

ISSUE
50



SAVE + REOPEN BEFORE EXPLORING

AIR LAND & SEA

JUNE 2016

THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



2 FABULOUS
WATCHES TO
GIVE AWAY
– Page 61



**Southern
Backyard**

25% OFF*

AFGHANISTAN AND OP SLIPPER COLLECTIONS

SALE ENDS 8 JUNE 2016

Use Promo Code **ContactMe** at the checkout

* Excludes framed artworks and limited edition medallions



Afghanistan Campaign
Ribbon Lapel Pin
RRP: \$5.00 SPECIAL: \$3.75

Afghanistan Campaign
Key Ring
RRP: \$7.90 SPECIAL: \$5.92

Afghanistan Woven
Cloth Key Tag
RRP: \$6.90 SPECIAL: \$5.17



Afghanistan Campaign
Medallion
RRP: \$9.50 SPECIAL: \$7.12



Operation Slipper 48mm Medallion
RRP: \$10.00 SPECIAL: \$7.50



Operation Slipper 85mm Boxed Medallion
RRP: \$85.00 SPECIAL: \$63.75



Operation Slipper Wall Poster

A full colour poster of Barry Spicer's painting in printed tube, ready for the post. 568 x 420mm.

RRP: \$9.90 SPECIAL: \$7.42

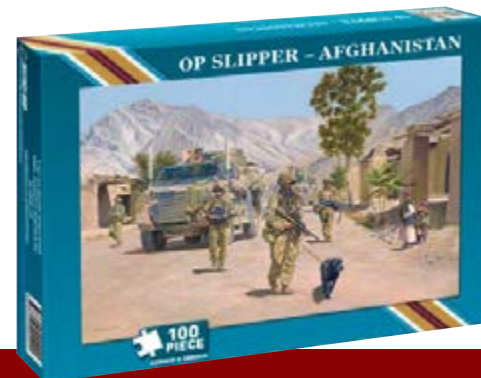
Afghanistan Campaign
Wall Plaque

The scorpion was widely adopted by many Australians as a symbol of their deployments to Afghanistan. This bold wall plaque sets the scorpion against the Australian flag and the colours of the Afghanistan Campaign Ribbon. A perfect piece for home, office or club.

RRP: \$49.70 SPECIAL: \$37.27



Operation Slipper 100 Piece Puzzle
RRP: \$9.95 SPECIAL: \$7.46



Operation Slipper
Australia Lapel Pin
**RRP: \$5.00
SPECIAL: \$3.75**



Operation Slipper Bumper Sticker
154mm x 112mm.
RRP: \$2.00 SPECIAL: \$1.50

Operation Slipper Patches
Two quality patches. Embroidered on drill cotton with Velcro back. 100mm x 50mm and 75mm x 55mm. Sold separately.
RRP: \$5.00 SPECIAL: \$3.75

Operation Slipper
Shield Plaque
The Operation Slipper commemorative shield is an ideal award or personal keepsake. The commemorative Op Slipper design is finished in rich enamel within highly polished gold plate and mounted on a timber finish base. Room to include an inscription plate if using for awards and presentations or unit/company insignia for personal keepsake.
**RRP: \$45.00
SPECIAL: \$33.75**



Afghanistan Bar Runner and Drink Cooler

These quality drinkware items feature the oil on canvas painting *Operation Slipper - In Service Against Terrorism* by renowned artist Barry Spicer.

BAR RUNNER: RRP: \$29.00 SPECIAL: \$21.75

DRINK COOLER: RRP: \$6.00 SPECIAL: \$4.50



Operation Slipper Caps

Super tough heavy brushed cotton caps with Op Slipper patch proudly embroidered on front and Afghanistan-Middle East 2001-2014 embroidered at back. Navy blue and desert sand.

RRP: \$15.00 each SPECIAL: \$11.25



Full Afghanistan range at www.militaryshop.com.au/Afghanistan
Full Op Slipper range at www.militaryshop.com.au/OpSlipper



WINTER IS COMING

SPECIALS ON
Cold & Wet Weather Gear
Sleeping Gear
Footwear
Long Range Packs



ph: 07 3855 2574

www.maxforcetactical.com

Regiment



Malice



Rhino



Ph: 07 3855 2574
TacticalTailor.com.au

**TACTICAL
TAILOR**
Made In The USA

ISSUE 50 – JUNE 2016

46



40

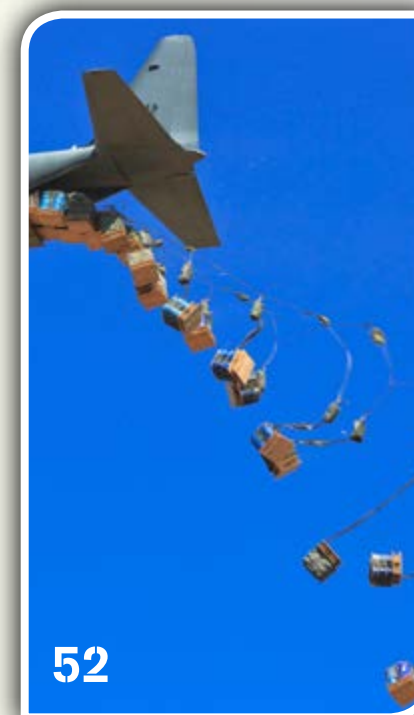
- 12** The Big Picture
In-flight service
- 14** The Inner Sanctum
The Reaper
- 20** New ADF Equipment
EF-88 Ancillaries
- 26** Ireland 2016
Centenary of Rebellion
- 40** Southern Jackaroo
Combined with Diamond Sprint
- 46** Ex Ssang Yong
On the ground in Korea
- 52** What goes up...
176 Air Dispatch Squadron
- 58** Arty Observer
Controlling indirect fires
- 64** Enemy - a book extract
- 70** Q Store
- 72** Not close enough
Up for VC but not awarded
- 76** Military Fitness
- 78** Cadet Corner
- 84** Gear Insider



26



58



52



14

15% OFF BOOTS

EDITORIAL

Use promo code **ContactC** at the checkout

We have a huge range of boots from all the leading brands including;

**ALTAMA • CROSSFIRE • GARMONT
MEINDL • TRACERLITE**



View the range at
www.militaryshop.com.au/boots



MILITARY SHOP

EVERYTHING MILITARY
FRONT + CENTRE

ON LINE: www.militaryshop.com.au PHONE: 02 6123 2950

IN STORE: 65 Kembla Street Fyshwick ACT

Issue 50 – June 2016

CONTACT
AIR, LAND & SEA



**SOUTHERN
JACKAROO**

Cover photo by
Corporal Dan
Pinhorn

Story page 40

Editor

Brian Hartigan

editor@militarycontact.com
ph: 0408 496 664
fax: (02) 4293 1010

Art/Design

Brian Hartigan

Advertising

Brian Hartigan

advertising@militarycontact.com

**Business
Manager**

Rosie Hartigan

accounts@militarycontact.com
ph/fax: (02) 4293 1010

CONTACT Air Land & Sea magazine is
Published by Contact Publishing Pty Ltd,
PO Box 3091, Minnamurra, NSW 2533, AUST

www.militarycontact.com (all info)
www.aussiecombat.com (free subs)
www.issuu.com/contactpublishing (archives)
www.facebook.com/CONTACTmagazine
www.youtube.com/CONTACTpublishing
www.pinterest.com/CONTACTmagazine
www.twitter.com/aussiecontact

CONTACT Air Land & Sea is published on 1 March,
June, September and December. It is only published
electronically on the Internet and is available by FREE
subscription via www.aussiecombat.com

All editorial, advertising and general enquiries should
be addressed to the editor.

All material appearing in this magazine is protected by
copyright and may not be reproduced in whole or in part
without permission from the copyright owner (which
may not be Contact Publishing). The views expressed in
this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the
publisher or the editor. The publisher does not accept
responsibility for any claim made by any author or advertiser
– readers are encouraged to seek professional advice where
appropriate.

ISSUE 50!!!

That's a pretty big milestone, if I do say so myself.

So, let me take this opportunity to let you in on a little secret... when I started CONTACT magazine 50 issues ago, it was done as a nose-thumb at Defence by me – a recently departed sergeant from ARMY Newspaper – plus a corporal who was still serving there. We were both angry that Army HQ had allowed the then-new civilian editor to shut down ARMY Magazine, citing 'staffing issues'.

"Bullshit," all six staff under him cried – and that corporal and I declared (in secret) "not only could dedicated and motivated staff keep ARMY Magazine going if you let them – but, just two of us will prove it by producing a new magazine, in secret, in our spare time – and make it better than ARMY ever was."

Because of the circumstances of its birth, my personal, secret, secondary goal was to keep CONTACT going for longer than ARMY Magazine existed – which was 52 issues.

Well, with 50 issues, plus one Special Infantry-only issue plus 12 issues of COMBAT Camera now published, I think I can claim to have surpassed ARMY Magazine in every way.

Anyone want to argue with me about that?

But, of course, I'm not nearly done yet!

CONTACT Air Land & Sea is alive and kicking. COMBAT Camera is still here, dusted off for the occasional special event. And big plans are rattling around in my brain for improvement and expansion.

BTW...

...that corporal who started this journey with me has long since moved on to other things, but I am grateful to him for his enthusiasm and drive and ideas in the early days. Without him, CONTACT would never have gotten off the ground. In fact, the whole thing was his idea from the start – I just followed his lead, before eventually taking over.

...when I handed that civvie editor a copy of our first issue, he fake-smiled and said 'well done' (or something) as the blood drained from his face – then, five minutes later, I literally found him in conference with his boss demanding to know 'how can we shut this down?'

...that weasel civvie editor who single-handedly destroyed ARMY Magazine and then tried to shut CONTACT down, held the ARMY News editor's job for less than two years. Good riddance to a bad ass!!!

...a prologue to this whole saga is that, when Army Newspaper Unit lost its unit status and the editor/major's position was civilianised, a key condition stipulated by Army HQ was that there must be "no loss of capability". Less than 18 months later, ARMY Magazine was defunct. So, boo hiss to Army HQ for letting the above weasel destroy the passion and pride (esprit de corps) that was built up over the previous 12 years under a properly functioning military rank structure.

That said – without their complacency, CONTACT would never have been born. So, I guess I should say 'thanks Army HQ for being so slack/spineless'.

Not that I hold a grudge or anything [he lies].

Sincerely,

Brian Hartigan
Managing Editor

Subscribe free at www.aussiecombat.com

CARINTHIA[®]

GO PROFESSIONAL



G-Loft ISG Hybrid



G-Loft Ultra



NEW! MIG 310



VISIT www.premierdefence.com.au

Sole importer and distributor
Premier Defence Agencies Pty Ltd
info@premierdefence.com.au
02 9708 2475

Veteran

PARTY

Putting Australians First

VOTE

1

VOTE
1



DONALD FRIEND
EDEN-MONARO

VOTE
1



SEAN MACNAMARA
FADDEN

VOTE
1



JASON BURGESS
FISHER

VOTE
1



BRIDGET CLINCH
BRISBANE

VOTE
1



MARK BRADBURY
SENATE CANDIDATE FOR NEW SOUTH WALES

VOTE
1



RAYMOND BENNIE
SENATE CANDIDATE FOR NEW SOUTH WALES

VOTE
1



JEREMY DAVEY
SENATE CANDIDATE FOR QUEENSLAND

VOTE
1



DARRYL HODKINSON
SENATE CANDIDATE FOR QUEENSLAND

www.advp.org.au #voteforveterans

AUTHORISED BY R EVANS, VETERANS PARTY
2 St Kilda Parade, Taylors Hill, Victoria 3037
Veterans party printing by SPADIXdesign.com

Dear valued **CONTACT** reader,

It is with great pleasure that I introduce you to the **Veterans Party**.

The Party was originally conceived in 2013 and held its inaugural AGM in Canberra on Australia Day 2014. The Party achieved registration status in 2015.

I'm honoured to have been endorsed as the Party leader and the Lead Senate Candidate for Queensland. I am surrounded by a team of Defence Force and First Responder Veterans who are dedicated to achieving a better outcome for all Australians.

Whilst our Party was originally conceived to represent the defenders and protectors of our nation; those who serve or have served our country and communities in our Defence Force and First Responder services, we have come to offer representation for all Australians. The term Veteran is colloquial, and we seek to represent all Industry Veterans, whether they are from the agricultural, health or resources industries, or anywhere in between.

All dedicated Australians deserve proper care and support, in a commitment that must be lasting and sincere. We strive to offer Centralist views that seek to unite, rather than divide the community.

We are particularly focussed on addressing and breaking the silence that often surrounds mental illness, which many in the Defence, First Responder, and broader community are suffering.

We will offer smart and sensible policies on matters of importance to Australians. Our approach is one that is collaborative, constructive and effective. We do not intend to waste people's time nor insult their intelligence by politically point scoring.

I invite you to join us on our journey from infancy towards what I believe will be a new era in Australian politics. I invite you to research, scrutinise and offer us feedback. I invite you to make a difference this polling day.

Kind regards,
Jeremy Davey.



Written and authorised by Jeremy Davey for the
Australian Defence Veterans Party (Veterans Party), Orpheus Place, Burpengary QLD 4505



Got something to say?
E-mail: editor@militarycontact.com

INCOMING

INCONVENIENT TRUTHS

A newspaper report in SE Qld pre ANZAC Day said the Army Reserve had run out of money for the financial year and all Tuesday-night and weekend parading was cancelled until July.

CONTACT sought clarification from Defence, including asking if it was confined to south-east Queensland. Their official response was... "Contrary to media reporting, Army Reserve members continue to parade in South East Queensland and the Reserve force is adequately funded. Regular Tuesday parade nights and training weekends continue, however some activities have been modified or rescheduled at the Brisbane-based 11th Brigade. Priority tasks, including career and initial employment training courses, and essential unit governance continue as scheduled. Members of the 11th Brigade supported all ceremonial activities on Anzac Day, including at regional locations in Queensland."

In light of this answer, and especially since it differed slightly in wording but substantially in meaning to that which was attributed to a Defence spokesperson in the initial report, **CONTACT** asked its readers for a boots-on-the-ground perspective...

— "CO was told that Monday afternoon that everything was to be shut down until further notice, so Tuesday parade was cancelled. We all

got the brief and got told we were in limbo with all activities including Anzac Day cancelled, bar end-of-year exercise. Friday comes and we are told Tuesday's are back on, but we are only allowed two guards on Anzac Day and no one else can be in uniform, no one else will be paid. A few weekend activities were put back on and larger activities reduced."

— "It's not just Queensland. I'm in WA, and 13 Brigade has a stop-parade on. You will find a smattering of senior staff and those readying to deploy etc still working, but members were notified by text messages that all parades and exercises are cancelled until the last week of June."

— "Not just Queensland, 4 BDE is on the bones of their arse as well."

— "This isn't the first time this has happened in my 27 years of service. It isn't a rumour, it is happening."

— "It was no rumour it was real."

— "It's true...and not just Army."

Was Defence open and honest in its answer to **CONTACT**? You be the judge.

We'd still like to hear from any Reservists who have had Tuesday night parades cancelled because of funding issues – editor@militarycontact.com

ANZACS

Good afternoon Brian. Congratulations once more for your latest publication of **Contact Magazine's** newsletter. It was a thoroughly good read and although I don't know how you managed to do it so quickly, the ANZAC Day tribute was absolutely first class.

Yours sincerely,

John Weiland, COL
Colonel Commandant, Australian Army
Public Relations Service

Sir. Thank you for your wonderfully encouraging feedback. To be honest, doing that special issue of **COMBAT Camera** magazine was a piece of cake, relatively speaking, because of the awesome quality of the materiel so readily at hand. How good is that Corporal Jake Sims (front cover)? I actually only decided to do that magazine on Tuesday lunchtime when I saw the photos (especially Sims') and had it finished by Thursday evening.

Thanks again, Brian Hartigan, Editor

USA CALLING

After 30 years of support, RAAF decided it was too costly to send us free copies of **Air Force News**, or anything else they used to send (photos, insignia etc). **RNZAF** also – although they are at least still sending us their **Air Force News**.

For more than 30 years we had as a very good friend in an ex-RAAF group captain who sent us anything we wanted. He had contacts everywhere, and often sent stuff without us even asking. Unfortunately he passed away in 2006, and we have had no help from Downunder since.

We'd really love to hear from people in Australia and NZ who would be willing to help us with details about insignia (uniform and otherwise) and aircraft markings. We love to receive photos of squadron and special-occasion markings.

In return, have a 30-page listing of aviation collectibles, some insignia and badges, and lots of books, postcards, commemorative medallions, belt buckles, aviation and spaceflight commemorative porcelain and glass collectibles etc, which we could swap for Aussie or New Zealand stuff.

Leads or direct help would be greatly appreciated.

Peter Walton
Heraldry of the Air, Aviation Insignia Museum
3200 South Nova Road Lot # 51
Port Orange, Florida 32129-3136
USA
heraldryoftheair@msn.com

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. Feel free to write to editor@militarycontact.com about **CONTACT** or any on other military subject – Ed

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

In-flight Service

A United States Marine Corps, Marine Tactical Electronic Warfare, 4 Squadron "Seahawks" EA-6B Prowler, refuels from a Royal Australian Air Force KC-30A during operations in the Middle East region. RAAF tankers have dispensed more than 50,000,000lbs (27,000 tonnes) of fuel since being deployed in September 2014.



THE INNER SANCTUM

AN AUSTRALIAN POLICE SNIPER

BY JASON SEMPLE

WARRIORS THROUGH THE AGES HAVE ALWAYS FACED THE SAME CHALLENGE - ARMOUR AND WEAPONS ARE HEAVY, PLACE A BURDEN ON THE SOLDIER AND REDUCE OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS. EVEN MODERN ARMOUR AND WEAPONS, WITH ALL THE ADVANTAGES OF LIGHTWEIGHT MATERIALS, PRESENT THE SAME CHALLENGES. THE SOLUTION IS TO BE FOUND IN LEVERAGING THE LOAD-BEARING CAPABILITIES OF THE HUMAN BODY WITH THE AID OF SCIENCE TO DEVELOP A FUNCTIONAL SOLUTION. EMPHASIS FOR FUTURE WAR FIGHTING IS ON CUTTING-EDGE EQUIPMENT THAT ASSISTS THE USER FOR FUNCTIONALITY WHILE REDUCING WEIGHT AND EFFORT.



Jason Semple is a regular contributor to CONTACT and we are delighted to have him on board for this continuing series of enlightening and inspiring insights into the rarely seen realm of snipers. Jason is a former police sniper of many years' experience. He is also co-owner of Advanced Accuracy Solutions LLC and co-inventor of The Reaper™ Weapons Support System, which copped a lot of flack on Facebook recently. So we invited Jason to lay out the facts about The Reaper in this issue's installment.



Advanced Accuracy Solutions have developed a support system to integrate with this ethos and to enhance the modern combative.

Advanced Accuracy Solutions LLC was formed by three former military and law-enforcement special operations operators/snipers. Tim Russell and myself came from working in multiple Australian police tactical units both state and federal. Our third owner is Andy Butler who has more than 20 years of US SOF experience.

The three of us know from our own experience that organisations cannot afford to miss any opportunity to enhance the combat effectiveness of their personnel.

AAS, through our own needs, developed The Reaper™ Weapons Support System (TRWSS).

The Reaper was designed to increase operational endurance, assist with load bearing and greatly enhance shooter accuracy – all of which are intrinsically linked.

The catalyst for the development of new equipment nearly always relates to a need, and our needs were stability, endurance and accurate shooting from aircraft. While deployed overseas, the sniper team Tim and I were spending a significant amount of time shooting from rotary-winged aircraft both in training and on operations. Like any skill, tactic or environment we work in, once guys have mastered it they start looking at ways to make things work better, easier, more efficiently. This was the case for weapon choice, ammunition and the tactics involved with aerial fire support.

One thing that we were never 100% happy with was the constraints of physically supporting

the weapon for long periods in a relatively static position out the side of a helicopter. We tried purpose-built sniper bars, weapon sling arrangements and all manner of ideas in-between. I even tried a gyro-stabilised system that cost US\$60,000 – and found it to be bulky and tactically limited in its application.

All of these systems transferred vibration from the airframe to the weapon system to varying degrees and required the shooter to engage from set depths within the airframe.

Sniper bars and strap arrangements also heavily impinged on freedom of movement in and out of the airframe and required airworthiness certificates if bolted to the bird.

The gyro system literally took up the entire central area of a UH-60 Black Hawk thanks to its setup and power requirements.

Being deep in the airframe also limits arcs of fire dramatically and affects engagement distances. It was far from ideal, that's for sure.

But, of all those solutions, I'd use a bar or a strap over the gyro any day.

Tim Russell had the idea of using a concept where the weapon system could be supported off the actual shooter, much like that used by roving cameramen. But those specific systems were unsuitable for our purposes, which led us to design our own-patented support, and thus The Reaper™ was born.

My years studying mechanical engineering back in Newcastle before I joined the police provided us the expertise to transfer concepts into actionable designs.

The system needed to be simple to operate, have the ability to attach to current body-armor and plate-carrier systems, and the movement action of the support cord needed to be smooth and effortless in application.

The actual system is a fully enclosed adjustable unit that transfers the weapon weight through a person-mounted overhead support boom and cord, and easily folds away when not in use.

An internal shock-absorbing system allows for effortless vertical and horizontal weapon tracking via a non-stretch cord attached to the weapon itself. The system incorporates two shock absorbers for smooth operation and as a redundancy for shock failure. The system removes operational equipment weight forward of the user (weapon carriage) and transfers the load-bearing to the torso. The weapon is supported to the point where it exhibits a neutral weight value.

The Reaper weapon support system was designed to give the shooter superior accuracy and physical support for the weapon platform being employed. The system is attached to the individual via a mounting system on the rear of the shooters body. Individual mounting can be achieved via specialised Molle attachment pieces or via specific backpack configurations that are all Mil spec.

The bulk of the system is made from high-grade aluminium, using cutting-edge processes. The pulley system uses industrial-strength stainless-steel shock absorbers at various compression strengths. The remaining parts are made from high-strength durable plastics and stainless-steel components designed for minimal maintenance.

The Reaper system allows the aerial shooter unparalleled flexibility and a distinct separation from the airframe in terms of vibration and firing positions.

The shooter can attach to the airframe with personal safety strap and shoot from any position within the aircraft with complete support and accuracy. The Reaper allows the shooter to quickly traverse from either side of the airframe, and to disembark if needed while picking up or dropping off troops.

The transition from aerial application to ground

operations eventuated after we were showing the system to some United States SOF personnel. They were really impressed with how effective the system was and spoke to us about potential ground-based applications. We had already been using the system for ground-based counter sniping roles and we readily saw the potential as well.

The Reaper is designed to meet the muscular limitations that affect even the strongest personnel. There is a limited period of time that personnel can support a weapon in front of their body, exponentially-so when the weight of the weapon platform increases from carbine to MG. Muscular endurance is literally as short as a few minutes for even the lightest rifle when aiming.

One of the key issues with marksmanship is muscular engagement and fatigue. Once fatigue of a muscle group occurs, so does the steady control of the weapon system, which affects accuracy drastically, especially when you increase the range to target.

The Reaper system removes the requirement for constant and prolonged muscle inputs from the shooters forearms, biceps and shoulders, allowing for unlimited cover time on target and enhanced accuracy. The Reaper is particularly valuable when clearing threat areas over long periods.

The ability to patrol with light and medium machine guns at a ready position is a force multiplier option with minimal cost outlay.

Personnel patrolling for long periods can become combat ineffective or, at the very least, have a diminished response to a threat. The last hour of a patrol is just as important as the first and removing fatigue greatly enhances combat effectiveness, which is of immeasurable value to the soldier and his commander.

The Reaper allows its operator to patrol with LMG's at the ready position and use the extra fire support in the same dynamic way one might use a carbine. The LMG operator can then cover target areas for extended periods from positions other than prone with a high level of accuracy.

The Reaper Weapon Support System has applications across the entire spectrum of small-arms. The ability to attach a variety of small-arms



(carbines, sniper rifles, crew served weapons etc) means it has a place in all units at the section level, to extend operator effectiveness, accuracy and endurance.

There is also a ballistic-shield Reaper system available as a separate design.

Aerial fire-support/sniping

- Designed to enhance accuracy from rotary-winged aircraft for both aerial sniping and fire support.
- Suitable for special-forces and battalion use. System supports weapons systems from AR-style weapons to MG.
- Requires no engineering or airworthiness certificates on aircraft.
- Allows high degree of flexibility to operator shooting positions.
- Allows operator to easily exit aircraft to support troops on the ground.
- Improves operational endurance of shooter.
- Enhances accuracy.
- Reduces load-bearing and shooter fatigue.

Unstable Platform Shooting

- Enhances accuracy off unstable platforms such as marine craft (RHIB, larger marine vessels).
- System integrates well with armored vehicles allowing the gunner to traverse 360 degrees and cover areas close to vehicle (e.g. Bushmaster).
- Increases shooter endurance and flexibility.

Counter Sniping/DDM

- Continuous control of weapon in unsupported positions.
- Provides instant stable and accurate shooting position.
- Allows for greater flexibility and reaction to attack.
- Allows for greater coverage of threat area.
- Reduces load bearing and shooter fatigue.

Approach shooting/over-watch

- Provides enhanced accuracy to over-watch activities.
- Gives operator greater flexibility in choosing over-watch position while maintaining accuracy (not limited to prone).
- Allows for greater speed of action and mobility with instant access to support.
- Provides extended endurance on target.
- Suitable for carbine, sniper weapons and MGs.
- Highly suitable for rolling operations and extended durations.
- Reduces load bearing and shooter fatigue.

Machine gun support

- M249/Minimi/M240/Maximi/Mag 58 support for dismounted, over-watch and static operations.
- Provides significant increase to endurance.
- Provides the ability to shoot accurately from non-prone and mobile positions.
- Allows for more aggressive/accurate and mobile MG support.



As the readers of CONTACT magazine may know, the Australian Army holds an Army Innovation Day (AID) once a year in Canberra. Its purpose is innovative in itself as the goal is to identify new technologies and products for evaluation and potential use in the military.

With big organisations, sometimes innovations take a while to see the light of day, thanks to bureaucracy, so the aim of AID is to try and streamline access. It is a very professional process and was impressive to those companies invited to attend, after preselection.

After presenting at AID 2015, AAS was further selected to provide The Reaper systems for a 6-month testing and evaluation period to explore potential uses in the ADF.

We are fortunate to have such a robust testing and evaluation process conducted by a premier military organisation, with comprehensive evaluation standards that we can rely on for professional outcomes.

The testing and evaluation period will determine any progression or possible adoption by the ADF.

AAS is cognisant of the skepticism that surrounds a product like The Reaper, which is unusual, definitely new and outside usual thinking. We do however have a 100% track record of transforming the opinions of those who were initially skeptical.

There was a massive social-media reaction when the ADF released footage of initial trials. A lot of the commentary was negative and very much related to people not understanding the system or its use.

Most comments related to the following points;

The potential to get 'hung up'

Our system, like many other pieces of kit, is not designed for use in every situation. Cutting your way through thick bush or jungle is obviously a time when you would not have the system in use.

Reaper is designed to be used when the soldier

deems it appropriate – the same as with all kit. If it is likely to cause an issue you can easily fold it away in seconds.

I am 6 foot 4 inches and I can freely walk in and out of regular doorways wearing The Reaper. Once again though, it is user choice as to whether this would be necessary, tactically. I have also spent significant time walking in bush and have had absolutely no issues with getting hung up.

We have hundreds of hours using the system in rotary-winged airframes and, once again, the system has no issues with getting hung up.

What happens when you go to ground with it?

The Reaper is obviously not needed when you hit the prone position, as the weight of the weapon rests directly on the ground. You can however shoot from the prone if you are still attached to The Reaper if you went down in a contact.

Importantly, modern battle spaces are increasingly urban and do not always support going prone in response to attack. Using cover or a hardpoint is more often the preferred option.

If you aren't strong enough to carry your weapon, you shouldn't be in the Infantry in the first place.

Years ago I heard an old-school instructor say, "Those new sights are rubbish – you can always rely on your iron sights. Those things will break and how can you rely on them".

While he was correct in saying that iron sights are reliable, but, to call new optics rubbish is ridiculous. I'd rather be able to deliver accurate fire faster and to extended ranges any day, and new sights give us that ability.

As for strength – at 6-foot-4 and 110kg, I can and do hold a heavy rifle longer than most people, but, like anyone, my muscles fatigue, and muscular fatigue affects accuracy when you can't keep your sights steady or control recoil as efficiently.

Accurate and fast delivery of fire is the best way to counter any threat – that is fact. MGs have been used as an area weapon for more than 100 years. But, a lot of machine-gun-employment theory and tactical use relates to volume of fire. With improved ammunition, sights and advanced new weapons, machine guns are increasingly used with much greater precision.

At the end of the day, tactics, methodology and SOPs are developed over time by the military organisation employing them. And smart organisations such as the Australian Army, which are open to innovation, evolution and change, are at least open minded enough to trial new products, whether they eventually adopt them or not.

AAS has been requested to present at a number of SF units around the world. We have systems being evaluated in the USA and a number of Asian, European and Coalition countries, with a number of SF units having made initial purchases of the system for specialised tasks, such as aerial fire support and helo-sniping, with some larger orders for ground troops.

We have also sold systems to specialist CT and SWAT teams as well.

At the end of the day, by developing The Reaper, our aim is merely to assist service men and women by offering them one new, practical and proven tool they can choose to employ or not depending on the tactical scenario they are about to embark on.



THE RISING SUN COLLECTION

25% OFF

SALE ENDS 8 JUNE 2016



The Rising Sun Collection

Our best seller. This superb collection shows the evolution of one of Australia's most recognisable symbols.

The seven exquisitely detailed stamped metal replica hat badges are set in a timber finish display box featuring a large gold-plated seventh pattern badge on the front. The history of the Rising Sun badge is inscribed on the inside cover. Badges also available individually.

RRP: \$98.00 SPECIAL: \$73.50



History of the Rising Sun Bar Runner and Drink Cooler

The history of the Rising Sun badge is reproduced in stunning full colour on this bar runner and drink cooler. This high quality bar runner will be a perfect addition to any club or just your bar at home and the drink cooler is the perfect companion. The bar runner has rubber backing and the dimensions are 890x250mm.

BAR RUNNER: RRP: \$29.00 SPECIAL: \$21.75 DRINK COOLER: RRP: \$6.00 SPECIAL: \$4.50

Order at

www.militaryshop.com.au/RisingSun
and use Promo Code **ContactMe** at the
checkout

THE EF-88 SYSTEM

WHEN THE WHOLE IS GREATER THAN THE SUM OF ITS ANCILLARY PARTS

Nine months ago, in [CONTACT issue 47](#), I heralded the arrival of the Australian Army's new assault rifle, the Enhanced F88 (EF88). At the time, I noted the EF88 only constituted part of the total EF88 system. Indeed, the whole of the EF88 system would not be realised until its remaining parts, state-of-the-art surveillance target acquisition (STA) ancillaries, were introduced in 2016.

Well, here they are. This article completes the story commenced in September last year. It describes the comprehensive EF88 system that will be issued to Australian Army soldiers, Air Force security forces and Navy boarding parties from mid 2016. In other words, for the first time, this article presents the whole of the EF88 system's parts.

And, without doubt, the whole of the EF88 system will drive an extraordinary enhancement to the lethality of the Australian Defence Force's close combatants.

The EF-88 System is a watershed event

Watershed events rarely occur in armies. Once in a generation? Perhaps even less frequent than that.

Well, from mid 2016, the ADF's close combatants will experience a watershed enhancement to their lethality.

The catalyst for this watershed enhancement is the introduction EF88 system, which includes the leading EF88 weapon in standard and carbine variants, plus a range of state-of-the-art STA ancillaries.

Tiers of the Warfighter

TIER 1

Special Forces – not applicable to this article.

TIER 2 DISMOUNTED - T2D

This configuration is for those combatants who seek out and close with an enemy. In the context of the 'EF88 system', T2D includes: RAInf; RAA Joint Fires Teams (JFT); Combat Engineers; RAAF Security Forces; and RAAF Combat Controllers

TIER 2 MOUNTED - T2M

This configuration is for those combatants who operate Armoured Fighting Vehicles (AFV) as part of a combined arms team. That is, RAAC personnel.

TIER 3 GENERAL COMBATANT - T3

This configuration is for the general combatant whose role and tasks are primarily focused on providing vital combat support and combat service support to combined arms teams, yet who are responsible for their own local security, defence, force protection and in-extremis close combat.



From mid 2016, the Australian Army will introduce the EF88 system to the 3rd Brigade and other Townsville-based Army and Air Force units.

The 7th Brigade and other south-east Queensland Army and AF units will follow in 2017, followed by 1st Brigade and others from 2018 to 2021.

In the words of one senior Army officer, "A combination of robust testing, trials and the introduction into service of the EF88 to the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, in 2015, have confirmed the EF88 system is second-to-none as an assault rifle in terms of its lethality, robustness, reliability, ergonomics and light weight".

EF88: a brief recap

While I provided a comprehensive history of the F88 in last September's issue, it is worthwhile recapping how we arrived at this point.

The F88 has proven to be a functional, reliable, accurate and lethal rifle for the Australian soldier since its inception 25 years ago.

However, this is not to say the F88 did not have areas for improvement – both perceived and actual. After all, there is no such thing as a 'perfect weapon'.

Many of the F88's perceived and actual areas for improvement emerged in the 'noughties' when operational realities and evolutions in weapon and STA ancillary design made the F88 feel heavier, less balanced and, by virtue of its fixed 1.5-power telescopic sight, less lethal.

Arguably, the same trend affected all assault rifles.

In response, Army pursued options to fix these areas for improvement. Furthermore, Army sought a fix that would future-proof the weapon against emerging requirements and technologies throughout its life span.

The solution is the EF88.

Based on the outcomes of extensive trials supported by soldiers from numerous brigades, integration activities involving Diggerworks, and the introduction of the EF88 into 1RAR in 2015, the weapon has proven itself to be lightweight, ergonomic, modular, balanced, exceedingly lethal, exceptionally reliable and truly leading.

The EF88 also offers an exciting development path to ensure it remains a leading, if not superior assault rifle during its life of type. This growth path will allow the weapon to accommodate future weapon, ammunition and STA ancillary developments over the coming 15 years.

Tailored lethality - not one size fits all

A long-standing criticism of the Australian Army has been that it adopts a one-size-fits-all approach to equipping its soldiers.



The ancillaries

Without doubt, the STA ancillaries being introduced with the EF88 system will enhance, if not optimise, the lethality and situational awareness of Australian Army combatants.

They include:

1. The side-opening Steyr Manlicher SL40, 40mm grenade launcher attachment (GLA). This will be issued to tier 2 and 3 grenadiers
2. The Elcan Spectre DR 1-4x enhanced day sight (EDS). This will be issued to all combatants, irrespective of tier.
3. The Qioptiq Kite in-line image intensification (II) device, which will be provided to T2D riflemen and grenadiers.
4. The Elbit Systems TH65 in-line, roll-on/roll-off thermal imaging system (TIS). This will be issued to T2D commanders and marksmen.
5. The INFORCE WMLx multi-function weapon-mounted light (WML) with the Daniel Defense off-set rail for integration on the 6 o'clock or 12 o'clock NATO STANAG rails. This will be issued to all T2D combatants.
6. The Grip-Pod detachable foregrip bipod (DFB), with integrated bipod and dual light rail as the standard EF88 forward grip for T2D and T3 combatants, except grenadiers.
7. The Harris bipod with A.R.M.S. clamp lever mount for specialist marksman applications.
8. The Knights Armament detachable foregrip (DF) as a backup grip for grenadiers, armoured fighting vehicle crews and helicopter crew.
9. Grenade launcher sight, designed by Thales Australia.

Photos not to scale



TIER 2 MOUNTED STANDARD



TIER 2 DISMOUNTED GRENADE

Well, the introduction of the EF88 system debunks this criticism, proving the Australian Army now pursues a tailored, nuanced approach to enhancing the lethality of its soldiers. This tailored, nuanced equipping approach has also been applied to other close-combatant equipment, such as the soldier combat ensemble, which I'll talk about in a future issue.

Indeed, the EF88 system is characterised by weapon and STA role packs designed to optimise the ability of select soldiers, sailors and airmen and women to achieve the lethality requirements of their specific roles and tiers.

By example, tier 2 dismounted (T2D) combatants will be equipped with ancillaries to enable them to achieve the capabilities required of their specific close-combat roles and tasks.

T2D commanders will be equipped with a standard EF88, enhanced day sight (EDS), thermal imaging system (TIS), weapon-mounted torch (WMT) and detachable foregrip/bipod (DFB) to enable them to perform their role within the fire team, patrol, pair, team, section, platoon, troop, company, squadron, battalion and/or regiment.

Similarly, T2D marksmen will be equipped with the standard EF88, EDS, TIS, WMT and a robust bipod to enable them to perform their tasks within the fire team.

T2D grenadiers will be endowed with the standard EF88, EDS, image intensification tube (II), WMT, detachable foregrip (DF) and the SL40 grenade launcher attachment (GLA).

Finally, the T2D rifleman will employ the EDS, II, WMT and the DFB.

Of course, the specific needs of tier 2 mounted (T2M) have not been neglected. They, like their aviation-crew counterparts, will be equipped with the carbine version of the EF88 with EDS and DF.

As for tier 3 combatants, they will be equipped with the EDS, DF and, in the case of T3 grenadiers, the GLA. This configuration has been tailored to their roles and tasks in the field and deployed environments.

Arguably, Aristotle's most famous saying was that 'the whole is greater than the sum of its parts'.

This approach has defined the Australian Army's approach to designing and equipping ADF close combatants with the EF88 system from mid 2016.

Without question, the whole of the EF88 system, comprising the leading EF88 and tailored state-of-the-art STA ancillaries, will drive an extraordinary, watershed enhancement to the lethality of ADF close combatants.



TIER 2 DISMOUNTED MARKSMAN

Winter became summer. Bondage
became freedom and this we left to
you as your inheritance.
O generations of freedom remember
us, the generations of the vision.

These lines, etched in stone in The Garden of Remembrance in Dublin, reflect Ireland's revolutionary past and the responsibility following generations are charged to uphold – the liberty that was so highly valued, and so costly won.

On Easter Sunday 2016, 3700 men and women of Óglaigh na hÉireann (Defence Forces of Ireland), honoured the memory of their forebears, the men and women of the Easter Rising 1916, by participating in the largest ceremonial parade in the history of the State on behalf of the people of Ireland.

Dublin was resplendent in sunshine – save for a brief shower that failed to wet either the powder or the spirits of the ceremonial artillerymen at Kilmainham – for the landmark event, just one of many parades, reenactments and ceremonies across the country and across this centenary year.

As the world watched awestruck, listened attentively and applauded loudly, Ireland as a country, and the Irish as a people stood tall, proud and free.

IRELAND 2016



"Proud of you all, not just for yesterday, but for the honour you display every day in the service of the Irish people and for peace, justice and human rights across the world", one commenter on Facebook said.

"The performance of ceremonial duties carried out by each and every member of the Irish Defence Forces has been, as always, world class. The nation is fiercely proud of you all, for all that you do at home and overseas. Thank you!" another said.

Though I am long removed from Ireland and have served in Australia's Defence Forces, I cannot help but share Ireland's pride – it's in my blood.

While my paternal grandfather, John Hartigan, and his future wife Mary O'Meara were probably a bit young to participate in the Easter Rising on 23 April 1916, they were both involved in many actions that followed.

By 1918, my Granddad is listed as an IRA company commander in Limerick and is mentioned in several historical documents – and in local folklore in the area to this day.

Family folklore, I only learned relatively recently, which was corroborated by many cousins, says he was very close to General Michael Collins, possibly eventually becoming one of his infamous "Twelve Apostles".

This is impossible to verify, however, because he is not officially listed or 'credited' as such in any history and because his service record, in Dublin Castle, where his son and my Uncle Sean worked for many years as a detective, is reportedly sealed and marked "Never to be opened" by Countess Markievicz.

I knew my grandfather when I was young, but he never spoke to me of his service to his country. Older cousins did, apparently, get confirmation of certain facts from him, but many blanks will probably never be filled in.

Unfortunately, the man I knew and loved was broken, confined to bed – possibly suffering mental rather than physical afflictions.

But, what he and thousands of other Irishmen and Irishwomen did 100 years ago was of such immensity that it is very hard to contemplate – and live up to.

But we, the generations of freedom will remember them, the generations of the vision.



Lest we forget

My Granddad's medals:



Among the few pieces of my grandfather's memorabilia that have ended up in my care are four medals, two of which I feel are significant.

The Service Medal (1917-1921) – is awarded in two classes – Medal with bar to persons with entitlement to a pension under the Military Service Pensions Acts in respect of active service from 1916 to 11 July 1921 (the bar is inscribed *Cómrac*, translated 'Combat') – and, Medal without bar to persons who were members of *Óglaigh na hÉireann* (Irish Republican Army), *Fianna Éireann* (an Irish

nationalist youth organisation), *Cumann na mBan* (women's auxiliary force) or the Irish Citizen Army.

Grandad's little collection contains both medals – which leads me to believe that the one without bar belongs, in fact, to my Granny.

Either way they are treasured family heirlooms – and I think I should return them to Ireland into the care of an elder of my tribe.

My Grandad died on 23 May 1974, aged 75, when I was 11 and Granny preceded him on 29 January 1973, aged 73.



Detective Garda John Hartigan at Tipperary Station, 1931 (left) and on duty in uniform at the official opening of the Christian Brothers Primary School in Wexford, 1939 (below).



A Terrible Beauty Remembered



The 1916 Rising Centennial Parade, through the eyes of Private Eoin O'Shea, D Coy, 7th Infantry Battalion

The centennial commemoration of what was, arguably, the most defining single event in the creation of an independent Ireland took place on Easter Sunday, 27 March, 2016. Having served in the RDF for almost a year, I – along with many of my 7th Infantry Battalion colleagues – had the privilege of being included in the Dublin parade. A section of us 'patrolled' as part of a re-enactment of troops of 73 Inf Bn serving in Lebanon in 1993.

As the parade drew near, I found myself considering the significance and the modern relevance of the sacrifices made some 100 years ago. While no historian, I have been struck by the scale of tragedy, pride, divisiveness, sacrifice, and eventual national independence that were the legacy of Easter 1916. What resonated even more were the subsequent living, breathing, rich narratives of many Irish families, including my own.

My grandfather, Andrew Fitzsimons, born in Dublin on 23 June 1916 to a very nationalist family,

recalled standing outside Mountjoy Prison at four years of age with his parents as Kevin Barry, a young medical student and Irish Volunteer, was hanged for his part in an attack that left three British soldiers dead. The outrage following this execution seemed to remain with my grandfather; he chose 'Kevin' as his confirmation name and used the name throughout his adult life. He went on to serve as a captain in the Defence Forces during The Emergency.

My uncle, Sean Fitzsimons, also served in the PDF, as an enlisted man. He served overseas in the Congo and Cyprus and was proud to be included in the guard of honour during President Kennedy's visit to Ireland in 1963.

By sheer coincidence, our place in Easter Sunday's parade was directly behind the '1963 Congo group'; I was figuratively walking in the footsteps of my uncle and his comrades! Further ahead still, those men and women soon bound for the Golan Heights



Left and right: Members of the 7th Infantry Battalion, Irish Defence Forces, parade in the period dress and equipment of Irish peacekeepers from 1993.

Below: The author's uncle Sean Fitzsimons in the Congo in 1961 or '62.

Bottom right: The author's grandfather Captain Andrew 'Kevin' Fitzsimons, who served during 'The Emergency' (WWII).



were a reminder of Ireland's continuing contribution to UN peacekeeping.

Two of my father's brothers served in the Irish Army and Naval Service whereas two of his uncles previously served with the British Royal Navy during WWII.

The complex subject of Irishmen fighting under both flags during 1916 is examined in scenes detailed in Brendan Kelly's book, 'He Lost Himself Completely' (2014), in which Kelly details the poetic tragedy of shots being fired between Volunteers and British soldiers through the gates of Richmond War Hospital, a location in which many Irishmen were recuperating from psychological trauma (or 'shell shock' as it was then called) suffered while serving in the trenches of the Western Front.

The parade took place less than two weeks after I had accepted a job as a psychologist with Combat Stress, a charity supporting British armed forces personnel similarly affected by recent operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. Even amidst the joy of the day, I tried not to lose sight of the wounds – both physical and psychological – surely suffered by many of those who fought and survived.

The crowds who came out to watch the parade were 10-deep at some points and they applauded and cheered loudly. It was a day for the Irish people and one of relatively few on which they could gain a clear sense of the discipline, pride, and capacity of their own Defence Forces, permanent and reserve.

No fewer than 50 RDF members from 7 Inf Bn participated – a clear testament to the emerging success of the single-force concept of today's Defence Forces – and perhaps a fitting tribute to the Volunteers of 1916.

But my experiences of the day, as well as the rich tapestry of the Rising's meaning and effects within generations of my family, are only part of the story. Many serving today have ancestors to whom, likewise, the Rising was significant in shaping the paths of their lives. For example CQMS Noel Montgomery (7 Inf Bn), when issuing us with our

*We know their dream; enough
to know they dreamed and are dead;*

WB Yeats, 'Easter 1916'

'93 Lebanon uniforms, informed us that two of his uncles had fought in the Rising; one of whom, Tom Crimmins, is credited as being the last man to leave the GPO.

After the parade, I asked some of my D Coy colleagues about their reflections:

"It was a memorable experience to be part of a 'once-in-a-lifetime' opportunity [to commemorate an event] that my two great grandfathers fought in 100 years ago. It was an honour to walk the streets that my great grandfathers once walked." – Private Craig Lawlor

"The parade allowed me to pay tribute to my great grandfather who fought in the War of Independence and was a member of the Free State Army." – Private Liam London

"The priceless privilege to be able to honour those who paid the ultimate price for this country is something that cannot be compared. I will always cherish my involvement in these commemorations. That feeling of walking down O'Connell Street is something that I will hold onto forever." – Private Thomas O'Mahony

"Taking part in the Centennial Parade was important to me as my great grandfather, Tobias Breslin, fought in the 1916 Rising. Fortunately, he survived and went on to be a 2nd lieutenant during 'The Emergency' in the 1940's, based in Boland's Mill. It was a great privilege to march down O'Connell Street representing my unit and my family." – Private Laura Hayden

"As a volunteer soldier myself, to march down O'Connell Street under the eyes of the President and the relatives of people who fought during Easter Week was a huge honour. To represent the organisation and the nation in this historical event was an unforgettable experience." – Private Simon Fitzhugh



"As an Irishman and a soldier, it was an honour to be able to commemorate, and pay respects to, the men and women who not only fought and died in 1916, but who sowed the seeds for what would become the Ireland we know today and also the Irish Defence Forces." – Private Steve Burke

"Throughout the lead up to Easter Sunday for the past few months has been a very positive experience for me and one that I had been looking forward to within the past year. Although not ethnically Irish but born here, I have never felt as proud or connected to Ireland as I did marching down O'Connell Street representing the country that has adopted my spirit." – Corporal Anthony Cheung

"Níl focail agam chun ceartais a dhéanamh don mothú ollmhór bróid a bhraith mé fhéin agus mo theaghlach de bharr mo rannpháirtíocht i gComórtha na Cásca agus chuile a léiríonn sé. Bhí mothúchán bróid agus meas d'Óglaigh na hÉireann le brath ón lucht féachana ar feadh iomlán an bheolaigh. Bhí éifeacht an tionscnamh Bratacha sna Scoileanna le feiceáil gosoiléir ar Sráid an Dáma nuair a thánamar ar grúpa páistí óga ag canadh Amhrán na bhFiann dúinn agus ag croitheadh a gcuid Bratacha Náisiúnta. Fíor am le thocht a mhothú id' scórnach."

"Words do not do justice to the immense sense of pride that both I and my family felt from my participation in the Easter Commemoration celebrations and all it represents. There was a palpable sense of pride and respect for Óglaigh na hÉireann from the spectators all along the route. The effect of the 'Flags for Schools' initiative was particularly evident on Dame St when we passed a group of young children singing Amhrán na bhFiann [National Anthem] to us and waving their



National Flags. A real lump-in-your-throat moment." – Lieutenant Antóine O'Beoláin

Yeats' own poignant words remind us of the tragedy and sacrifice of so many that fateful week 100 years ago. Having witnessed, however, the pride and love expressed by the Irish people on Easter Sunday 2016, I cannot help but believe that the dreams of those who died have since been realised by the living.



Blast from the Past

By Paul O'Brien
Photos by Sergeant Wayne Fitzgerald

The Guns of Easter 1916

It was definitely 'Rising' weather, when on 13 April 2016 on the ranges at Kilbride, Co Wicklow, the very same weapons that were used during the 1916 insurrection were once again fired, in tribute to those who struck a blow for independence.

The day's events, the branch of Lieutenant Colonel Jimmy O'Neill, saw battalion staff and unit commanders assembled to take part in an historic opportunity. The hands-on demo gave all those present a chance to examine and fire the weapons their predecessors used, and faced, that Easter week.

Ordnance technical officer Captain Alan Kearney (main photo) gave a briefing on each weapon and CQMS Robbie Walsh gave the safety brief. The weapons had been maintained to a very high standard as those entrusted with their safe keeping knew they were looking after an important part of Oglagh na hEireann's history.

Brigadier General Michael Beary, GOC 2 Bde, was enveloped in a cloud of smoke as he fired one of the 1500 Mauser 71s that were landed at Howth and Kilcoole in 1914. This bolt-action, single-shot rifle was considered revolutionary when first issued to the Prussian army in 1872 and a trained soldier could fire four rounds per minute. However in 1916, the rebels faced British soldiers trained to fire 15 rounds per minute from their Mk III Lee Enfield rifles. Some Volunteers also possessed this weapon, which, when fired on the range, still demonstrated accuracy second to none.

A Vickers regular heavy machine gun, used by British forces, was also fired. This water-cooled weapon was capable of firing 500 rounds per minute, using 250-round belts. During the Rising, British troops positioned a Vickers on the fourth floor of the Shelbourne Hotel from where it strafed Irish Citizen Army positions in St Stephen's Green.

When the Lewis gun was demonstrated, Lieutenant Colonel Pat Farrelly told the story of how his grandfather, who served under Séan MacEoin during the Irish War of Independence, had to hide his Lewis gun when pursued by British Forces before returning the following day to retrieve the weapon. Considered a light machine gun at the time, this air-cooled weapon, capable of firing 500 rounds per minute and weighing 13kg (28lbs) was a formidable weapon. Though a very temperamental weapon, often subject to jamming, we were given an excellent, expert demonstration, with the gunner opening fire and clearing stoppages calmly and with great precision.

Firing continued with the British officer's standard-issue sidearm, the Webley .455 Mk VI calibre, six-shot revolver. This is a top-break revolver with automatic extraction of spent cartridges.

Included in the many weapons the Volunteers smuggled in from Germany were the Luger and the Mauser 'Broomhandle' C96, two semi-automatic pistols. Many senior Volunteer commanders in 1916 were issued with the C96. Eamon de Valera loaned his to Lieutenant Michael Malone, who would use it in the leafy, suburban Northumberland Road, to inflict heavy casualties on attacking British troops.

The pistols and revolver were fired from 10m, and the devastating effect on the targets showed they were as deadly today as they were 100 years ago.

Many of those serving today, including those attending this historic event, had family or relations who took part in the Rising and the subsequent War of Independence, proving that the Irish Defence Forces has a proud and noble history and continues its long tradition of defending, protecting and supporting.

It is now planned to put these weapons on display in Cathal Brugha Barracks, Dublin.

SPECIAL OFFER

Get a FREE Miniature World War I Medal Trio, valued at \$69.00, with every Great War Bear. To take advantage of this special offer enter the code *ContactB* at the checkout to discount the bears by \$69.00. Hurry, this offer ends 8 June 2016.



View the bears at
www.militaryshop.com.au/ww1bears



MILITARY SHOP



NEW ZEALAND DEFENCE FORCE

ASSISTANCE TO FIJI'S DISASTER RECOVERY EFFORTS

AIRCRAFT AND VESSELS USED FOR THE HUMANITARIAN AID OPERATION

HMNZS CANTERBURY

The maritime hub of New Zealand's humanitarian aid operation in the northern outlying islands.

380
TONNES

Of aid supplies and construction materials for distressed communities in Vanuabalavu and Yacata islands.

180

Transfers on her landing craft to support the aid operation.

HMNZS WELLINGTON

Offshore patrol vessel HMNZS WELLINGTON – operated in northern Lau for almost three weeks before returning to New Zealand on 16 March.

70
TONNES

Of aid supplies delivered to communities in northern Lau.



Identified route and anchorage into Vanuabalavu lagoon that HMNZS CANTERBURY used and beaches for her landing craft operations.

P-3K2 ORION

Conducted aerial surveys less than 24 hours after category five Tropical Cyclone Winston pummelled Fiji on 20 February.



Information from the aerial surveys provided Fijian officials with a clearer picture of the damage it caused, saved them days of on-site damage assessments and enabled them to immediately secure international aid for relief efforts.

C-130 HERCULES

120
TONNES

Helped deliver close to 120 tonnes of aid from New Zealand.

BOEING 757

1050

Brought the advance group of 37 combat engineers and 1050 water containers to Fiji on 24 February.

KING AIR B200

Supported the humanitarian aid operation for about three weeks before returning to New Zealand on 28 March.



The King Air transported Fiji government staff and civilian volunteers from non-governmental organisations such as the Red Cross to remote islands devastated by the cyclone so they can assess the outstanding needs in these communities. It also conducted aerial reconnaissance flights for Fiji Roads Authority, among other Fiji government agencies.

NH90 x2

160
HOURS

The helicopters flew almost 160 hours of relief missions on their first overseas operation. They delivered essential aid supplies, shelter kits, water purification equipment, food and sacks of seeds and plant cuttings to cyclone-ravaged communities. They also transported New Zealand medical volunteers, NZ Defence Force personnel and Fiji government staff to Fiji's remote communities and far-flung islands.

SEASPRITE

70
HOURS

CANTERBURY's Seasprite helicopter completed around 70 hours of relief missions, transporting aid supplies as well as New Zealand medical volunteers, NZ Defence Force personnel and Fiji government staff from Vanuabalavu to outlying islands in northern Lau.

MILITARY VEHICLES x45

Used to support the NZDF's humanitarian aid operation in northern Lau.

LANDING CRAFT x2

Aid supplies were offloaded from CANTERBURY using her landing craft and distributed to the affected communities in northern Lau.

NZDF ships and helicopters delivered hundreds of tonnes of aid supplies to disaster-struck communities across Fiji, from northern Lau in the east to the Yasawa islands, which make up Fiji's western border.

AROUND 60

New Zealand Army carpenters, electricians, plumbers, plant operators and engineers worked alongside soldiers from the Republic of Fiji Military Forces to repair dozens of schools, medical centres and community buildings on the main island of Viti Levu and in the remote northern Lau archipelago.

NUMBER OF CIVILIAN AND MILITARY PERSONNEL DEPLOYED FOR THIS OPERATION

530

About 530 engineers, carpenters, electricians, plant operators, plumbers, sailors and aircrew were deployed to Fiji, making it one of the NZDF's largest peacetime deployments to the Pacific.

WHAT THE FIJIANS SAY



"We've been left with nothing and we don't know what the future holds. So we are grateful that New Zealand and other countries are helping us."

23-year-old Eseta Kaitani from Nasau village on Koro Island, 106 km north of the Fijian capital of Suva.



"We were overwhelmed and our resources were stretched. And with inadequate capabilities, it's hard to imagine how we would have coped with demands for relief without New Zealand's assistance."

Minister for Agriculture and National Disaster Management Inia Seruiratu



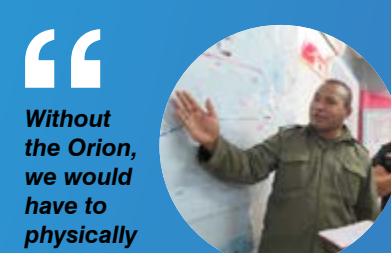
"All this rebuilding is helping bring back smiles and hope to people in affected areas. The pace of work is quite fast. Those schools that were repaired by the NZDF are among the first to reopen."

Republic of Fiji Military Forces Commander Rear Admiral Viliame Naupoto



"I was happy and excited to go back to school again. The New Zealand soldiers did a good job in fixing our classrooms."

Lynette Emline, Year 8 student at Navunisea District School in Silana, a coastal village 62 km north of Suva.



"Without the Orion, we would have to physically visit the likely affected areas to assess the damage. That is how we did it in the past and that took days to carry out in a scattered archipelago like Fiji."

Lieutenant Colonel Ilai Moceica, Chief of Operations Planning for the Republic of Fiji Military Forces

TIMELINE



“Were the Aussies even there?”



Op Fiji Assist coverage

Sixteen days after Tropical Cyclone Winston departed Fiji, the ADF released it's first official information on its Operation Fiji Assist, with an on-line story and a press release, which CONTACT published.

The perfectly legitimate question at top was asked of CONTACT on our Facebook page about that time because, up to that point, the only information on Australian's contribution to post-Cyclone-Winston recovery efforts had come from Defence Minister Marise Payne, who put out two media releases back in February.

Other than several informal and all-too-brief social-media posts and tweets and a range of quality photos that were not supported by stories, ADF media-educating/informing efforts were very sparse.

By contrast, CONTACT readers certainly noticed that the New Zealand Defence Force had been very

active and put out no fewer than seven substantial media updates with packaged photos in the first 10 days.

Now that it's all over, a recount of CONTACT's coverage of the Cyclone Winston cleanup shows we published eight ADF stories in total – one of which was (illegally) sent to us by a soldier on the ground, three of which were after-activity reports heralding staged departures and two more were weeks old, republished from Defence newspapers.

By contrast, we published 11 NZDF stories, all of which were all-but 'live' activity reports from the field.

You know, it used to be the other way around – CONTACT used to thrive on a plethora of quality ADF media output and had to rely on 'informants' for our New Zealand coverage.

How times change. And one wonders why?

Find, like, share at      

SPEARPOINT

SOLUTIONS & TECHNOLOGY

A Veteran Owned & Operated Company

90 Bayldon Road, Queanbeyan

Sole distributor of a wide range of equipment that soldiers request, including...

- Arc'Teryx cold-weather clothing
- Crye Precision clothing & equipment
- Salomon boots
- Drifire tactical apparel
- Ops-Core helmets
- Smith Elite Eyeshields
- Suunto watches
- Tactical lighting
- EOD equipment
- Body armour and equipment
- Firearms and accessories
- Tactical load equipment



SPEARPOINT

SOLUTIONS & TECHNOLOGY

sales@spearpoint.net.au – www.spearpointtechnology.com.au – +61 (0)2 6298 1122

COMBINED EXERCISES

Diamond Sprint



SOUTHERN JACKAROO

Soldiers and officers of Brisbane-based 7th Brigade 'dug-in' with members of the US Marine Corps, US Army and the Japanese Ground Self Defence Force during Exercise Southern Jackaroo 16 at Shoalwater Bay from 14 to 30 May.

The now-annual Exercise Southern Jackaroo – which happens straight after the Australian Army Skill at Arms Meeting in Puckapunyal – aims to promote mutual understanding and enhance interoperability between the three nations.

This year, the trilateral Exercise Southern Jackaroo was combined with 7th Brigade's annual combined-arms training activity, Exercise Diamond Sprint,

and involved almost 2000 Australians and around 365 international participants.

Over the course of the exercise soldiers and marines lived together out field, conducted urban operations and live-fire activities supported by light armoured vehicles and artillery, all culminating in a Brigade-sized defensive battle scenario.

Lieutenant David Hasler, a platoon commander, said the combined exercises were really good.

"We've identified that no matter where you are from in the world, infantry stuff is infantry stuff, and there's that common bond between us," Lieutenant Hasler said.

Subscribe free at www.aussiecombat.com

"But, it's been really good to see different techniques and ways of going about things, and to learn from each other and see how we employ, even the same equipment, in different ways."

Corporal Jace Burger, US Marine Corps, said that while he had worked with the Japanese before, it was his first time working with Australians.

"The great thing about working with the Australians is we speak the same language and pretty much have the same sense of humour," Corporal Burger said.

Brigadier Anthony Rawlins, Commander 7 Brigade, said working with the other nations, exchanging information and learning from each



other's tactics, techniques, and procedures was invaluable.

"But, at the end of the day, when you get people from three different nations digging in to some pretty difficult terrain here, these are the real lessons – this is the confidence – these are the shared memories that will last throughout a career."

Trooper Shaun Williams, 2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment, Queensland Mounted Infantry, said

the team focus of his job – especially on a large exercise like this combined Southern Jackaroo and Diamond Sprint – was very rewarding.

"Depending on what type of vehicle you're in, there's always at least a minimum of two people in a vehicle, so you do get to help each other out a fair bit, and the mateship does grow quite quickly in this environment."

Around 350 New South Wales Army reservists





from Battle Group Waratah also supported Exercise Southern Jackaroo.

The battle group established a main defensive position against a fictional enemy, conducted live-fire combat-team attacks complete with mortar, machine gun, sniper and light armoured firepower support, and assaulted an urban facility.

CARINTHIA®
GO PROFESSIONAL

SLEEPING BAGS
BIVOUAC BAGS
CLOTHING

USED BY PROFESSIONALS WORLDWIDE

Download a catalogue at: www.premierdefence.com.au
Distributed by: Premier Defence Agencies
info@premierdefence.com.au
02 9708 2475

GORE-TEX

TAS

BE PREPARED
FOR

**Military
Security
Disaster Relief
ANYWHERE**

45 L COMBATPack
in KHAKI and AUSCAM

PATROL MK IV
Sleeping Bag

Top Loader
in MULTICAM

1206 Pack
in KHAKI

Leg Holster
in CAM

Bivvy Bag
in AUSCAM

1198 Pack in
MULTICAM

Available at your nearest **AUSSIE DISPOSALS** store.
Distributed by: TI TRADING Pty Ltd Ph: 07 5563 8585 Fax: 07 5563 8520 Email: abc38263@bigpond.net.au

Exercise Ssang Yong 16

Words Tim Dempsey

Photos by US Marine Corps

Under clear blue skies on the morning of March 12, as part of Exercise Ssang Yong 2016, amphibious elements of the United States Marine Corps and Republic of Korea (ROK) Marines landed at Doksukri Beach on South Korea's south-eastern coastline.

This year's Ssang Yong – which translates to 'twin dragons' – was the third such biennial exercise between US and ROK forces, and the first to incorporate other nations.

Assault Amphibious Vehicles from the Republic of Korea (ROK) Marine Corps Regimental Landing Team 7 were inserted on the beach in five waves, unloading troops from South Korea, the United States, New Zealand and Australia in an effort to demonstrate co-operative readiness and resolve.

The leading force in the exercise was the Combined Amphibious Task Force 76, comprised of nearly 20,000 sailors and marines from the United States and South Korea. The US contingent featured approximately 9200 marines from the 3rd Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) and 3100 personnel from Expeditionary Strike Group Seven of the US Navy, while 4500 ROK marines of Regimental Landing Team 7 and 3000 personnel from Flotilla 5 of the ROK Navy completed the South Korean contribution.

Following the beach assault, Brigadier General John Jansen, the Commanding General of the 3rd MEB, arrived at the beach for a brief press conference.

"We are here to engage in complex training operations, to build our capabilities and capacity along a range of military operations from humanitarian assistance and disaster relief to complex expeditionary operations," Brigadier General Jansen said.

"We believe by training together we grow stronger, and with strong alliances and partnerships in our area of responsibility, we bring peace and stability to this region."

When pressed for a statement on recent tensions in North Korea, Brigadier General Jansen was quick to stress the lengthy preparation invested in executing this exercise.

"We've been planning for this exercise for over a year," he emphasised.

"So we would have had this exercise regardless of what is going on in the news right now.

"But what we do hope is that it offers a good example of our capabilities with our ally, the Republic of Korea."

Private Zachary Dean, Bravo Company, 6RAR, fires an M40 sniper rifle during exercise Ssang Yong 16 in South Korea.





A small media contingent was taken on a Marine MV-22 Osprey to the USS Bonhomme Richard, the flagship of Coalition Amphibious Taskforce 76.

It was an impressive sight. MH-60 Seahawk helicopters were continuously landing and taking off – up to 50 times per day for the duration of the exercise – while high-speed Marine landing craft cruised past in the distance. The LHD Bonhomme Richard is the flagship for the Bonhomme Richard Expeditionary Strike Group, which currently includes the USS Ashland and USS Germantown, as well as the 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU).

Below the LHD's decks, Rear Admiral John Nowell and Rear Admiral Ji Yung Park gave an insight into the exercise from a Naval perspective. Emphasising the importance of interoperability between US and ROK forces, Nowell was again pressed on the situation in North Korea, but said that proceedings were "not in response to anything that North Korea is doing".

This year's Ssang Yong differentiated itself from previous occasions primarily through the size and scope of the exercise – a clear signal to the region of the continuing US and ROK determination to illustrate strength and resolve.

This was the first Ssang Yong to incorporate the Navy in such a key role, which was highlighted by the presence of both the Bonhomme Richard and South Korea's naval flagship, the ROKS Dokdo.

It was also the first time that Australian and New Zealand troops were invited to take part, as part of the wider effort to demonstrate a regional alliance.



Around 100 Australian troops formed Combat Team Bravo from 6RAR and were attached to the 4th Marine Regiment, while 60 New Zealand troops were attached to the ROK Marines.

Perhaps most significantly, unlike previous Ssang Yong missions, the exercise did not conclude following a successful beach landing.

"Ssang Yong 14 was ended when the landing assault was completed, however for this year's Ssang Yong we are not just conducting our operations up to the landing," RADM Park said.

Exercise Ssang Yong is part of wider US ROK military drills on the Korean Peninsula, involving more than 15,000 US and 300,000 ROK troops, which continued into early April.

Tim Dempsey is a security analyst and defence writer, embedded with US and allied forces during Ssang Yong 2016.

Find, like, share at [f](#) [t](#) [p](#) [i](#) [v](#) [e](#) [m](#)



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.

SOLDIER ON IS ABOUT THE ANZAC SPIRIT, AND MATESHIP AND ALL AUSTRALIANS KEEPING THEIR PROMISE TO TAKE CARE OF OUR WOUNDED WARRIORS.



INSPIRE. ENHANCE AND EMPOWER

Our wounded have done their part for Australia, they have given their best. Thousands have wounds, some you can see and some you can't. It is now Australia's turn to look after them, please give generously and make a difference in our wounded warriors lives.



SoldierOnAustralia

WWW.SOLDIERON.ORG.AU



@SoldierOnAust

SNAR SHOT

Australian Army Lieutenant Tristan Ross (standing), and Corporals Kenneth Bright and David Eason with Task Group Taji 2 at the Taji Military Complex, Iraq. Photo by Corporal Jake Sims

THE CONTACT MAGAZINE YEARBOOK

A new product for lovers of **CONTACT** on paper

A 100-page hard-cover coffee-table book you'll love to browse, read and display – or give away as a gift

It's filled with a selection of the best stories from 2015 – ALL STORIES, NO ADVERTISING

This is also a collectors' item – we will print no more than 250 copies

Buy you copy [HERE](#)



What
goes
up



Army's 176 Air Dispatch Squadron used Exercise Elephant Trail in March to test its ability to respond to short-notice contingency resupply scenarios from a deployed-camp environment.

No.37 Squadron's C-130J Hercules aircrew also took advantage of the unique exercise to practice several mass-container airdrops comprised of a wide range of loads.

Exercise Elephant Trail involved the preparation and airborne delivery of more than 30 tonnes of cargo, which included construction of 60 container-delivery-system loads.

Commanding Officer 9 Force Support Battalion Lieutenant Colonel Chris Clapton said the exercise was the first time in five years that the capability had been practiced on such a scale.

Squadron Leader Scott Harris, 37 Squadron's flight commander, said they airdropped 20 container delivery system loads in two separate passes of the Londonderry drop zone, with each pass delivering 16 tonnes of cargo.

"Through this exercise, we were able to validate the associated training and procedures for a high-

end capability skillset, which we rarely have an opportunity to exercise to its limits," Squadron Leader Harris said.

"For the C-130J workforce, aerial delivery is a core capability and relies heavily on interoperability with 176AD Squadron and the customer we support in the field."

For the exercise and working in the field, deployed members of 176 Air Dispatch Squadron practiced constructing loads as diverse as water drums to watercraft – although not all were actually dropped.

Officer Commanding 176 Air Dispatch Squadron Major Francesca Molner said delivery of air loads was critical to Defence's ability to respond in environments where fragile airfield infrastructure had been damaged by hostile actions or natural disasters.

"176 AD is quite a unique capability. It is the only aerial delivery capability within the Australian Defence Force," Major Molner said.

"When we refer to aerial deliver, what we mean is we use the squadron to rapidly deploy personnel, equipment and other stores to areas that need it, where there is no airfield or the airfield may be damaged.

"We can be employed in a number of ways and that's one of the reasons we're doing this exercise.

"Types of contingencies you would see us on are mainly the resupply of combat troops. But recently you saw the work of this squadron over Mount Sinjar in Iraq, which shows that we can rapidly deploy all around the world in support of people who require our assistance.

"So, in the past 10 days, what 176 has done is develop a number of dynamic scenarios that replicate real-life contingencies we may be called upon to support.

"We exercised those contingencies not only to rehearse, but to demonstrate just how ready we are and postured for any eventuality the Australian government might require us for."

Sergeant Kyle Beattie, Troop Sergeant, Supervisor Aerial Delivery, said that when the squadron deployed to their simulated camp, not only did they have to start rigging loads without any ready-made facilities, but they also had to build the necessary facilities around themselves to sustain ongoing operations.

"So, one team was straight into tent building while the other team was straight into rigging air-drop loads, out in the elements," Sergeant Beattie said.

"It was non-stop all day to get the job done.

"When we set up first for this exercise we had a task to prepare 60 CDS of humanitarian aid in 16 hour.

"So that was hit the ground, erect tents, prepare our stuff and build the CDS.

"We actually did all that in 15 hours and 30 minutes – which is pretty awesome.

"In fact I don't think that's ever been done before.

"All those loads that you saw drop today were part of that 60-load assembly line we prepare on that first day."

must come
down



But, as with any Army unit, 176 Air Dispatch Squadron soldiers have soldier tasks and responsibilities too – especially in a field environment.

Sergeant Beattie said that in the days that followed the unit also concentrated on basic soldier skills, developing the site with CAT wire, sandbag bunkers and other defences that the soldiers don't get too much exposure to in their day-to-day jobs.

"An exercise like this takes the guys out of a hangar environment with a lot of facilities and gives them a taste of what life and work could be like deployed in operational circumstances.

"This exercise got the troops used to working in conditions they are not used to in case we ever get deployed.

"The actual rigging of the loads is something the troops practice every day, and deploying out here doesn't really make much difference to that actual task.

"It's just the setting up of facilities, living in an austere environment and providing our own security that we really need to get them used to and give them exposure to.

"All the stores and equipment we need for a deployment is actually packed and ready to go all the time.

"We regularly check them and make sure that we're good to go at any time.

"But actually getting the notice to go and living out here in a field environment for a while with the troops is fairly rare but a really enjoyable experience."

Maj Molner said she thought the soldiers loved the experience.

"They are in a simulated field environment doing the very thing they joined the Army to do – doing their job and surviving on just the things they packed with them and responding to a range of scenarios.

"This solidifies a sense of confidence that they are ready for anything and they don't actually require infrastructure and they can deploy in a field environment quite comfortably with few issues.

"And of course we're talking about a very diverse bunch of people, not just in the gender space, but people from all different walks of life, working towards a common goal.

"I myself came to this country, with just the clothes I was wearing, escaping a brutal totalitarian dictatorship in Romania.

"So you do see people from all walks of life working together, males, females, different cultures, different religions – working together, as soldiers, towards one goal."

She said Exercise Elephant Trail was focused mostly around humanitarian aid and the building of a range of mass-container-drop stores (CDS).



WORDS BRIAN HARTIGAN

**PHOTOS CORPORAL DAVID GIBBS
AND BRIAN HARTIGAN**



"What that means is we have demonstrated that we can drop a lot of stores in small areas in practice for real-life situations.

"At the end of this exercise we hope we will have reinforced our readiness posture, rehearsing some of our scenarios and also cementing the strong relationship between Air Force and Army and how we together can respond to any contingency required of us, injecting personnel, equipment or stores wherever they are required.

"For this exercise we've even simulated being in a field environment as though we were physically dislocated from Australia.

"We've had the support of numerous Air Force squadrons. In fact we've worked with every single one of the transport squadrons in this exercise – 35 Squadron with C-27J, we've worked with 36 with the C-17s, and 37 with the C-130s.

"We are very very dynamic in what we can deliver – water, food, blankets, tentage, from the humanitarian perspective, or in the military sphere, we're talking about combat ratios, ammunition,



vehicles, engineering equipment – in fact anything the combat soldier requires on the battlefield, we can deliver."

Major Molner said the Mount Sinjar humanitarian-aid mission was probably the most notable example of real-world application of her unit's capability.

In late November 2014, Royal Australian Air Force C-130J Hercules aircraft undertook multiple humanitarian-aid airdrops to support displaced civilians on Mount Sinjar in northern Iraq.

Four airdrop missions delivered more than 32 tonnes of humanitarian aid stores including water, tents and blankets to the beleaguered Iraqi civilians who were fleeing ISIL attacks and facing harsh winter temperatures in the mountains.

The air drops were conducted between 20 and 23 November 2014 using Iraqi-supplied stores prepared by 176 Air Dispatch Squadron personnel deployed from Australia on very short notice, working alongside coalition forces at Erbil airbase in northern Iraq.



Major Molner said the Mount Sinjar task was proof to the ADF and the Australian government that they have a terrific capability in 176 Air Dispatch Squadron and deploying it very quickly when people were in need was well within their capacity.

"We are a direct enabler for airbourne operations, which, by definition, is a national capability to project power and assistance.

"We work with a whole bunch of agencies both civil and military, but the most prevalent relationship would be between us and the Air Force. We work very closely together, we train together and we prepare contingency missions together.

"We do operate at a strategic level and we are always ready for whatever the Australian government requires us to deliver. We're postured and ready to go."



NA CONTACT 0414
NAKEDARMY

'MATESHIP'
WALKING WOUNDED
NEW GUINEA 1943

'RARE' SERIES
COLD CAST
BRONZE

INSPIRED BY DAMIEN PARER'S FAMOUS
NEWSREELIMAGE - RELEASE DATE 25 APRIL 2014

ANZAC DAY CENTENARY 2015 - WILL YOUR UNIT BE READY?
FOR YOUR MONUMENTAL SCULPTURE & TROPHY REQUIREMENTS
SEE OUR NEW WEBSITE www.naked-army.com CALL US TOLL FREE 1800 731 490

**Reap the rewards of the best Defence
Discount program in Australia**

SAVE THOUSANDS OF DOLLARS ON
your favourite brands

JOIN TODAY
www.apod.com.au

A soldier in camouflage gear is shown from the chest up, wearing night vision goggles and holding a clipboard. The soldier is smiling slightly. The background is a blurred outdoor setting with trees and foliage. The text "When a shooter can't see the target, he relies on the..." is in the top left corner. The title "Artillery Observer" is in the bottom left corner. The text "CONTACT was asked a question some time ago about artillery observers..." is in the top right corner. The text "In basic terms, artillery observer (ECN 255) is the entry-level role..." is in the middle right. The text "Direct entry from civvie street is only open to ECN 255 artillery observer..." is in the middle right. The text "JFO and JTAC require higher levels of training and are therefore not open to direct entry..." is in the middle right. The text "The artillery observer operates as part of a six-person joint fires team..." is in the middle right. The text "Their primary role is to establish fire supremacy on the battlefield..." is in the middle right. The text "As an artillery observer, the joint fires team is attached to combat teams..." is in the middle right. The text "Joint terminal attack controllers within Army are generally artillerymen..." is in the middle right. The text "Director of Army Workforce Management Colonel Elizabeth Khan says..." is in the middle right. The text "At least that has been the trend in recent years, but that's going to be increased..." is in the middle right. The text "This role is not one that is picked or nominated at Kapooka..." is in the middle right. The text "After testing, they'll give you a list of jobs you are deemed suitable for..." is in the middle right.

When a shooter
can't see the target,
he relies on the...

CONTACT was asked a question some time ago about artillery observers – what they are, what they do and how they relate to JFO (joint fires observer) and JTAC (joint terminal attack controller).

In basic terms, artillery observer (ECN 255) is the entry-level role in this employment category with joint fires observer (JFO) being the advanced level, and JTAC the pinnacle of the tree.

Direct entry from civvie street is only open to ECN 255 artillery observer. It is also worth noting that it is and has been for a long time, open to female recruits.

JFO and JTAC require higher levels of training and are therefore not open to direct entry.

The artillery observer operates as part of a six-person joint fires team.

Their primary role is to establish fire supremacy on the battlefield by controlling and engaging targets with Australian and coalition joint fires assets, including from artillery and mortars, attack helicopters, ground-attack aircraft and naval ships.

As an artillery observer, the joint fires team is attached to combat teams and Amphibious Ready Elements (ARE) of the Royal Australian Infantry Corps or the armoured squadrons of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps. The joint fires team controls all joint fires and effects in support of the combat team or squadron manoeuvre plan during close combat.

Joint terminal attack controllers within Army are generally artillerymen. In basic terms, a JTAC is a higher trained JFO. The biggest difference between a JFO and a JTAC is that the latter has a higher level of authority to release ordnance. A JFO must have a JTAC involved in the decision to release any weapon from an aircraft.

Director of Army Workforce Management Colonel Elizabeth Khan says, on average, the Army needs approximately 25 ab initio recruits coming in off the street to fill artillery observer roles each year.

"At least that has been the trend in recent years, but that's going to be increased in the coming financial year to about 38, to enable further growth in this capability for Army," Colonel Khan says.

"This role is not one that is picked or nominated at Kapooka – you can pretty much walk in to Defence Force Recruiting and say you would like to be an artillery observer and they will then start the process, as with any other recruit, to determine if you are suitable.

"After testing, they'll give you a list of jobs you are deemed suitable for and if artillery observer is on the list, and there is a position available, then you could be offered artillery observer as a 'Corps-enlisted' soldier for that role.

Artillery Observer



simulated and live target engagements using coalition aircraft on a regular basis.

These engagements are formally assessed at job standard in accordance with a formal agreement between the US and other coalition partners.

No. 4 Squadron RAAF runs JTAC training in Australia for the JTAC capability across the ADF, providing trained controllers mainly for Special Operations Command.

Joint terminal attack controller is the US terminology and since the US certifies and controls training, it makes sense to use their

terminology, though CONTACT notes that in recent correspondence on this topic with Defence, the ADF spelt out the acronym as joint tactical aircraft controller.

In any case, the ADF says JTAC is not part of the artillery observer employment category, but it could be fairly said that experienced artillery observers would be better positioned than most to step up to the role.

JTAC courses conducted by 4 Squadron are predominantly attended by Royal Australian Artillery, Special Forces and RAAF personnel.

"And, if you really want to be an arty observer but there isn't a space available this year, for example, it would still be a good idea to enlist as an artillery gun number and try to trade transfer later.

When they finish Kapooka, arty observers go to Puckapunyal to the School of Artillery where they do five courses – Artillery Common Induction Training, which is two weeks; the one-week Basic Combat Communicators Course; two-weeks Specialist Combat Communicators Course; one-week Artillery Advanced Field Craft Course; and then the Joint Fires Team Basic Observer Course, which is an additional four weeks.

The role of the artillery is to support other arms and services by raining hot steel upon the enemy in an effort to establish control on the battlefield by preventing him from interfering with friendly operations or developing his own.

An artillery observer controls the accuracy of artillery, mortars, naval guns or attack aircraft by observing fall of shot and calling for adjustments to aim.

Six-man joint fires teams control all joint fires and effects in support of the combat team or squadron

manoeuvre plan in close combat and, as such, the artillery observer is equipped with, and must be proficient in using, state-of-the-art battlefield surveillance equipment such as the digital terminal control system, laser target designator and pointer, laser range finder, ground surveillance radar and a range of video feeds from airborne surveillance platforms.

Joint terminal attack controller (JTAC) is the term used in the United States armed forces and some other military forces for a qualified service member who directs the action of combat aircraft engaged in close air support and other offensive air operations from a forward position.

In 2006, the Royal Australian Air Force became the first foreign air force to receive Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) accreditation from the United States Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM), which means Australia is authorised to run its own courses to produce JTAC operators certified and authorised to control US and coalition aircraft on any battlefield.

To remain current at the highest level, the operator is required to conduct a number of



GENDER BARRIERS GONE

In January 2016, with no fanfare, hoopla or official announcement, the Australia Defence Force lifted all gender restrictions on employment – meaning any female deemed capable may now enlist in any military employment category – including front-line combat roles.

Director of Army Workforce Management Colonel Elizabeth Khan told CONTACT the removal of gender barriers in the ADF was about ability.

"If anybody, regardless of gender, is mentally and physically capable and suitable for a role, then they should pursue it – and be able to pursue it – regardless of gender," Colonel Khan said.

"We are trying to get a lot more women into Defence, and in particular Army, and removing these restrictions allows us to recruit into roles that were otherwise blocked to women.

"There are now no roles in the ADF that man or woman can't do. There are no gender restrictions left.

"Infantry, armour, artillery, combat engineers and special forces – we now have no barriers to anybody coming in as long as they have the physical and intellectual capability to do the job.

"Of course, we'll train them for their chosen role once they get in.

"Ab initio standards for men and women are a little different right at the start of recruiting, but as they progress through the training continuum, the PESA – Physical Employment Standards Assessment – is the same for men and women.

"So, for example, if a female goes to infantry, she has to pass the same physical employment standards for infantry as the males."

Engineer Captain Jen Egan in Tarin Kot, Afghanistan, 2006. Photo by Brian Hartigan



SUBSCRIBER GIVEAWAY

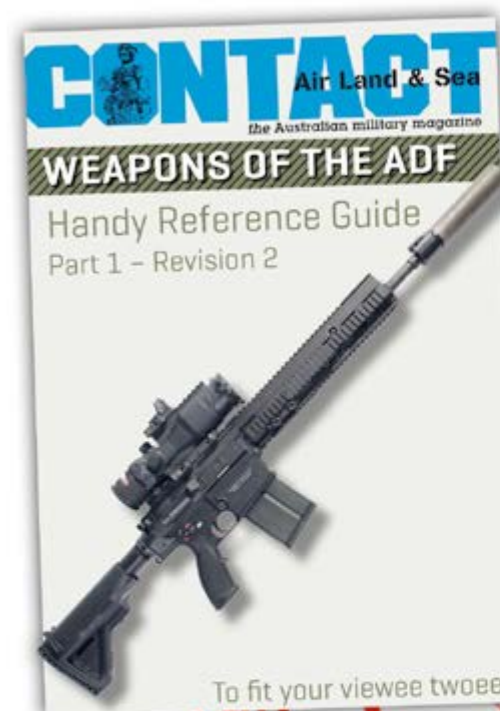
Thanks to Suunto watches of Finland

CONTACT has not one but two Suunto Traverse Alpha watches to give away

EACH WORTH \$729

To win, subscribe to our mailing list and tell us in 50 words or less why you should be a lucky winner – [HERE](#)

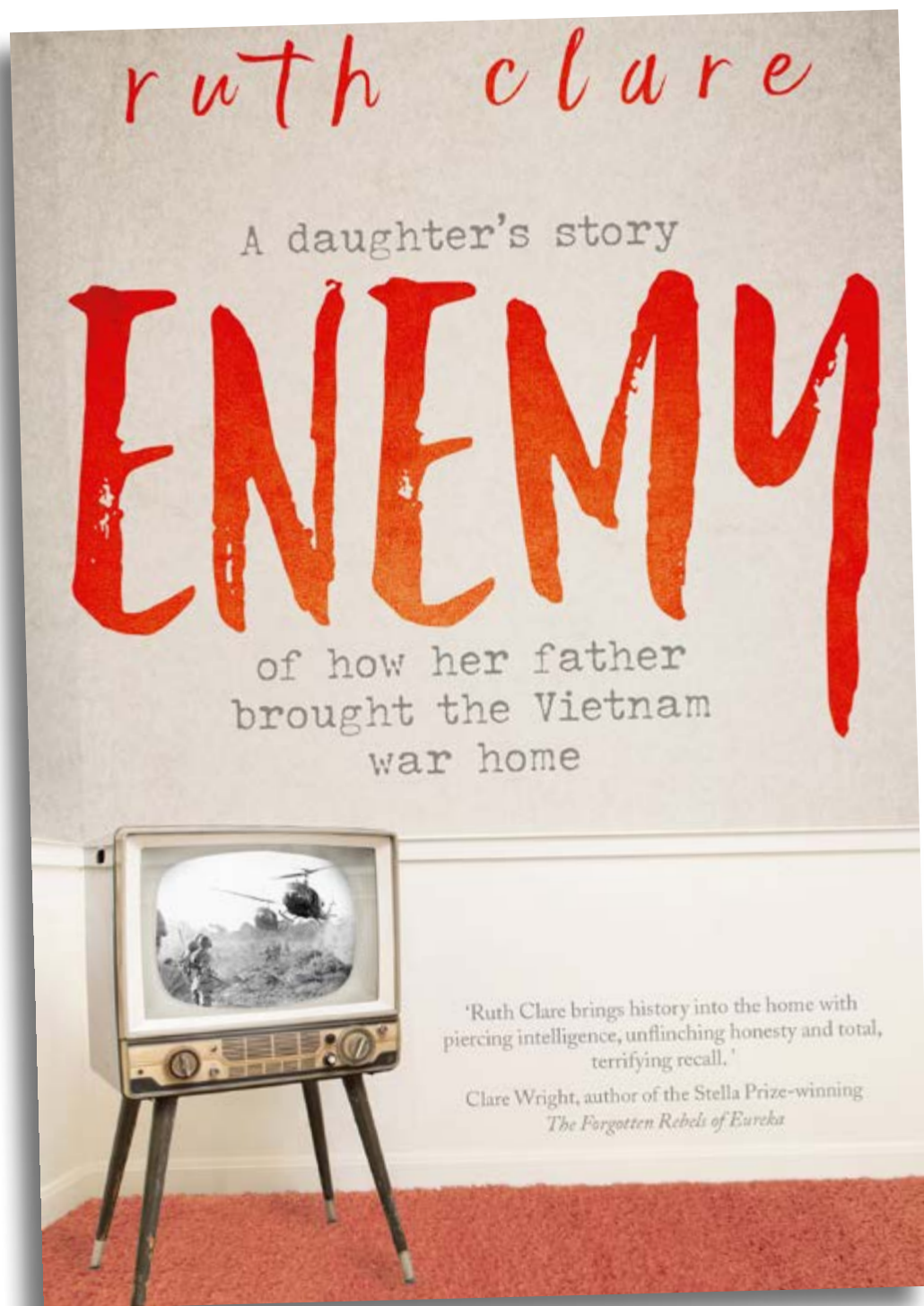
Current subscribers can also enter. Australian residents only. Closes 1 July 2016.



Order your next Viewee Twoee – pre-loaded –



...by CONTACT



I was born into the war still raging inside my father. The DNA he gave me came charged with trauma he didn't know how to process, and as my life unfolded it seemed I was fated to follow in his footsteps. I too learned life should be lived on guard because you never knew when the next attack would come.

Dad came of age in the era of Australia's National Service Scheme. According to the National Archives of Australia, of the 800,000-plus twenty-year-old men who registered during this time, more than 63,000 had their birthdays drawn in the lottery and served in the military. Over 19,000 went to Vietnam.

Douglas Robert Callum was born on 30 January 1946. His birthday condemned him to give up the plans he had made for his own life so he could serve a country that would go on to shun and shame him.

Going to war, watching his mates die, causing the deaths of others shattered his soul. He put the pieces

back together again the best he could, but the clatter of machine guns always leaked through the cracks. Most people on the outside would never get to see the damage he fought to hide, but within a family even the best disguises slip.

In 1974, the year I was born, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) hadn't been recognised as a condition. Even after it was added to the American Psychiatric Association's Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, in 1980, it was never something spoken about in my house.

When I was growing up Dad rarely mentioned the Vietnam War, or his part in it. No one ever told me the way Dad behaved might have anything to do with a war. No one ever told me it wasn't my fault.

One day, after he had left our family for good, Mum said to me, 'I wish you had known your father before he went to Vietnam.'

I wish I had too.

An extract...

Chapter 1

My first memory is of Dad hitting me. I was three years old, and hiding under the table in our dining room watching Mum dry dishes in the green-and-brown kitchen of our seventies style two-storey brick house on a quarter-acre block in Strathpine, one of Brisbane's outer suburbs.

I had been spying on her for ages, pretending to be a secret agent. She didn't know I was there. I was an excellent spy.

The front door banged and as Dad's heavy steps came closer I shuffled further back into the darkness under the table. I planned to put him under surveillance as well. His engine-oil smell and hairy legs passed me by, then his shadow came to a sudden stop in front of me.

'Jesus Christ,' he muttered, then yelled, 'Girls!'

His loud voice made my stomach sick and my heart start thumping. I didn't want to get in trouble again. Kerstin's voice drifted from our bedroom. 'Coming, Dad.'

Ten seconds later she skidded to a stop in front of him. 'Yes, Dad.'

Whenever Dad said our names we had to say, 'Coming, Dad!' before the count of five, then drop what we were doing and start running. I knew I would be in big trouble but I couldn't make myself move.

'Where's your sister?' 'I dunno.'

I wriggled back more so she wouldn't see me. 'Ruth!' His yell was louder this time.

My heart raced faster but I managed to get the words out. 'Yeah, I'm here.'

He bent to find me under the table. Not saying anything, he uncurled one finger from the fist of his right hand and jabbed it first at me, then toward the wall, indicating where he wanted me to go.

I didn't move. He stood waiting a moment before his face whipped back into view and his voice came out as a growl. 'Get out of there.'

I started to crawl, but it wasn't fast enough, and his hand shot under the table. He grabbed my arm and swung me up, plonking me down hard on my feet next to my sister. Even once he let go, his fingers still dug holes into me.

Dad formed his words slowly, making sure we heard every consonant. 'Look at me.'

His hair was blond and flopping down over a tanned forehead streaked with grease from the motorbike he was fixing. The yellow t-shirt that stretched tight across his big chest had a dark V in the middle from his sweat.

He turned on his quiet voice, the one that could trick you into thinking everything was going to be okay. 'Come over here.'

Kerstin and I lined up in front of him.

'What's this?' He pointed to a spot on the wall.

My heart dropped down to my toes, taking all the heat in my body with it. He was pointing at the label I had peeled off my box of Tic Tacs and stuck to the wall.

I stood dumbly for a moment, ears thudding. Kerstin leaned in and looked at the sticker and I copied what she did, trying to look innocent. I stared at the curled-up edges and pretended I was seeing it for the first time.

'It's a Tic Tac sticker.' I tried to make my voice sound interested and surprised.

'I know it's a Tic Tac sticker. What I want to know is who put this sticker on my wall?' Dad's voice pretended to be patient.

Kerstin moved a bit closer to me and swayed slightly, giving me a small bump. She was looking at the ground but I knew she wanted me to own up.

Fear raced through my body like a runaway train, shaking my legs and swooshing in my ears as it rocketed

through my brain trying to help me come up with the lie that would make this go away.

'Well?' Dad's eyebrows were high on his forehead. Kerstin was the first to talk. 'It wasn't me.'

I paused. Maybe if we both said we didn't do it then no one would get in trouble. 'It wasn't me.'

Dad's hand disappeared behind his back then shot out as fast as a cobra, striking Kerstin on the shoulder. She knocked into me and I stumbled. Before I could regain my balance, his hand moved back again and he hit me in the ear. I stumbled backward, falling onto the floor.

My ear burned and throbbed and I cried. Kerstin cried too. Her cry sounded like shock and pain. My cry was those things as well, but also horror at myself; my lie was the reason she was hurt.

'Get up!' He moved to pull me upright but I crawled out of his reach and scrambled to my feet before he could touch me again.

My ear was screaming for attention but I knew better than to put my hand up to hold it. Dad hated it when you acted like he had hurt you.

I looked up for a moment toward the kitchen and saw Mum standing there, frozen in place. Her cigarette was down low, the smoke curling all around her, turning her into a ghost.

'Now, don't make me do that again.' Dad put his face so close to mine I couldn't take it all in. He jabbed his thick square finger at the wall again and again. 'Tell me who put this sticker on this wall!' Though he pulled his head back, his up-close face glowed like a camera flash in my mind. The light streaming through the window and bouncing off the wall was bright too. I couldn't focus on where he was pointing. I had to think of a way to stop Kerstin being hit while not getting hit myself, but I couldn't make my brain work. 'I'm going to ask again, who stuck the sticker on the wall?'

When his eyes went flat and cold like this he wouldn't be happy until someone had been punished.

'I didn't do it!' Kerstin's words mixed with her sobs.

I tried to own up, but I couldn't make myself. 'I didn't do it either.'

This time I watched for his hands. He hit Kerstin on the side of her head and she screamed. When his hand came for me I managed to swerve out of the way and put my arms up to protect my head. Though I escaped a second blow to my still-ringing ear, the soft underside of my upper arm took its place. I felt the deep pain of a soon-to-be bruise but at least I managed to hold my feet in place. I screamed and my sobbing started again.

Kerstin was standing with her head flopped forward, half whimpering, half sobbing. I chanted silently to myself: sorrykerstinsorry kerstinsorrykerstin.

Dad bent down into a squat, grabbing Kerstin's arm in his right hand and mine in his left. His leathery fingers dug deep into our flesh and he pulled us into an orderly line again. He shook us.

'Who did it?' We didn't speak.

He shook again, harder this time. My teeth snapped together and the world blurred into rainbows as my head rocked back and forth on my neck.

'Who did it?' His shakes were getting harder and I knew I couldn't let Kerstin take any more of this no matter how scared I was.

'I did. Me.'

Dad threw Kerstin into the corner of the room and focused his dead eyes on mine. He kept his hand wrapped tightly around my left arm so I couldn't run away, and got me into a better position.



ENEMY

A Daughter's Story of
How Her Father Brought
the Vietnam War Home

By Ruth Clare

Viking/RRP \$32.99

*"My dad's conflict
had not ended when
he left the battlefield.
It continued on
forever inside
him, sending its
shockwaves into the
hearts and souls of
his family."*

He began hitting me properly now, using his swings to keep the beat of his words.

I (whack) am not (whack) hitting you (whack) because of the sticker (whack). I am hitting you (whack) because (whack) you lied to me!

I tried to get away but his fingers clawed in further, and I couldn't avoid the hits landing on my legs, my arms, my bottom. Sometimes his hand was open, but sometimes it was a fist, punch- ing, punching.

His face was only inches away and I could feel myself merging with him. The rage pumped out of him, into me, filling me with anger bigger than my body could hold.

A booming voice filled my head. You're a liar too. You say you are only hitting me because of the lie, but you hit Kerstin too, and she didn't lie. Liar. Liar. Liar.

Becoming aware Dad had finally let go of my arm, I ran, making it only as far as the lounge room before his footsteps thundered behind me. My eyes felt incredibly sharp and the world slowed into snapshots. Door. Hallway. Bookshelf. Window. TV.

I was scanning for escape, but I couldn't figure out where to go so I dived under the couch, knocking my forehead in the attempt. As I scrambled toward the back, Dad grabbed hold of my right leg and pulled. The springs underneath the couch caught my hair and a chunk of it was ripped from my head. I screamed.

I managed to grab the leg of the couch but his hand strength- ened its grip on my ankle and he pulled me

up into the air until I was hanging upside down. I was still holding on but the couch was now tilting as it was lifted into the air with me. He shook me back and forward roaring, 'Let go of it! Let go of it!' I finally lost my grip and was left dangling in the air.

Dad set me down hard on my feet. Blood pounded in my temples, making my ears throb, and my head kept tumbling from being upside down. He started up where he had left off. 'Don't (whack) run away (whack) from me (whack). Listen (whack) to what (whack) I'm saying!'

I no longer felt his blows land. The beating of my heart and the hissing in my ears were all I knew. I didn't care what he was saying; I had to get away. I ran to my bedroom and scrambled under my bottom bunk, but had barely managed to conceal myself when I felt him grip both my legs.

I was covered in sweat and his hand slipped. Just as he readjusted his hold to allow him to better drag me out, Mum appeared at the door.

'Doug! Stop it!' Her voice was a scream so wrapped in terror it was barely more than a whisper. 'You are going to kill those kids one of these days!'

He stopped, loosened his hold on my legs, then let go completely. I scurried further under the bed, backing against the wall and making myself as small as possible. From my hiding place I saw Dad's legs storm out of the room and Mum disappear down the hall after him. It was finished.

REMEMBER THE FAMILIES OF OUR FALLEN HEROES.

Since 1923 Legacy has kept their promise to Australian veterans and taken care of the families of those who have died or become incapacitated as a result of their service.

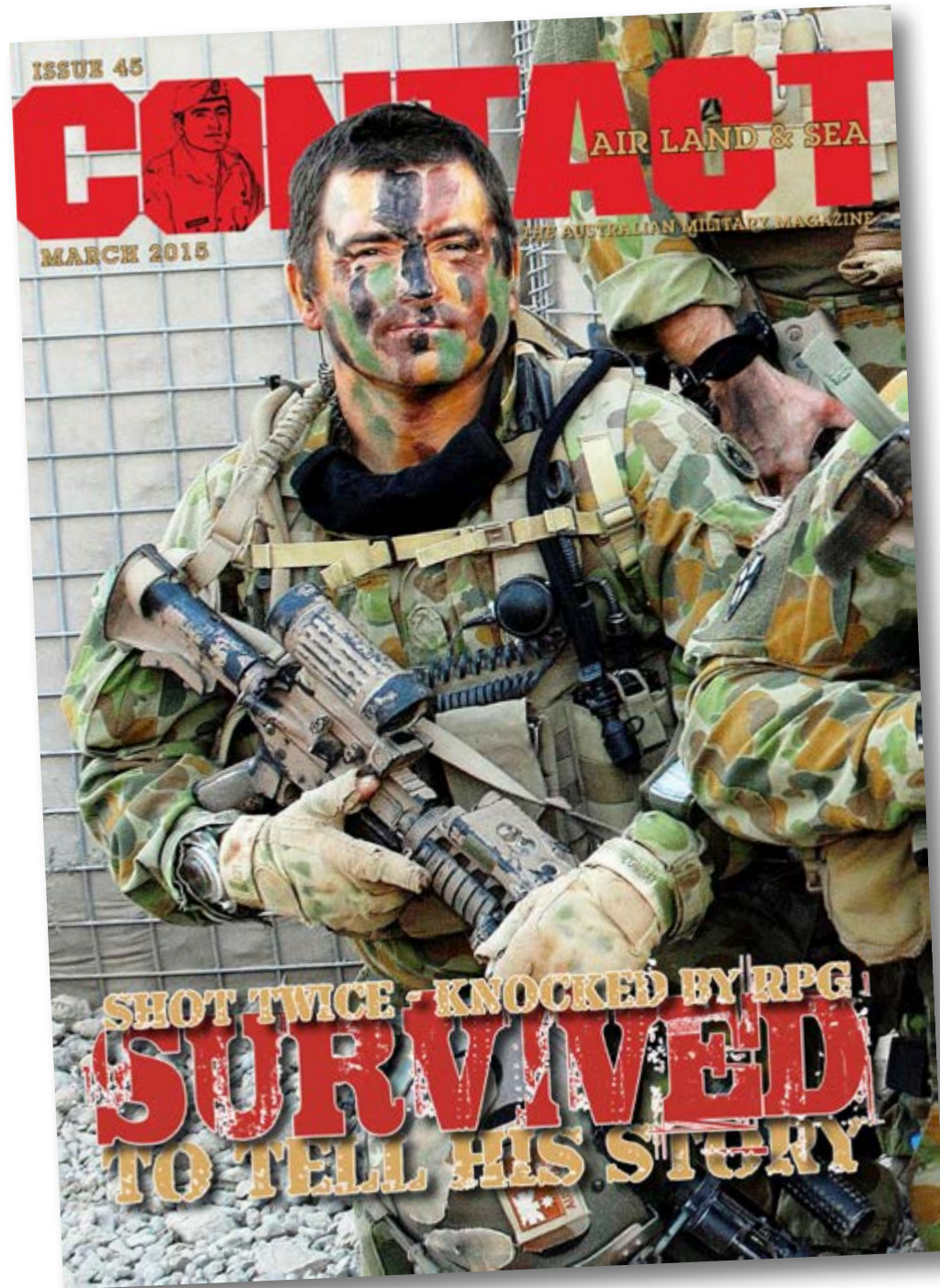


SHOW YOU CARE BY DONATING AT LEGACY.COM.AU

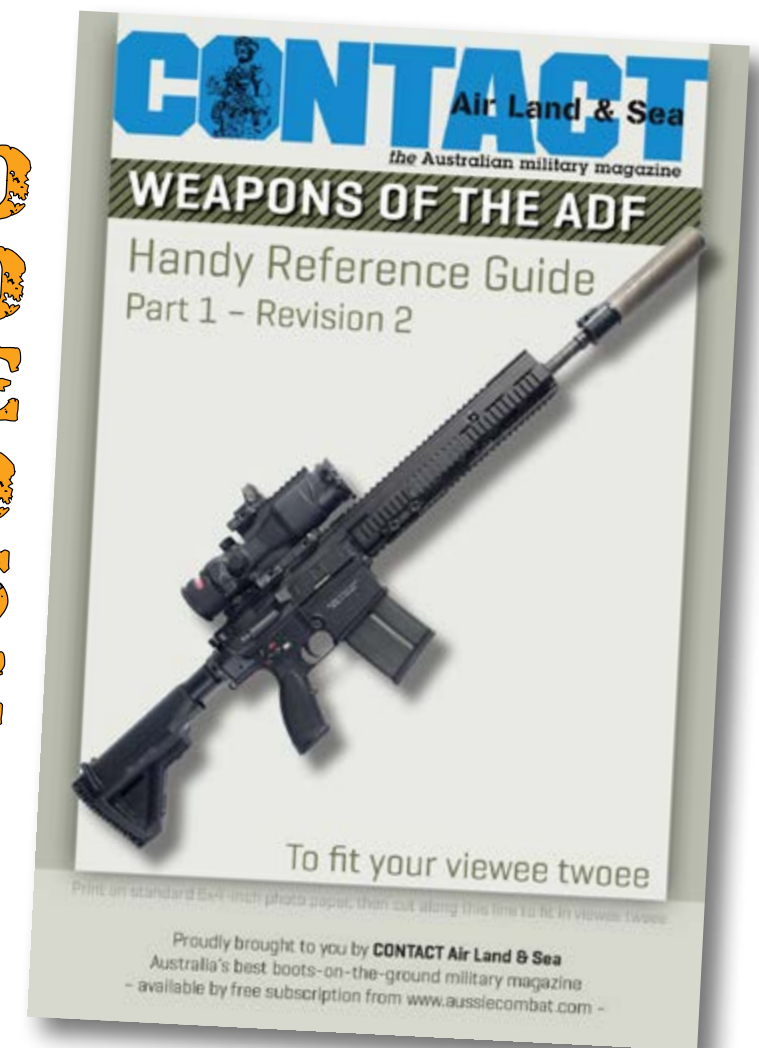
Caring for the families of deceased and incapacitated veterans.



SUBSCRIBE FREE TO CONTACT



... AND
DOWNLOAD
THIS VIEWEE
TWOEE-SIZED
WEAPONS
GUIDE FREE



OR, IF YOU ALREADY ENJOY THIS GREAT FREE E-MAGAZINE PLEASE INVITE YOUR COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS TO REGISTER FOR THEIR OWN FREE SUBSCRIPTION VIA
WWW.AUSSIECOMBAT.COM



VERY-LIMITED EDITION RAIN PROTECTION

Premier Defence Agencies has got high-end European manufacturer **Carinthia** to do a run of its Survival Rainsuit jacket and trousers in licensed Multicam for a government customer.

Using the Topaz 2.5 layer laminate, the Survival Rainsuit is fully breathable and lightweight.

This one-size-fits-all garment is versatile and small – small enough to fit a full set into a Minimi pouch with room to spare!

Customers already know these are the ultimate in extremely breathable, lightweight, packable weather protection.

This run is limited and you can pre-order through the www.coolkit.com.au website – but we're told production closes soon, so don't delay.

*This image is
Photoshopped for
illustrative purposes,
because the Survival
Rainsuit in Multicam has
not been made yet.*



TASCO TRAIL CAMERA

Trail Cameras have been around for a while and many hunters and outdoorsmen will be familiar with their application. They are often used to recon areas for target or pest species to assist with hunt planning.

Their application however is far wider than that. Many customers of the Military Shop are looking for a camera they can 'set and forget' to surveil private property to try and detect theft or damage. Indeed many enquiries also come from public authorities seeking to protect public spaces and housing from vandalism.

These cameras are ideal for this purpose, offering a discreet way to keep an eye on valuable assets.

Farmers keeping an eye on diesel tanks are another common use.

The Tasco Trail Cam has 5-megapixel resolution, can take up to 32GB SD card, enabling 1000s of photos or hours of video capture.

Black LEDs also allow it to take excellent-quality photos at night without a visible flash.

They can be padlocked for extra security of the weatherproof unit and the strap allows for mounting



on things such as large trees for covert positioning.

The cameras provide evidence-quality date/time stamped pictures and are high on the shopping list of security companies or those wanting peace of mind.

Available from Military Shop, 65 Kembla St, Fyshwick, ACT and on line [HERE](#).

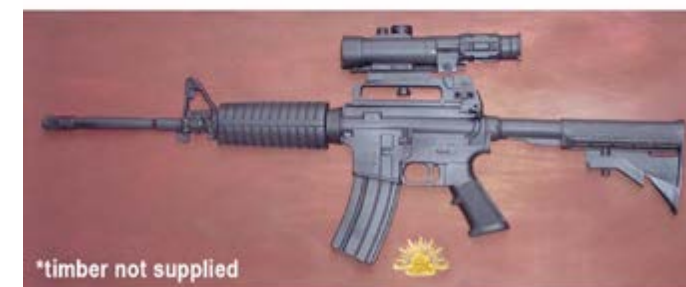
INFORCE®
 INFORCE APL

Ergonomic Switching | Low Profile | 200 Lumens
 Now available in White + IR
BUY ONLINE DIRECT
360DEFENCE
.COM.AU

Resin Works Militaria



One-sided resin weapons* from Australia and around the world for trophies and plaques



*timber not supplied

Keith Walsh – 0434 233 285
keithwalsh66@gmail.com

**MILITARY
FITNESS**

**WITH DON
STEVENSON**

Now archiving on the
CONTACT
web site

austax
(QLD) PTY LTD | PUBLIC ACCOUNTANTS

INCOME TAX RETURNS NATIONWIDE

**SPECIALISING IN DEFENCE
PERSONNEL INCOME TAX
RETURNS FOR OVER 30 YEARS**

**CALL US TODAY FOR
expert assistance with all your
accounting & taxation needs.**

1300 36 65 29

4/438 SAMFORD ROAD, GAYTHORNE QLD 4051
WWW.AUSTAXQLD.COM.AU



CLOSE BUT NOT CLOSE ENOUGH

Australians recommended for the VC but not awarded

BY MAJOR DARRYL KELLY

1842 Bombardier Lindsay Ernest Barrett, 101 Howitzer Battery

GUNS NEVER DIE

Artillery is a vital component of any infantry attack. Failure of the guns to neutralise their targets will cost their infantry cousins dearly – and to a gunner, that is inexcusable...

Lindsay Barrett was a young grazier from Frances, South Australia. He was born on the Binnum Estate on 18 July 1897. A bright young lad and a hard worker, he was destined to carve out a better life for himself and his family. He had a strong ally and mentor in his half-brother and mate, George Hamstone. The pair had plans for land and cattle of their own and, while still contributing to providing financial support to their family, they saved every spare penny to go towards their future.

With the onset of war, Lindsay was keen to enlist, as he knew that a steady income from his Army pay was more than he'd make on the land and the extra money could make things a lot easier on the home front. He allotted three shillings a day from his pay to George to look after the family and whatever was left over would go into their kitty.

Following his enlistment on 11 January 1916, 21-year-old Lindsay was allocated to the 13th Reinforcements of the 3rd Light Horse Regiment – a mixed lot of horsemen from South Australia and Tasmania in desperate need of reinforcements following their losses at Gallipoli.

Arriving in the staging camps of Egypt, Lindsay found himself in stirring times. The AIF was growing and new units were being formed for action on the battlefields of France and Belgium. Volunteers were being called for to fill positions in the pioneers, the machine gunners and even the newly formed cyclist battalion. But the one that appealed to Lindsay the most was artillery, to which he transferred on 15 May 1916.

Lindsay was initially posted to the Artillery Details, which was encamped at the old Egyptian battlefields of Tel el Kibir. In late May, Lindsay and his gunner mates broke camp and entrained for the nearby port of Alexandria. Boarding the darkened troopship 'Corsican', they prepared to run the U-boat threat across the Mediterranean. It was only after they cast off they learnt that they were not bound for France, instead heading for England, where specialist artillery training awaited.

Lindsay and his mates were introduced to the new 4.5 inch howitzers. Unlike their field gun counterparts, the howitzers could fire their deadly projectiles at high and low angles of elevation. This enabled a howitzer battery to engage targets that may be sheltering behind the relative safety of hills, villages or other features. This added a dynamic dimension to artillery warfare on the battlefield. The gunners looked at the howitzers with awe and respect and couldn't wait until they could pit themselves against the might of the German Army.

As their training progressed, 1916 gave way to 1917 and, in March, the best of the gunner trainees were sent to the 116th Howitzer Battery, which was preparing to deploy to France. Lindsay was one of those chosen to fill the ranks.

On arrival at the battlefield, Lindsay was again reposted. This time to the 101st Howitzer Battery, which was part of the 1st Field Artillery Brigade. 1FAB was a veteran artillery formation, having formed and deployed in 1914. They served with distinction at Gallipoli and had given a great account of themselves in France, but the enemy had taken their toll on the ranks of the brigade and now they were in desperate need of rest, refitting and most of all reinforcements.

However, the rest and refit would have to wait, as the infantry were about to make their first assault against the seemingly impregnable Hindenburg Line, a string of heavily fortified villages, redoubts and pillboxes, occupying key terrain and protected by belt upon belt of barbed wire, in some places hundreds of metres in depth.

The Brigade's 1st, 2nd and 3rd Field Battery's moved into the line near Vaux Lagnicourt, whilst the 101st Howitzer Battery deployed to the hotbed of The Noreuil Valley. 1FAB were in-depth as their sister formation, the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade were deployed to their front. The other batteries were scattered on a narrow frontage which saw the guns dangerously forward, while the infantry and machine gunners of the 1st Australian Division were busily digging in on the forward lines but unfortunately scattered far too thinly across a 12,000-yard front.

This was to be Lindsay Barrett's first exposure to combat. He felt confident in his training and he knew he could depend on his mates around him. But this was the German Army he now faced. Before him were seasoned troops with years of combat



experience behind them. Only a fool would not feel some form of trepidation as to what may lie ahead – and Lindsay was no fool.

On 11 April, the main attack was launched by the Diggers of the 4th Australian Division, between the fortified villages of Queant and Bullecourt. Although they fought valiantly, they were crippled in the assault by the lack of bombs, ammunition and the failure of the supporting tanks to reach the objectives. The Diggers were forced to withdraw, leaving behind hundreds of dead, wounded and stranded troops, who were stuck within the seemingly impenetrable maze of belt after belt of intact enemy barbed wire.

With the major allied assault beaten, the enemy turned its attentions towards the nearby areas around the village of Lagnicourt and the Noreuil Valley. It was here that the Hun felt they could counter strike, deliver a savage blow and then roll the allied flank.

The 1st Division's scattered defence across such a broad frontage left severe gaps within the line. Additionally their positions were under direct observation from the entrenched enemy occupying a significant component of the Hindenburg Line.

On 15 April, the enemy launched its attack. Catching the infantry unawares, the enemy were able to breach the forward positions and strike deep into the Australian support lines. The infantry were forced to retire to try and reform and prepare for counter attack of their own. But the guns were now vulnerable and the detachments of the 1st and 2nd Field Artillery Brigades were also forced to withdraw, temporarily abandoning their beloved guns, but not before they carried off their breach blocks, thus making them unusable to the enemy. Only the 101st Howitzer Battery remained intact and held onto their guns.

Lindsay and his mates kept up a steady volume of fire onto the depth positions of the advancing enemy. The gunners needed to be mindful not to fire directly upon the unmanned Australian guns. Shortly they would be needed in action, once the infantry counterattack could secure them back into allied hands.

The enemy troops marvelled at their prize of overrunning the artillery positions and started rattling through the gunner's kit, looking for food, valuables and souvenirs. This gave our infantry enough time to reorganise and prepare to hit back and retrieve the guns.

The Australian infantry advanced with a hasty, yet savage counter attack, hell bent on recapturing the guns and driving the enemy back. With tenacity, the Diggers started to get the upper hand and pushed forward along the valley floor. The Australian machine gunners were able to seize the higher ground and bring their remaining Vickers guns to bear on the retreating enemy forces. The infantry cleared through the gun positions and reclaimed possession of the guns. The gunners quickly brought them back into action and started to also engage the fleeing enemy.

As the battle petered out and the firing subsided, Lindsay was able to take stock of what he'd just experienced. The smouldering cartridge cases were piled high alongside the guns and a distasteful cloud of cordite hovered low over the battery. The horses and limbers of the Divisional Ammunition Column raced onto the position, delivering a fresh supply of ammunition lest the Germans be foolish enough to try and seize the guns again.

Lindsay knew that he'd given a good account of himself but there was work to be done, then he could rest.

In mid-July 1917, the 101st Howitzer Battery was redeployed to Belgium and locked in a savage action in defence of the strategic town of Ypres. The battery was tactically attached to the 73rd Heavy Artillery Group, who were engaged in deadly counter-battery operations – basically artillery duelling between the opposing sides. As batteries engaged in support of an attack or defensive action, specially selected opposing batteries would rein fire down upon them, intent of destroying the guns, ammunition and detachments, thus denying the frontline troops their much needed fire support.

To be on the receiving end of a concentrated artillery barrage by heavy-calibre guns was indescribable.

Lindsay was engaged in manning his gun as it fired in support of the infantry when suddenly he heard the shrill screaming of incoming rounds from counter-battery fire. The earth erupted around him, blazing hot steel splinters from exploding rounds slashed through men, horses, stores and equipment with a savage ferocity.

CLOSE BUT NOT CLOSE ENOUGH

Australians recommended for the VC but not awarded

BY MAJOR DARRYL KELLY



Lindsay screamed as a red hot splinter slammed into his leg. Jamming his thumb into the wound to try to stem the flow of blood, he crawled towards the corner of the gun pit in a vain attempt to seek shelter. As the enemy fire subsided and shifted to a new target, the call went out across the 101st gun position – 'Stretcher bearers, stretcher bearers'.

Lindsay's wound was serious enough to warrant hospitalisation and the luxury of a three-week break from the carnage of front-line life.

In October the battery was into action along the infamous feature dubbed ANZAC Ridge. Lindsay was temporarily promoted to bombardier on 23 October and took over as second in command of Number 5 Gun.

On the morning of 26 October the battery was firing in support of Australian infantry. The enemy counter-battery fire was extremely heavy but the Aussie gunners, stuck to the task and continued to fire in support of their infantry mates.

Suddenly an enemy round exploded between Numbers 5 and Number 6 guns, killing or wounding both detachments, except for Lindsay who was unscathed. Realising that the loss of firepower would cause a serious gap in the barrage, Lindsay took to continuing to lay, load and fire his gun singlehanded. For the next 10-15 minutes and under extremely heavy fire from enemy artillery, Lindsay did the work of an entire detachment, his efforts keeping the effects of the rolling barrage generally intact.

As information was relayed to the remaining guns to cover the lack of fire, Lindsay was ordered to tend to his wounded mates.

For his actions that day, Lindsay Barrett was recommended for the Victoria Cross, but, as the recommendation progressed through the chain of command, it was relegated to the Distinguished Conduct Medal.

Lindsay remained with the battery through the winter of 1917-18 and fought through the savage German onslaught of early 1918, following the collapse of Russia.

He was also on hand when nearly 200 officers, NCOs and men who'd enlisted in 1914 were sent on six-months furlough back to Australia. This gutted the brigade, but the younger men like Lindsay were more than ready to accept the responsibilities of both rank and position.

By late October 1918, the battery was taken out of the line for a well-earned rest. It had been in almost constant

action for the past 15 months straight. But the break came too late for Lindsay, as during a heavy enemy counter-battery bombardment earlier in the month, he was heavily gassed.

He was invalided to England for specialist treatment to counter the severe effects of the mustard gas but for Lindsay, the war was over. In the first two weeks of November, he enjoyed leave in London and the surrounding districts, and then on 11 November at 1100 hours, the country erupted with the unbelievable news – Armistice.

In the lead up to Christmas 1918, Lindsay boarded a troopship bound for home. The authorities felt that the full exposure of another European winter could be deadly for him and he arrived back in Australia on Valentine's Day, 1919. The returning soldiers received the thanks and welcome of the people at large with stirring speeches, cakes, tea and handshakes. Lindsay looked at the small engraved gold fob given to him by the townsfolk as a mark of respect. As the local parliamentarian waffled on and on, the words did not reach Lindsay's ears. Instead he thought of his mates, lying beneath the cold, stark earth of France and Belgium. It was only then he snapped back into reality realising that he'd clutched the fob so tightly he almost drew blood. Then he turned and silently walked into the darkness and headed for home.

After a mere six weeks leave, he was medically discharged from the AIF, still suffering the effects of gas, the shrapnel and other unseen wounds.

Returning to life on the land was not a smooth transition for Lindsay. He missed the war and the closeness of mates, the knife-edge excitement and, most of all, the thrill of danger. He confided in his mate George, but he too was restless and yearning to see the world and, one day, simply walked away from the farm and family and was never heard of again.

Lindsay felt that perhaps married life would provide him with a purpose and a reason to settle. He wooed a young lass, Vera, and the pair soon became a couple, marrying in August 1927. One child, soon led to two and then three. But Lindsay was still not happy. He tried a number of jobs but nothing seemed to satisfy him. He yearned for the rugged bush life, which was not for the family.

The South Australian Rail Network was expanding and Lindsay saw an opportunity to supply timber for the sleepers. This was an ideal solution for Lindsay. Long



periods in the bush, felling and shaping timber, coupled with the closeness and 'devil-may-care' attitude of hard-working men in the camps, was refreshing. Occasionally he made visits home to see Vera and the kids, in nearby Bordertown. These visits also added to the expansion of the Barrett family, which was soon approaching double figures.

With the onset of the Second World War, Lindsay, now 48, again offered his services to his country, enlisting in the militia in June 1942. He was posted to the 4th Australian Garrison Battalion and detached to the Loveday Internment Camp. The main roles of the prisoners were the growing of opium poppies for making morphine, and other duties and work on nearby farms and properties.

Lindsay was still able to get home on a regular basis, with child number 11, a fine young boy named Daryl born in June 1945.

Lindsay's Second World War service ended on 16 November 1945, after serving 1247 days of effective service. He again had trouble settling following the end of war. Long periods away, combined with the challenges of providing for such a large family finally led to an inevitable breakdown in the Barrett marriage.

Lindsay drifted further and further away from his family and visits became scarcer and scarcer. The children grew, matured and married, carving out their own lives and ambitions. Eventually Lindsay remarried, this time to a lady by the name of May, and they resided in Murray Bridge in relative peace for their remaining years.

But the Barrett family was not yet finished with war.

Daryl, the youngest of the brood, was 21 when selected for National Service as an infantryman to serve a tour of duty in Vietnam in 1966-67 with the 5th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment. He was a good soldier, just like his father, and had felt the sting of battle.

Returning home, Daryl thought long and hard about making peace with his father – basically as one combat veteran to another. But unfortunately, time ran out before they could meet, as Lindsay passed away on 18 September 1967 and today lays at rest in Murray Bridge Cemetery.

One overriding mystery that haunted the Barrett family for more than 30 years was the whereabouts of Lindsay's medals, including his coveted DCM. Daryl's wife Julia and their daughter were enthralled with researching the family history but even after 12 years of painstaking research, still could not uncover the location of the medals. Unfortunately, Daryl Barrett passed away with the mystery still unanswered.

Then suddenly, out of the blue, a British auction house made contact with the Barretts, indicating that Lindsay's medals and gold fob were coming up for auction and would they be interested in bidding for the items. It was like a dream come true for the family but they had to face the stark reality that a number of hard-core collectors were also showing interest in the group.

On auction day, Daryl's widow Julia, their two children and their families primed themselves to make their bids, via phone to England. The issue was always in doubt and the spirited bidding was fierce. But, ultimately, Lindsay's medals are now safe and their whereabouts established.



For a lot of service personnel, social and competitive sports are an important part of staying fit. Sport makes a welcome change from long-distance running or weight workouts and adds an element of teamwork and competition.

Typically in the ADF, sport revolves around team games, such as rugby and soccer, or individual endurance sports such as running and triathlon.

These sports all have their benefits in terms of speed, strength and general conditioning, but there is one sport that combines speed, strength, endurance, grip strength, core stability and the need to handle awkward objects.

The sport is Strongman and, out of all the competitive sports in the world, it is easily one of the best for helping develop the fitness required for military operations.

Usually when people think of strongmen they think of huge barrel-chested individuals who can lift big, but who would have trouble running to catch a bus. However, these days, that's not entirely correct.

There are now weight categories in strongman and, in the middle and lightweight classes you can find athletes who are lean and muscular and who possess incredible speed, strength and power as well as huge work capacity and endurance.

Regular readers of this column will know that military service requires true functional fitness, which is the ability to handle objects in the real world, not just in a controlled gym environment.

Strongman is really the sport of functional fitness, as the whole point of Strongman competitions is to lift, load, move or carry awkward objects.

So, even if you never plan on competing, there are excellent reasons for including Strongman training in your program.

Demands of Strongman

Warning! – Strongman training and competition is extremely tough and should only be undertaken if you've already got a basic level of conditioning. I like to think of Strongman as the icing on the cake for military conditioning so, make sure you've got a foundation of basic leg, lower-back, core and upper-body strength before starting. A few months of barbell and kettlebell training will sort that out.

Once you've built your base, you can use Strongman training to maximise the development of almost any aspect of your fitness. However, the main carryover from Strongman to military service comes in the following areas.

Core strength – Strongman implements are typically awkward objects like logs, stones and tyres, and a high level of core strength is required to stabilise these objects so that they can be lifted and carried.

The high loads used in other events such as the car deadlift for reps make core strength critical in transferring force from the legs and back through to the arms.

In the military, a high level of core strength

means fewer injuries when carrying gear or negotiating obstacles.

Grip strength – how far can you carry a pair of full water jerries before your grip gives out?

At the top level, Strongman competitors regularly perform 'farmers walks' with the equivalent of seven full jerry cans in each hand! Implements such as thick axle clean and press, and sandbag loading all combine to give Strongman competitors unbelievable grip strength – and grip strength is critical in military work, for lifting, loading, climbing and much more.

Overall strength – deadlifting, stone loading and overhead pressing events develop strength in EVERY muscle in the body, without stupid isolation exercises.

The typical Strongman competitor is brutally strong and can instantly adapt to lifting huge loads even if they come in an odd package.

Conditioning – most Strongman events are quite short (90 seconds max) but they require a huge energy output, and training for them develops anaerobic/aerobic crossover fitness. This type of fitness is exactly what is required in combat situations and is a lot more applicable than steady-state aerobic fitness.

Mental toughness – the high-intensity nature of Strongman requires a certain amount of controlled aggression and mental toughness. Strongman events are often physically uncomfortable. Heavy bars tear at the hands, the infamous 'Conan's Wheel' hurts the chest and arms, and racing against the clock pushes lactic acid levels through the roof, to the point where your lungs are on fire and every muscle in your body screams at you to stop.

NOTHING you've ever done will ever be as hard as Strongman if you go at it with maximum intensity and focus. And, I believe that in this world of air-conditioned gyms, chrome dumbbells and pin-loaded machines, what military personnel need is to get outside and get down and dirty with some hard-core training.

Traditional Strongman v Strongman for mil personnel

Strongman competitors spend a lot of time working on max strength in the gym as well as their event training.

The event training tends to be fairly short and relatively low volume because of the weight of the implements used.

This approach is geared towards being able to do a single big effort of 30 to 90 seconds, followed by at least 5 to 20 minutes of rest before the next event.

In military work, the requirement is generally that you perform a bout of high-intensity work followed by a very short recovery, and then the cycle repeats numerous times.

Therefore, if you want to use Strongman training in your conditioning, I suggest lowering the weights for things like tyre flips, farmers walks and so on, but do repeated efforts in the 60 to 90 second range with short, 30 to 60 second rests.

Occasionally you can test yourself with a heavier one-off set and longer rests.

For unit PT Strongman training, circuits and mini

team comps can be set up using gear that's generally readily available at any big military base.

Events

Unlike most sports, Strongman events change from competition to competition and generally five to eight events are contested over a day or weekend.

Some events are specific to a certain comp, but the following events are staples of Strongman and will give you excellent training benefits.

I've included some typical weights in brackets for middleweight Strongmen but you should probably start with around 50 to 60% of these weights.

Farmers walk – two heavy (100 to 120kg each) objects with handles are carried either for maximum distance or as fast as possible over a fixed distance of 25 to 75m

Log press – a large log (100 to 130kg) with handles in the middle is lifted from the ground to overhead for max weight or max reps

Stone loading – five spherical or natural stones of increasing weight are loaded onto platforms of varying heights. Stones can range from 80 to 140kg+

Conan's wheel – a tripod with a long arm (4 to 5m) is set up. Halfway along the arm, a cage filled with stones or barrels is attached. The competitor hugs the bar to the chest and then carries it around the centre pivot for max distance. Weights can be in excess of 200kg.

Tyre flipping – a large earth-moving-machine tyre (200 to 340kg) is flipped for distance or number of reps.

Truck pull or push – a vehicle is dragged or pushed for time over a fixed distance.

Deadlift or squats for max reps – deadlifting an odd object like a car, or a cage of barrels for squats. 200kg+ for maximum reps in 60 to 90 seconds.

Medleys – any two events contested back-to-back without a break.

Competing

If you want to take your training up a notch then there are a few Strongman comps being run in Australia, including novice events where the weights are lighter and people without any previous experience can have a go without needing to be able to lift a ton.

Competition really brings out the best results in people and it was notable that at the 2008 OzStrongman Nationals in Brisbane, a few of the guys competing were active service personnel.

This article was first published in **CONTACT 21** and is reproduced here while Don takes a well-earned break. This article is also available on our web site, along with a growing archive of Don Stevenson's other work, where you can also link to programs, books and DVDs including Don's ever-popular e-books **Couch to Commando** and **Beat the Beep Test**. Find the "Military Fitness" button on the [CONTACT web site](#)

CAs Challenge

Army Cadets from across Australia converged on Gallipoli Barracks in Brisbane in May to compete in the annual Chief of Army Cadet Team Challenge.

The Tasmanian team were the overall winners of the coveted trophy – the first win for Tasmania.

Chief of Army Lieutenant General Angus Campbell and Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army Warrant Officer Don Spinks were on hand to present prizes and speak with cadets at Gallipoli Barracks on 21 May.



Historic day for 3 Wing AAFC

3WG AAFC kicked off its 75 year anniversary highlights in 2016 with a Vice Regal function hosted by His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Ret'd) at Government House, Macquarie St, Sydney, on 29 May.

More than 130 cadets and staff from 3WG attended the function.

Formalities included the inaugural induction into the 3 Wing AAFC Hall of Fame, where Chief of Defence

Force Air Chief Marshal Mark Binskin was honoured for his previous service as a Cadet at No. 3 Flight in Camden.

The recipient of the inaugural NSW Governors Sword of Honour for Excellence in 3WG was Cadet Under Officer Sarah Welsh from 331 Squadron (pictured).

The Vice Regal Reception also marked the first ever public engagement for the recently established 3 Wing Band.



Humble ANZAC rep

As the sun slowly rose at ANZAC Cove in Gallipoli on 25 April, Cadet Under Officer Victor Low, 703 (City of Fremantle) Squadron, AAFC, was among the thousands present for the Dawn Service.

Victor was an ex officio member of the Australian Defence Force Contingent to Gallipoli for ANZAC Day.

The senior cadet was this year's recipient of the Cadet Sergeant Ellie Tibble Memorial Scholarship, which funds an Australian Air Force Cadet to attend the ANZAC Day vigil at the 1915 Gallipoli battlefield.

"I'm deeply honoured to have been chosen as the scholarship recipient for 2016," Cadet Under Officer Low said before travelling.

"This pilgrimage to Gallipoli will be one that I remember

with gratitude and hold in high regard for the rest of my life.

"The Gallipoli landings were the first nationally significant military action fought by the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps in the First World War, and it's profoundly moving to reflect that 8141 Australians died there - more than 2000 on the first day alone."

Cadet Under Officer Low said the annual Cadet Sergeant Ellie Tibble Memorial Scholarship selection process was rigorous, involving a written application, interviews by senior officers from the Air Force Cadets and Royal Australian Air Force, and a 15-minute presentation on Gallipoli.

Although 18-year old Cadet Under Officer Low has only been in the Air Force Cadets for just over four years, he learned to

fly solo in gliders at age 15 and powered aircraft at 16, coming dux in both courses.

He has served in the Fremantle Squadron as Chief Instructor, Cadet Squadron Warrant Officer, and as an instructor on squadron recruiting camps and for Cadet Corporal training.

As well as possessing a keen interest in flying, he has also represented Western Australia as a team member in the Air Force Cadets national shooting competition.

He is currently studying engineering at Curtin University and considering a career as a commercial aviation pilot.

Cadet Under Officer Low was accompanied to Gallipoli by Flight Lieutenant (AAFC) Nick Dodd, Commanding Officer 704 Squadron, whose great uncle died at Gallipoli.



Cadet Under Officer Victor Low, 703 (City of Fremantle) Squadron AAFC, with his escort Flight Lieutenant (AAFC) Nick Dodd, at the AWM before flying to Turkey.

IAPF OVERVIEW



WILDLIFE CONSERVATION THROUGH DIRECT ACTION

- Approximately 24,000 rhino remain in Africa and are doomed to extinction in ten years at current poaching rates
- Rhino horn is one of the most expensive substances on earth (\$90k/kg) and thus, these majestic animals are the hardest to protect
- IAPF plays a critical role in buying time for this keystone species
- By doing so, entire ecosystems are protected.

ABOUT THE INTERNATIONAL ANTI-POACHING FOUNDATION

The IAPF was founded in 2009 by former Australian Navy Clearance Diver and Special Operations military sniper Damien Mander. Our core mandate is to defeat the highly militarized criminal onslaught on elephant and rhino in Southern Africa. Toward that end, we employ direct action style operations, legal direct action and law enforcement tactics to bring poachers to justice. IAPF develops and manages:

- Anti-poaching ranger training and operations
- Conservation security plans
- Wildlife crime information systems
- Specialist technology and systems for anti-poaching operations
- Field equipment procurement and supply.

THE GREATER LEBOMBO CONSERVANCY (GLC), MOZAMBIQUE

IAPF is the only NGO operating in the GLC in Mozambique - the most important place on the planet to save the rhino and the place where they were declared extinct in 2013. Located to the east of South Africa's Kruger National Park, the GLC is all that stands between almost 40% of the world's remaining rhinos and the world's most vicious poachers. Working in close partnership with the management of Sabie Game Park and the Government of Mozambique, we established our operations in the area in June 2015 and now patrol a 30-mile border between KNP and Mozambique with only nine rangers. Before we arrived, a rhino's life expectancy in the GLC was 12-24 hrs. During our time in the area, we have:

- Increased protected rhino habitat in Africa by almost 70,000 acres
- Reduced anti-poaching rates by almost 50% based on rates in other protected areas
- Worked with local law enforcement agencies to capture more than 20 poachers
- Minimized poacher access to Kruger National Park – rates in KNP due west of IAPF are down 90% while elsewhere along the KNP/Mozambique border, rates have increased by almost 40%
- For the first time since 2013, when rhino were declared extinct in Mozambique, a resident population of approximately 25 rhinos has re-established itself in the Park
- It is through the dedication and willingness of our rangers to risk their lives each day that we are starting to turn the tide in this war on wildlife.

In 2016, we are adding anti-poaching operations at Incomati Reserve, just to the south of our current operations. This will add a further 20 miles of border to patrol and protect an additional 54,000 acres of wildlife habitat.

2016 EXPANSION GOALS

In 2015, IAPF-US spent 85% of every dollar realizing its mission on the ground in Africa. By nearly doubling our presence in Mozambique, we are urgently seeking increased capital investment.

2015 US DONATIONS REC'D \$642,505 (Individuals 23%, Corporations 13%, Foundations 64%)
EXPENDITURE \$642,375 (Program Expenses 85%, Mng't/General 2%, Fundraising 13%)

2016 GLC BUDGET

Sabie Game Park	\$360,000	40%
Incomati Rangers	90,000	10%
K9 Support	80,000	7%
Air Support	140,000	16%
Administration	230,000	27%
	<u>\$900,000</u>	

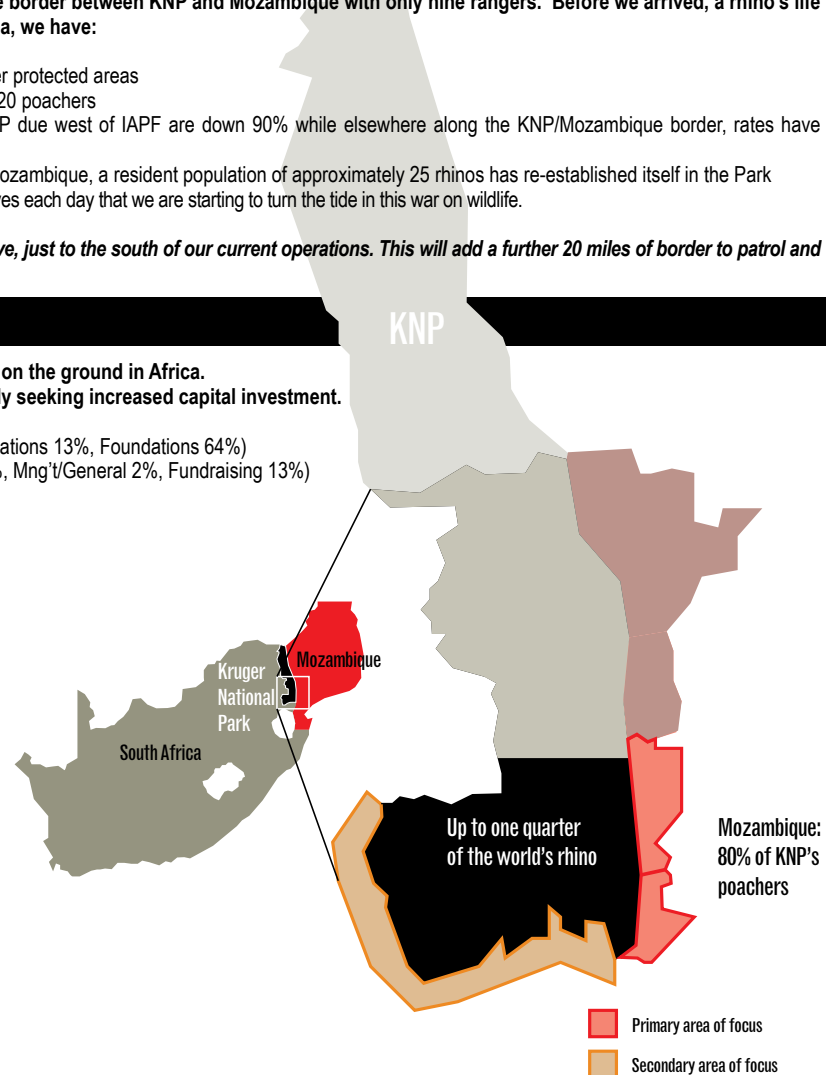
The investments of individuals, corporations and foundations are the lifeblood of our operations.

You may donate online at:
www.iapf-usa.org/donate

Checks can be made payable to IAPF and sent to:
International Anti-Poaching Foundation
2450 Louisiana Street, Suite 400, Unit 415
Houston, TX 77006

The IAPF is a registered 501(c)3 non profit organization.
All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.

For inquiries contact: Damien@iapf.org



Visit us at www.iapf.org



INTERNATIONAL
ANTI POACHING
FOUNDATION



THE INTERNATIONAL ANTI POACHING FOUNDATION IS

RECRUITING NOW

IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE WHAT IT TAKES
AND YOU WANT TO SEE AN END TO THE CRUELTY
AND PROTECT SOME OF THE WORLDS GREATEST CREATURES
GO TO WWW.IAPF.ORG FOR MORE INFO



WWW.IAPF.ORG

WWW.IAPF.ORG

CONTACT

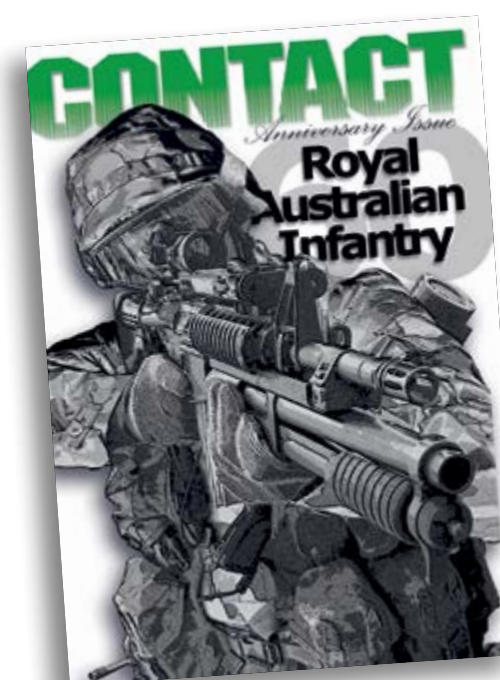
AIR LAND & SEA
THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE



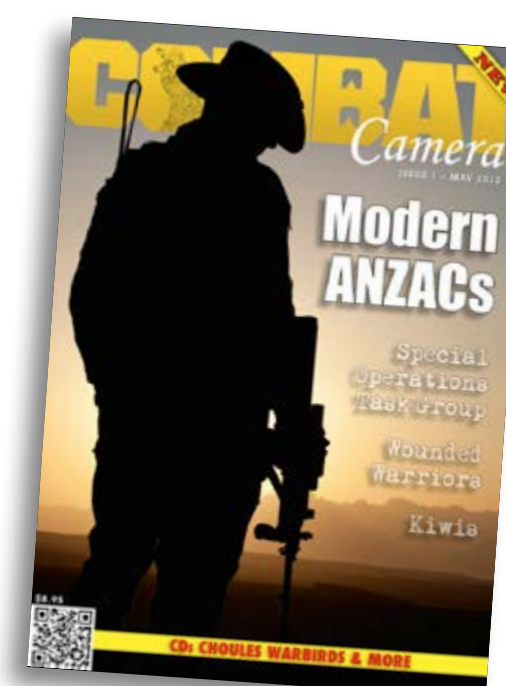
**ALL PRINTED
MAGAZINES
\$8 EACH**
or buy in bulk to save \$\$\$
→



MAIL INCLUDED



This 'Infantry Special Issue' was produced to mark the 60th Anniversary of the Royal Australian Infantry Corps.



COMBAT Camera Issue 01 is available as a print magazine.

BEWARE THE INBETWEENERS



Email your comments, critiques, criticisms or death threats, to gearinsider@militarycontact.com

Welcome back to another year of defence service and we hope all our readers had a safe and happy Christmas with family and loved ones.

Yes – I know – sorry this is a bit late, but I was so tied up in the annual 'death by Powerpoint' session, I ran out of time to write for the March issue.

Coming back to face the challenges and tasks of a new year, we all tend to be forwards looking. What we don't think too much about is what we have already left behind or are about to leave behind, and the transition period can get awkward.

For example, while most of us still wear DPCU, the 'old' cam pattern is already all-but dead to industry as the manufactures move to AMCU (Australian Multicam Camouflage Uniform).

With the announcement in 2014 of the fielding of the then new AMCU-patterned uniform, suppliers pretty much settled in to wait for our issue of the new pattern and cut.

More than 18 months later and for most of the Army, the jacket general purpose is the closest they have come to being issued any component of the new uniform in the new pattern – and only if you're south of Brisbane!

And even then, some units have been told that even the jacket GP will not be issued to them until 2018!

Ok, so that's normal, and there is always a lag on issues of new uniforms and I may be pre-empting a non-existent problem here, but, given the move of both the contracting and aftermarket defence manufacturers away from DPCU items, where does that leave those members lower down on the list for the new issue?

**The actual answer will be
an RSM's nightmare mix of
DPCU, AMCU and Multicam**

The actual answer will be an RSM's nightmare mix of DPCU, AMCU and Multicam. Oh, and interspersed with a lot of personal-purchase load-bearing equipment in solid colours, in fact much like it is now!

For me, the biggest question is, why is this change occurring so slowly? We're not such a large force that manufacture and stockpiling of new equipment and



uniforms could not have occurred to allow for a faster, Army-wide transition.

Not long ago we spoke of equipment and sustainment practices creating a case of haves and have nots, and slow issues of new items further exacerbates this issue.

Truth is, there will be sufficient stocks of DPCU items to sustain most personnel, however these items will now be regarded as superceded and many soldiers may be forced into sourcing aftermarket items to keep pace. But, those items will no longer be made in DPCU – and aftermarket manufacturers are not allowed access to AMCU (remember, Defence is doing its best to maintain full control of the new pattern).

Now for the really funny part.

A few aftermarket-item manufacturers are also Defence contractors, so while they will officially be making items for Defence in AMCU, they will only be able to make the same items for aftermarket customers in solid colours or Multicam, but not AMCU.

I don't know about you but this leaves me wanting to bang my head against a solid object.

But why is it going to go this way? Well, I'm pretty sure it's down to two things.

One is Defence's sustainment idea of "buy less, but buy more often" so as to take advantage of new technologies as they emerge.

If that was true or followed to the letter, of course, then we should be getting newer/better camouflage patterns from either the Canadian designer Hyperstealth or the Australian designer Roggenwolf, as both have beaten the Crye Multicam and British Multicam variant MTP in New Zealand's camo testing.

The other and most likely is down to the common denominator across all of Defence.

Money.

In successive budgets and under prior governments, Defence has been told to find cuts in spending, as it always has when there is budgetary pressure.

From a Defence point of view, how do you maintain capability the way the government wants you to, without spending?

Well, you only have to find savings for that particular year, and the easiest way to do that in the short term is to postpone a purchase, project or acquisition until the next budgetary year. Looks great on the books and to the minister and you just do it again the next year, postponing a different project to get the savings for that year. Too easy!

Given these strategies, however, you can see how the full fielding of new equipment can become slow or stagnated and, along with a similar delaying of other acquisitions, will only compound into the future.

I GO WHEREVER
DUTY TAKES ME
AND WILL SURVIVE
THE TEST OF TIME.
STILL SERVING.

THE NEW **STRONGARM**
BUILT IN PORTLAND, OR USA

GERBER
HAS BEEN MAKING
SURVIVAL KNIVES FOR
THE US MILITARY SINCE 1968.
THE STRONGARM FIXED BLADE
CARRIES ON OUR LEGACY OF TOUGH-AS-HELL
FIXED BLADE KNIVES FOR COMBAT AND SURVIVAL
APPLICATIONS. WITH THE STRONGARM'S MODULAR SHEATH
SNAP-TOGETHER COMPONENTS, THE OPERATOR CAN MOUNT THE
KNIFE VERTICALLY ON MOLLE, HORIZONTALLY ON A STANDARD 1.75"
TACTICAL BELT, OR IN A TRADITIONAL DROP-LEG BELT MOUNT FASHION.

UNSTOPPABLE  **GERBER®**

Designed and built in Portland, OR. || Learn more at www.gerbergear.com/Tactical

Available at platatac.com