IT'S ABOUT TELLING OUR DIGGERS THAT WE WILL ALWAYS HAVE THEIR BACKS; THAT WE WILL REMEMBER THOSE WHO HAVE COME HOME, AS WELL AS THOSE THAT HAVE DIED. IT'S ABOUT GIVING THE WOUNDED THE DIGNITY THEY DESERVE AND THE CHANCE TO DO AND BE WHATEVER THEY CHOOSE.

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# Tough Partners

Returned-veterans' charity Soldier On announced on 29 May that it had formed a new partnership with Australia's toughest obstacle-racing event – Tough Mudder.

The two organisations launched the partnership at Darling Harbour, with an obstacle demonstration by Soldier On ambassadors Lee Campbell and Damien Thomlinson.

Wounded in Afghanistan, Damien said the work done by Soldier On was important for those who had served in the Defence Forces, particularly those who had since left the Australian Defence Force.

"Not even the demanding mental and physical challenges of service can prepare you for your return to civilian life – no matter the physical or psychological wounds you might have endured," Damien said.

"Losing both my legs made my return an even greater challenge, but I could not have done it without a supportive network and community around me."

He said, through this new partnership, he hoped Soldier On and Tough Mudder could continue to raise awareness of the issues facing modern-day service men and women, while highlighting the benefit of physical activity in successful rehabilitation.

Soldier On CEO John Bale said he was excited to give the Australian public a fun and healthy way to show their support for those affected by their service.

"We are always looking for ways to engage with the Australian community, and Tough Mudder will give people a great reason to get some exercise, raise some money for a worthy cause, and have a great time doing it," he said.

"It's a logical fit, as both organisations celebrate physical challenges and achievements, and look to use these experiences to inspire others to do the same."

For every Tough Mudder event, participants will be encouraged to undertake their own fundraising to show the men and women who serve our country in the Defence Forces, or as part of DFAT, the AFP or other emergency services, that they will always have their backs.

Those participants who raise more than \$140 will be rewarded with \$25 reduction on their Tough Mudder registration fee.





# AUSTRALIA'S



The first military flight in Australia took place on 1 March 1914 when Lieutenant Eric Harrison took off in a Bristol Boxkite. Exactly 100 years to the minute later and at the same airfield, RAAF test pilot Squadron Leader Steve Bekker took to the sky in an exact replica of the Boxkite, which was built by staff at the RAAF Museum, Point Cook, Victoria, where it now lives. This latter-day flight also marked the beginning of "The Centenary of Military Aviation Air Show" at Point Cook, on 1 March 2014.

And CONTACT photographer Daniel McIntosh was on hand to capture a taste of the action later in the day.

# CENTENARY OF AVIATION

This photo by Leading Aircraftman Brenton Kwaterski  
Digitally modified by CONTACT





PHOTOS BY DANIEL MCINTOSH

POINT COOK AIRSHOW 2014



# Adopting a

# K9 HARD CASE



Honza just wouldn't work for anyone else - a real hard case.

The room fell silent as the door opened. After being apart for two months, their eyes found each other's as if the handful of onlookers surrounding them were nonexistent. That emotional moment was solidified with a kneeling embrace - and the wag of a tail. But only one of them knew the 28th of February 2014 was more than a joyful reunion - it was also the beginning of a new future.

US Army Sergeant John Nolan, former senior specialised-search-dog handler previously assigned to the 3rd Military Police Detachment at Fort Eustis, and Honza, a 7-year-old yellow lab SSD, have been partners since January 2011, and after completing an adoption process, are now able to maintain that bond as they both separate from military service.

Sergeant Nolan, a native of Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, was in the process of separating after seven years of active duty, where he served first as a military policeman and later as an SSD handler.

He and his father, Jack, left home at 2am that morning to finalise the adoption paperwork and take Honza home - a seven-and-a-half-hour drive that Sergeant Nolan said was well worth the effort.

"I'm basically the only handler he's had, and he's the only dog I've ever worked with and this was the longest we've been away from each other," he said. "Driving here with my dad, he told me I should get some sleep, and I said I can't - I feel like a kid on Christmas, because I can't wait to get down there to see him'."

Sergeant Nolan and Honza's partnership resulted somewhat by chance. Originally, Honza was procured as a puppy from Germany and trained at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio. He spent several years in training before leaving to work with an engineering unit. But Honza didn't quite perform with his assigned handler as anticipated and was sent back to Lackland soon after, labeled as an 'untrainable dog'.

"Lackland put him back in the pool, and that's how I ended up with him," Sergeant Nolan said.

"For whatever reason, he just decided I was going to be the one he worked for, and we've been together ever since."

But before their partnership brought them to the February adoption day in Virginia, their bond was forged in the heat of the desert, during a year-long deployment in Afghanistan.

"I had reenlisted while in Afghanistan to spend another year with Honza.

"We were together every minute of every day for a year. He slept in bed with me; when I had to shower he'd wait outside for me; he sat next to me when I ate and waited until I was done. He probably knows me better than anybody else.





"He saved my life on more than one occasion. He's more like my son than anything else – so it was only right to make sure he came home with me and had a good place to live for the rest of his life."

Because the SSD program is winding down as forces return from Afghanistan, Honza's adoption process was a bit easier than most, Staff Sergeant Jeffrey Michaud, 3rd MP Detachment kennel master.

"It's fantastic when we are able to facilitate adoptions," he said.

"Nolan and Honza have such great rapport, and with the mission changing, it only made sense to come together as a team to get the process started and make this happen."

With the mission changing, the need to send SSD handlers to school will decrease, potentially leaving no handler to work with Honza, who had developed separation anxiety, which also put him at risk for health concerns.

After signing the remaining adoption documents, Nolan shared a few laughs and stories with his fellow handlers, allowing them to bid a proper farewell before Nolan and Honza left to begin the next chapter of their friendship.

**ABOVE: Two old war dogs reunited.  
BELOW: On task in Afghanistan.**



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# **Land Forces** AUSTRALIA ASIA INDO-PACIFIC **2014**

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# NEW SPICE FOR OLD *RATS*

British armed-forces ration packs are being spiced up with the introduction of a new hot sauce created by a former Royal Navy submariner.

The MoD awarded a contract for £28,000 to the makers of Hot Diggidy Dog pepper sauce to supply 75,000 5ml bottles for the military's 24-hour ration packs.

The contract is the biggest ever for the small company that produces the sauce at its premises in Barry, in the Vale of Glamorgan, south Wales and the business has doubled in size as a result.

Founder and MD of Hot Diggidy Dog, Simon Llewellyn said he lived and loved the armed forces for 11 years and knew the importance food played in troop morale.

"What began as experimentation using bags of dried chillies onboard British nuclear submarines has now grown into a rapidly expanding business that, thanks to the MoD contract, is fast becoming a household name," Mr Llewellyn said.

UK MoD issues 1.6 million 24-hour ration packs every year, which contain the 4000 calories deployed military personnel need in their daily diets.

They include traditional favourites such as boiled sweets, baked beans and hot chocolate alongside newer items such as chicken tikka masala, chilli con carne and Oreo cookies.

The 5ml vial of Hot Diggidy Dog sauce is the first new addition to the MoD's ration packs since 2010.

## WHAT'S IN A RATION PACK

**60** DIFFERENT MENUS  
available in ration packs

<b>10</b> Sikh/Hindu	<b>10</b> Vegetarian
<b>20</b> General	
<b>10</b> Halal	<b>10</b> Kosher

**Daily Kcal**  
MEN **2,500** WOMEN **2,000**  
**SOLDIER in the field 4,000**

**British NEW HOT SAUCE**  
(Hot Diggidy Dog)

**RATION PACK EXTRAS**

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# ADGies on Ops

## AIR DEFENCE GUARDS IN KANDAHAR

Leading Aircraftman Greg Polak stands in front of the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected Vehicle (MRAP) his team uses in Kandahar.

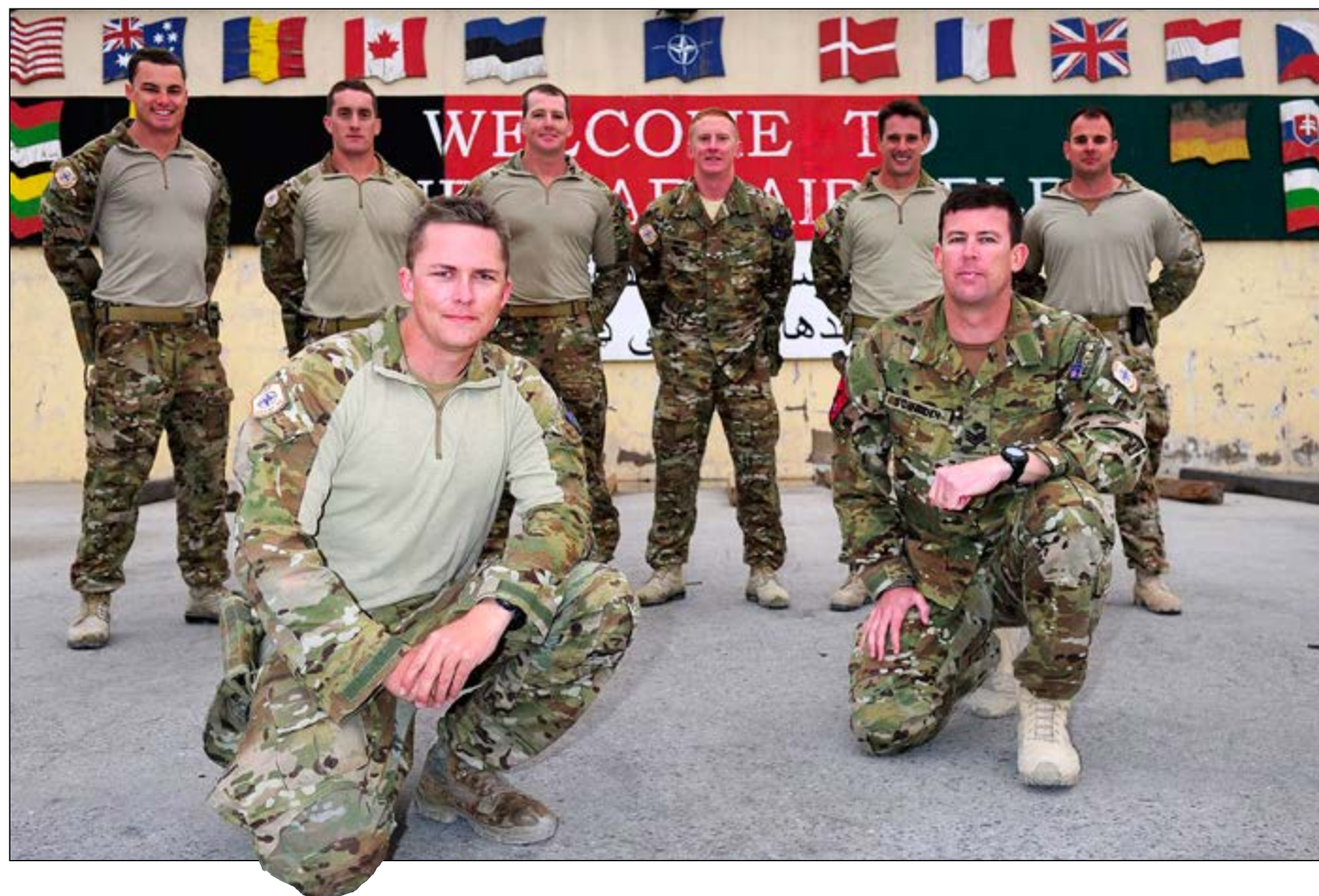
PHOTOS BY WO2 ROB NYFFENEGGER

Royal Australian Air Force personnel from RAAF Base Amberley arrived in Afghanistan in March to assist the international team tasked with providing security at one of the world's busiest airports. The eight-man detachment of Airfield Defence Guards led by Flight Lieutenant Mick Fox, a Ground Defence Officer, were quickly integrated into the multi-national security team at Kandahar Air Field, a strategically important hub for the International Security Assistance Force. Flight Lieutenant Fox said the airmen from No. 2 Security Forces Squadron were conducting patrols on foot and with heavily armoured Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles to secure the sprawling air field in southern Afghanistan. "This is still a dangerous place and our Airfield Defence Guards are at the forefront working with other nations on the flight line and within the base security zone to ensure the safety of personnel and equipment," Flight Lieutenant Fox said. "At any given time there could be about \$50 billion worth of aircraft and mission-essential equipment on the airfield or flying above.

"Plus, at the moment, Kandahar Air Field is also home to more than







**ABOVE:** Royal Australian Air Force Air Field Defence Guards at Kandahar Air Field, back row, from left – Leading Aircraftman (LAC) Chris Madsen, LAC Liam Thomas, LAC Matt Brouff, LAC Dallas Wedd, Sergeant Joel Sleep and Flight Lieutenant Mick Fox, and front row from left – LAC Greg Polak and Flight Sergeant Lloyd Schneider.

**RIGHT:** Leading Aircraftman Greg Polak at the wheel of his MRAP.

22,000 coalition troops, contractors and locally engaged employees.”

The Aussie security team interacts with coalition troops from Romania, the United Kingdom, the United States, Luxembourg, Denmark and Belgium on a daily basis.

“Our men are all revelling in the experience to test the skills they have been training so hard for,” Flight Lieutenant Fox.

“For many of them, it was their first Anzac Day on operations, so I am sure it is something they won’t forget.

“They are not taking the tasks lightly, especially considering the potential threats they may encounter when patrolling outside the perimeter of the airfield.”

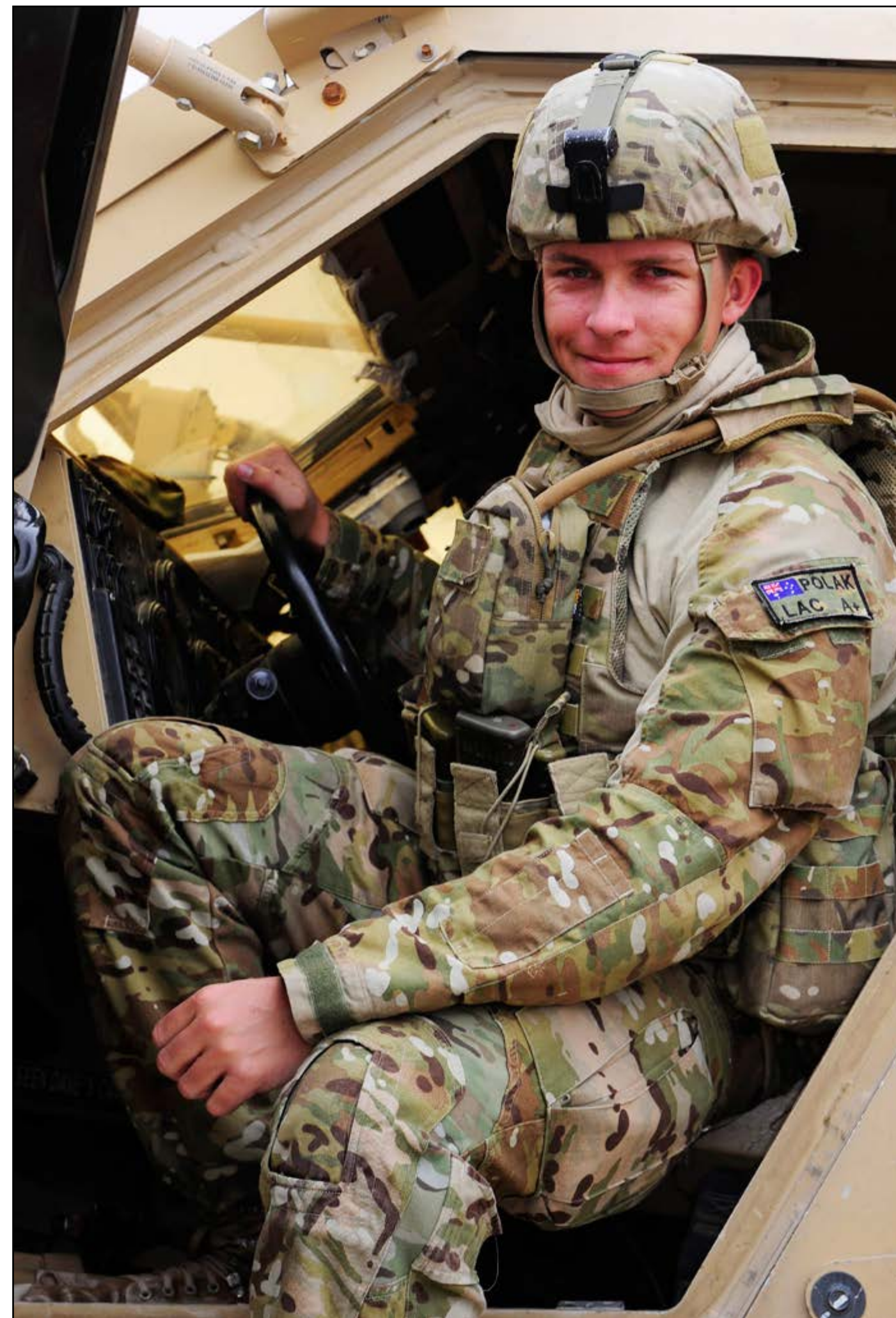
Another new experience for the Aussies in Afghanistan is that they are

commanded by two women – a Belgian lieutenant officer-in-command and a Royal Air Force flight sergeant second-in-command.

Following the completion of Australia’s mission in Afghanistan’s Uruzgan province last year, Australia’s efforts have shifted to a nationally oriented mission throughout 2014, providing training and advisory support to the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

Around 400 ADF personnel continue to work in Afghanistan, mainly in Kabul and Kandahar.

Approximately 800 more Australians provide support from locations within the broader Middle East Area of Operations, including the ADF’s maritime commitment.





# A Bear Over there



Photos by Flight Lieutenant Gary Montgomery  
© Crown copyright

**With tensions over Russia's intentions in some of its old dominions at an all-time high, the approach of large, unidentified aircraft in formation would be a concern for any European country. So it was for the UK on 23 April when two unidentified aircraft were spotted on air-defence radar approaching the NATO Air Policing Area north of Scotland, unannounced.**

Two Royal Air Force Typhoon fighters were launched from RAF Leuchars, north of Edinburgh, to intercept the formation and determine the identity of the aircraft, which were not responding to either civil or military air-traffic controllers.

Typhoon Pilot Flight Lieutenant Gary Montgomery from 6 Squadron RAF said he intercepted and flew within visual range of the aircraft and identified them as Russian Tu-95 'Bear H' strategic bombers.

"We monitored their progress, including handing them over to Danish F-16 QRA aircraft as they flew towards Denmark, then continued to monitor them as they returned and then departed towards Norwegian airspace," he said.

"During the sortie we refuelled from a RAF Voyager aircraft from RAF Brize Norton, to increase our airborne endurance."

Flight Lieutenant Montgomery said intercepting Russian Bear aircraft was not an uncommon occurrence.

On this occasion, the Bears were carrying out a routine training sortie in international airspace.

The Tupolev Tu-95, NATO reporting name 'Bear', was designed shortly after WWII and entered service in 1956, with more than 500 airframes built when production ended in 1994.

In 2007, Russian President Vladimir Putin recommenced routine Bear patrols, some 15 years after they had formally stopped.

Several notable Bear intercepts

have occurred since then, not only in European-patrolled airspace, but also near Alaska, mainland USA, Guam, South Korea and Japan.

In the UK, high-readiness RAF fighter aircraft are kept on line 24/7 x 365 and can be scrambled to intercept, identify and, if required, intervene with unidentified aircraft approaching UK air space.

Fighter controllers/air battlespace managers monitor UK airspace around the clock from two control and reporting centres (CRC's).

Under the direction of controllers at RAF Boulmer in Northumberland and Scampton in Lincolnshire, British fighters can be scrambled within minutes.



A Russian Tu-95 'Bear'



A Royal Air Force Typhoon shadows two Russian 'Bears'



# Search for MH370

One of the greatest mysteries in aviation history turned a spotlight in Australia's direction shortly after Malaysian Airlines Flight MH370 lost contact with air traffic controllers early on 8 March – and simply disappeared. One of the largest searches of its type in history kicked off the next day and, at its peak, involved active participation from 26 countries and involved about 60 ships and 50 aircraft, concentrated on the Gulf of Thailand and the South China Sea.

But, as technical and investigative information crystalised, the search drifted south – way south.

Crewmembers on HMAS Success endure wet and freezing conditions while searching for missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370.  
Photos by Able Seaman Julianne Cropley

**WATCH HMAS  
SUCCESS CONDUCTING  
REPLENISHMENT AT SEA  
OPERATIONS**



**WATCH MISSION WRAPUP**





*Flight Lieutenant Joshua Williams and Flying Officer Daniel Bailey scan for signs of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370 from the flight deck of an AP-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft.*  
Photo by Leading Aircraftman Oliver Carter

By 15 March, investigators were beginning to suspect the plane had turned south and may be located somewhere along an arch that was, according to Australian PM Tony Abbott, "as close to nowhere as it's possible to be".

On 17 March, Australia agreed to lead the search in the southern Indian Ocean and, the next day, a lone Royal Australian Air Force P-3 Orion aircraft began the daunting task in a target area of about 300,000sq/km approximately 2600km south-west of Perth.

The next day, three aircraft and three merchant ships were on the task.

At its peak, the South Indian Ocean search, led by Australia, included ships and aircraft from Australia, China, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, South Korea, the UK and the USA, as well as a British submarine.

Australia's contribution to the search included four AP-3C Orion patrol aircraft two E-7A Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) platforms, as well as Her Majesty's Australian Ships Success and Toowoomba alongside the civilian-crewed Australian Defence Vessel Ocean Shield.

Ocean Shield became crucial to the search as she carried specialist underwater search and location equipment that became the focus of much attention.

This equipment included a towed pinger locator (TPL-25) and a Bluefin-21 autonomous underwater vehicle (AUV).

*BELOW: RAAF loadmasters, Sergeant Adam Roberts and Flight Sergeant John Mancey, launch a self-locating data marker buoy from a C-130J Hercules in support of the search for Flight MH370.*  
Photo by Leading Seaman Justin Brown

*BOTTOM: An RAAF AP-3C Orion flies past HMS Echo.* Photographer unknown



**WATCH AN ORION MISSION**





The US Navy also provided specialist Navy and civilian equipment operators who joined Ocean Shield's civilian crew and embarked ADF specialists.

It was hoped the TPL-25 system could locate the audio 'pinger' attached to the aircraft's black-box cockpit-voice and flight-data recorders.

The Defence Maritime Services Vessel (DMSV) Seahorse Standard also joined the search, as did Malaysian vessel, KD Lekiu, the British survey ship HMS Echo and the nuclear submarine HMS Tireless.

The team gathered in Perth also included a Royal New Zealand Air Force P-3K2 Orion; two US Navy P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft; two Chinese PLA-Air Force Iluyshin IL-76 aircraft seven PLA-Navy ships; two Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force P-3C Orions; a Republic of Korea Navy P-3C Orion and one Republic of Korea Air Force C-130H Hercules; and, two Royal Malaysian Air Force C-130 Hercules plus one Malaysian Navy ship.

The initial search area south-west of Perth was so far from anywhere that even aircraft with the endurance of the long-range maritime-patrol Orions only had about two hours search time on station.

That was until fresh analysis of all the evidence available shifted the search area much closer to Perth, relatively speaking.

The new search area, while still quite large in area, was now concentrated just 1100km west of the WA capital.

Hopes of success in the search were raised on 5 April when Chinese patrol ship Haixun 01 reported that it had detected an underwater electronic pulse signal.

ADV Ocean Shield also pick up two longer-lasting signals the same day, followed by two more signals on 8 April.

While these signals were heavily analysed and considered as 'possibly consistent with those of a black-box pinger', no definitive declaration that they were in fact from flight MH370 could be made.

But it did give authorities a centre of gravity around which the search could concentrate.

By 14 April, with the battery life of the black-box pingers well and truly expired, the search changed to an active search for physical debris using sideband radar on the Bluefin-21 AUV – complicated by the fact that the water depth in the search area greatly surpassed Bluefin's 12,000-foot maximum capacity.

By 28 April it was considered that the chances of finding floating debris on the surface was so unlikely as to warrant calling off the air search.

On 1 May, the Royal New Zealand Air Force Orion P-3K2 aircraft and detachment taking part in the search for missing flight MH370 landed back at RNZAF Base Auckland, 53 days after leaving on the longest single search and rescue operation ever conducted by the RNZAF.

New Zealand Chief of Air Force Air Vice-Marshal Mike Yardley said the team had done their very best to find evidence of the fate of MH370, in the hope of bringing some resolution to the families and friends of the passengers.

*MAIN: Able Seaman Matthew Johnston is towed by Australian Defence Vessel Ocean Shield's fast response craft as he scans for debris of the missing Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370.*

*Photo by Lieutenant Ryan Davis*

*BELOW: Leading Seaman Joel Young mans the doorway of HMAS Toowoomba's S-B70-2 Seahawk helicopter during the search.*

*Photo by Leading Seaman James Whittle*

*BOTTOM: Flight Lieutenant Phil Wade, an Air Combat Officer with No. 2 Squadron, RAAF, mans a mission commander's station aboard an E-7A Wedgetail Airborne Early Warning and Control (AEW&C) aircraft.*

*Photo by Corporal Colin Dadd*







ABOVE: Sergeant Scott Mulgrew scans the Southern Indian Ocean from an AP-3C Orion. Photo by Corporal Janine Fabre

BELOW: ADV Ocean Shield. Photo by Leading Seaman James Whittle

BOTTOM: AUV Artemis is recovered onto ADV Ocean Shield. Photo by Leading Seaman Bradley Darvill



"They put in 276 flying hours, representing about 10 per cent of the international aerial search effort, and searched a total area of about 1.5 million square kilometres – an area roughly eight times the size of New Zealand," he said.

"This was a very demanding task – the search areas to which the P-3K2 was assigned are remote and inhospitable – but our crews slotted easily and seamlessly into the international search effort, which was a credit to the adaptability and professionalism of our people and the extremely well-coordinated operation run by our Anzac colleagues."

The NZ flight crew was supported by a ground crew who often worked through the night to ensure the aircraft was ready to go each morning.

"More than 40 personnel have been directly involved in Perth and earlier, in Penang in Malaysia," Air Vice-Marshal Yardley said.

The Brits were equally proud of their involvement, though disappointed at the result thus far.

HMS Echo's Commanding Officer Commander Phillip Newell said his 60 men and women had given the search their all.

"My ship's company worked 24/7 to find MH370," Commander Newell said.

"They are young, bright and enthusiastic and will step up to every challenge in the search for the missing aircraft.

"I am immensely proud of them."

Petty Officer Simon Hamilton, the man in charge of seamanship aboard the survey ship, said the crew trained hard to do what they do and sometimes it was hard to deal with tasks placed in front of them, especially when loss of life was involved.

"At the end of the day, if we can find answers for the relatives of MH370 then it will be a good day for the Royal Navy and a good day for me."

Sadly, as this article is published, there are still no answers on the fate of the lost aircraft and the 239 souls on board.

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# Winds Over Illawarra

## Annual air show cops a beating



**BY GLENN FENWICK**

Perhaps this year's air show at Albion Park south of Wollongong should have been renamed **Winds Over Illawarra**, such was the unseasonal westerly gale that marred the usually awesome **Wings Over Illawarra Air Show**.

A cross wind of 30 knots, with gusts of 50 to 60 knots heavily restricted the flying

program on the day, as the safety of all concerned was the main priority.

It may be easier to outline what machines did take to the skies rather than what didn't – the S-211 Marchetti, the Sabre and the F/A-18 Hornets were the only ones able to handle the severe crosswinds, and then sometimes only just – with Sabre pilot Jeff Trappett displaying exceptional piloting skills when he came in to land and was hit

by a gust, forcing him to recover from a near disaster with one wheel landing and one wingtip pod contacting the tarmac, and then blowing a rear tyre before bringing the plane under control at the end of the runway.

The dramas were not restricted to those who made it into the air, with the beautiful 'Connie' and the newly acquired Caribou trapped on the runway link road after

'Connie' sunk through the tarmac before the gates even opened.

Efforts to free the graceful Constellation proved fruitless, and it wasn't until the next day that she was eventually freed and returned to her hangar.

It was not just the majority of the historic aircraft that were grounded either, with The Roulettes, The Red Berets and all of the other aerobatic displays grounded.

**PHOTO BY SAM FENWICK**



Star attraction Matt Hall didn't even make it out of Newcastle because of the widespread strong winds.

None of the aircraft from Temora were able to attend either, including the much anticipated Spitfire – nor the RAN's dancing Squirrel helicopters.

This year was the first time Wings Over Illawarra was run by a private entity, supported by the Historical Aircraft Restoration Society (HARS), and despite some expected minor teething issues and the weather, which was out of everyone's control, the organisers still hosted a very good show, with the static displays becoming the main focus for the crowds who did attend.

But the F/A-18 Hornets were the saviours of the show, their much anticipated arrival

hushing the crowd, who soon clambered for a look inside the cockpit of one of the machines that was made available for public viewing.

And despite the biting winds, I don't think anyone left airside until the Hornets returned to the sky, with the visual and acoustic experience of the aerial display becoming a total crowd pleaser.

With a few lessons learned in regard to ticketing and food vendors, and some favourable weather conditions, the organisers are already planning a bigger and better show next year.

I have to thank Bright Events, especially Marketing Manager Andrew Herring, and the volunteers at HARS, especially Russell Field, for their hospitality, access and assistance on the day.

#### PHOTOS THIS PAGE BY GLENN FENWICK

**Right: An F/A-18 Hornet cuts a trail through the sky over Albion Park, south of Wollongong at this year's Wings Over Illawarra Air Show.**

**Centre right: An S-211 Marchetti braves 35 knot crosswinds.**

**Below: Pilot Jeff Trappett brings his CAC-27 Sabre in for a very tricky landing that was as impressive as it was scary.**

**Bottom: A Mk-21 Mustang reflects deceptively sunny skies.**







Left: Sabre maintenance. Above: F-111 nose pig. Below: Connie before she got stuck.



## WORDS BY SAM FENWICK

I was very excited about going to Wings Over Illawarra this year, because after winning the 2013 Wings photographic competition, one of my prizes was to be given Media Accreditation for this year's event.

I went down to the airport with my Dad and another photographer, Tim at 6am, and we were allowed to walk all around the tarmac and amongst the planes without having to worry about crowds getting in the way of our photos.

As part of my accreditation I was given access to some of the pilots, and so I interviewed the whole Roulette Team, two of the Hornet pilots, and spoke to Jeff Trappett, the owner of the Sabre and Mustang.

I also got to catch up with my friend Dutchy, one of the Roulette ground crew who I met last year and featured in CONTACT.

The best part of my day (apart from selling my winning photograph for \$100

even before the gates opened!!) was having a front-row view of the F/A-18 Hornets landing, taxiing and then again taking off and putting on a great display – they sound awesome, but were tricky to photograph.

Apart from the very strong winds, I had a great day, and after talking to the pilots it has really made me think about what it would take to become a Roulette or fighter pilot.

Sam Fenwick interviews Hornet pilot 'Fuzz'



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# AFTER THE BLAST

ON THE DAY BEFORE ANZAC DAY, TEAMS OF SPECIALISTS FROM THE SPECIAL OPERATIONS ENGINEER REGIMENT (SOER) FANNED OUT TO SEARCH FOR EXPLOSIVE HAZARDS, POTENTIAL IEDS, BOOBY TRAPS AND EXPLOSIVES CACHES. NEARBY A SCENE OF DESTRUCTION FROM A MASSIVE BLAST ON 12 APRIL STILL LITTERED THE GROUND.

BUT THEY WEREN'T IN AFGHANISTAN...



**An explosive detection dog handler from the Special Operations Engineer Regiment works his dog through the remains of bomb-damaged buildings on a farm in Derrinallum west of Melbourne.**

This was rural Victoria, near Derrinallum west of Melbourne, and the soldiers were deployed to support Victoria Police in the aftermath of a massive blast that killed property owner Glenn Sanders and injured two Special Operations Group police officers.

The blast ended a six-hour siege that began when police tried to arrest Mr Sanders in relation to another incident earlier in the week.

Mr Sanders, aged in his 40s, had reportedly become reclusive in the wake of his wife's death less than two years earlier.

Special Operations Engineer Regiment's Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel H (protected identity), said that given SOER's unique skills, capabilities and experience, Victoria Police sought the regiment's help to check a number of areas on the property, where potential caches and further explosive hazards were thought to be located.

In response to the call for help, SOER deployed a team of high-risk search and explosive-ordnance disposal specialists, explosive detection dogs and handlers, medical, signal and other support staff to the location where, over a period of three days, they



methodically searched two sites on the property.

The activity was conducted under Defence Aid to the Civilian Community (DACC) provisions.

"Our personnel used a range of SOER's capabilities to conduct the high-risk search," Lt-Col H said.

"Explosives detection dogs, electronic and manual search techniques were used, but no further explosive hazards were found.

"Our teams spent Anzac Day working to ensure public safety and allow the Victoria Police to continue their investigations, safe in the knowledge that the areas of interest had been comprehensively searched."

More than three weeks after the drama had begun and the property declared safe, the local Hamilton Highway was reopened – after being closed as a public safety measure until the property was finally given the all clear by the Army's experts.

SOER provides Special Operations Command with an integrated, rapidly deployable and specialised capability to counter chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and explosive (CBRNE) threats across the spectrum of special operations – both domestically and overseas.

In addition to Royal Australian Engineers, the SOER consists of Army, Navy and Air Force members from a range of other corps, including intelligence, signals, medical, nursing, ordnance, transport, and electrical and mechanical engineers.

The regiment also employs specialist civilian staff to ensure the unit is always operating at the cutting edge and with the latest counter-CBRNE technology and capability.

"This activity highlights the high regard in which SOER is held as well as the unique capabilities that the unit can and does provide to assist civilian authorities as well as SOCOMD across a very broad spectrum of threats and support requirements," Lt-Col H said.





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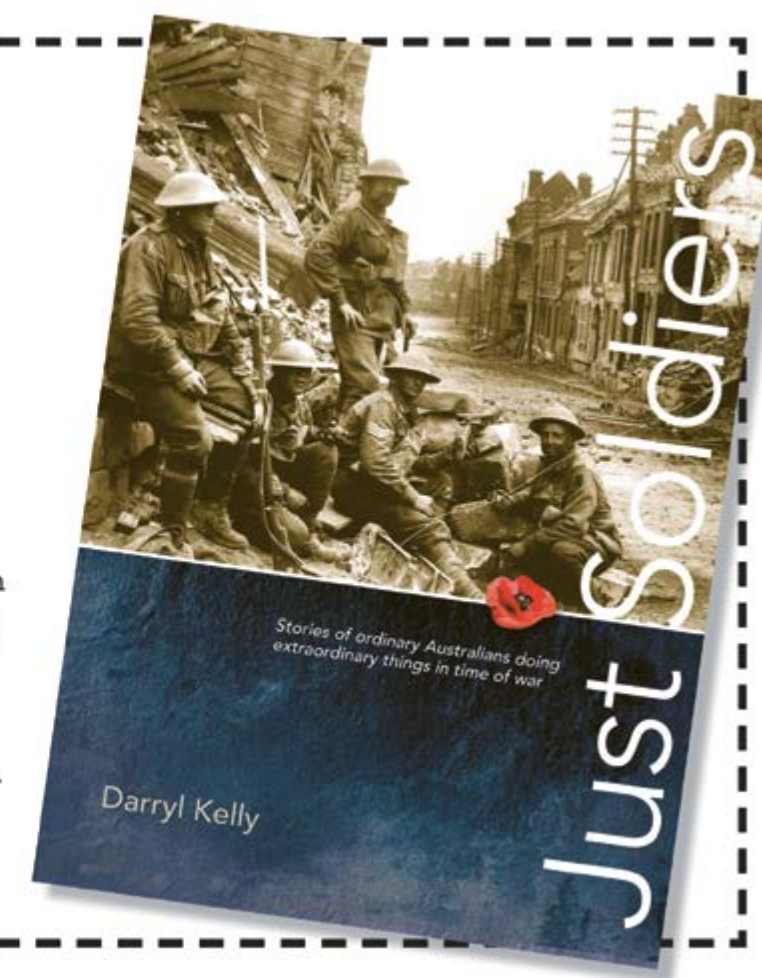
# JUST SOLDIERS:

## STORIES OF ORDINARY AUSTRALIANS DOING EXTRAORDINARY THINGS IN TIME OF WAR

by Darryl Kelly

In 1914, Australia had a population of fewer than 5 million, yet 300,000 from all walks of life volunteered to fight. More than 60,000 were killed and 156,000 wounded, gassed or taken prisoner. This book of WW1 stories, based on fact, portray the human tragedy of war. Many confirm the reputation of Australians as fearless fighting men. Yet, as in life, not all were heroes.

Available at all good book shops or [www.anzacday.org.au](http://www.anzacday.org.au)





## LETTERS HOME – Darwin & DIDP



Photo by Able Seaman Sarah Williams

### Wilfred Bowie – outdoors type

Wilfred 'Bowie' Bowie is currently serving as an able seaman boatswains mate onboard HMAS Darwin on Operation Slipper.

Having grown up in Injinoo, at the tip of Cape York, Queensland, Bowie wanted to find a job where he could be an example to his family and friends.

With the full support of his family, Bowie joined the Royal Australian Navy in September 2011, undergoing basic training at HMAS Cerberus.

Having an uncle involved in indigenous recruitment for the ADF, Bowie participated in the Defence Indigenous Development Program and was shown other job opportunities available outside his home town.

"My uncle wanted us to be challenged, to extend our horizons," he said.

Being a boatswains mate was immediately appealing – working

outdoors, fitness and traveling, along with the mateship and job security that the Navy offers.

Family involvement in the ADF can be traced back to WWII, with his grandfather being a private in a light-infantry battalion.

There are also numerous uncles, cousins, nieces and nephews who continue to serve in all branches of the ADF.

Able Seaman Bowie was selected to represent indigenous ADF personnel at the International Fleet Review (IFR), conducted in Sydney during October 2013.

"It was an awesome experience.

"Getting together and performing with other indigenous ADF members was unforgettable."

His experience at the IFR made him reflect on something that his grandfather, Adhi Ephraim Bani, a traditional owner and mentor, once said - 'Past must exist for the present to create the future'.

### Lawrence Sabadi – proud

Able Seaman boatswains mate Lawrence Sabadi joined the Royal Australian Navy in January 2012.

Growing up in Cairns, his decision to join was heavily influenced by family already in the ADF, with several cousins, nieces and nephews currently serving in the Navy and the Army.

His family always expected Lawrence to join the ADF, but were unsure which service it would be.

The Defence Indigenous Development Program (DIDP) helped him make his mind up, with the Navy being the chosen path – though Army was a very close second.

Being involved in the DIDP enabled Lawrence to see for himself a variety of jobs available in the ADF and gave him a better opportunity to see what he really would be interested in.

As for boatswains mate – well, Lawrence believed it was a job that was out of the ordinary and had a sense of adventure about it.

Able Seaman Sabadi is currently serving on HMAS Darwin, deployed on Operation Slipper in the Middle East Area of Operations.

Despite being overseas and visiting other countries, his career highlight so far was when he was selected to represent indigenous people at the Navy's International Fleet Review (IFR) last year.

"Being selected to represent was a wonderful opportunity, I was very proud to be a part of acknowledging indigenous people currently in the ADF," he said.



Photo by Able Seaman Sarah Williams



# Q STORE

## Energy Watching?

APOD – Defence Discounts Online, has joined forces with Energy Watch Australia to negotiate an exclusive discount on the cost of electricity for Defence members past and present, and their families in NSW, VIC, SA and SE QLD.

With electricity prices increasing by up to 35.8% over the past three years in NSW, service personnel who are reliant on defence housing have few options to proactively reduce their household bills.

APOD recognised that the rising cost of electricity

highlighted one of the many unique challenges associated with defence service.

APOD's Director of Sales and Marketing – and an Army spouse – Kerry Newsome said that when put to the test, under the APOD Energy Watch deal, an average Defence household in Victoria could save up to \$638pa and \$276.75pa in NSW.

The APOD offer has no contracts and no exit fees, making it a good fit for current-serving Defence families – and is available now via the APOD website [www.apod.com.au](http://www.apod.com.au)



Australian small to medium enterprises exhibiting at the **Land Forces 2014** Exposition in Brisbane from 22-25 September can benefit from a range of new measures designed to enhance the value they derive from the event.

Event organiser, Land Defence Australia Limited, has created special Australian SME and 'Made in Australia' precincts in the Land Forces 2014 Exhibition Hall, as well as appointed a

new SME Advocate – Terry Whelan, who is responsible for coordinating a range of innovations for Australian SMEs.

"Events such as Land Forces 2014 enable us to provide targeted, concentrated support for Australian SMEs and we need to exploit these opportunities," Mr Whelan said.

"We believe it is imperative that all bodies work closely together in order to ensure that our SMEs garner the best support possible and that the return on their investment in participating in these events is realised."

To discuss Land Forces 2014 SME initiatives, contact Terry Whelan on mobile +61 (0) 452 265 140 or email [twhelan@amda.com.au](mailto:twhelan@amda.com.au)



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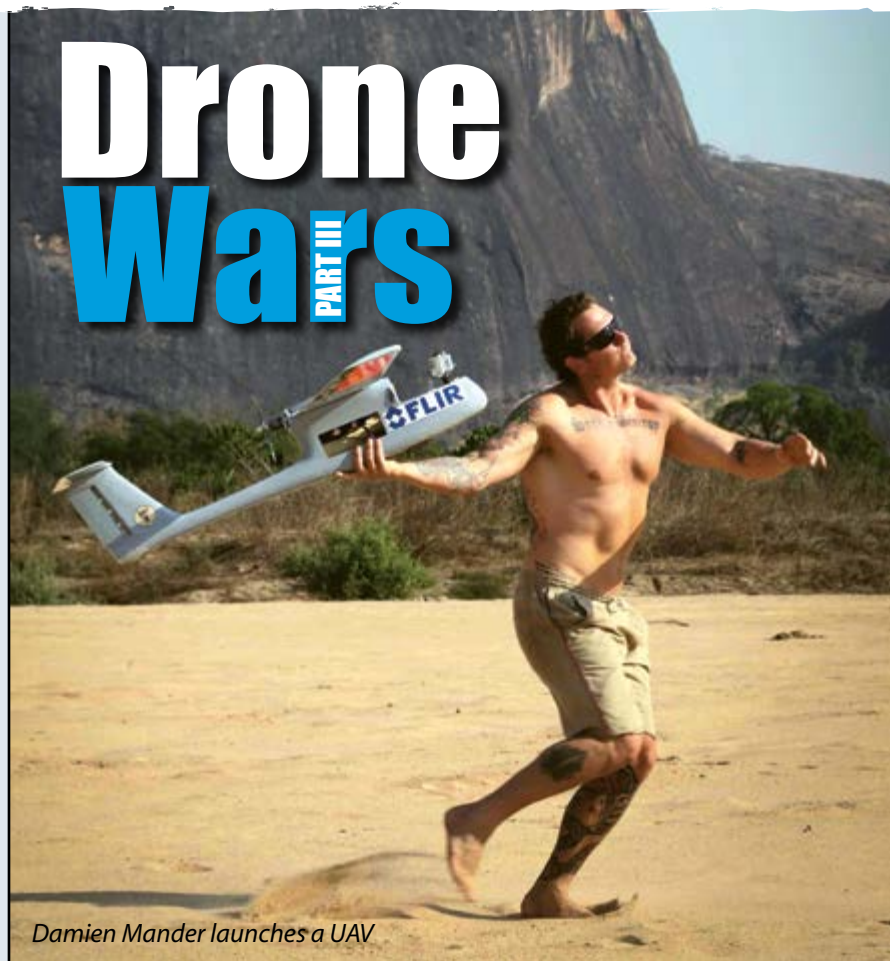
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## Drone Wars PART III



Damien Mander launches a UAV

What complicates conservation in Africa is that elephants are considered vermin. Crop raids and fatalities as a result of human encroachment into wildlife areas create a constant divide between the two species. Consequently, poachers are doing the locals a great favour – and pocketing the proceeds.

What is needed in Niassa is a fulltime drone with long-range capability to help patrol vast areas and channel limited resources to where they are most effective.

Envisage a drone with 20 hours endurance, flying

endless grids across the reserve. Live feedback is channeled through computer-recognition software programmed to alert staff of any incursions. The drone locks onto the target and guides ground teams into position while the entire incident is recorded.

This type of capability will cost around US\$130k and, while many will argue the money could be much better spent in other places, I couldn't think of a more worthy place.

But I'm biased.

Now imagine the capabilities of this technology injected into the

Rhino Wars raging further south.

### THE JOURNEY

In 2008 I left Iraq for good after three years of duty in the 'Sand Pit'. I had saved and invested considerably and could afford not to work for the foreseeable future – and that was the plan.

Eager for adventure, I'd heard about the work of anti-poaching units some years earlier and earmarked it for a six-month tour. I arrived in Africa at the beginning of 2009 aged 29.

It was in Zimbabwe where the purpose of my journey through life really hit home. I was face-to-face with the harsh reality of rangers on the front line, with few resources, trying to defend a global treasure from a determined enemy. It was not something I could ever turn my back on. So, I grit my teeth, liquidated my assets and set up the International Anti-Poaching Foundation.

The seed for my frustration that would lead to the start of the IAPF was watching under-paid and under-appreciated rangers sent out on missions into harms way.

Before I set out on my first patrol in Zimbabwe, I knew already what was needed to win the battles these rangers faced on a daily basis. It's not hard to pinpoint – training, equipment, mentoring, institutional support and persistence.

Taking my boots off after that first patrol, I boldly stated, "Access to the right technology would win this entire war." The drones that had helped bring me home safely from Iraq were at the top of my list. I spent the next three years working with rangers, training them, running operations and above all – learning.

We built affiliations that gave us access to reserves, equipment and manpower. We established two training facilities to teach rangers. The experience confirmed that little has changed in decades when it comes to patrolling vast wilderness areas. It generally consists of a small team, with a weapon or two, basic rations and limited communications, sent out on extended patrols.

I'm often asked how I can focus so hard on protecting animals when there are people suffering around the world. I ask them if they would have more of a problem with a dog digging up their flowerbed or a terrorist launching a chemical attack in their city centre. Both are at about the extreme levels of what animals and humans are intentionally capable of doing to really upset your day. Over the past few years I have really started to struggle on a personal level with the way things are unfolding on a global scale. We now share a

planet with 7 billion other people, all fighting hard each day for a better job, to build a grander house and drive a faster car. We spend more and more each waking moment to advance, to grow bigger, faster and stronger. We spend more protecting our own species than anything else on the planet. Healthcare, border protection, defence, disease cure and energy. We no longer live in a society. We live in an economy. In the short-sightedness of our quest to advance, we have foolishly pushed ourselves to a point where we are scrambling for solutions. We need to decide what is important and then make decisions that matter.

This generation will be judged by our moral courage to protect what is right. And every worthwhile action requires a level of sacrifice.

If we can justify spending a trillion dollars on advancing the way we talk to each other, then how do we make sure the use of this same technology is available for saving what the human march forward is destroying?

Drones have been available for well over a decade for defence and energy. We must for now sit here grateful for the fact we have been able to build just two for the purpose of saving these magnificent elephants.

True wilderness areas are a global asset – and

they are shrinking. Why must the conservation of these areas be an ongoing struggle? Why must those dedicating their lives to protecting these areas be in constant battle with each other for funding? I think it's unfortunate that struggling or poorly administered African countries should be left with the burden of having to fund all the costs of conservation. These are the world's assets to experience and the responsibility therefore should be a global one.

We are doing our best to hold back the tide of human encroachment – the unbalanced challenge between dwindling wilderness areas and rapidly increasing human populations. If we don't all begin to respect this planet – and I mean wholeheartedly – then it is going to chew us up and spit us out.

This project is a big step for us. The Drone Age is coming to conservation and we must be given the capacity to embrace it. This project does not just represent what can be done for the elephants of Niassa, but what should be a global focus.

It is high time that conservationists around the world be given access to the equipment that is out there.

My vision is that, one day soon, wildlife all over the world will have a watchful eye flying over, just as our soldiers do on the battlefield.



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# CLOSE BUT NOT CLOSE ENOUGH

Australians recommended for the VC but not awarded

BY MAJOR DARRYL KELLY

**Private Ronald Crank DCM  
53<sup>rd</sup> Battalion AIF**

## SIG OR GUNNER?

The young Digger pondered the situation. If the massing enemy could attack and gain the upper hand, the battalion could be in danger of being cut-off and annihilated. Now was the time to act...

Ron Crank was born in Manchester, England, and was a teenager when he travelled to Australia with his parents Arthur and Clara, older brother Norman, who had served in the Territorial Forces in England, and younger brothers Gordon and John. The family settled on the leased "Brandon Farm" in the southern New South Wales town of Exeter. Times were hard but they loved life in Australia and were determined to make a go of it.

With the onset of war in 1914, the Crank family was still working the land. In 1915, Norman decided to enlist and sailed as a member of the 19<sup>th</sup> Battalion bound for Egypt<sup>(2)</sup>. Ron continued to help on the farm but the family was struggling to make ends meet. His parents decided to move to Sydney with the younger children and rented a house in the inner suburb of Petersham. Ron remained on the farm. He read and re-read

the letters from his brother who was now locked in battle at Gallipoli. He craved to do his bit and struggled with his conscience of what to do to help his family.

In January 1916, Ron travelled to Sydney to see his parents. He caught the train to Campsie where his father managed the popular Ideal Refreshment Rooms.<sup>(1)</sup>

The young bloke sat stirring a steaming cup of tea when his father said, "What's the matter lad, you look like you've got the weight of the world on your shoulders?"

"Dad I want to enlist – I know you're worried about the farm – but it's what I want to do. I've got to do my bit!"

The older gentleman pondered the situation – "You bloody well keep your head down, young fella", and a smile came across Ron's face as he raised the tea in salute to his father.

Ron tidied up his affairs in Exeter and travelled to Bathurst where, on 15 February 1916, he enlisted in the AIF.<sup>(1)</sup> Gallipoli was now a memory and the growing Australian Imperial Force now centred their focus on a new foe – the professional German Army.

Following initial training, Ron was allocated as a reinforcement to the 53<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, commonly called "The Whale Oil Guards", which was part of the 14<sup>th</sup> Brigade. He sailed on 11 July aboard the troopship "Vestalia" bound for England.<sup>(3)</sup>

As he underwent training at the AIF Training Camp at Salisbury Plains, Ron came down with a severe case of tonsillitis, which had him hospitalised on 31 October 1916.<sup>(1)</sup>



Australian signallers lay telephone cable near Hooge, 20 September 1917. [AWM E00859]

On release, he rejoined his mates in their final preparations for deployment to France.

On 23 December 1916, Ron was officially taken on strength of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Battalion.<sup>(1)</sup> He settled quickly into life in the front line and was soon to prove himself a keen and competent soldier.

In February 1917, Ron was chosen to become a battalion signaller and was sent to the Signal School for a three-week course.<sup>(1)</sup>

The 53<sup>rd</sup> Battalion was in and out of action in early 1917. Ron adapted well to his new job. He was active at running out the vital telephone lines and repairing and maintaining them when they were damaged during action. On more than one occasion he went out under intense enemy fire to repair a severed line. He knew that signallers were a prime target for the German snipers but he also knew the importance of communications, especially at the height of battle, and went about his duties with cool, calm efficiency.

In May, Ron was sitting in the command post when a runner arrived and handed over a satchel to the adjutant. The officer read through the various papers and dispatches. As he read one particular dispatch, he paused and glanced at Ron. He stood up and went over to the commanding officer who was busy

studying a nearby map-board. The adjutant showed the CO the dispatch. The CO took the paper and approached the young signaller.

"Ron – can you come outside for a minute!" The CO handed the dispatch to Ron. "I'm sorry mate!" the CO said walking away. Ron looked at the paper and grimaced – it told him that his brother Norman had been killed recently in the second battle of Bullecourt.<sup>(1)</sup>

Ron sat down on a nearby sandbag and took out his note pad. With tears streaming down his cheeks he wrote – 'Dearest Mother and Father... I have just learnt terrible news' .....

The 53<sup>rd</sup> enjoyed a well-earned break at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army Rest Camp in late June/early July. They were in the thick of it at Polygon Wood and the final actions were to gain as much ground as possible before the onset of the winter rains, which would turn the battlefield into a bog.

Ron received a letter from home informing him that his younger brother Gordon had enlisted in the Camel Corps and was on his way to the Middle East.<sup>(5)</sup> "Take care young fella" Ron said under his breath as he folded the letter and placed it into his journal.

Ron celebrated his first anniversary with the battalion by taking two weeks leave in England.<sup>(1)</sup>





# CLOSE BUT NOT CLOSE ENOUGH

Australians recommended for the VC but not awarded

BY MAJOR DARRYL KELLY

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> National Archives of Australia: B2445, WWI Service Records, 2153 PTE Ronald Crank DCM

<sup>2</sup> AWM 8, Unit Embarkation Rolls, 19<sup>th</sup> Battalion, 1914-1918 War

<sup>3</sup> AWM 8, Unit Embarkation Rolls, 53<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 1914-1918 War

<sup>4</sup> Bean, CEW, Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918, Volume V AWM 1936

<sup>5</sup> AWM 8, Unit Embarkation Rolls,

Camel Corps Reinforcements, 1914-1918 War

<sup>6</sup> Bean, CEW, Official History of Australia in the War of 1914-1918, Volume VI AWM 1936

<sup>7</sup> AWM 28, Recommendation

Files for Honours and Awards, AIF, 1914-1918 War

<sup>8</sup> NSW Births, Deaths and Marriages

<sup>9</sup> Reveille Article November 1941

<sup>10</sup> AWM Biographical Data

In April 1918, the 53<sup>rd</sup> was deployed in and around the village of Villers Bretonneux. It was like living in the lap of luxury. The village, which had been evacuated, was brimming with food, clothes, wine and other luxuries. The troops were billeted in warm surroundings.

It was the calm before the storm, however. Within weeks, Villers Bretonneux would be the vital hinge in turning back the massive German assault aimed at capturing the Channel ports and isolating the British Army from their vital lifeline.<sup>(4)</sup>

By mid year the German advance began to falter as the Australians were pushing hard against the enemy and slowly starting to push them back. By early August, the allies were now in open country and advancing at a rapid rate. Advances of 5 miles in a day, something that was unheard of in early battles, were now occurring. August 8<sup>th</sup> was their pinnacle. This was deemed by the German commander, Ludendorff as the "Black Day of the German Army".<sup>(4)</sup>

On 1 September 1918, the 53<sup>rd</sup> Battalion was pushing hard against an area known as Anvil Wood near the village of Peronne. Ron was with the forward elements running out a telephone cable. The Diggers were forced to fire to their left rear at a group of Germans moving near the southern edge of the village. Just alongside the road was an abandoned German 77mm field gun, which had been captured earlier in the battle. Stacked near the gun was a generous amount of ammunition.<sup>(4)(7)</sup>

The Diggers were trying to distribute their fire across a broad front and moved forward to a better position. Ron was setting up communications when, through the drizzle, he saw the Germans massing for a possible counter-attack against the vulnerable left flank of the battalion. Noticing the field gun, he rushed over to it. Lance Corporal Cecil Weatherby, a storeman with the 53<sup>rd</sup> was bringing up some rifle

ammunition at the time when he heard, "Cec – over here mate, quick!"

There was no time to stand on ceremony as Ron ordered "Help me turn this bloody gun around".

"What's your plan Ron?" Weatherby asked.

"We're going to use it on those buggers forming up down there!" Ron replied.

The pair had no idea how to operate the gun, but they were going to learn in a hurry. As they struggled to move the gun in the general direction, Ron would occasionally look down the barrel to see if it was trained on the enemy. Once there, Ron quickly familiarised himself with the elevating and traversing wheels. He didn't have time to figure out the sights, so he decided to aim by eye by looking through the barrel.

"Right, we're on!" Ron snapped. "Load a round, Cec!"

Cec slammed a high explosive round into the breech. "Stand Clear!" Ron yelled.

Ron crouched as he fired the gun, then immediately popped up to see where the round had landed. It was well over, so he rotated the elevation wheel down a bit – looked through the barrel and saw he was near to on and ordered, "Load". Cec Weatherby again slammed another round into the breech. Ron again fired, this time the projectile exploded just short.

Again he went through his sighting process and again they loaded, "Stand Clear" and fired. This time the round was spot on, exploding amongst the massing enemy troops. The Diggers of the 53<sup>rd</sup> and the other nearby troops raised a cheer at the success of the would-be gunners.

Suddenly Ron and Cec heard the tell-tale whistle of incoming artillery rounds. The rounds impacted around the gun, coupled with spurts of ricocheting machine-gun fire striking both the gun itself and the surrounding area. Again, Ron ordered the gun be loaded and, as he fired, the round again found its mark. "Load". The pair kept

this up for some minutes, reaping a terrible toll on the enemy. Artillery continued to impact around the Ron's gun, but somehow it never found its mark. Then the enemy broke ranks and began to scatter. Ron breathed a sigh of relief and took a swig of water from his water bottle and offered it to his mate.

"Good on you, Cec!" Ron said. "Happy to help, mate but I tell ya – you're a mad bastard!" Cec replied. "Well I'd better get this ammo back up to the blokes!" he finished, and was off.

Ron needed to get back to his task as well and picked up his cable reel and started off towards his company, playing out the telephone cable as he went.

He spent the rest of the morning laying and maintaining a vital telephone line to the forward battalion headquarters. The ground on which the telephone wire was laid was under direct observation of the enemy and was swept with heavy artillery and machine-gun fire. But the telephone line was vital and had to be laid and, more importantly, maintained and repaired.<sup>(7)</sup>

Later in the day, the enemy again massed for a counter attack. Lieutenant Waite 'borrowed' Ron to again man the gun and use it to break up the massing enemy. Ron rushed to the gun, this time with Private Arthur Hopkins<sup>(6)</sup> (Cec Weatherby had been wounded during the day). The amateur gunners set about their task and poured round after round into the enemy. They again attracted severe enemy artillery and machine-gun fire, none of which found its mark.

But a new hazard now faced Ron and his mate. The gun had fired a significant number of rounds and, as they had no means of cleaning the barrel, the 'gunners' risked that any round they fired could hit an obstruction and explode while still in the gun. Disregarding the dangers Ron and his mate fired more than 90 rounds at the enemy, again forcing them to flee.<sup>(4)(6)</sup>

For his actions, Ron was recommended for the Victoria Cross, but was eventually awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal instead, as was Lance Corporal Cecil Weatherby. Private Arthur Hopkins was awarded the Military Medal for his part in the action.<sup>(7)</sup> Ron was also promoted to the rank of Temporary Corporal on the night following the action<sup>(1)</sup> and granted a two-week leave to Paris on 25 September.<sup>(1)</sup>

Following the war, Ron remained in France and England until September 1919 before returning to Australia. He was promoted to Lance Sergeant on 1 May and then to Temporary Sergeant the next day. His time waiting to go home was not wasted though, as he was able to travel to his native Manchester to visit relatives.<sup>(1)</sup>

On his return to Australia, Ron picked up the pieces and planned to resume his life. He married Laurie Amos in 1920<sup>(8)</sup> and his discharge from the AIF occurred on 7 May that same year.<sup>(1)</sup>

Ron was very active in the establishment of the 53<sup>rd</sup> Battalion Association, and was a frequent contributor to the RSL magazine *Reveille*. With the onset of the Second World War, the association organised comfort parcels for those from the old 53<sup>rd</sup> who were serving overseas.

The Crank family were again represented in the war when Ron's son, Norman, (whom he named after his late brother) served in the 2<sup>nd</sup> AIF and his younger brother, Gordon, who'd served with the Camel Corps in the Middle East in WWI enlisted in the Royal Australian Navy. His youngest brother, John, also served, in the Army's Volunteer Defence Corps.<sup>(9)</sup>

Ron Crank DCM, a soldier who showed such courage and determination, passed away on 22 May 1955, was cremated and today lays at rest in Sydney's Rookwood Cemetery.



## PESA PREPARATION

Ever since my first article for **CONTACT** in 2005, I've held (and stated) the opinion that the standard fitness tests used by the ADF are a poor measure of combat fitness. Fortunately, at some point, the ADF figured the same thing out and over the past few years they have developed a new fitness test to complement the basic running, pushup and situp tests that have been the foundation of military fitness testing since about WWII.

The new "Physical Employment Standard Assessment" has started to roll out to full-time Army and some Reserve units – and according to the plan, will extend to other units in the wider ADF between now and 2016.

Personally I think the test is a massive improvement over the 'basic fitness assessments' – it's not perfect, but then any fitness test has to strike a balance between testing the required fitness attributes, ease of administration, reliability and safety – and I think the PESA does that pretty well.

So what do you need to know about this test and what are the best ways to train for it?

### The Test

The first thing to know about the test is that it consists of several different functional fitness events, all of which are conducted in uniform and boots with the addition of webbing, rifle, marching order and even armour depending on the test and level.

The assessment grade is based on the role you are employed in and not on your age or sex. There are three levels corresponding to all-corps, combat arms and a specific infantry test.

The individual events are currently a 5km or 10km loaded march, fire and movement test, jerry can timed carry and a box lift and place. These tests are designed to assess aerobic capacity, power, anaerobic capacity



and speed, grip strength, endurance and basic core strength.

For the infantry, there is also a simulated casualty drag, leopard crawl and 1km patrol-order run.

### Training for the Tests

Fundamentally if you have a high level of overall fitness and do some basic weight training in addition to bodyweight training and running, then the PESA shouldn't pose too many problems for anyone. Having said that, here are a few things that you might want to focus on to ensure that you are adequately prepared.

**Technique** – The PESA has some very specific performance standards for each test, so make sure you know the tests and practice the technique. In particular, the box lift and place requires some practice so that you don't get disqualified.

**Loaded marching** – If you are a member of a combat corps this won't be too unusual. But if you haven't

done any pack marching for a while, it's a good idea to break out your patrol and marching order and do a few practice stomps to condition your feet, check that your gear is in good working order and figure out the most comfortable way to carry the required load. My advice for loaded marching is to always start very conservatively. Start with no more than 50% load and add 2-3kg and 1-2 km per week at most so as to avoid overuse injuries.

**Jerrycan carry** – This one tests grip strength and endurance, two things that are often overlooked in general training programs. Doing some additional carrying work with kettlebells in the gym, pullups and rows using a towel or rope, or getting out and practicing the test in small doses will ensure that you can pass this test.

**Sprinting** – The fire-and-movement course requires short bounds and going to ground at each bound, so get out and practice repeated sprints of 5m to 20m as well as

the required technique of getting up and down. Don't forget that, on the day, you'll have a rifle and webbing, so add those elements as you progress.

**Core strength** – Pack marching, sprinting, jerrycan carries and the box-lift and carry, all require good core strength. My top picks here would be planks, back extensions and lots of deadlifting.

**Upper and lower body strength** – For most men of average height the lift and place task isn't going to cause many difficulties. But here's the rub – the test doesn't change in height or weight for smaller, lighter individuals, so some men and quite a few women may be lifting half their bodyweight to nearly head height! If that describes you then it would be a good idea to practice deadlifts, front squats, barbell rows and overhead presses.

So there are some basic tips on the PESA and how to train for it. To receive a sample four-week training plan for the PESA email me at [octogenstrengthcoach@gmail.com](mailto:octogenstrengthcoach@gmail.com)

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## Historic snapshot



Australian Air Force Cadet Sergeant Beau McAuley sits in a replica of the Bristol Boxkite first flown in Australia by his great great grandfather Lieutenant Eric Harrison (below), 100 years and one day earlier. And, right, with Air Vice Marshal (Retd) Mark Skidmore, the first man to fly the replica. Modern photos by Leading Aircraftman Brenton Kwaterski



## Darwin Defenders



Army and Air Force Cadets stand 'at ease' during the Darwin Defenders Commemorative Service at Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance. Photo by Corporal Cam Scott



## Tassie Herc Visit



Above: Commanding Officer No. 37 Squadron Wing Commander Darren Goldie shows AAFC Cadet Corporal Andrew Cowley, Cadet Angus Capp and Cadet Oliver Morley the flight deck of a C-130J Hercules. Above left: Australian Air Force Cadets visit a No. 37 Squadron C-130J Hercules at Hobart Airport, Tasmania, on 17 May. Photos by Sergeant William Guthrie





## AAFC's new home



Darren Chester speaks with cadets (above) after he opened a new AAFC HQ in Bathurst. Photos by Corporal David Said

Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Darren Chester officially opened a new Air Force Cadets National Aviation Centre at Bathurst in April.

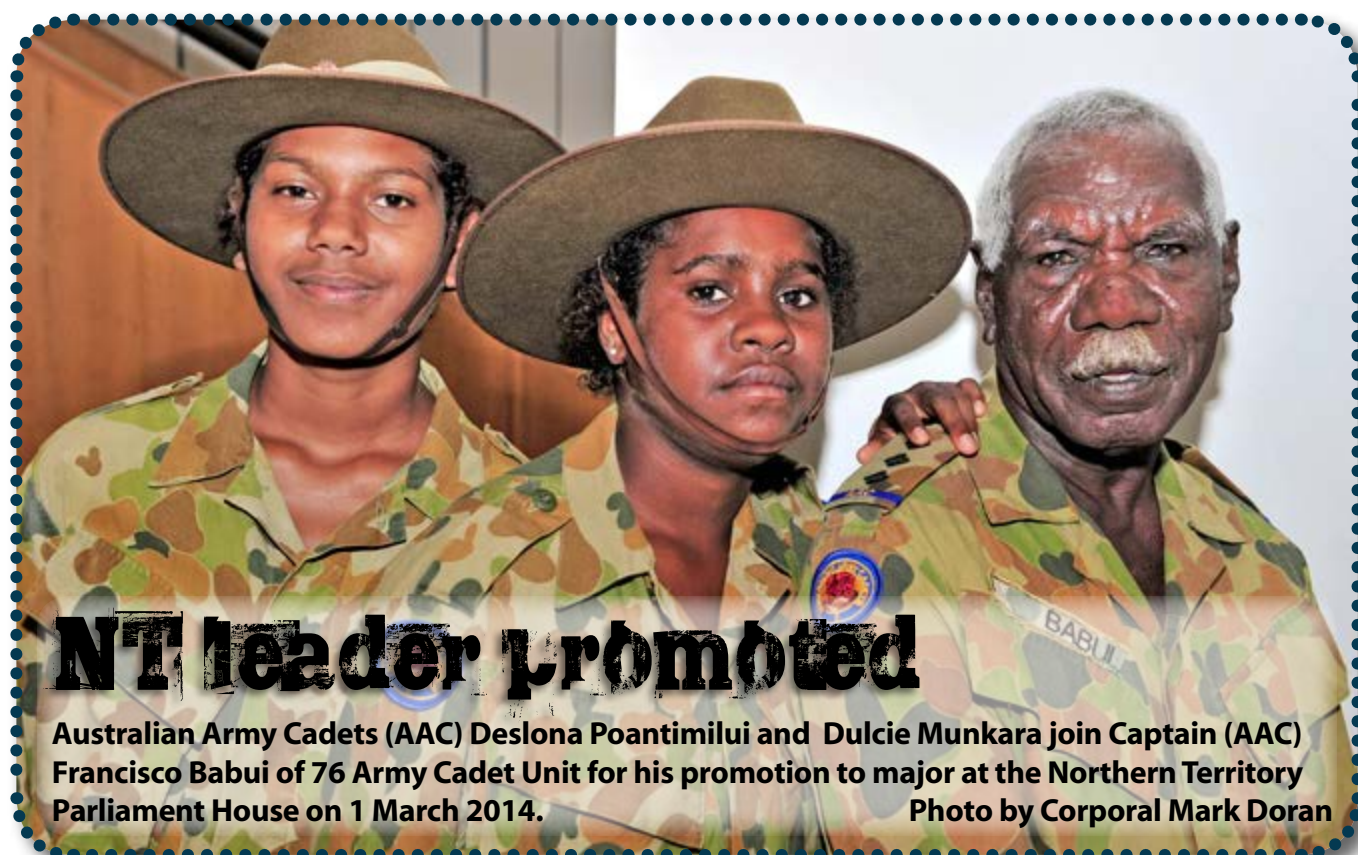
"The facility will make aviation training more accessible for cadets from around Australia," he said.

"It will be used by Cadets aged between 13 and 20 years who will travel from all over Australia to participate in weekend and school-holiday aviation camps.

RAAF oversaw the \$5 million project at Bathurst Aerodrome, which will become 'home' to 7100 Australian Air Force Cadets.

Including classrooms, living accommodation, kitchen facilities, and a separate hangar to house aircraft, the facility will have accommodation for up to 80 cadets and 20 staff.

The official opening also showcased the first of 19 new gliders purchased by RAAF for the AAFC.



## NT leader promoted

Australian Army Cadets (AAC) Deslona Poantimilui and Dulcie Munkara join Captain (AAC) Francisco Babui of 76 Army Cadet Unit for his promotion to major at the Northern Territory Parliament House on 1 March 2014.

Photo by Corporal Mark Doran

# The latest Navy Cadet novel

by

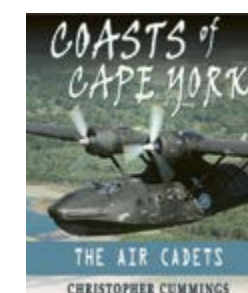
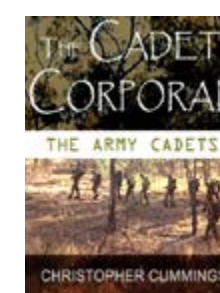
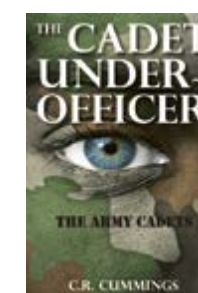
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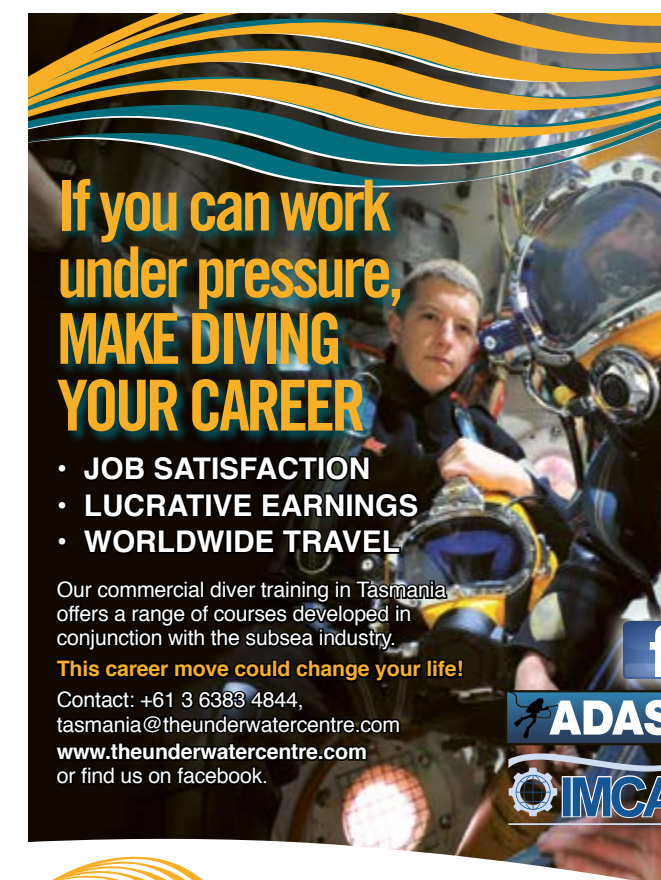
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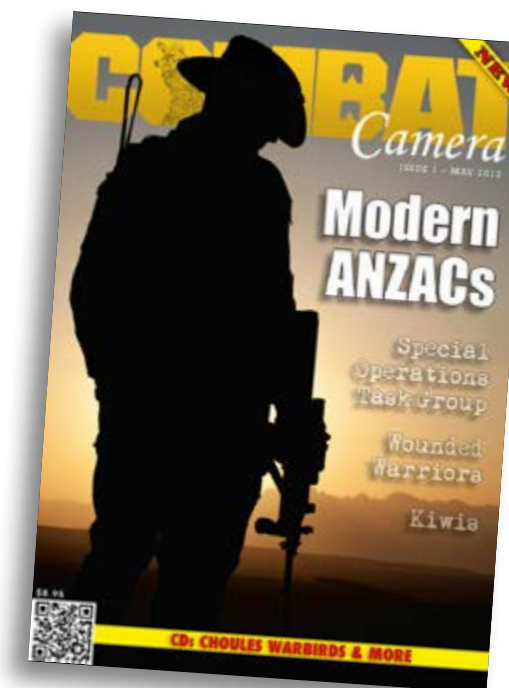
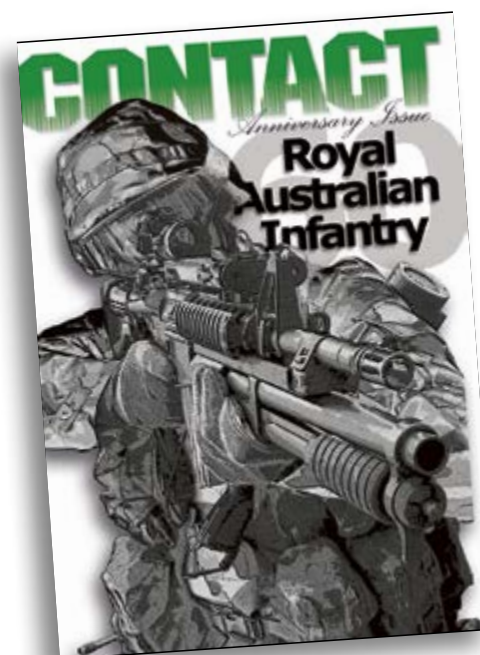
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## GEAR INSIDER

Is the Australian Army about to announce a new 'uniquely Australian' camouflage uniform?

# NEW AUSCAM?

**One of the gear rumours going around Defence at the moment really fascinates me. It's the one about whether we will be dropping Disruptive Pattern Camouflage Uniform (DPCU) and going to Australian Pattern Multicam (AMP). So many theories are going around at the moment that even I find it hard to get a grasp on what is happening, despite having friends in low places!**

Let's jump in with both boots and stomp around on this one for a bit. Apart from the green and black 'smock psychological'

raincoat, the British style DPM jackets (actually made here) issued to RAAF loadmasters, the Tiger Stripe and US ERDL uniforms used by SASR and RAN CDs in Vietnam and after, Australian defence didn't have its own indigenous pattern camouflage for general issue. In the late '70s, CSIRO and defence used early computer design and photography to devise a set of shapes and colours that, when patterned, would provide the best concealment in all Australian conditions. Trial sets were made in 1982 and

issued in '83 with success for the pattern (although, unfortunately, the uniform cut was changed). This became DPCU with a few minor colour changes.

Now, we need to understand what a camouflage uniform needs to do and how, before going further.

Camouflage is not designed to hide you, but conceal or at least delay recognition long enough to keep or return the advantage to you.

How camo does this is by tricking visual and mental receptors into thinking that

you're a part of that scene. It does this by disrupting the un-natural parts of you and your equipment so they seem more natural and don't stand out. It's called boundary disruption. After all, the enemy is looking for the shape of a man, helmet, weapon and so on. When they do see something not right, the disruptive effect makes them subconsciously question what they have seen, and ignore it, or delay their identification of it, giving you more response time and the ability to seize the advantage. When the fighting gets close, the pattern loses its effectiveness in concealment but now becomes the method of identifying friend from foe.

DPCU is very effective in concealing and identifying. In fact, Australians are one of the most easily identified forces today, as well as one of the most easily concealed when we want to be, thanks to DPCU. Over the years, DPCU has been evolved into a successful desert pattern (DPDU), a red/brown OPFOR version that proved too effective in the north, a Naval pattern (DPNU), an RAAF pattern that was not adopted, an experimental, greener jungle version called sapper green and the ill-fated mid-point version for transitional areas.

With so many versions of DPCU and its ability to be modified to suit, why have we got AMP? That is a really tough question and several answers are available – but which one is correct? Ostensibly, the problem arose when soldiers in Afghanistan transitioned from desert to vegetation several times during a patrol. If you wore DPCU, you stood out in the desert areas, if you wore DPDU, you stood out in the green areas.

This is where the mid-point pattern came in. Mid-point was the first attempt and was hastily put together, produced and fielded. But soldiers complained that it was very bright under IR vision, faded quickly and was not as effective as DPCU in either terrain. Anecdotal evidence says that mid-point was also fielded without proper testing (fading, IR properties and so on) and that not much of it ever went on patrol.

At the time this was going on, there was an increased public awareness of equipment problems, and pressure on defence to do something about it. Our special forces had been using Crye Multicam for some time by now and said it was effective, so the government of the day ordered Defence to begin purchasing Multicam uniforms for urgent operational issue.

Having seen the British Army ask Crye to develop a version for them (Multi-Terrain Pattern, MTP) they also decided to contract with Crye Precision for a "distinctly Australian

version" of Multicam. It's interesting to note here that DMO paid AUD\$3.1 million dollars for pattern development and AUD\$4.7 million for a license to produce the pattern and uniform in Australia.

The timeline of the DPCU/ mid-point/Multicam/AMP process was not a quick event, which leads us to wonder if the mid-point pattern could have been refined, or a suitable and distinct alternate pattern sourced? The answer to that is, almost definitely.

Let's look at mid-point. Put into the field quickly and missing a lot of R&D, its flaws could have been addressed in later production. But a considerable amount of time had been expended so far and a faster solution was wanted.

At the time this was happening, there were two major Australian equipment manufacturers with their own patterns on the market and one Australian pattern developer. It is our understanding that a defence manufacturer consulted the pattern developer and that that manufacturer made a submission to Defence for an effective, fully Australian solution that would also keep a distinctive pattern. It appears that this effort was a bit too late and the Crye pattern went ahead.

We have also learnt that the Australian developer's pattern was submitted to



the recent NZDF camo tender and placed equal with a design from a Canadian tenderer. During testing in NZ, the Australian- and Canadian-developed patterns out-performed the Crye-designed Multicam and British MTP.

Time, public pressure and a feeling of responsibility brought about the acquisition of AMP, but it still took some time for the pattern to be developed, production to be tendered out and to get the pattern into service, for only two rotations!

Still, there were complaints when the pattern was unveiled. The main complaints were that the cost of modifying the pattern for a distinctive Australian look, was significantly more than the effort required and that, in the end, the pattern was not so distinctive anyway – a trained soldier needed to be within about 10m to identify it as the Australian pattern. We don't need to tell you the problem of letting people get that close to you before you can identify them! Especially when there have now been several instances of enemy attackers wearing commercially available Multicam uniforms.

One other theory on the acquisition of AMP is that it may become the 'away-team' uniform for Australian forces. Many other nations use Multicam in some form for small teams and special forces.

So what about us, will we replace DPCU with AMP? After some recent feedback from Defence, it appears that they haven't 'officially' made up their mind either. Both patterns work well in Australia and overseas, although at the extreme ends of the spectrum, they start to lose their performance. This has become evident with Multicam in that the US Army recently solicited for a new family of four camouflage patterns, for woodland, transitional, desert and one for personal protective

equipment. The real kicker in this is that Crye named and marketed Multicam as an all-terrain pattern – but then submitted the four new patterns required by US DoD. In another twist, the US Senate has all-but stopped the US military from adopting service-specific patterns and the US Army is said to be on the brink of announcing that it will now go with a pattern called Scorpion – which they developed in-house and have owned outright for more than 10 years.

Since I started this article, Defence has officially revealed a Blue AMP pattern for the RAAF and recently, to industry revealed a modified AMP pattern in DPCU colours plus an additional two, making seven colours in total. Possibly the most drastic change is that pattern elements have been made smaller. Why? Was the original AMP not distinctive enough? Is it to prevent us looking like the US? Is it the risk of enemy in a similar pattern or possibility of Blue-on-Blue deaths due to mistrust?

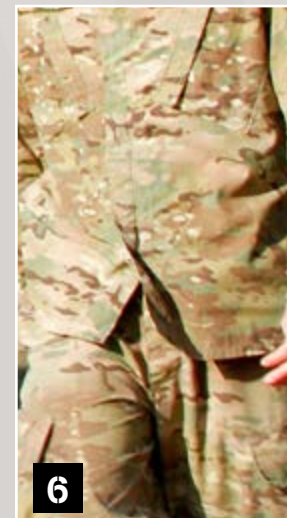
In the end, I think there are some serious questions here. Considering it has only been used on a couple of rotations. "Did we need AMP when off-the-shelf Multicam sufficed for so long?" "What did we get for the money we paid?" and "Why was Australian industry ignored?"

In regards to that last question, we have been advised that the Australian camo developer had made two unsolicited proposals to defence since 2005. The first was rejected as "too similar to Asian Tiger Stripe" and the second mysteriously disappeared.

*We really want your thoughts on this one so get writing. Comments, critiques, criticisms and death threats can be sent to the usual email, [gearinsider@militarycontact.com](mailto:gearinsider@militarycontact.com)*



One of the people above is wearing a 'uniquely Australian' camouflage pattern. This may or may not be the exact final version expected to be adopted by the Australian Army later this year, but it's close. The other person above is American. Can you tell them apart? Could you tell them apart at 50m under battle conditions? The people below are wearing American, Australian and British uniforms. Can you confidently tell which is which? The first correct answer, numbered in the right order, received at [gearinsider@militarycontact.com](mailto:gearinsider@militarycontact.com) will win a surprise mixed-bag gift pack.





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