

ISSUE 53

# CONTACT

AIR LAND & SEA

MARCH 2017

THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

1<sup>ST</sup> DIVISION  
LOOKING  
AHEAD

LOOKING  
BACK



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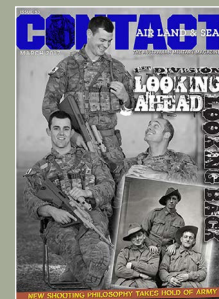
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## EDITORIAL

Issue 53 – March 2017

### CONTACT

AIR, LAND & SEA



1 DIVISION  
LOOKING AHEAD  
LOOKING BACK

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Story page 50

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appropriate.

A couple of times recently I've had cause to defend my credentials as a  
defence comentator, so I thought I'd revisit here too. For space reasons, I  
have to abbreviate here, but if you want to read the full version, [try this](#).

I joined the Australian Army (full time) in 1990. I served as an  
Aircraft Fitter in Townsville until 1997. I was a 'keen, green' soldier who  
participated in Brigade Mil Skills and shooting comps. I also won a  
unit Soldier of the Year trophy, which I only mention because my OC  
organised a 'prize' for me to go to Thailand with 1RAR as a grunt in an  
Infantry section.

I mention Thailand too because, on that trip, everyone I shared a  
gun pit with said something along the lines, "This trip is so awesome,  
someone should write to ARMY News about it". So I volunteered.

I submitted a story to ARMY News – where, if you're familiar with the  
process, they 'butchered' my story to turn it into a 'news report'.

I also offered the story to The Northern Services Courier – a free local  
military 'rag'. They published my story without changing a thing – and I  
was hooked. For the next 18 months, I never missed getting something  
published in 'The Courier' – and a couple of things in ARMY News.

I also went to Canberra, twice, to spend time at ARMY News to learn  
how they wanted me to write for them.

Then a vacancy came up at Army Newspaper Unit and I applied. I was  
rejected three times, but eventually got selected when the third-picked  
guy broke his arm. Was I crap? I don't think so – and I think I turned out  
OK in the end. Was I a pain in the arse? Probably. And, persistence paid  
off because I was posted to Army Newspaper Unit in January 1998.

Long story short – I was there less than five years, but made sergeant  
before they civilianised the editor's job and gutted morale.

I kicked up so much fuss on behalf of my soldiers, they eventually  
'offered' me a reporter's job at RAAF Newspaper (which didn't have any  
reporters to that time) and tried sell it as 'a new opportunity'.

Instead, I opted to transfer to the Active Reserve – and got a job as  
the first ever PR photographer with the Federal Police. An awesome job  
– but a story for another day.

About a year after leaving ARMY News, a corporal who was still  
working there told me they were shutting down ARMY Magazine  
(which all the reporters loved, because it was the main reason we  
got to go out in the field, to do in-depth reporting) – and they were  
shutting it down because the civvie editor cried "staffing issues".

So, that corporal and I decided to start CONTACT Magazine, mainly as  
a "fuck you – just two staff members could do it – and do a better job  
than you – on our own time, with our own money, as a hobby, in secret".  
So we did. And when that editor saw the first issue of CONTACT, in  
March 2004, he ran straight to his boss to scheme shutting us down!!!

Nearly 15 years later CONTACT is still here (though my corporal  
partner-in-crime has moved on).

And I'm still in the Army Active Reserve, still in the Australian Army  
Public Relations Service, still officially posted to ARMY Newspaper – but  
definitely not working there.

And I'm still a pain in their arse :-)

Sincerely,

Brian Hartigan  
Managing Editor

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# INCOMING

## WEAPONS' GUIDE

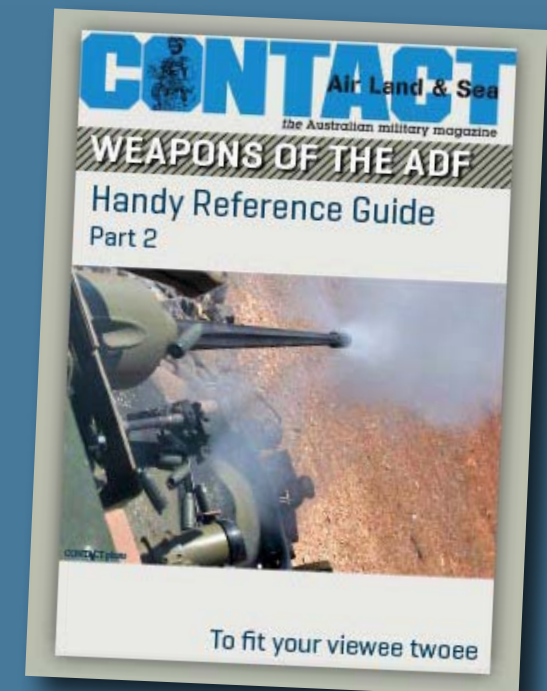
I have just downloaded your Viewee Twoee sized "Weapons of the ADF" document and it has already taken pride and place in my grab bag.

As I am Navy and I operate in a predominantly Green Ops space, this will help me no end when the greenskins start on about weapons and such.

I was wondering if you have thought of making a similar document for the vehicles/aircraft/waterborne craft of the ADF as a handy reference?

**Cheers, Pat F via email**

*Thank you very much for your kind feedback, Pat. It's awesome to hear someone getting some use/value out of it. A (armoured) and B (soft skin) vehicles will definitely make up a future expansion of the guide – though I might hold off until a couple of outstanding projects/orders are confirmed. I also have ships and watercraft in mind to cover in another expansion pack – and aircraft (fixed-wing and rotary) too – Ed.*



Viewee-twoee-sized **WEAPONS OF THE ADF** Part 2 available for **FREE** download [here](#)

## LEATHERMAN

**CONTACT** has a Blog Spot where fans and budding writers can air their thoughts or scratch a writing itch – and maybe win an awesome **Leatherman Skeetool RX Rescue** valued at \$184 in the process.



We invite Guest Bloggers with military leanings to contribute on a regular, semi-regular or one-off basis to the **CONTACT** Blog Spot.

This **Leatherman** giveaway competition closes on 10 March 2017. Conditions apply – [see here](#) for full details.

## SWBTA

*[re expansion of Shoalwater Bay and High Range training areas – and Sir Jeffrey Armiger's dummy spit]*

Slipping **CONTACT**. Can you really believe that land owners wouldn't want to sell at top dollar to defence and still have years to move their livestock off the property. I can understand properties abounding High Range, a large property to south was taken last year. Where is your support, for the ADF and our country or some political BS. High Range needs to and should be expanded, I am sure some farmers around Shoalwater will sell but that place is massive so I don't see defence purchasing too much. Let's even put our greenie hat on, defence will do better land care for its training areas than farmers will. Left wing BS.

**Terry Toon via Facebook**

*Terry. Attacks like this cut deep – but I won't retaliate here, and especially not on Facebook. You can see my answer to you on page 7, or in expanded form here. Sir Jeffrey's rant speaks for itself – Ed*

## TARGETS UP!

This page is a great outlet for fans to vent or to praise. Please, let us know what you think of our magazines and Internet sites so we can deliver more of what you want. Feel free to write to [editor@militarycontact.com](mailto:editor@militarycontact.com) about **CONTACT** or on any military topic – Ed

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



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# AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL AIRSHOW AT AVALON



An F/A-18F Super Hornet from No. 1 Squadron, RAAF Base Amberley, thrills trade-day crowds on the first day of the Australian International Airshow at Avalon, Victoria.

Because the 'Avalon Airshow' is currently running (28 February to 5 March for the trade, and 3-5 March for public access) and with this magazine published on day two, we only had time and space to include this teaser photo from one of our photographers on site.

But don't worry – we have two great photographers covering the show for us and anticipate receiving hundreds of awesome photos – enough to fill a whole other magazine, in fact.

That's why, on 2 April, we will publish a Special Issue of COMBAT Camera magazine dedicated entirely to the awesome action at Avalon.



# CONTENDERS



A BAE Systems Australia Patria AMV35 (above) and a Rheinmetall Boxer CRV (below) on the move at Puckapunyal, Victoria, during a Project Land 400 Risk Mitigation Activity. Land 400 Phase 2 is a project to purchase 225 combat reconnaissance vehicles to replace the in-service ASLAV.



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# How the Australian Army is CHANGING LIVE-FIRE COMBAT TRAINING



There can be little doubt that the Australian Army is looking very seriously at new and better ways for the Land Combatant to train and fight.

Head Modernisation and Strategic Plans – Army, Major General Gus McLachlan (now Army's Forces Commander) directed the Soldier Combat Systems Program in Army Headquarters to work with Army's Functional Commands, the Combined Arms Training Centre, Brigades and Units, Australian Target Systems, Marathon Targets and Zero Latency to run a series of trials and risk-reduction activities that would set the conditions for the technologies, training methods and instructional techniques to be institutionalised within Forces Command.

The watershed moment occurred in December 2016, when a newly raised Combat Shooting Cell at the School of Infantry received the virtual torch from Special Forces.

This new Combat Shooting Cell will be the hub from where new training will now be delivered to the wider organisation.

This is the first step, with more to come.

CONTACT interviewed Major Dan Harrison from Soldier Combat Systems – Army Headquarters, at the Combat Shooting Cell Risk Reduction Activity at Majura Range, Canberra, in December and what he outlined sounded very exciting.

Following is just a synopsis, with more detail to come in future issues of CONTACT.

Major Harrison said, "In the past 12 months, the Australian Army has been conducting a number of activities that will inform its needs and requirements for an institutionalised approach to combat shooting and the modernisation of soldier ammunition, targetry, training areas and ranges.

There are eight trials and activities that are designed to modernise the way that the Army trains and fights using live-fire and combat shooting..."



## WE SHOULD UNASHAMEDLY ASPIRE TO BE THE BEST ARMY IN THE WORLD, ALBEIT NOT THE BIGGEST

– CHIEF OF THE AUSTRALIAN ARMY, LIEUTENANT GENERAL ANGUS CAMPBELL ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RYAN REVIEW INTO ARMY TRAINING, EDUCATION AND DOCTRINE





## STEEL TRIAL

A trial was conducted at SASR on targetry made of super-high hardness steel that disintegrates 5.56mm ball ammunition.

This allows for steel target shooting at distances as close as 7m.

Steel allows a firer to get very good, very quickly because of the instant feedback that it gives. A shooter can make corrections to the way they shoot without having to pause and look down at a visual display unit or walk downrange to inspect and patch a plastic target.

## ROBOTIC MOVING TARGETRY

In conjunction with Marathon Targets, the producers of the well-known T-30 robot target also in service with the US Marine Corps and developed here in Australia, Army is refining its requirements for using this targetry in the future. Complete with Artificial Intelligence that responds to stimuli, can talk and yell and provides a stimulus response when shot.

## CONTEMPORARY TARGETRY AND EQUIPMENT

*The resistance to the close-range killing of one's own species is so great that it is often sufficient to overcome the cumulative influences of the instinct for self-protection, the coercive forces of leadership, the expectancy of peers, and the obligation to preserve the lives of comrades... what is being trained in this environment is the ability to shoot reflexively and instantly and a precise mimicry of the act of killing on the modern battlefield. Every aspect of killing on the battlefield is rehearsed, visualised and conditioned.* David Grossman, "On Killing" 2009.

In conjunction with Australian Target Systems, the Australian Army is investing in the development of new targetry for appropriate phases in an individual's training progression that is not only more realistic but enjoyable to use.

## COMBINED ARMS RANGE IN A BOX

In conjunction with Australian Target Systems and the School of Armour in Puckapunyal, the Australian Army is seeking to develop deployable and mobile targetry that will be suitable for the suite of new weapons and sensors that will become available through the Heavy Weapons Modernisation Project and Land 400 – the future Combat Reconnaissance Vehicle and Infantry Fighting Vehicle.

## COMBAT RANGE IN A BOX

In conjunction with Australian Target Systems, this capability has the ability to turn any range into a million-dollar combat shooting range with dual friend or foe twin turning targets, GPS guided moving targets and a complete intelligent range management system that allows users to create new types of range shoots within minutes.

## IMMERSIVE SIMULATION

In conjunction with Zero Latency, a recreational Virtual Reality Company in Melbourne that develops moving first person shooter scenarios, Army is investigating the use of this technology for immersive style training. This particular form of Virtual Reality has overcome many of the challenges with motion sickness associated with the technology.

## FLY AWAY ACTIVITIES

On establishing the Combat Shooting Cell at the School of Infantry, this new cell in conjunction with Australian Target Systems is trialling the ability for the complete combat shooting package to be exported to external training locations such as in combat brigades.



## COMBAT SHOOTING CELL

This activity formally transitioned the combat shooting skills developed within Special Operations Command, over the past 10 years, to the School of Infantry.





### WHAT DID THE STUDENTS THINK?

- "I cannot recommend this course highly enough. It develops confidence and demonstrates a teaching technique that is much more effective than I've previously experienced."
- "This course teaches ways of thinking, not simply skills."
- "The techniques enabled faster training and better retention of knowledge and skills"

### ...AND AN INSTRUCTOR

"It gives students much more confidence in their abilities, a much higher level of confidence in their ability to pass on this information, and the motivation and the excitement to make their own soldiers the best they can be."

– Corporal Mark Donaldson, VC

### INFORMING OUR NEEDS FOR FUTURE RANGES AND TRAINING AREAS

Army is investigating its needs with regards to optimised range facilities, in conjunction with the raft of trials and risk reduction activities currently underway.

As the new Head Land Capability, Major General (Kath) Toohey replacing Major General (Gus)

McLachlan has seen the training, the instructional techniques and these technologies first hand, and under the continuing direction of Brigadier Chris Mills, Director General Modernisation – Army, will be well informed to make important decisions on their future growth paths.

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# NEW REALITY-BASED INTERVIEW

ACCIDENTAL PSYCHOLOGIST HELPING TURN AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING ON ITS HEAD

According to the Internet, Canadian-born Ken Murray co-invented Simunition, is passionate about reality-based training and is the Director of Training for the Armiger Police Training Institute ([www.armiger.net](http://www.armiger.net)) near Orlando, Florida.

What the Internet doesn't say is that Ken Murray is a 'force of nature'.

I met him at a special-forces-run range activity at Majura military range complex in Canberra, during a lunch break.

On first sight, he was tall and lean, shoulder-length white hair – and dressed in Aussie SF uniform, huddled with Aussie SF dudes.

On introduction, I got my hand crushed, but still managed to extract and operate a recording device to capture the following 'interview' – in which Ken asked and answered the questions in a wonderfully engaging monologue that lasted almost exactly 30 minutes – edited and abridged as follows...

Ken starts off by explaining the genesis of Simunition, the paint-marking training ammunition for real guns.

**I**t was an interesting journey that started out as a dalliance with paintball, in Quebec, Canada. We took a bunch of girls – let them hang out by the pool – and the bunch of guys went and duked it out in the field. I thought this was so much fun I wanted to run one myself. So I thought, I'm just going to buy some paintballs. No you're not, he said, they don't exist, you can't get them. It was a very, very tight market.

I happened to encounter a guy who was making the only Canadian paintball gun that existed. As I do with anybody I really need something from, I made him my friend. Over philosophical beverages, we thought it would be interesting if we could do this with real guns given that we had enthusiasts from the police and military worlds coming out to the paintball fields and getting annihilated by weekend-warrior kids that had been doing it recreationally for a long time.

This posed a really interesting question. How can these people with no tactical training or experience be annihilating people who were supposed to be the defenders of freedom?

And, when we thought about it, there was a very simple answer – you just learn how to get out of the way of a projectile.

None of the training that had been done up to that point taught us how to do that. From laser beams to the goofy standing shoulder-to-shoulder training that is still prevalent in police and military circles today, we've been missing the boat because we've been standing on the wrong dock for many, many years.

So we thought, let's do this, without understanding the technical challenges involved. We investigated everything from the candy industry to the make-up industry in trying to design a ballistically stable, light projectile that wouldn't explode when you propelled it with an explosive charge. It was a huge technical challenge. But, long story short, we obviously overcame, and produced a disruptive technology that changed the way the world thought about what we could do with paintballs and guns.

But then we ran head-on into organisational belief systems that say, "We have safety rules that prohibit us from pointing guns at anything we don't intend to shoot or destroy. We're in the serious business of teaching people how to use firearms safely and you're violating our safety protocols. You need to get off my range and don't come back".

But, how can you teach people to gunfight if you're not going to gunfight?

Adding a consequence – such as pain or competition – to gunfighting training simply helps us to emotionalise the experience in a way that's never been done before. But, start talking like that in some circles and they think you're crazy.

Like any new technology, we had to get just a few people to invest themselves in the idea. The innovators – if they're the cool enough kids – are the one or two percenters who are going to do things despite the fact the technology is sub standard, just because they want to be first. In our world, when we're talking about innovators, we're talking about special-operations organisations, like Seals.

Then come the early adopters, the ones who look at what the innovators are doing and say, "That's interesting, I want to try that too".

My first breakthrough was on a Marine Corps base, down around Norfolk, Virginia, where I caught the



attention of some counter-intelligence guy who said, "That's a fun technology. We have no need for it, but I think I know a guy who might be interested". He walked me right in the back door to some Seal Team Six ops-research guy who sat in a cubical. On his little corkboard, there was a cartoon of a king in his armoury, with chipped swords and broken helmets and shattered shields. His knight is knocking on the door, with a guy in a shiny suit with an M60 machine gun, saying, "Sire, there's a weapons salesman here to see you". The king doesn't even turn around, and says, "Tell him to piss off, can't you see I'm getting ready for war". Underneath, the Seal Team guy had written, "Never be too busy to see the next cool thing".

So, he said, "Show me the next cool thing". We had found our innovator. Now for the early adopters – which were the Seal Teams and the Ranger battalions.

Then we moved up from SWAT teams to more advanced police – our 'early majority' – then 'late majority' – and it started to tip.

When it started to tip, big personalities starting to take over and started doing stupid things with it. "Of course we stand here shoulder to shoulder. We can't move one person ahead of the next person. That's dangerous. We've got bullets and we've got fields of fire and arcs we need to concern ourselves with. It's doctrinal."

So now we decided we needed to teach too. I started developing training schools on how to effectively use these technologies.

What we were able to convince people of was that conventional munitions require so much structure and order around them that they get in the way of realistic gunfighter behaviours.

Many of the things we program people to do on the range will get in the way of what you need them to do in combat. But, with non-consequential technologies, you can start working in 360-degree realistic environments.

I discovered that I'm an accidental psychologist, because what we're really doing is playing around with the internal workings of the experiential mind of human beings. That means that because the way the fear mind works, if we horrify people in the beginning then we're creating phobias.

We come into this world with four innate fears – loud noises, sudden approach, falling and smothering. That's it. A baby who knows nothing will react to these four stimuli, and not much else.

In traditional training, when we start dealing in the armed or combative arts, we're activating a super phobia of a lot of the things we actually want people to do in combat.

Think in terms of dog training. There's two types of dogs that will bite you, a good, aggressive, well-





trained dog, and a fear biter. A good, well-trained dog, I can send, I can recall, I can stop in place, I can have him play with my kids. With a fear biter, you can't do that. They're unpredictable, they won't go when you send them, they won't return when you call them, they'll bite anybody and I sure as hell wouldn't trust them with my kids.

In the military and law enforcement community, we've been creating a lot of fear biters unintentionally, and we need to be cautious about that.

Here in Australia, we've just got through the early adopter stage and now we're teaching in the innovator stage.

Because combat shooting is just a small piece of warfighter optimisation, using the philosophies that we're trying to instil in the instructor cadre here at this activity at Majura Range will work whether you're a paper pusher or a fighter pilot, because we're teaching people how to think.

We can teach people how to win physically, but are they going to win socially? Are we going to win the Twitter war? Are we going to win the media war? Are we going to win the social battle where we now have to go and justify to our society what it is we're doing? Why it is that we're spending their tax dollars in this way and why is it that we're putting their sons and daughters in jeopardy? Are we going to win morally and ethically? Or are we just going to be a bunch of

conquerors? Are we going to win psychologically or are we going to bring people back from overseas as broken individuals?

In America, they've got something called Project 22, where they recognise that 22 soldiers a day are murdering themselves in the wake of all the things they've encountered down range, and coming back to a system that doesn't support them. That is absolutely incomprehensible to me and it must change. But it has to first change in the training realm and it has to change at the doctrinal level.

How do we prepare our soldiers to do something and then not support them when they do? That has to change on a societal level.

We need to win financially, which means we're not spending all of our money down there and going bankrupt doing it. We need to apply the correct dollars for the correct tool to do the correct job and know that people have a job when they come back.

We're taking the seven survival skills approach to creating this optimised war fighter and this little idea we're now working on and bringing industry and military and our social partners together on, is going to take us into that innovator phase. We know it works – we've done it on the micro level with organisations like Seal Team Six and SASR.

The big question is, can we now export this to larger army?

The belief system suggests that we can't because the people are too stupid. Well, who's creating the stupid people? Our society in many ways because we're creating a bunch of ADD kids with 160 characters to communicate with. Then, as soon as they get off the bus at every boot camp I've seen, we're scaring the shit out of them by screaming and chasing them around with an anxiety stick, and then wonder why they're scared of guns.

One of the first things they see before they get to touch a gun is the 'guns are horrifying' video, instead of, 'Hey here's something that won't hurt you if you use it right. There's nothing about this thing that's going to hurt you if you know what you're doing. Let's take it apart, let's fuck around with it, let's see what it does'. They're going to learn how to not do this or that so that it doesn't go bang when we don't want it to, or when we do want it to that it's pointed in the right direction. Then we'll put it into a contextual setting so that we build this thing up until we can move, shoot, communicate. Then we can test it at a higher level, putting a lot more emotional content in there.

But if we don't think about it at the innovator phase and start moving it through the larger organisational phase, where they might resist it just for the sake of resistance, how do we get this out to our sons and daughters to make sure we're creating the best warfighters in the world?

Reality-based training is a modality that we use to replicate in a simulation realm – in a pretend environment – the things we want them to do operationally, safely, out in the battlefield, in a risk-seeking environment.

If we create a risk-adverse personality and send them into a risk-seeking environment, we're putting them in harms way, and society by extension. That's kind of what this whole thing is about.

We're so acclimated to an arranged environment where 'that' is down range in training – but, what's 'down range' in an operational environment? All of it, everywhere, right?

There's a great video I encourage you to watch. Google it. It's called the Backwards Bicycle with Dustin Chandler. He's a rocket scientist. His engineers decided to play a trick on him, so they created a bicycle that when you turn the handlebars to the right, it went left and turn to the left and it went right.

Chandler thought, 'This will be easy, I'll just think my way through it'. It took him eight months at five minutes a day to learn how to ride a backwards bicycle. But the sick thing about it was, once he could ride the backwards bicycle, he had forgotten how to ride a regular bike.

We have in our head, neurologically wired-in patterns and the more we do something through repetition, the deeper the pattern goes. What you learn in training is what you will automatically fall back on under pressure.

Then if we add belief system on top of that...

If you have some old crusty warrant officer who doesn't believe that we can create thinking soldiers – who'd rather his soldiers did what they're told rather

than think for themselves – then he ends up chasing them around with an anxiety stick.

But you can't learn that way. It actually shuts your brain down to learning. There is no value in it. In fact there's negative value and you're going to humiliate people and they're not going to want to learn.

But, if you understand an equation and appreciate the process, you can get into more complex equations, more complex thinking.

Likewise, if you're trying to instil a fitness personality in somebody, why make the gym a miserable place to go? Show me the training value in that.

On the range, if you make it a bad place to be – fill shooters with anxiety – you're going to break people for the range.

Old thinking is, 'We need to create tough people'.

Well, resilience doesn't mean throwing them in the deep end with no swimming lessons. You're going to drown people that way. While you might have 1 or 2 per cent who will figure out, splashing around, how to save themselves, that's only your 1-percenter people.

Heraclitus said that out of every 100 people in combat, 10 shouldn't really be there, 80 are just targets, 9 are good fighters and we're lucky to have them for they the battle make – ah but the one – one is a warrior and we must find him, for he shall bring the others back.

You could take the nine and the one, give them a DVD, some weapons and some ammunition and they'd come out in a few weeks as pretty good warfighters.

The 10, they really shouldn't be here and we need to find a filtering process to not let them put themselves – and us by extension – in harms way.

It's the 80 that concern me. The 80 are the ones that we're wrecking from day one as soon as we get them off the bus at Kapooka and start chasing them around with a fucking swagger stick.

You go down to most conventional firearms ranges and you're having people scream out, turn left, turn right, fire this, fire that. All they're doing is following directions. That's drill. They're not teaching them warfighter behaviours. In fact they're scaring the shit out of people with guns in a contextual setting. That makes it even worse.

Using the methodologies we're using here at Majura this month really does create someone who thinks their way through a problem. Today, for example, we're practicing a lesson that involves moving a VIP across an open area. They get contact from above, they start shooting. First time they ran through this they grabbed the VIP, pushed forward to the container they were getting shot at from and hunkered in place. So we pressed the pause button and asked, what are you thinking right now? This was the nearest available cover they said. What's your goal? we asked. Protect the VIP they said. So, is your goal to engage these bad guys or to get the VIP out of here? What was your last known safe place? Back there where the vehicles are. Okay. So you're still in a risky position and the bad guys know where you are and they own this terrain. So, does it make sense hunkering here? No. Okay, so let's try it a different way.

Now they are thinking.





In the old way, we probably would have stood there and yelled, "You idiots. You just put these guys in jeopardy. You go to your room and think about what you've done."

That way, you've practiced failure, painted it with shame and made them think about failure over and over again. Show me the training value in that.

If we can create thinking soldiers through emotionally and intellectually engaging and not fear-producing responses, then we can actually wire in future behaviours.

There's no shelf life on experience. You've at least heard of it not experienced the idea of your life flashing before your eyes in a critical incident. That's your brain in high-speed retrieval mode, searching through your experiences, looking for something in your past to bring forward to save your life in this moment. If the only thing you've got in the past is getting chased around by some prick with an anxiety stick and told what a worthless soldier you are, that's the thing you're brain will retrieve.

Through the old methods, we're actually creating more of the '10 and 80 people' and losing the 'nine and one' people.

But there's a process for fixing that. That's what we are trying to do here. This is where it all begins. This is the concept the Australian Army is now reconciling with.

No professional sports franchise would do it any other way – and we are a professional sports franchise. And, as the biggest professional sports franchise in the country, preparing our elite athletes for the super bowl, we have an obligation, a moral and a legal obligation to prepare our people with the best neuroscience, the best trainers, with the best technology money can buy.

Even if it costs more and takes more time. Right?

But – here's the cool part – it doesn't. It costs less and it takes less time. But the thing is, we need to concentrate those dollars on the front end, not the back end. And we need to think differently about how we're doing things in an organisation that's not good at change. We have to challenge doctrine that exists in binders where the pages were written by people who still exist inside the organisation – and we have to rip those pages out when those same authors are wearing a lot more rank on their sleeves.

So, how do we get past that? Do we have to wait for those people to move on? Do we have to wait for our society to collapse before we change the way we protect it? Or can we change little bits over time?

We make small changes as we get through the innovators, to the early adopters to the early majority, and eventually to the late majority – until "that's just the way it is done around here".

Meanwhile, we need to either bring the people who have resisted us back into the fold and prove to them that this is the better way – or we send them in the direction of the tar pit. Because, if the idea of military modernisation is simply putting new paint on a catapult, that's stupid.

Our job is to think our way through this. For the seven years I've been involved in this organisation, I couldn't be prouder than to see exactly what's happening now and where we are with this trial period.

When the Australian Army gets this right, they're going to make you famous and tell this story all over the planet – about how you can take an idea like this, adapt and model it, and turn it loose on an organisation – for its own protection.

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## SERVED TO THE VERY LAST

**Corporal David Steven Askin GS**  
**New Zealand Special Air Service Regiment**

known as Steve to his friends and colleagues, was killed in a helicopter crash while fighting bushfires near Christchurch, New Zealand, on 14 February 2017

**T**he New Zealand Defence Force confirmed reports that a helicopter pilot who died in a crash while fighting fires in Port Hills near Christchurch on 14 February was a decorated soldier who served with 1<sup>st</sup> New Zealand Special Air Service Regiment in Afghanistan.

Corporal David Steven Askin, known as Steve, was awarded the New Zealand Gallantry Star in 2014 for service in Afghanistan, including a famous incident at the Intercontinental Hotel in Kabul in 2011.

During that incident, Corporal Askin was wounded by grenade and rifle fire, yet carried on with his mission and rescued guests from the hotel as fire broke out.

He was also cited on a number of other occasions for exceptional bravery during operations in Afghanistan.

The Gallantry Star is New Zealand's second-highest gallantry award, presented for acts of outstanding gallantry in situations of danger.

Chief of Army Major General Peter Kelly said Corporal Askin had lived up to the finest traditions of the New Zealand Army.

"Our thoughts are with his family, friends and comrades at this time," Major General Kelly said.

"He was an outstanding soldier who served his country with bravery and commitment – the same bravery and commitment



Steve Askin was farewelled in a moving service, attended by more than 500 people, at the Air Force Museum of New Zealand in Christchurch, on 20 February 2017.

he showed in helping his community fight these fires.

"During his time in Afghanistan, Corporal Askin displayed great gallantry and leadership in the face of the enemy.

"He often put himself in the line of fire, and put the objectives of the mission before his personal wellbeing."

Corporal Askin's medallic recognition was announced, without his identity being made public, in December 2014 by Defence Minister Gerry Brownlee.

**The citation reads:**  
*Serviceman D displayed outstanding gallantry on several occasions in Afghanistan in 2011. Serviceman D repeatedly faced heavy fire from determined enemies and sustained several wounds in the line of duty, while contributing to the resolution of several incidents, the protection of civilian life and undermining*

*enemy operations. Serviceman D's performance was of the highest order and in keeping with the finest traditions of New Zealand's military record.*

### **A new life of service:**

Rob Kittow, principal of Way to Go Heliservices for whom Steve Askin worked, said, Steve was a much loved and vital member of their team, and always exemplified the attitude of the quiet professional.

"Steve has always served his community, either with his career in the military or as yesterday when he was fighting the Port Hills fire," Mr Kittow said.

"Steve had responded with his machine when the alarm was first raised on Monday night to protect threatened properties and had returned yesterday morning to help fight the fire.

"Steve has had an association with Way to Go Heliservices since 2008, first as ground support

then flying duties. He has been a valued member of the North Canterbury community.

"Steve has long been involved in helicopter fire fighting. For instance the Flock Hill fire two years ago and many since, including the recent Broken River fire when most Cantabrians were enjoying the Waitangi weekend.

"Steve was heavily involved in helping the Kaikoura community following last year's earthquake, flying electricity workers into the back country as they worked to restore power to the cut off community.

"Steve loved New Zealand and the outdoors. His professionalism and dedication to duty was an inspiration."

David Steven 'Steve' Askin enlisted in the New Zealand Army in 1998 and, while he left the full-time Army in 2013, he remained an active member of the SAS Reserves.





# EXERCISE RED FLAG

After three weeks of high-intensity missions, Exercise Red Flag 17-1 concluded with a good report card.

A 200-strong contingent of Royal Australian Air Force personnel deployed to Nellis Air Force Base in Nevada with an E-7A Wedgetail command and control aircraft and a C-130J Hercules transport, in January, for the three-week exercise.

There they joined colleagues from the United States and United Kingdom – in fact, for the first time ever, a non-American took a senior commanded position on the exercise, with RAAF officer Group Captain Stuart Bellingham commanding the Combined Air and Space Operations Centre.

Another first for this exercise – and very interesting to the Australians too – was the debut appearance of the F-35A Lightning Joint Strike Fighter.

For the Australian contingent, the participation of USAF-operated F-35As, as well as the United States Navy's E/A-18G Growler electronic attack jet, provided

exposure to two capabilities that will soon enter RAAF service.

"We are integrated with these capabilities from start to finish, from planning missions, through to debriefing the missions," Group Captain Bellingham said.

"Australia has air battlespace managers from No. 2 Squadron (E-7A Wedgetail operators) and No. 41 Wing (part of Surveillance and Response Group) who are controlling the Red Flag airspace, and getting firsthand experience how these capabilities can be employed.

"We're getting real insight into understanding the capabilities and what Australia's future is going to look like."

After the first eight days "at war" and more than 100 sorties, the USAF reported that the F-35A Lightning II was proving to be an invaluable asset with a claimed 15-to-1 kill ratio.

Lieutenant Colonel George Watkins, an F-35 pilot and 34<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron commander, said the first

day they flew (on defensive counter-air) they didn't lose a single friendly aircraft.

"That's unheard of," Lieutenant Colonel Watkins said.

"Because of the aircraft's increased capability, exercise planners then increased the complexity of scenarios for the 'Blue Air' players.

"The number of adversaries has increased, their skill level has increased, the sophistication of the surface-to-air threat has increased."

So how good is it – how did the F-35A fare in a sophisticated warfighting environment?

While Lieutenant Colonel Watkins did confirm a 15-to-1 kill ratio for the Lightning, he explained that that figure didn't really mean anything in the bigger picture of Exercise Red Flag.

He said the kill ratio was a little misleading because the F-35 was tasked with taking out ground threats while F-22s and F-15Cs took care of the air-to-air threat.

"This Red Flag's scenarios and the aggressors they're putting up for the missions we're flying are significantly more complex and aggressive than previous years.

"I've been to about four Red Flags, one as recent as a year and a half ago flying an F-16, and I've never seen a Red Flag like this where they put up as many advanced threats against us.

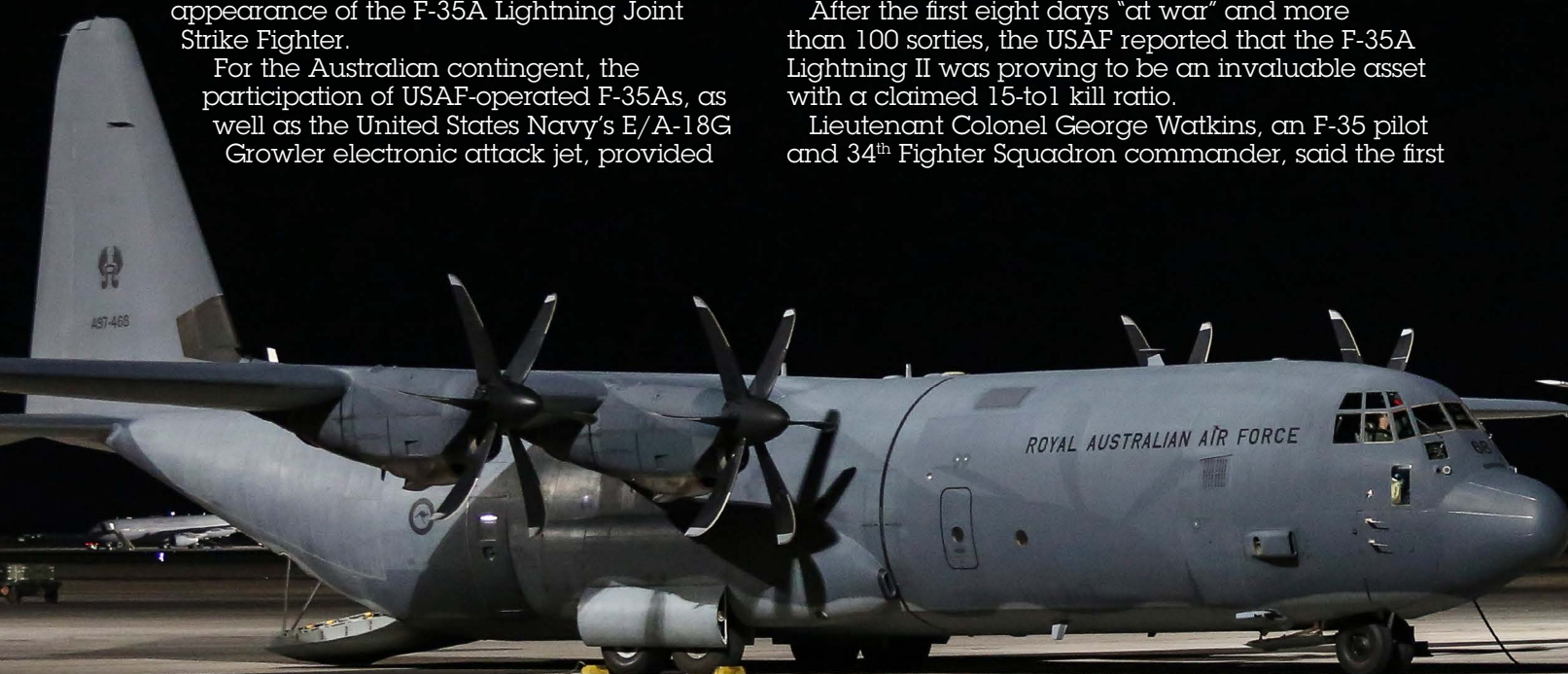
"This is a training exercise for pilots, so if we didn't suffer a few losses it wouldn't be challenging enough.

"So there are some threats out there that make it through because of the sheer numbers and advanced missiles that they're shooting at us.

"We have had one or two losses so far in our training, which is good for the pilots.

"But, right now we're counting about 15-to-one kill ratio for aggressors to F35s, even though the air-to-air mission is not our primary role.

"So I guess you could say we're doing very, very well."



RAAF C-130J Hercules (bottom left) and E-7A Wedgetail (below).  
Top left: F-35A Lightning II  
Film strip: RAAF 4 Sqn Combat Controllers check a dry lake bed for suitability to land a C-130.





# RED FLAG

Group Captain Stuart Bellingham (tall man beside Skippy) and the Air Battlespace Management team for Exercise Red Flag 17-1, comprising members of the Royal Australian Air Force, Royal Australian Navy and the United States Marine Corps.



## RAAF GROUP CAPTAIN STUART BELLINGHAM BECAME THE FIRST NON-AMERICAN TO COMMAND THE COMBINED AIR AND SPACE OPERATIONS CENTRE AT A RED FLAG EXERCISE

Group Captain Bellingham said integrating the E-7A Wedgetail alongside the F-35, the F-22 and the E/A-18G Growler was giving the RAAF invaluable exposure to capabilities that are coming to Australia in the very near future. "This exercise is fundamental to our air force preparation," he said.

"We've been coming to Red Flags for more than 30 years, where we get outstanding coalition integration, alongside our key allies, the advanced air power construct around the fifth-gen aircraft and gaining insight into how we'll work alongside them in a highly complex, near-peer adversary fight."

The first Exercise Red Flag was held in November 1975, born out of the USAF's analysis of the Vietnam War, which found an aircrew's chances of survival was much higher if they had flown at least 10 combat missions. Those 10 missions are now conducted in a

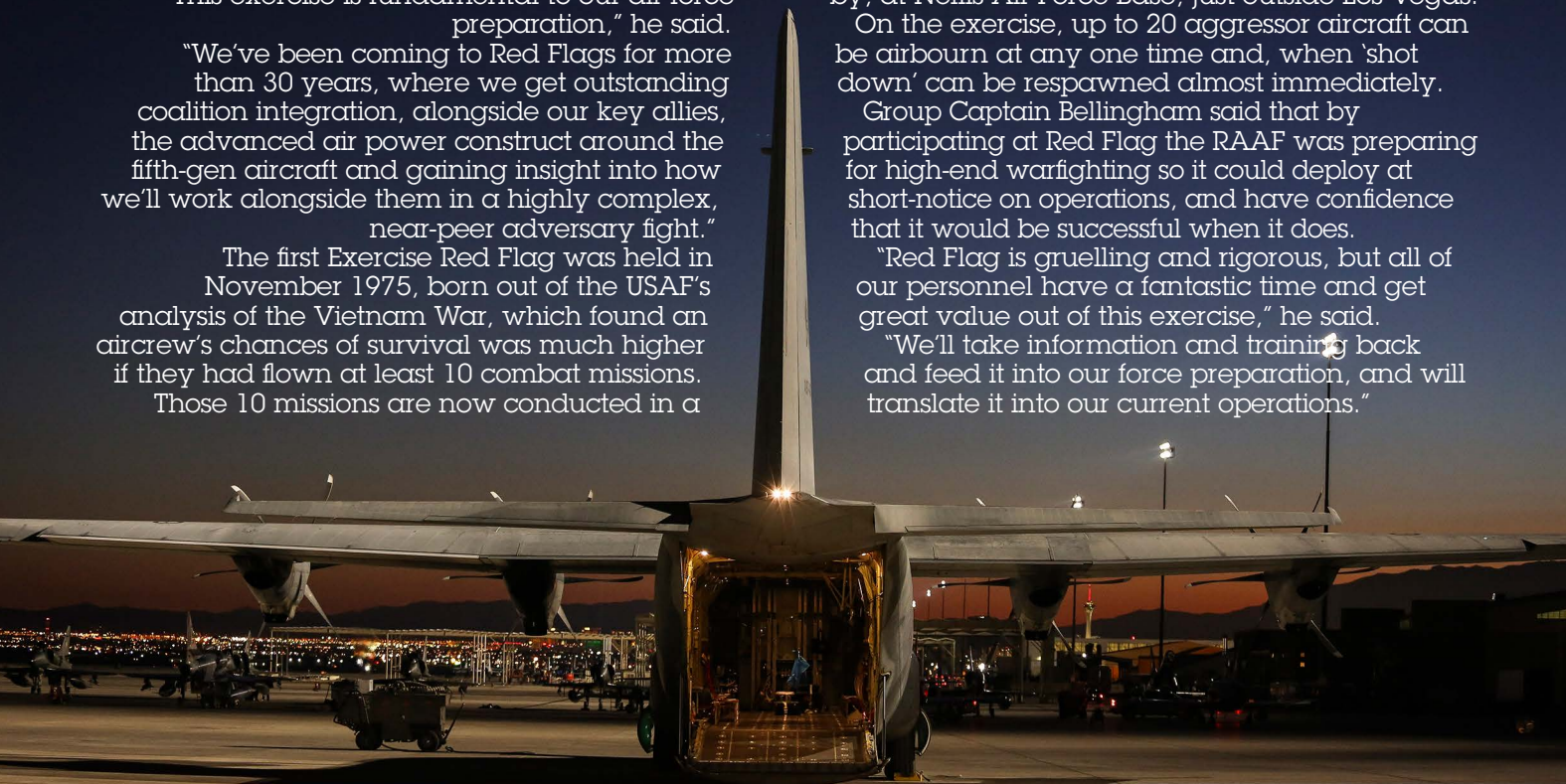
modern and simulated high-threat environment at Red Flag, within the 31,000-square-kilometre Nevada Test and Training Range, which is turned into a simulation of a high-end-threat battlespace.

The aircraft and crews are accommodated close by, at Nellis Air Force Base, just outside Los Vegas. On the exercise, up to 20 aggressor aircraft can be airborne at any one time and, when 'shot down' can be respawned almost immediately.

Group Captain Bellingham said that by participating at Red Flag the RAAF was preparing for high-end warfighting so it could deploy at short-notice on operations, and have confidence that it would be successful when it does.

"Red Flag is gruelling and rigorous, but all of our personnel have a fantastic time and get great value out of this exercise," he said.

"We'll take information and training back and feed it into our force preparation, and will translate it into our current operations."



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## AUSTRALIA DAY ON OPS

Australian soldiers Private Callum Scott-Mills (left) and Lance Corporal Mitchell Bowman, from Task Group Taji 4 celebrate Australia Day 2017 at Taji Military Complex, Iraq.



# TASK GROUP TAJI



Corporal Thomas Stanesby

Around 1900 new police, trained by Australian and New Zealand soldiers, graduated from the Taji Military Complex on 16 February 2017.

Task Group Taji conducted six weeks of intensive instruction to the cohort from Iraq's Ninewah province comprising Sunni, Shia, Kurdish and Turkmen.

The ADF says more than 19,000 – NZDF says 20,000+ – Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) and Iraqi law enforcement personnel have now been trained under Task Group Taji since May 2015.

The Commander of Australia's Defence Forces in the Middle East region, Major General John Frewen said the graduation marked a significant milestone.

"This graduation is an important event as these Ninewah policemen will help ensure that we not only win the current fight but, more importantly, we win the subsequent peace," Major General Frewen said.

"Police forces are essential to building a capable and inclusive Iraq."

Commander Joint Forces New Zealand Major General Tim Gail said the latest graduation was not just a training milestone.

"The latest batch of trainees to march out now form part of stabilisation forces who are working to ensure that the gains made against Daesh – in Ramadi, Fallujah, east Mosul and other parts of Iraq – are sustained.

"By providing world-class training to the Iraqi Army and police forces our personnel help ensure there is a steady flow of capable fighters who can sustain the Iraqi military's counter-offensive operation against Daesh and keep the militants from regaining footholds in areas that have already been cleared," Major General Gail said.



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Corporal Brendan Gaut-Tye



Bombardier Luke Kerfoot



Corporal Brendan George

Task Group Taji Rotation 4 commander Colonel Richard Vagg said the recent graduates would undertake security and stabilisation tasks in and around Mosul, and in northern Iraq.

"Iraq's security forces, including federal and local police, are playing the lead role in defeating Daesh – then defending, holding and stabilising liberated areas," Colonel Vagg said.

"Our current group of trainers from the Australian and New Zealand Defence Forces have provided more than 1900 members of these forces with much-needed military skills.

"Iraqi Security Forces continue to lead the successful operation underway to liberate Mosul

and maintain security in territory recaptured from Daesh."

Colonel Vagg said that as more areas continue to be liberated from Daesh, strong and effective hold forces are a priority, to maintain security and support stabilisation operations.

"Hold forces such as the Ninewah Police are a key element in the ongoing clearance of Mosul.

"They will secure the now-cleared eastern side of the city, providing flank protection to the Counter Terrorism Service, Iraqi Army and Federal Police as they clear the western side."

"These police are determined to defend their country against Daesh."

Now in its fourth rotation, Task Group Taji is a combined force of around 300 Australian and 110 New Zealand Defence Force personnel, made up of trainers, force protection soldiers, support personnel and command elements.

The training they deliver includes law of armed conflict, weapons handling, marksmanship, combat first aid, explosive hazard awareness, obstacle breaching, combined-arms and urban operations.

NZDF PR says Small groups of the NZDF training and force protection teams are also travelling for short periods to other secure training locations in Iraq. While the Aussies may also be outreaching, they don't tend to publicise it.

Since last November, New Zealand soldiers have been training stabilisation forces such as the Iraqi Border Guards in addition to the Iraqi Army and police.

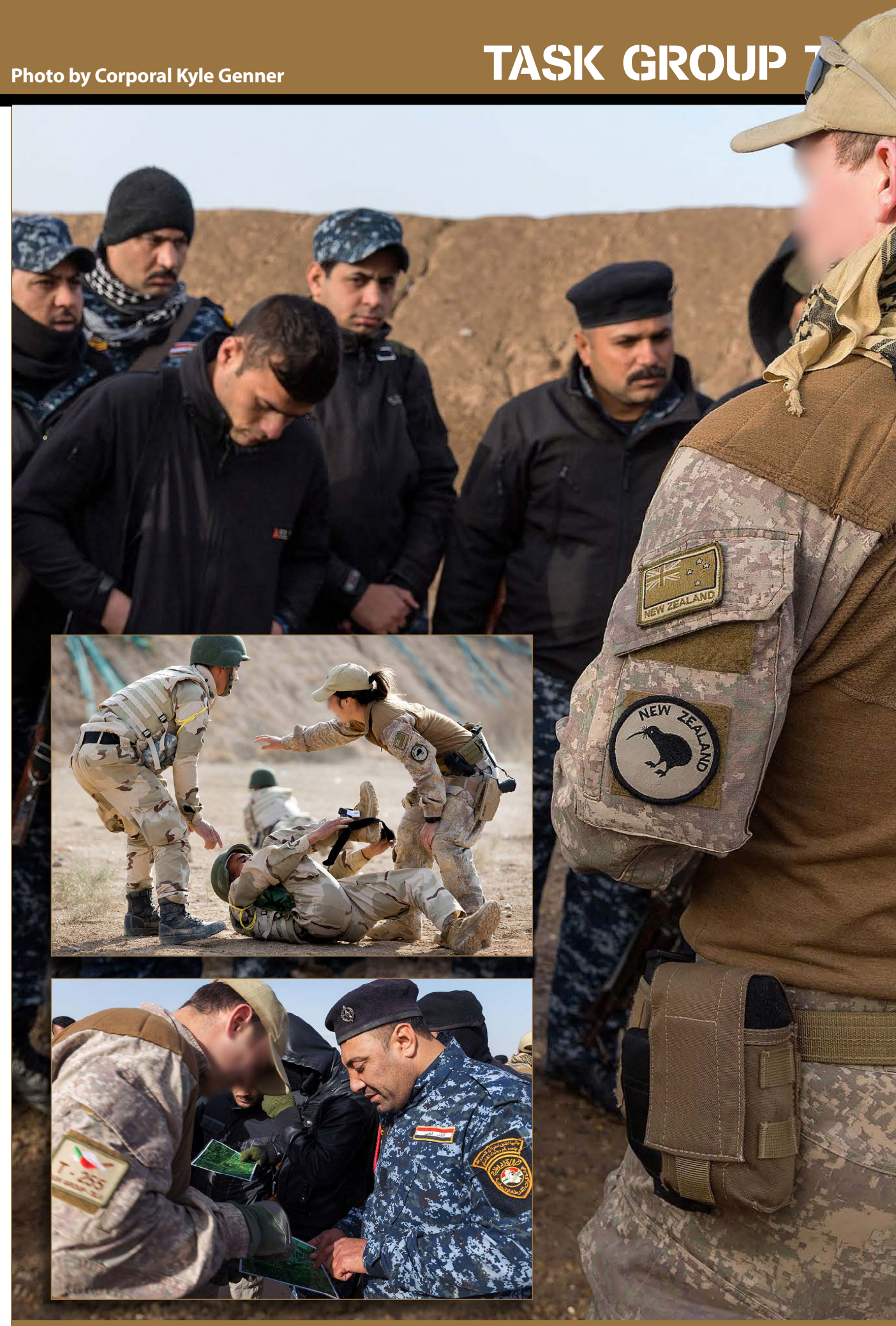
Task Group Taji became fully operational in May 2015 and both the Australian and New Zealand governments have committed to continue with the training until at least November 2018.

Task Group Taji is just one of several Australian and New Zealand operations in the Middle East. With Iraq (Taji and Air Task Group), Afghanistan, maritime patrol and their support elements, plus observers in Egypt, Sudan and Lebanon, there are more than 2000 ANZACs on duty in the region.



Photo by Corporal Kyle Genner

## TASK GROUP 7



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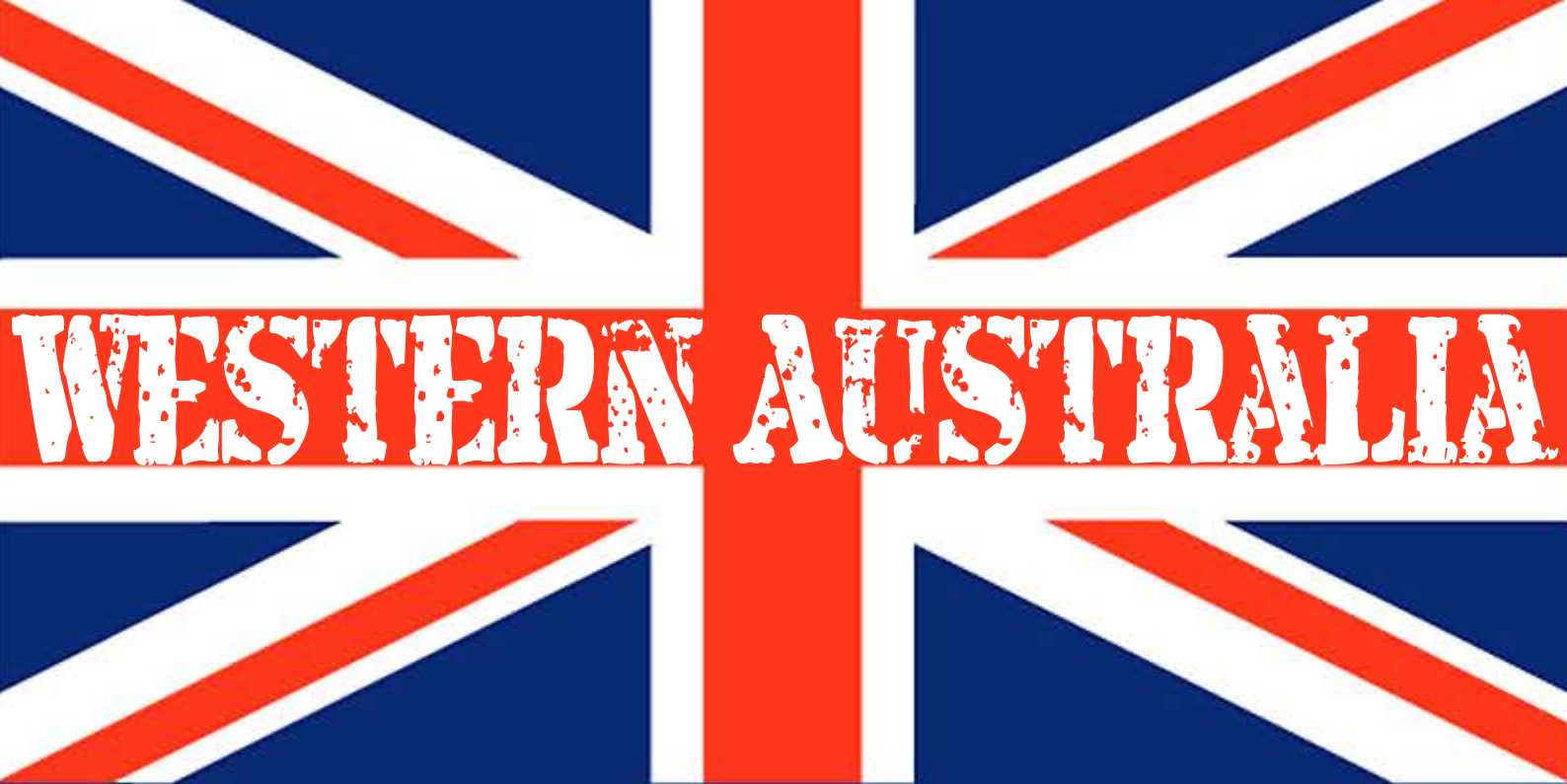
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# WESTERN AUSTRALIA

## AND US GEO-STRATEGY

By Serge DeSilva-Ranasinghe and Mitchell Sutton

With the recent announcements surrounding an upgraded US military presence in northern Australia, attention is once again turning towards WA's own long relationship with the superpower. While the US has been publicly guarded about its present and future position in WA, there are compelling strategic and political reasons which make the State an attractive location for a wide spectrum of military activities. The future is likely to see engagement built upon further, as the US increases its presence in the Indian Ocean and Asia Pacific regions.

While the US Navy was heavily involved in WA during World War II, it did not establish a permanent presence in the State until 1967. Naval Communications (NAVCOMMSTA) Harold E Holt, located at Exmouth Gulf, was the most powerful transmitter in the USN's worldwide Very Low Frequency (VLF) transmitter network, designed to facilitate communication with submerged ballistic missile submarines.

While the base was shifted to full Australian control during the 1990s, a keen interest has been retained in Exmouth. An ex-US Government C-Band Radar has been installed at the site, whilst the nearby Learmonth Solar Observatory continues to be run jointly by the USAF and Australian Bureau of Meteorology.

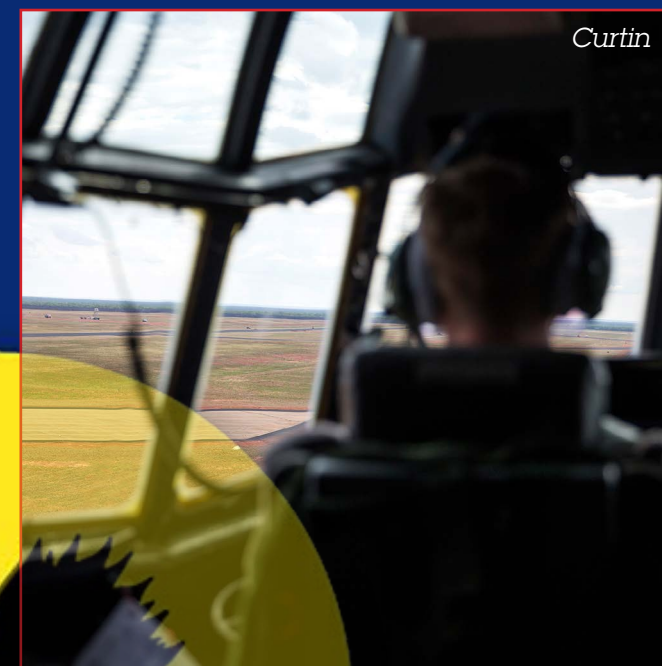
The Cold War-era technology and basing arrangements at Exmouth provide a stark contrast to a more recent and discrete US presence, established at the Australian Defence Satellite Communications Station (ADSCS). Located at Kojarena, 30km outside of Geraldton, the ADSCS site includes a ground station for the communications satellites of the US Wideband Global Satellite system.

HMAS Stirling and Fremantle Port have also been regularly used as stopover points by the US Navy. In 2003 Perth was the site of an experimental 'Sea-Swap' programme, whereby USN crews stationed in WA would replace personnel on US warships returning from the Persian Gulf. Although the programme was discontinued, US vessels have continued to use the ports as a stopover point.

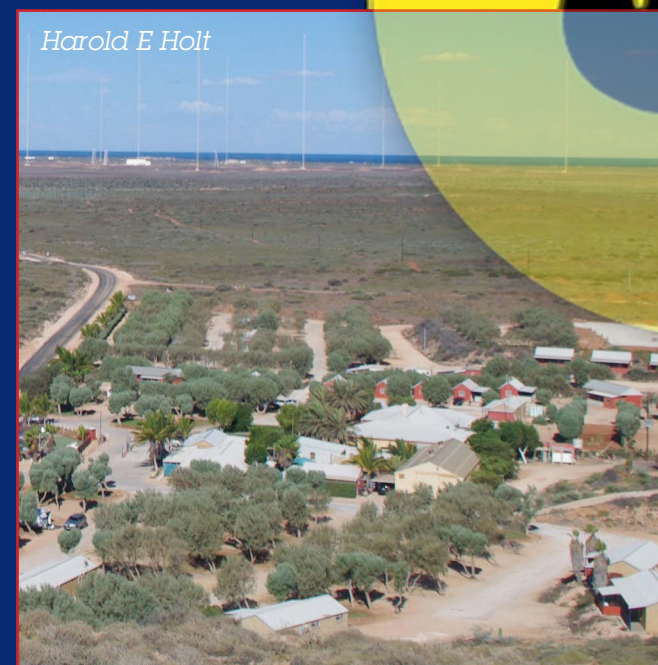
Despite this history of engagement, the future of US involvement in WA remains unclear at this stage. In the past there have been flashes of interest, including a report from the Washington-based Centre for Strategic and International Studies in 2012, advocating construction of US facilities in the Cocos Islands, and the basing of a nuclear carrier group at HMAS Stirling. A year later, Secretary of the US Navy Ray Mabus noted in an interview with The Diplomat, that: "the last Australia-U.S. ministerial talks agreed to specifically look at things like HMAS Stirling in Perth...I think that shows the importance



Learmonth



Curtin



Harold E Holt



Stirling

of Perth and, as the study gets underway, that importance will be confirmed". Despite a steady drumbeat of speculation since, nothing tangible has eventuated in this direction.

This may be changing with the unveiling of recent plans to rotate long-range USAF aircraft through Australian airbases in the Northern Territory. If the US does eventually opt for an upgraded presence in WA the likely scenario would be similar to this plan, with a gradual increase in US usage of existing facilities. This might include HMAS Stirling and the bare base airfields Learmonth and Curtin.

Commenting on WA's strategic importance to the US, Australia's former Ambassador to the US, Kim

Beazley, affirmed: "WA basing has great enthusiasts in the US national security think tanks, so it will stay on the US agenda", he said. "Official enthusiasm will wax and wane. What needs to be done is costly, and the US hopes we will pick up the tab for base expansion and renovation of Cocos". He added: "Future American interest for once heavily depends on the presidential outcome, but the inescapable significance of our geography to US space-based systems will remain".

**Serge DeSilva-Ranasinghe is a security analyst, defence writer and consultant.**  
**Mitchell Sutton is a security analyst and defence writer.**



# OUR WESTERN FLANK

By Serge DeSilva-Ranasinghe and Mitchell Sutton



Discussion of Western Australia's place in the Indo-Pacific has, until recently, tended to be dominated by trade and economic engagement, rather than strategic concerns. Yet the fact that WA sits on the doorstep of a region riven with some of the world's most intractable conflicts cannot be ignored. Regionally, a bewildering array of actors are engaged in conflicts across the spectrum of warfare, ranging from the low level insurgencies of Myanmar and Thailand to the nuclear brinksmanship of India and Pakistan. For WA, this proximity to major world flashpoints potentially contains both a veritable threat and a salient opportunity.

Whilst the possibility of WA coming under direct attack from foreign state actors remains low, there is nonetheless a range of ways in which WA's security and prosperity could be compromised. The most likely of these is the severing of the sea lanes linking WA to its key trading partners. Even a minor naval conflict in the South China Sea could severely disrupt exports to northeast Asia, whilst attacks on shipping in the Suez Canal, Bab-el-Mandeb or Strait of Hormuz would dramatically reduce imports of petroleum from the Middle East.

Another regional threat with very real consequences for WA is climate change, and

the prospect of ongoing crises associated with mass population movements. A case in point is Bangladesh, where an estimated 17 million people could be displaced if sea levels rise by 1.5 metres. Hence, with the State's geographical proximity, vast coastline and a small population of little over 2.5 million, WA may well be confronted by an increasingly precarious situation unfolding in our near neighbourhood.

Conversely, these dangers are balanced with significant opportunities. WA is perfectly located to support the ADF's operations in the Indian Ocean and Asia Pacific regions, significantly reducing the time and cost required to deploy assets across the vast distances involved. This is highly significant, considering the numerous operations that Australia is currently engaged in worldwide, most are located in or near the Indian Ocean and its littoral states.

Aircraft supporting the Australian contributions to Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria frequently stop over at Exmouth's RAAF Base Learmonth and Bullsbrook's RAAF Base Pearce on their way to Al Minhad Airbase in the UAE. At the same time, naval vessels participating in the international counter-piracy, terrorism and drug taskforces in the western Indian Ocean are usually either based at,

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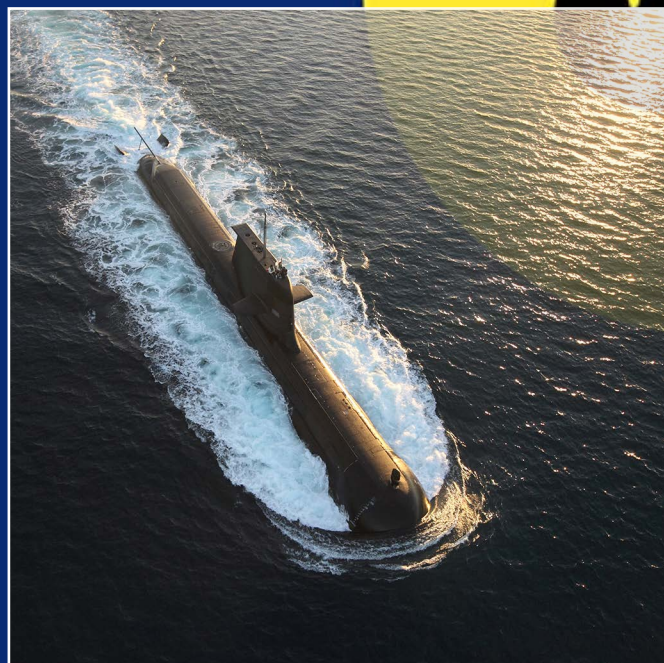
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or utilise, Rockingham's HMAS Stirling. There is the potential for this to be developed even further in future, if additional Navy or Army assets were to be permanently based in WA.

WA's strategic location is also ideal for facilitating regional military cooperation. At present foreign naval vessels frequently stop over at HMAS Stirling, with allied sailors also utilising the base's unique submarine escape training facility. There is significant scope to expand this cooperation into naval exercises with regional powers such as France, India, Pakistan and South Africa, whilst WA's large training range at Yampi Sound, which is due to be upgraded, could be utilised for multinational amphibious exercises.

Reaffirming WA's strategic value proposition to the national interest, General Peter Leahy, the former Chief of Army, recently said: "WA is Australia's gateway to the Indian Ocean and the many littoral states that are part of both a prosperous and fractious region. It was also the launching place for many of our forces in the First and Second World Wars and today it stands as the sentinel over our Western flank". Regardless of the ratio of risks and opportunities, it is evident that WA and ill-afford to ignore the strategic impact of its location in the Indo-Pacific region.

*Serge DeSilva-Ranasinghe is a security analyst, defence writer and consultant.*

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# A VERY BIG YEAR

By Major Kris Gardiner and  
Lieutenant-Colonel Simon Hompas

## 1<sup>st</sup> Division/ Deployable Joint Forces HQ

**COMMANDER 1<sup>ST</sup> DIVISION/DEPLOYABLE JOINT FORCES HEADQUARTERS – OR 1DIV/DJFHQ – IS PROUD OF WHAT HIS COMMAND ACHIEVED IN 2016. THE YEAR MARKED THE REINVIGORATION OF HQ 1 DIV/DJFHQ AS A TWO-STAR-LEVEL HEADQUARTERS TRAINED TO OPERATE WITHIN A MEDIUM-INTENSITY WARGHTING ENVIRONMENT, WITH ITS RETURN TO ARMY'S PREMIER EXERCISE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN SEVEN YEARS.**



1 Div/DJFHQ's deployment on Exercise Hamel was the pinnacle in a training year that saw certification in the Vital exercise series, as well as support to the Sea Series of amphibious exercises and Exercise Northern Shield.

Commander 1 Div/DJFHQ Major-General Paul McLachlan said the accomplishments of the headquarters in support of Army's training program proved the benefits of having a genuine command-and-control structure overseeing brigade-level operations.

"I set the challenge for my staff to adopt the business philosophy of delighting the customer when it came to supporting our subordinate formations within exercises and in our barracks role as the certifier of forces for operations," Major-General McLachlan said.

"If we cannot add value to the training experience and outcome, then we are not viable.

"I believe 1 Div/DJFHQ was able to deliver on that challenge and reinforce the benefits of having to respond to an actual two-star-level higher headquarters rather than a simulated one.

"It allows combat-brigade commanders to focus on their warfighting outcomes, while 1 Div/DJFHQ synchronises, coordinates and prioritises joint effects and sustainment in support of brigade manoeuvre.

"It has set a training benchmark that will benefit all formations within Army's training cycle in the years to come."

Carefully coordinated between Forcomd (Forces Command) and 1 Div/DJFHQ, the Land 2016 construct saw the integration of a significant number of concurrent training activities at the unit and formation level under a common training umbrella, further reducing the cycle of training duplication and burden on personnel and equipment resources.



The year also marked the development and first deployment of a fully digitised and functional major and minor Joint Task Force (JTF) HQ into the field.

Exercise Vital Prospect, 1 Div/DJFHQ's first major exercise of the year, led this new approach by integrating the Amphibious Task Group's Exercise Sea Horizon and 1 Brigade's Exercise Silicon Predator.

Joined by significant elements from Socomd (Special Operations Command), Navy and Air Force, the exercises were linked both physically and digitally, fusing formations and platforms under a common chain of command.

This combined and digitised concept was then repeated successfully for Hamel.

The result was a series of exercises that demonstrated interoperability and interconnectivity between services and formations rarely seen outside of the Talisman Sabre series, with a recognised land picture from the tactical to the divisional level that required minimal 'air gapping' across multiple systems.

Major-General McLachlan said the combined-training approach and integration within the digital battle space resulted in a responsive, adaptive and agile force demonstrating a unified approach.

"The digitisation of the Vital series, Hamel and Northern Shield will be recognised as the beginning of smart exercises, through the use of a detailed and high-speed command, control, communication and computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance [C4ISR] capability," he said.

"1 Div/DJFHQ's adoption of the LNIC-developed Mission Secret Network (a concept technology demonstrator) and the new Geospatial Environment

for Command and Control Operations or GEC2O (pronounced 'gecko') system, provided the most detailed common operating picture ever seen by Army.

"Through this consolidating network, 1 Div/DJFHQ's JTF HQ was able to direct-feed information from the brigade level up to HQJOC and across to various platforms and capabilities.

"A fully functional digital joint fires system was also fielded for the first time.

"This year's exercises demonstrated the digital battle space is not some distant concept, but a deployable capability able to deliver fast, accurate information and massive situational awareness, which is crucial in winning the land battle."

Looking ahead to Talisman Sabre next year, Major-General McLachlan said this year's achievements had placed 1 Div/DJFHQ in a prime position to deal with a challenging 2017.

"As we proceed through Exercise Polygon and into Talisman Sabre, 1 Div/DJFHQ, with assistance from 6 Brigade, will seek to further refine and exploit the use of the cyber battle space and redefine the way we as a force approach the fight, particularly with the integration and execution of amphibious and information operations."

"All of us are now charged to learn how to best employ these new capabilities.

"They are no longer future concepts and there is no reason the ADF should not be at the absolute forefront of innovative, digital and joint warfighting.

"It's an exciting time to be in the division."

## Who they are, what they do

Headquartered in Brisbane, 1 Div/DJFHQ is an Army functional command with four direct command units located in Queensland (1 Signals Regiment and the Combat Training Centre), NSW (39 Operations Support Battalion) and Malaysia (2/30 Training Group).

The mission of 1 Div/DJFHQ is to command assigned forces in order to meet directed operational requirements.

### CA-specified tasks for HQ 1 Div/DJFHQ are:

- Lead Joint Task Force planning in support of the Chief of Joint Operations;
- Provide a minor or major DJFHQ capability (with augmentation) scalable up to two-star level and able to operate in combined, joint and interagency environments;
- Act as the mounting authority for Army's amphibious forces, conventional contingency and operational force elements when force assigned by AHQ;
- Act as the Army lead for continued development and certification of the Amphibious Ready Element and Amphibious Ready Group; and,
- Command and manage 1 Sig Regt, CTC, 2/30 Trg Gp and 39OSB training schedules.

### CJOPS-specified tasks for HQ 1 Div/DJFHQ are:

- Provide a scalable JTF in accordance with the CA Preparedness Directive 2016;
- Provide force elements to conduct or support amphibious command and control; and,
- Support regional and international engagement objectives in accordance with the Defence International Engagement Plan and the Army International Engagement Plan.





# Commemorating last heroics

With WWI centenary commemorations progressing into one of the bloodiest periods of the conflict, 1 Div/DJFHQ continued its own ceremonies, pausing to reflect on the sacrifice of those who had gone before.

Acknowledging 100 years from the arrival of the Australian 1 Div to the Western Front, personnel from 1 Div/DJFHQ marked the occasion in two commemorative events at Gallipoli Barracks, Brisbane.

Led by Commander 1 Div/DJFHQ Major-General Paul McLachlan, staff rededicated an Anzac tree on June 3, recognising the sacrifice of 566 Queenslanders who were killed in action or died from wounds and disease during the Gallipoli campaign.

On July 22, 1 Div/DJFHQ continued its commemoration program, honouring the division's fallen in WWI on the eve of the centenary of the Battle of Pozieres, with the unveiling of a new memorial at the headquarters, replete with the evocative silhouette of divisional troops at the third battle of Ypres.

1 Div historian Colonel Dennis Scanlan said 2016 was a pivotal year for 1 Div/DJFHQ. "1916 saw the conclusion of the bloodshed at Gallipoli and the beginning of a new level of carnage never seen before," Colonel Scanlan said.

"Among it all were the Australian divisions, led by the 1st, which suffered terrible casualties in the Dardanelles and on the Western Front.

"The centenary of the events at Pozieres has added greater poignancy to 1 Div's memorial services, providing troops with an even greater opportunity to reflect on the extraordinary history of the headquarters since its formation in 1914."

Colonel Scanlan said the return of 1 Div to Army's raise, train and sustain cycle, as well as its continuing lead as the DJFHQ, had ensured its 102-year history would continue.

"1 Div/DJFHQ has developed a rich narrative in the time of its existence," Colonel Scanlan said. "With its continuing support to operations like the one in Fiji earlier this year, the return to greater Army, and its continued lead in the development of the ADF's amphibious capability, the headquarters will no doubt see us recognising milestones well into the future."



# A century of service

Raised on August 15, 1914, as part of the 1st Australian Imperial Force, 1 Div played a significant part in the Gallipoli campaign of 1915 before fighting on the Western Front. In its first major battle on that front in July 1916, soldiers of 1 Div captured the town of Pozieres at a cost of 5285 casualties.

Over the next two-and-a-half years, the division would fight in the battles of Mouquet Farm, Bullecourt, Menin Road, Polygon Wood, Broodseinde, Poelcapelle, Passchendaele, Hazebrouck, Amiens, Albert and Ephehy – and 20 1 Div members had been awarded the Victoria Cross.

1 Div was demobilised in March 1919.

In 1921, the division was re-raised as a Citizen Military Forces formation and, while this militia status prevented it from deploying outside Australia for the duration of WWII, the division's headquarters staff were transferred to New Guinea in 1942 to form the command element of Milne Force and tasked to secure the right flank of the Australian defensive line.

Under Commander 1 Div Major-General Cyril Clowes, Milne Force defeated a major Japanese amphibious assault at Milne Bay in 1942, delivering the first defeat of the Japanese on land during the war.

The division was officially disbanded again in April 1945.

In 1965, 1 Div was tasked with certifying the operational readiness of units deploying to Vietnam, and in 1973 HQ 1 Div moved from NSW to Enoggera, Brisbane.

Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, HQ 1 Div personnel were deployed on United Nations peacekeeping operations in Namibia, Western Sahara, Cambodia, Somalia and Rwanda.

In 1997, HQ 1 Div assumed the additional task of providing the ADF with a two-star Deployable Joint Force Headquarters (DJFHQ) for the command of joint assets during large-scale operations both in Australia and overseas.

In 1999, DJFHQ constituted Headquarters International Force East Timor (Interfet) and deployed to East Timor on September 20, 1999, on Operation Warden.

HQ 1 Div/DJFHQ has since formed the core of a number of Joint Task Force (JTF) HQ established to command deployed forces on support and humanitarian-assistance and disaster-relief operations throughout the region, including Plumbob (2000) and Anode (2003) in the Solomon Islands, Sumatra Assist (2005) and Padang Assist (2006) in Indonesia.

In 2009, the division was restructured as part of the Adaptive Army initiative and its regular manoeuvre brigades, along with the majority of its direct command units, were reassigned to the newly formed Forcomd.

HQ 1 Div was appointed as the Land Component to HQJOC and continued to maintain its short-notice command and control capabilities for contingency operations.

In recent years, HQ 1 Div/DJFHQ has provided a JTF HQ for many domestic and regional operations, including Queensland Flood Assist (2011), Cathedral (2012) in Papua New Guinea, Philippines Assist (2013), Okra (2014) in Iraq, Hawick (2014) in The Hague and Ukraine, and Fiji Assist (2016).

In 2012, Commander 1 Div/DJFHQ was jointly appointed by CA and Chief of Navy to act as the joint and Army lead authority to develop the ADF's emerging amphibious capability.





# Amphibious Future

By Major Kris Gardiner

1 Div/DJFHQ has the lead for developing the ADF's amphibious capability, and 2016 has been a year of positive progress.

This year has been busy for Australia's joint amphibious capability with the first operational deployment of the Australian Amphibious Ready Element (ARE) to cyclone-ravaged Fiji, in the largest multinational exercise in the Pacific, Exercise Rimpac; HMAS Adelaide's commencement of the Sea Series of exercises and the completion of CH-47F first-of-class flight trials.

It is a series of achievements that were realised through the joint efforts of key enablers representing the three services and Defence broadly, under 1 Div/DJFHQ as the capability lead.

Colonel-in-Charge of Amphibious Capability and Development US Marine Corps Colonel Terence Dunne said 2016 had provided a diverse series of opportunities that thoroughly tested all aspects of Australia's amphibious force.

"This year has proven to be pivotal for Australia's amphibious capability and has demonstrated the benefits and importance of joint development and sustainment," Colonel Dunne said.

"Operation Fiji Assist and the exercises undertaken provided a mix of short-notice, high-tempo tasks requiring bespoke solutions – and the results verified the scalability and flexibility of the ARE under the umbrella of the Australian Amphibious Force (AAF).

"One just has to look at the achievements in 2016 and the advances made by the joint enablers to grasp the significant impact amphibious capability has had on the ADF."

The first major test for Australia's amphibious capability and, in particular, the ARE was by the devastation wrought on Fiji by Tropical Cyclone Winston on 20 February last year.

Comprising elements from Navy, Army and Air Force embarked in HMAS Canberra, the ARE left Brisbane five days later.

Immediately on arrival in Fiji, the ARE began providing substantial humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR), including the delivery of 341 tonnes of stores through a combination of rotary wing and seclift, and engineer support to beleaguered communities on the islands of Koro and Taveuni.

The successful deployment of Canberra demonstrated the value of previous training and the seamless integration of the joint enablers was followed by Adelaide beginning its own certification process through the Sea Series of exercises.

Command post exercise Sea Horizon (Sydney) and enabling exercise Sea Explorer (Cowley Beach, north Queensland) allowed Adelaide and the ARE to integrate lessons from the 2015 Sea Series and on Operation Fiji Assist, and seamlessly execute combat-enhancement training, force-integration training and wet and dry

rehearsals for tactical amphibious assault, as well as integration of its elements.

Adelaide's exercise success was followed by the deployment of the Canberra-led AAF to Rimpac.

With an embarked force from 2RAR, 2 Cav Regt, 10FSB, 1CHB and members of the New Zealand and Tongan defence forces, the AAF demonstrated Australia's ability to conduct combined amphibious operations and confirmed the interoperability between Australia's amphibious platforms and those of our US partners.

The CH-53 Sea Stallion, V22 Osprey and Landing Craft Air Cushion (LCAC or hovercraft) were just some of the capabilities tested successfully with the Australian Landing Helicopter Dock, while the ARE and embarked foreign forces undertook joint and combined training with US land forces.

Commander of the landing force and CO 2RAR Lieutenant-Colonel Michael Bassingthwaite said the broad nature of the training and operational activities undertaken by the AAF in 2016 added valuable depth to the experience and skills of those supporting the amphibious capability.

"A key component of the AAF's success this year has been the experience gained on both the planned and

short-notice activities the capability has supported," Lieutenant-Colonel Bassingthwaite said.

"The AAF and, in particular, the ARE have had the opportunity to not only further develop their collective skills and interoperability with our US partners, but have put those skills into practice supporting real-time HADR to great effect."

Commander Amphibious Task Group (ATG) Navy Captain Brett Sonter said the successes of the ATG demonstrated the maturing of the capability and the wealth of knowledge amassed by the force since the start of 2015.

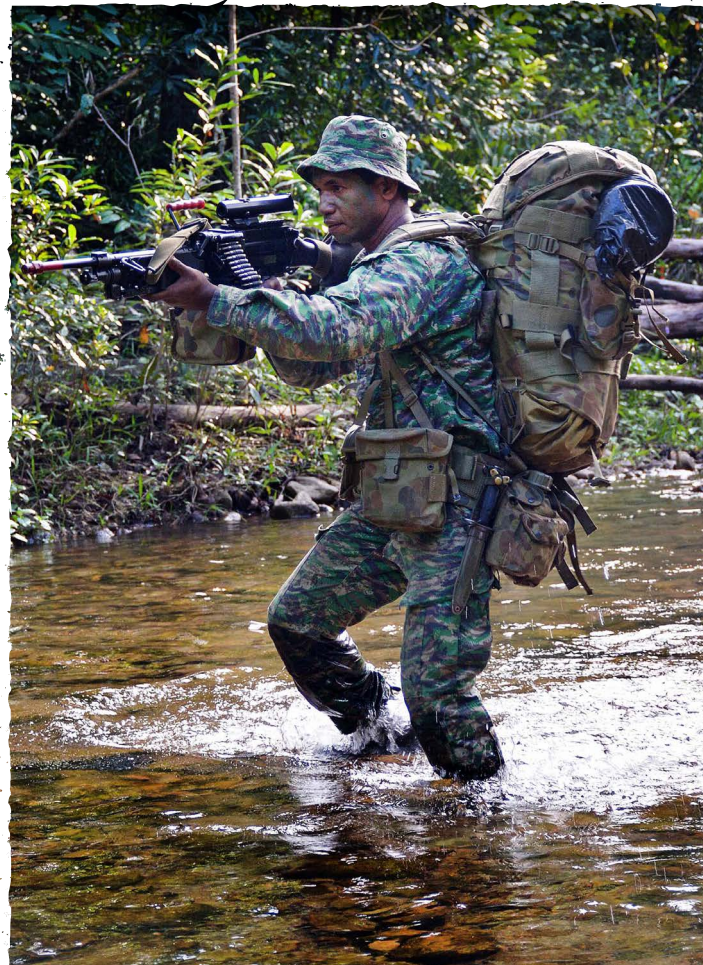
"Undertaking the Sea Series of exercises in 2015 with Canberra was as much about forging new territory as it was about certifying the capability," Captain Sonter said.

"With the certification process shifting to Adelaide this year, the deployment of the ARE to support Fiji Assist and Rimpac, the development of Australia's amphibious capability has realised significant growth and has achieved major milestones.

"The foundation provided by that success has placed the ADF in a prime position to enable further achievements within the amphibious capability in 2017."







# Combat Training

## CTC leads international engagement

Significant engagement with Australian and International training elements and a series of successful exercises and activities have seen the Combat Training Centre (CTC) complete one of its busiest years yet.

Responsible for ensuring high readiness and deploying forces are fully prepared for complex operations, CTC focussed on providing commanders and forces across Army and the ADF independent performance monitoring and assessment.

Commander of CTC Colonel Damian Hill, said the challenge for CTC during 2016 was the maintenance of high-tempo support to force preparation and force generation, while developing a modernisation strategy that ensured a training environment for forces with access to the full suite of ADF and coalition capabilities whether live, virtual or constructive.

"Digitising the trainer is at the forefront of CTC's modernisation pathway to ensure the centre can continue to provide accurate combat-performance assessment to commanders," Colonel Hill said.

The largest wing of the training centre, CTC-Live continued to deliver an environment for force-on-force, combined-arms training at the company/combined team and battle-group levels.

CTC-Live maintained a focus on improving warfighting capability through the conduct of challenging combat rotations, offering a unique service to Army.

The result of Live's efforts saw units conduct complex training events followed by immediate after-action reviews to enhance learning and continual improvement.

Commanding Officer CTC-Live Lieutenant-Colonel Anthony Birch praised the dedication and professionalism of his officers and soldiers during the high-tempo year.

"The successful planning, design and execution of four complex combined-arms and three mission-rehearsal exercises was only achieved through outstanding teamwork and commitment to our mission by the wing," Lieutenant-Colonel Birch said.

"We continued to build the knowledge and experience of the team through an ongoing commitment to individual MEAO deployments and sending observer/trainers on international exercises in Europe and the USA.

"Live also continued modernisation efforts through the development of opposing-force equipment and weapons, new live instrumentation systems and innovation in observation, data collection and management."

CTC-Battle Command (BC), the smallest wing of the training centre, continued to deliver premiere training to operationally deploying headquarters, through challenging and robust command-post exercises (CPX).

Commanding Officer BC Lieutenant-Colonel Spencer Norris said the planning, execution and observation of brigade and battalion headquarters as they exercised their preparations to command and control their units in a complex, high-threat environment was most rewarding.

"We are constantly getting better at integrating training units from various parts of the ADF," he said.

"2016 saw a significant step forward, with BC successfully integrating the Amphibious Task Group (ATG) headquarters CPX and the 1st Brigade CPX as a part of 1st Division/Deployable Joint Force Headquarters' certification Exercise Vital Prospect 16.

"We [BC] are already planning next year's integrated exercise series Polygon 17, which will see the nesting of

the ATG and 3rd Brigade headquarters CPX and the 1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment's live warfighter exercise in a true live, virtual and constructive exercise."

The Jungle Training Wing (JTW) of the training centre maintained its ongoing commitment to improving soldier skills and the standard of junior leadership within Army in a complex jungle environment, through its up-to-platoon level training program for sub-units and niche packages such as the Visual Trackers' Course and the Junior Officers' Jungle Operations Training (JOJOT) for the collective and individual.

Officer Commanding JTW Major Trevor Brown said the wing's location in far-north Queensland, and its outstanding program, maintained its position as one of the most physically and mentally challenging environments on offer to Australian and foreign forces.

"The training year yet again reinforced the relevance of JTW with its demanding packages and training location in which to practice and underpin individual and collective warfighting skills," Major Brown said.

"Our programs continued to focus on the improvement of team cohesion, assisting small teams and tactical headquarters in preparing for the demands of combat operations in a complex jungle environment be they Australian or visiting foreign forces."

CTC's support to international engagement was reflected in training delivered to a number of Australia's regional partners in 2016, both domestically and overseas.

Key training activities for JTW saw basic skills training delivered to the Timorese FFDL in Timor and Australia, developing their jungle warfare capability and their junior leaders as instructors.

The Indonesian TNI (Army) were also engaged by the JTW in Indonesia and Australia with a focus on providing a basic understanding of urban operations and close-quarter shooting techniques as well as developing their junior leaders as instructors.

Major Brown said the interactions with overseas forces proved to be a great opportunity to not only enhance the force under training, but enhance JTW's product as well. "We view it as an exchange of ideas and approaches," Major Brown said.

"The training delivered from these interactions will enhance individual and collective warfighting skills and contribute to Army's capability to conduct offensive, defensive and stability operations in a complex environment.

"JTW is also involved in an exchange program with the British Army Jungle Warfare Division in Brunei to share ideas, the development of our visual tracking capability and the professional development of JTW personnel who participate in their training as instructors."

The training wing has also recently re-established its relationship with the US 25th Infantry Division and hosted three of their jungle-operations course instructors.

Major Brown said this year's international engagement activities provided an outstanding training and professional-development opportunity for all personnel involved.

"Army is reclaiming and reinvigorating jungle operations training and leadership in a complex jungle environment.

"For Australian and international-army participants, our activities are playing an important role in building relationships with our regional and coalition partners."

## Trident boosts regional ties

By Major Kris Gardiner

The latest bilateral exercise to be conducted between Singapore and Australia wrapped up on Queensland's central coast with both nations hailing the activity a great success.

Exercise Trident, held from 27 October to 4 November, saw 1 Battalion of the Republic of Singapore Armed Forces' 7 Singaporean Infantry Brigade (Guards) conduct amphibious, air-mobile and offensive operations with a platoon and mortar support section from 5RAR at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area.

Hosted by Singapore as part of its annual Exercise Wallaby, the activity focused on the development of amphibious interoperability between the two nations through a series of simulated field-training activities and amphibious operations.

1 Div/DJFHQ representative Major Jamie Heron said the exercise, in its third iteration, had grown into a significant activity between the regional partners, offering an excellent chance to share tactics, techniques and procedures and to identify opportunities for exercise growth.

"Trident is in continual development, but it has already shown itself to be an important training activity for the ADF as it is for the Singaporean Armed Forces," Major Heron said.

"The ADF's participation has steadily grown from individual observers in a humanitarian and disaster-relief activity to a platoon-sized force element conducting amphibious operations in a foundation warfighting environment.

"Future intentions for the exercise are to develop it into a joint amphibious training activity for both nations."

While the primary focus is to deliver a training outcome, both nations see Trident as a superb opportunity to deepen the relationship between both militaries.

Major Heron said one of the strengths of the activity was the foundation on which Singapore and Australia had been able to foster closer military ties.

"The combined tactical and operational aspects of the exercise are obvious; however, the strength in the activity is the enhanced regional cooperation demonstrated between both nations," Major Heron said.

"Through the development of common functionality and the ability to operate unilaterally with Singapore, we continue to demonstrate to our other regional partners the genuine desire of Australia to build greater military ties across South-East Asia and our readiness to work together to respond to any threat if and when required."



# Busy Butterworth boosts brotherhood

It was another big year for 2/30 Training Group with the unit delivering one of the most demanding training and engagement programs in more than 60 years of near-continuous involvement by Australian soldiers in Malaysia.

Headquartered at the Royal Malaysian Air Force Base Butterworth and staffed by a small, dedicated cadre of regular and reserve personnel, 2/30 Trg Gp delivers advanced jungle training for quarterly rotations of Rifle Company Butterworth (RCB) and represents the coalface of an intense international engagement schedule for the ADF.

CO 2/30 Trg Gp Lieutenant-Colonel Thomas Tilbrook said 2016 was a remarkable year, punctuated by significant events and outstanding training outcomes.

"Few units are given the vast opportunities that 2/30 Trg Gp has experienced this year," he said.

"The unit and RCB Rotations 112 to 115 successfully completed all training objectives while broadening Australia's position as an important regional-security partner within South East Asia.

"It's an end state that continues to consolidate this unit's position as a key component in Army's training framework and Australia's international engagement efforts."

RCB Rotation 112 comprised soldiers from 11 and 13 Bdes and completed 29 separate courses, achieved seven 'crossed rifles', qualified 19 soldiers in Subject 2 Mod 1 for Corporal, established a gym near Camp Burma on the southern tip of Malaysia and hosted a Boss Lift activity.

Following a 'relief in place' in February, RCB 113 continued the achievements of the previous rotation, conducting the first visit by a Royal Australian Artillery contingent to the Malaysian School of Artillery and supporting Anzac Day ceremonies in Penang, Brunei, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Hellfire Pass and Sandakan.

CO Rotation 113 Major Matthew Hodda said the training offered to non-infantry rotations by 2/30 Trg Gp provided an excellent opportunity to develop foundation warfighting skills appropriate to combat-support roles.

"There are significant benefits to the continued deployment of composite companies or non-traditional rotations to RCB. From an RAA perspective, training delivered to personnel contributed greatly to the success

of Rotation 113 with a focus on developing senior- and junior-soldier leadership," Major Hodda said.

The engineer-heavy RCB Rotation 114 continued to raise the bar through their participation in Exercises Haringgaroo and Sapper Bersama – a joint construction effort to redevelop and improve range facilities in Pulada.

Major outcomes included improvements to the assault grenade range and the direct fire-support weapon (anti-armour) range, with construction of a much-needed 100m open range and an overhaul of Camp Burma.

Along with providing the catafalque party for the Sandakan Day memorial, 2/30 Trg Gp and Rotation 114 also supported Operation Reunite, which saw the remains of 33 Australians, including 25 servicemen – 22 of whom were killed in the Vietnam War – and eight dependants repatriated to Australia.

Operation Reunite had a particular poignancy for Corporal Chris Bowtell, an engineer with 2CER, who had the rare privilege of escorting the remains of his grandfather, Corporal Bob Bowtell, home.

Rotation 115 arrived at the end of August and was immediately put through its paces in the jungle in the Sik National Park, followed by an intense advanced jungle phase in the Kulim National Park.

Adding another feather to 2/30 Trg Gp's cap, Rotation 115 became the first foreign force element to access the Singaporean multi-mission range complex, a world-class indoor live-fire range facility.

Rotation 115 also participated in bilateral Exercise Chapel Gold with the Royal Thai Army in southern Thailand, before handing over to Rotation 116 in November.

Lieutenant-Colonel Tilbrook said the breadth of activities undertaken by 2/30 Trg Gp and RCB during 2016 were likely to grow next year.

"There is great interest from our regional partners in South-East Asia to build upon the close relations developed and maintained for more than 60 years," he said.

This year will also see a new leadership team at 2/30 Trg Gp, with Lieutenant-Colonel Tilbrook and RSM WO1 Nathan Ahearn handing over to Lieutenant-Colonel Malcolm Beck and WO1 Adrian Wilson.

# Good comms – check

By Major Cameron Leckie

Busy and varied are the two words most used to summarise life for members of 1 Sig Regt during 2016.

With the increase in tempo for 1 Div/DJFHQ, 1 Sig Regt, operating out of Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera, followed the headquarter's various deployments closely, providing communications and information systems (CIS) and combat service support.

From Fiji to the Middle East and Cultana to RAAF Base Curtin, unit members deployed across a wide range of environments undertaking a variety of operational and training tasks in sometimes challenging conditions.

CO 1 Sig Regt Lieutenant-Colonel Patricia Sharp said the achievements of the unit in 2016 were significant.

"This year has tested the unit's ability to provide high-readiness support to short-notice deployments on operations and exercises and its proactive efforts to Army's communications lead through modernisation," Lieutenant-Colonel Sharp said.

"1 Sig Regiment demonstrated a level of versatility and functionality that has confirmed its position as a technological lead, which is crucial as the communications provider for 1 Div/DJFHQ."

Among the clear highlights for the unit was its vital support to Operation Fiji Assist from February to April, its support of 1 Div/DJFHQ's deployed two-star headquarters on Exercise Hamel and its deployment on Exercise Northern Shield in north-west Western Australia.

The unit has also been issued a range of new capabilities, markedly improving its CIS services.

In early 2017, 1 Sig Regt will also be issued with new 'Soldier Combat Ensemble' equipment, reflecting its high-readiness requirement.

The regiment is also expecting to receive the first of its Land 121 medium- and heavy-capability vehicles.

Troop Commander Joint Communications Element Lieutenant Matthew Hunt said one of the highlights of the year was the technical innovation 1 Sig Regt was able to offer 1 Div/DJFHQ.

"Unit soldiers have accessed the latest communications advances to be adopted by Army this year," he said.

"The ability for 1 Sig Regt to provide new Internet-protocol communications architecture and associated command-and-control systems for 1 Div/DJFHQ during Vital Prospect and Hamel opened up a level of flexibility previously unavailable to a commander in the field.

"The results demonstrated the quality of technology available to Army and, importantly, have set a benchmark for the quality of service 1 Sig Regt provides."

Unit activities during 2016 weren't only focused on business, however, with a number of stand-out events taking place beyond exercises and operations.

About \$46,000 was raised for Legacy through fundraising efforts in Brisbane, while soldiers also participated in highwire adventurous training underneath Brisbane's Story Bridge, and a week of infantry minor tactics at Canungra.

Lieutenant-Colonel Sharp said the unit was preparing for an equally busy 2017.

"With a number of key activities occurring during the year, including Exercise Talisman Sabre and the upgrade of communications facilities in the Middle East, the unit will maintain a high-tempo," she said.

"We will look to build on the successes of 2016 and continue to lead in the integration and development of fully digitised communications within the battle space."





# Preparing troops for ops

By Major Kris Gardiner

With a resurgence in the number of significant operations involving the ADF, 39 Operational Support Battalion (39OSB) completed one of its busiest years in 2016.

The unit, located at Randwick Barracks, Sydney, completed force preparation for more than 5000 personnel across the three services, supporting Operations Accordion, Okra, Highroad, Mazurka, Aslan and Paladin.

CO 39OSB Lieutenant-Colonel Kimberlea Juchniewicz said the successful execution of the unit's training schedule was credit to the dedication of her soldiers, sailors and airmen and the support of visiting lecturers.

"One of the key factors in a successful deployment is the quality of preparation offered to our people," she said.

"Not empowering those we deploy to represent our nation with relevant knowledge can add unnecessary risk to an operation that goes beyond the individual and can affect the collective."

"39OSB has been fortunate to have an excellent cadre representing Army, Navy and Air Force, as well as access to other members of Defence who have provided invaluable information for those deploying."

With 33 courses conducted this year, 39OSB has delivered a variety of packages ranging from three days to three weeks to individuals and formed bodies.

OPSO Major Tim Frankcombe said the range of operational requirements and force locations dictated critical analysis of the content and relevance of force preparation courses.

"The unit has worked closely with HQJOC to refine course content and ensure it meets the requirement of the contemporary operational environment," he said.

"The rapid changes that occur within the life of any operation mean material delivered by the OSB needs to be regularly reviewed for relevance."

## Ensuring ADF members are well prepared

This year the unit has prepared 2429 people for deployment to the Middle East region and 98 for deployment on United Nations operations.

"The operation these members will deploy to will be either subtly or significantly different from the one entered into by their predecessors," Major Frankcombe said.

"2016 has seen a particular effort made to re-evaluate packages delivered with the result being a refined series of products that have been more efficiently conveyed."

"In some cases a whole day has been taken off the length of the original course."

39OSB has also invested significant time in requests and planning for redevelopment of existing facilities to ensure equipment issue is more efficient and training facilities are appropriate.

The Kokoda Conference Centre has been redeveloped to enable lectures to be presented by

video teleconference (VTC), in order to relieve staff from travelling to Sydney to present briefs.

Lieutenant-Colonel Juchniewicz said the integration of digital technology had opened a number of opportunities for the delivery of training.

"The expansion into VTC technology is reflective of the digitisation and modernisation that has been undertaken by 39OSB's higher headquarters – 1 Div/DJFHQ," Lieutenant-Colonel Juchniewicz said.

"We are sharing their digital epiphany and in doing so have opened up the training possibilities to prepare our deploying personnel."

"Future participants in force preparation courses will benefit from the near unlimited possibilities posed by the integration of digital communications, making it possible to have access to deployed personnel, directly providing access to the most up-to-date information available."

## Learning from [immediate] Past

A little more than a century after George Santayana wrote, *"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it"*, a 21<sup>st</sup> Century combat variant of that philosophy is underpinning the work of 1 Div/DJFHQ's Adaptive Warfare Branch (AWB) – *'Success on operations favours those who learn and adapt fastest'*.

With an establishment of 20 personnel comprising mostly reserve members (many of them former unit commanders or RSMs), as well as regular Army and public servants, AWB is tasked with drawing out lessons from deployed forces and feeding these rapidly back into Army's force generation and operational cycles.

XO AWB Major Damien Richardson said the branch was a key enabler of the division's ability to learn and adapt rapidly to changing conditions on operations.

"While every ADF unit and sub-unit has a responsibility to conduct its own ongoing reviews of processes, and to test and adjust according to changing circumstances, we want to make sure these lessons are promoted as widely as possible, as soon as possible."

"We achieve this through actively reading post-op reports, after-action reviews and post-activity reports, interviewing soldiers currently deployed and those returning, distilling the lessons and getting the message back into the force preparation cycle as soon as possible."

The lessons not only inform the way 1 Div/DJFHQ trains, prepares and equips force elements for operations, by adjusting the force preparation conducted by the Combat Training Centre and 39OSB – both direct command units of 1 Div – but are fed upwards to the

Army-wide authority synchronising the process of gathering lessons and implementing them.

"We work closely with the Centre for Army Lessons to ensure the learning outcomes get the exposure they should, to understand not only the things that didn't work, but also the things that did," Major Richardson said.

"This year, key activities for us included lesson collection activities for Task Group Taji, the Force Protection Element and Op Fiji Assist, with the latter providing valuable and timely feedback to Amphibious Capability Branch at a key point in the introduction of the Amphibious Force."

The breadth of AWB's commitment to learning from the past can be seen in the range of in-house material it publishes to assist individuals and units prepare for deployment.





# HORRID HAIRY HOOFVES

## EVEN HORSES PORK UP ON HOLIDAYS

STORY & PHOTOS SERGEANT ROSS TILLY, RAF  
CROWN COPYRIGHT 2017

Ninety-seven horses from the Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment in Knightsbridge, London, reported for duty in January in a shocking state after a two-month Christmas holiday running wild in Leicestershire.

The horses, icons of immaculate British state pomp and pageantry, returned relaxed after their extended break at grass – but the troopers at Hyde Park Barracks had a gargantuan challenge on their hands to transform the long haired, bearded, mud caked, semi-feral beasts back into proud, sleek steeds fit for The Queen.

First, the worst of the dirt and mud had to be painstakingly brushed out, tangles freed and knots eliminated. Then the horses had their overgrown hooves clipped, and shod, followed by a warm soapy bath in the solarium, dried under heat lamps, in an effort to wash away the ingrained dirt.

Then their shaggy coats were clipped, beards shaved, followed by hours and hours of close grooming. It was several days before the coats recovered their sheen – and weeks before the horses were back to full fitness, with a healthy, balanced diet and physical exercise to tone their muscles and streamline their flanks.

The Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment is never off duty. They are fighting, operational soldiers first and foremost, but when based in London their daily duties as the Queen's Life Guard has them protecting the

official entrance to the Royal Palaces at Horse Guards 24/7/365.

To give the horses a well deserved break from the military routine, twice a year all but a rear guard is sent to the country on holiday. Released into wide open fields, their lungs filled with fresh air and bellies filled with fresh grass, the magnificent animals flit, frolic, gambol – and roll in mud.

Corporal of Horse Liam Telfer said that although the soldiers knew every horse like family, they were in such a state when they got back to London the soldiers had to rely on microchips and hoof stamps to identify their mounts and get them back into the correct stalls.

Major James Harbord said the soldiers were in the stables from 5.30am to 4pm every day, working with the horses to get them ready for their first parade, in six weeks.

"The transformation will be remarkable but will involve serious, long, hard, patient graft" Major Harbord said.

"But, The Queen knows her horses and she's got a real eye for detail.

"She'll be checking that we've met those critically high equine standards for state ceremonial, and we're determined as a regiment to put on a good show for Her on the big state ceremonial events to come."





# ROYAL SALUTE



*Queen Elizabeth II  
Sapphire Jubilee*

On 6 February 2017, Queen Elizabeth II became the first British Monarch in history to reach a Sapphire Jubilee – having acceded to the throne 65 years ago when her father, King George VI, died in 1952.

However, as is her custom on Accession Day, Queen Elizabeth spent this historic day quietly at Sandringham – while her realm was anything but quiet as all across England, and beyond, guns fired in Royal Salute.

In London, the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery, wearing immaculately presented full-dress uniform, rode their horses and gun carriages past Buckingham Palace to The Green Park.

Commanded by Captain Katie Lavin, 89 horses pulled six WWI-era 13 Pounder Field Guns through the city before dramatically charging across The Green to place the guns into position for the Royal Salute.

On command, each of the six guns fired blank rounds at 10-second intervals until 41 shots were fired.

Shortly after, the Honourable Artillery Company, London's Reserve Army Regiment, drove through the city to the Tower of London, where they took up position on the riverbank overlooking HMS Belfast.

At the stroke of one, their three L118 Light Guns, similar to those used in recent years on operations in Afghanistan, fired a 62-gun salute across the Thames.

At Her Majesty's Navy Base In Portsmouth – home to a third of the Royal Navy fleet and soon-to-be-home to Britain's new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth – Warrant Officer 1 Lee Hendricks and his specialist crew fired a traditional 21-gun Royal Salute.

One of those firers was Able Seaman Gunner Carl Murray, from HMS Collingwood's close range section, who said it was his first time firing the ceremonial gun.

"It's a very proud moment for me to be part of this historic occasion and I will remember it for a long time to come," Able Seaman Murray said.

At Edinburgh Castle in Scotland the honour fell to gunners from 7 (Sphinx) Commando Battery, 29 Commando Regiment, Royal Artillery, where battery commander Major Paul Horne said the battery was honoured to fire the Royal Salute at the historic castle on such an historic occasion.

"The Royal salute provides a great occasion for the gunners to display their professionalism and pride in conducting such an honour in Scotland's capital city."



At Cardiff Castle in Wales, honours fell to a proud reserve unit – C (Glamorgan Yeomanry) Troop, 211 South Wales Battery, Royal Artillery.

Senior officer on parade, Colonel Lance Patterson said the unit took great honour in commemorating such a magnificent milestone.

“Our units take huge pride in wearing the ceremonial uniform, but on this occasion it is that little bit more special.”

In Northern Ireland at Hillsborough Castle, County Down, the 206 Ulster Battery, Royal Artillery – The Ulster Gunners – performed the Royal Salute in very blustery conditions, while at Gibraltar’s Grand Battery, Headquarter Company (Thomson’s Battery), The Royal Gibraltar Regiment, fired its 21 rounds in bright Mediterranean sunshine.

Now in her 91<sup>st</sup> year, The Queen has ruled for longer than any other Monarch in British history, becoming a much loved and respected figure across the globe.

Her extraordinary reign has seen her travel more widely than any other monarch, undertaking many historic overseas visits.

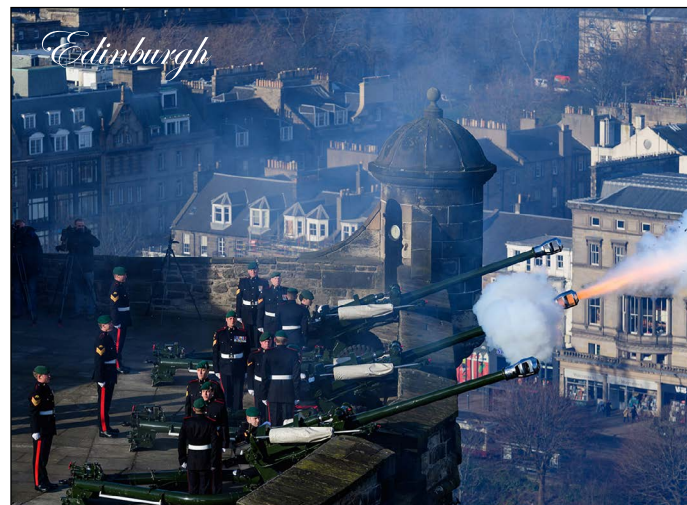
Known for her sense of duty and devotion to a life of service, she has been an important figurehead for the UK and the Commonwealth during times of enormous social change.

Her Majesty continues to carry out a full program of engagements, from visits to charities and schools, to hosting visiting Heads of State, to leading the nation in Remembrance and celebratory events.

The Queen sees public and voluntary service as one of the most important elements of her work. She maintains links, as Royal Patron or President, with more than 600 charities, military associations, professional bodies and public-service organisations.



To coincide with the occasion of her Sapphire Jubilee, Buckingham Palace re-released this photograph of Her Majesty, taken by David Bailey in 1914, in which she is wearing a suite of sapphire jewellery given to her by her father as a wedding gift in 1947.



On Royal occasions, Royal Salutes are fired in London, Dover, Portsmouth, Colchester, Plymouth and York in England, Edinburgh Castle in Scotland, Cardiff Castle in Wales, Hillsborough Castle in Northern Ireland, and Gibraltar.

The number of rounds fired in a Royal Salute depends on the occasion and place. A standard Royal Salute is 21 rounds. In Green Park an extra 20 rounds are added because it is a Royal Park. At the Tower of London it's 21 rounds plus 20 because it's a Royal place, plus another 21 'for the City of London'.



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# STATEMENT FROM SOLDIER ON

Dear Reader. Last year was a difficult year for the veteran community. It was estimated more than 70 veterans took their own life, with many more veterans' lives impacted by mental health issues, family relationship breakdowns, violence, alcohol and substance abuse, incarceration and homelessness.

In 2016, these issues gained increased media coverage and Australia gained a better understanding of what our veterans have experienced and the challenges they face in the years after service.

As a country, we started to appreciate why after undertaking one of the most demanding, admirable and courageous jobs – defending our country – our veterans and their families need support readjusting to normal life. There is still much for us to understand, but these are important steps forward.

Just as important were the steps taken to better recognise our veterans' remarkable skillsets, experiences and personal attributes.

It is our duty as a country – and it should be our honour – to provide our veterans and their families with the right support and opportunities once they leave the Defence Force. This ensures they can overcome any mental impacts from their service,

readjust to a normal life and continue to be incredible leaders in our community.

Last year Soldier On developed and launched a world-class Veteran and Family Support Program, and with industry partnerships, we are changing the lives of veterans and families around Australia. But unfortunately, without government funding, there are only so many veterans and families we can support.

We constantly receive calls for support from regional Australia. Locals asking us why we aren't in places like Darwin, northern Queensland, country New South Wales and many other locations.

They can see the difference our services are making and they desperately want their local veterans to benefit too.

Soldier On wants to let you know, we have heard your calls and we have taken action.

Last Thursday, Soldier On presented the Australian government with our 2017/18 Federal Budget Submission for consideration.

In our budget submission, we outlined the need for an effective response to the current issues veterans face by establishing community based regional services, expanding psychology services to meet the

needs of families, and improved collaboration and coordination across the sector.

#### We proposed the government invest in:

- An expansion of Soldier On's services to six regional locations and, in doing so, positively impact at least 48,200 veterans;
- Psychological services to partners and children and those delivered through virtual infrastructure; and,
- An independent peak advocacy body for the veterans' support services sector.

As Soldier On approaches our fifth anniversary, our mission remains to achieve the best reintegrated generation of veterans in Australia's history. We are not there yet. But we are working hard to achieve it, and last week's budget submission will hopefully take us one step closer.

Let 2017 be the year of action and change for our national heroes and their families.

*To help us provide vital support services to veterans and their families, please donate – or sign up to become a regular donor. For the price of a cup of coffee each week, you can help Soldier On make a significant difference in the lives of veterans and their families.*



## SOLDIER ON HELPING OUR WOUNDED WARRIORS

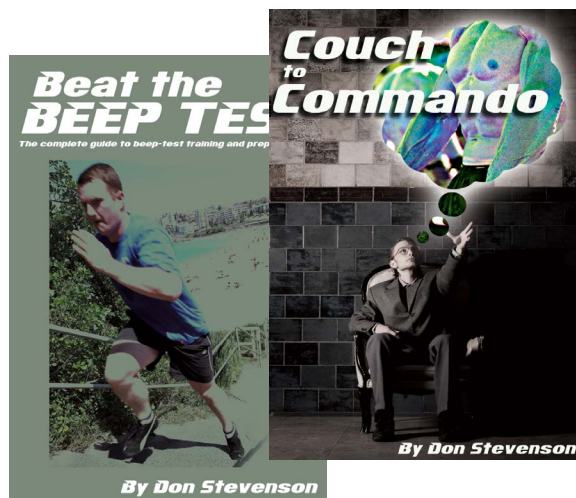


**SOLDIER ON** IS ABOUT AUSTRALIANS COMING TOGETHER TO SHOW THEIR SUPPORT FOR OUR WOUNDED. IT'S ABOUT TELLING OUR DIGGERS THAT WE WILL ALWAYS HAVE THEIR BACKS; THAT WE WILL REMEMBER THOSE WHO HAVE COME HOME, AS WELL AS THOSE THAT HAVE DIED. IT'S ABOUT GIVING THE WOUNDED THE DIGNITY THEY DESERVE AND THE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

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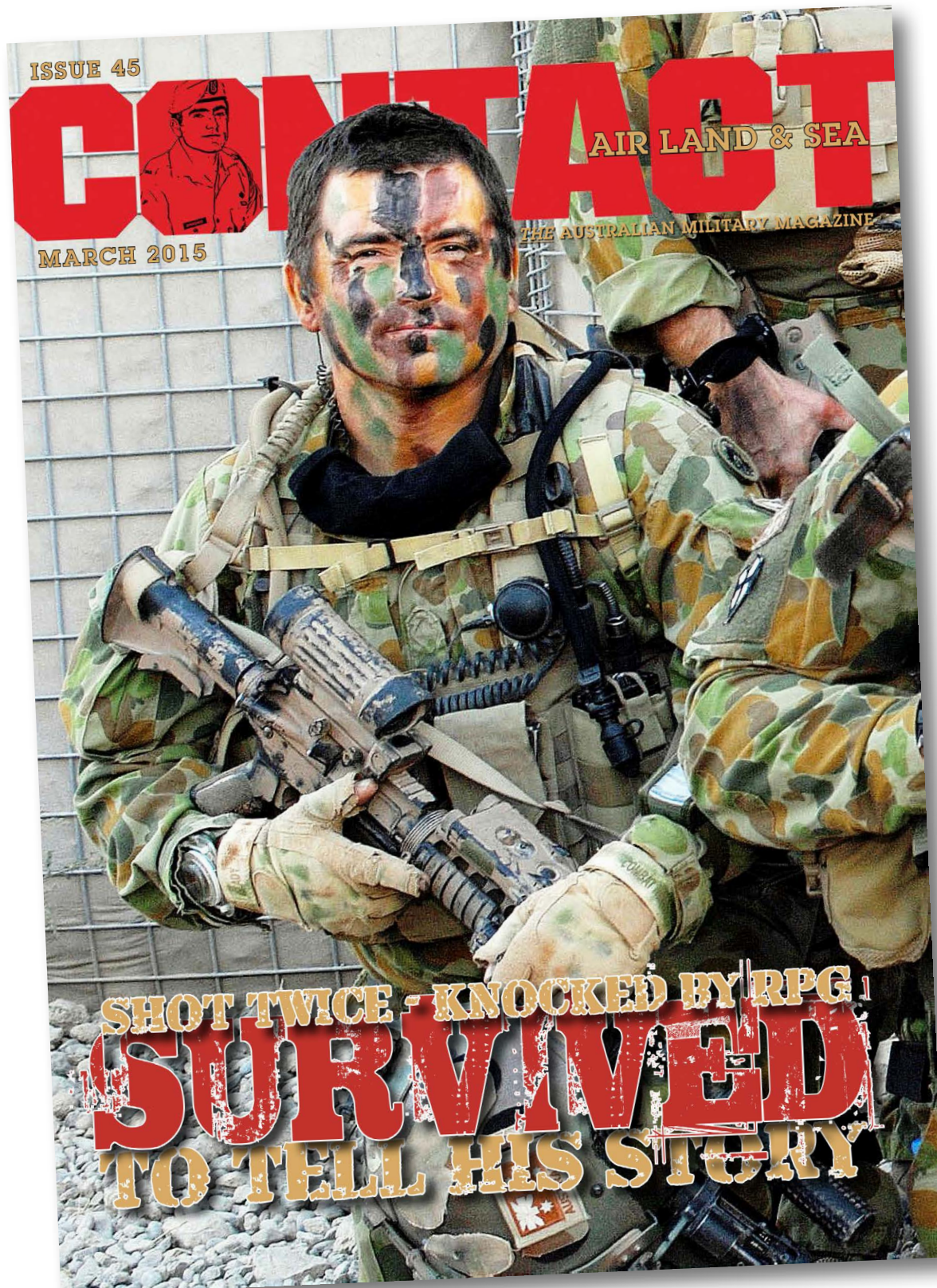


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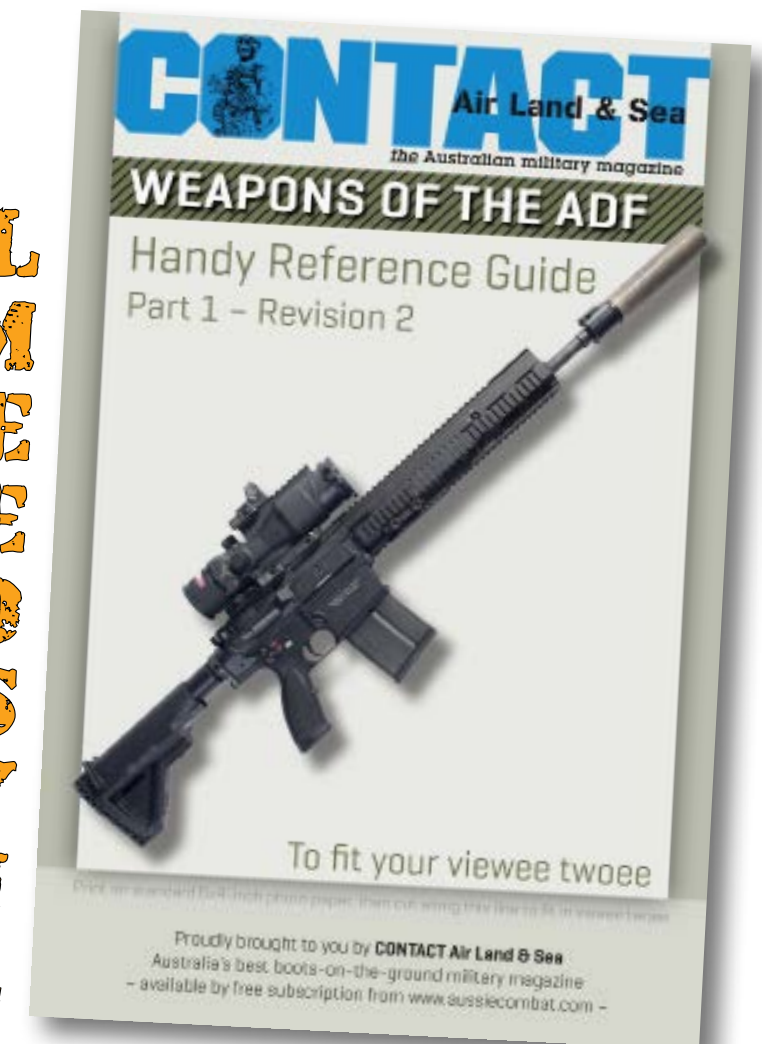
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# CLOSE BUT NOT CLOSE ENOUGH

## Australians recommended for the VC but not awarded

BY MAJOR DARRYL KELLY

**Privates John David Schumann MM  
and Gilbert Garven Robertson MM  
7<sup>th</sup> Battalion**

# EVERY BULLET COUNTS

**“How you doing mate?” the Digger said as he took the haversack containing the precious ammunition. “Not too bad Gil, but I’ll need a hand to get back!” John gasped “Hold on, I’ll get this lot back and I’ll be to you shortly!”**

**John Schumann was a bright bloke, a man from a farming background, working alongside his father, out on the Wimmera.<sup>1</sup> Determined to serve his country in what was termed The Great War, John enlisted on 22 July 1915. Being 27 years of age and able to look after himself, he was allocated to the infantry. First up he was part of the reinforcement draft for the 11<sup>th</sup> Battalion (Western Australia), then he was changed to the 10<sup>th</sup> Battalion (South Australia), before the higher command settled on him being allocated to the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, a Victorian unit<sup>1</sup>. At year's end, he embarked on the HMAT<sup>2</sup> Demosthenes, bound for Egypt. Arriving in early 1916, John had missed the carnage of Gallipoli, but the evidence of the campaign showed on the faces of the veterans who had recently returned. He soon learnt that war was a serious business and his best method to fit in was to adopt a policy of “ears open and mouth shut” and learn everything he could from the hardened Gallipoli veterans.**

In Egypt, he completed another element of training before boarding a troopship bound for France. Again he staged through further training, designed to bring him up to speed for the European war. Finally he received orders to move to his battalion, which was already preparing itself for its first major action on the Western Front. On 11 July 1916, after a journey of more than seven months, Private John Schumann finally arrived at the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, as part of a reinforcement draft. From here the draft was broken up into the sub units, with John being allocated into one of the Lewis Gun sections of 'D' Company<sup>3</sup>.

The 7<sup>th</sup> was already a finely honed force. It was a mixture of experienced Gallipoli veterans and eager young reinforcements from Australia. As the orders came down, the assault formations made their way to the Somme battlefields where, God willing, they would force the enemy's hand, break through his lines and in the word's of Field Marshall Haig – ‘set the cavalry loose!’

The Somme offensive had been in full swing since 1 July and the dogged defence of the enemy was ever present. On 19 July

the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion was moving forward towards the front line at Pozieres. As they passed a designated area the word came down for the soldiers and NCOs to drop blankets, packs and felt hats but to retain their greatcoats for the journey forward<sup>4</sup>. The officers were to remove their Sam Browne Belts<sup>5</sup> and leather gaiters and wear normal tunics, in an attempt to make it more difficult for German snipers to identify them. As a means to assist friendly observation, the troops were to sew a six-inch square of pink material onto the back of their tunics<sup>3</sup>.

While the officers underwent detailed briefings and map studies from the senior major, others went forward to conduct detailed route reconnaissance for the move forward. The remainder of the battalion underwent extensive rehearsals and training in preparation for the upcoming occupation of the forward trenches. These included the taking and consolidation of enemy trenches by company-sized groups and the requirement for designated mop-up parties who would locate any of the enemy hiding in dugouts and eliminate isolated pockets of enemy resistance<sup>3</sup> – dubbed by the Diggers as ‘The Rat Hunt!’

Orders came down that the main assault by 1<sup>st</sup> Division against the Pozieres line would occur at 2400 hours, 22 July. The 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Brigades had the dubious honour of the initial assault, while the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, including the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion would maintain close support when required from the western side of ‘Sausage Valley’<sup>3</sup>.

‘Sausage Valley’, served as one of the main maintenance areas to keep the front line units well supplied. The valley was strewn with wagons, horses and stacks of supplies, as well as disoriented troops and casualties returning from the forward area. Because of the surrounding features, the German forward artillery observers could not physically observe the area from the ground, but they could from the air and, as they had themselves occupied the area previously, they had the coordinates down to the last inch and thus delivered deadly, accurate fire whenever and wherever they chose to<sup>6</sup>.

As the assaulting brigade's went into the meat-grinder that was Pozieres, the casualties were almost immediate, and it was clear that additional troops would be needed. At 0425 hours on 23 July, the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion received orders to deploy two companies forward and, as A and B Companies moved out, John Schumann opened one eye wearily – “better you than me,” he muttered to himself as he nestled back into his haversack containing the Lewis Gun magazines he was using as a pillow.

At 0545 hours, the platoon sergeants roused the troops, “come on, up you get, we’re on the move!” they said. John Schumann wasn’t sure if he was dreaming or not, ‘till he got the toe of a boot in the ribs, “Come on Schumann – the war’s waiting for you – get your kit on!” the sergeant growled.

As the men moved forward along a trench line known as ‘Black Watch Alley’<sup>3</sup>, the very ground shuddered beneath their feet as the area ahead was pounded by a deluge of artillery. On entering the trench lines, carnage was everywhere and, to John, it was like every nightmare he’d ever had was now rolled into one. Machine gun and rifle fire whizzed overhead as if to make the air hazy with the blur of lead, artillery exploded in and around the trenches smothering the soldiers who tried to take



*The final resting place of Private John Schuman.*

shelter against the earth walls and in dugouts. Trapped men, who’d been buried alive would scream in muffled tones and thrash violently before falling limp as their air gave out. All the while their mates clawed at the ground with bare and bleeding hands in vain attempts to rescue them.

The 24<sup>th</sup> of July brought an additional horror as the German gunners saturated the area with deadly gas shells<sup>3</sup>. Huddling down low in the trench, John coughed and wheezed into his corporal's ear, “as if carrying 200 rounds of ammo, two sand bags, two Mills Bombs<sup>8</sup>, our ‘fighting order’<sup>9</sup>, great coat and the rest, and with the Hun trying either to shoot you, blow you up, bury you alive or trying to choke you with gas isn’t enough – the gas goggles they issued us don’t bloody work!”<sup>10</sup>

“If you get out of here in one piece, I’d take it up with your local member if I was you, mate. He can raise a question of your well being in parliament!” the corporal sarcastically replied.

In such an environment, sleep was near-on impossible and the best one could do was to doze until the next shell threw them around like rag-dolls. Schumann had been at the front for a mere 36 hours and yet it seemed like a month.

As the 25<sup>th</sup> of July dawned, the devastation continued. The 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion runner made his way through the maze of 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion soldiers huddled in the trench. “Where’s your boss?” he said to one soldier. Holding his helmet down with one arm, the soldier quickly pointed with the other hand to the small group of signallers and an officer huddled over the field telephones.

“Sir – orders” the runner said as he knelt down and thrust the grimy paper forward. The D Company OC<sup>7</sup> read the message. ‘Shit’ he said to himself as he crumbled the paper in his fist. The order required that three platoons of D Company were to be dispatched immediately to assist the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion. Under protest the OC sent three of his four platoons forward, while his remaining platoon was already engaged in carrying bombs from the rearward dump forward to the firing line. “Seems like the bloody CO of the 5<sup>th</sup> is trying to run the whole flaming show!” the OC snarled<sup>3</sup>.

As the platoons moved through the trench lines, the artillery was brutal and casualties started to mount. John stayed on the

tail of his gunner, for to be separated would seriously deplete the team's ability to support the platoon when required. As they assumed their places in the forward trenches, which were little more than a scattered mix of unconnected shell holes, they prepared to make the main assault against their objective. The assault and subsequent dogged defence by D Company of their newly captured ground spanned 27 gruelling hours and when finally relieved, the remnants were utterly exhausted. Among the wounded was John Schumann, who’d taken a round through the foot and required evacuation to the rear for treatment<sup>3</sup>.

John's wounds were serious enough to keep him from rejoining the battalion until the following November, where, with the onset of the worst winter in 40 years, made the forward trench lines a misery. Yet Christmas was celebrated in grand style by the battalion, with mail, a distribution of Christmas puddings, a tote of rum and a Christmas ‘Billie’ to each man, donated by the people back home<sup>6</sup>.

Back in Australia, other willing volunteers enlisted to do their bit. One such recruit was 19 year old, Gil Robertson. Gil hailed from the Victorian town of Maryborough where he worked on the railway. The young lad was no stranger to military life, as he’d been a senior cadet for the past two years. Now, with the written consent of his parents, Peter and Harriet, he was allowed to join the AIF. Allocated to the 21<sup>st</sup> reinforcement draft for the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Gil set about readying himself for service on the battlefields of France and Belgium. He was a quiet, competent soldier and worked hard at his training. Embarking on the troopship Nestor in early October 1916, he was bound for England, where he arrived on 16 November<sup>11</sup>. Following a bout of training, lectures and preparation at the Australian Training Battalion on the stark Salisbury Plains, Private Gilbert Robertson was deemed ready to progress one step closer to the war. Along with his fellow soldiers from both his and the other battalion's reinforcement drafts, they were ferried to a waiting troopship, the Victoria, for a dash across the channel to France<sup>11</sup>. With the icy wind blowing down from the North Sea, Gil and his mates huddled together on the deck and looked at the muzzle flashes from what seemed thousands of guns illuminating the distant





# CLOSE BUT NOT CLOSE ENOUGH

## Australians recommended for the VC but not awarded

BY MAJOR DARRYL KELLY



*Military Medal, British War Medal and Victory Medal awarded to Private Gilbert Robertson. Photo courtesy John Burridge Military Antiques, Perth, WA*

### Notes

1. National Archives of Australia: B2445, WWI Service Records, 4323 J.H. Schumann MM, 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF.
2. HMAT denotes His Majesty's Australian Transport.
3. War Diaries of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF, AWM 23/24/17, July 1916.
4. Officers were permitted to retain their valises, containing bedding, spare clothing and other small creature comforts, which would be brought forward by battalion transport and later the carrying parties to the forward areas.
5. A distinctive belt and shoulder strap traditionally worn by officers.
6. Our Dear Old Battalion, The Story of the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF, 1914-1919, by Ron Austin, Slouch Hat Publications 2004.
7. OC – Officer Commanding.
8. Mills Bombs were the British version of the hand grenade.
9. Harness with ammunition pouches, entrenching tool, water bottle, bayonet and other equipment attached.
10. Forward with the Fifth, the Story of Five Years' War Service Fifth Infantry Battalion, AIF, A.W. McKeown.
11. National Archives of Australia: B2445, WWI Service Records, 6572 G.G. Robertson MM, 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF.
12. "Stand To" – go to full alert with all weapons manned and ready to receive a possible attack.
13. Blighty was a slang term for England. To get a Blighty was either leave or a wound serious enough to warrant evacuation to England.
14. Field punishment could be awarded by a court martial or a commanding officer for any offence committed on active service. There were two categories of field punishment. Field punishment No1 consisted of heavy labouring duties, possibly being restrained in handcuffs or fetters, and being tied to a post or wheel. Field punishment No2 differed, in that the offender was not liable to be attached to a fixed object. Gil Robertson was not a pervert or a cross dresser – silk was the only fabric that did not attract lice and, as a result, was highly prized by soldiers and often worn under their uniforms to provide some comfort from the irritating vermin.
15. Tree number 32.

horizon. To a man, a thousand thoughts of home, enlistment, hesitation, confusion, commitment and the future ran through their minds. Gil thought of his own destiny and decisions and muttered to himself – "I hope, I've got this right!"

Like many of the reinforcements before him, Gil's journey was a long and frustrating one, but finally he marched into the battalion, on 27 May 1917<sup>11</sup>.

Allocated to A Company, Gil settled in quickly. One of the first men he met was John Schumann, who'd been allocated to the company to cover the manning shortfall. By now John was very much the 'old soldier' and Gil quizzed him about life in the battalion, personalities and upcoming actions. Gil noticed the wound stripe on John's sleeve. "What happened there?" Gil motioned with his head. "Oh – picked up a little something at Pozieres, most of us got a scratch here and there!"

During the ensuing months, the 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion cemented their reputation as a crack unit with action after action. In September they were pitted in action around the Menin Road with the 1<sup>st</sup> Division's main task to attack and seize two woods, being Nonne Boschen and Glencorse. These features tended to screen the German defences dubbed the 'Wilhelm Line'. Capture these woods and accurate, direct fire could be brought to bear on the Germans. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade, comprising the 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Battalions, were going in as the main assault. A new tactic was to be tried – this was not to launch the attack from the forward trenches, but instead crawl into 'No Mans Land' where forming-up tapes had been laid closer towards the enemy trenches. This way the Diggers would be exposed in the open for less time and hopefully be on the Germans before enemy artillery fire could be brought to bear<sup>6</sup>. The 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Battalions had the dubious honour to push furthest in the assault and seize the third objective – the 'Green Line'.

"Right – over we go!" the officer whispered, and the men climbed out of the trench and crawled forward. The ground had been torn to pieces by months of shelling and, on reaching the tapes, the men had time to quickly take stock and listen and wait for the sound of friendly gun fire. Gil's heart was pounding that much he thought it would burst from his chest but as he looked around he knew he wasn't the only bloke to be scared shitless. "Easy up Gil!" John said nudging the young soldier, "We'll be pushing forward soon". The hushed words passed down the line from man to man – "Remember as we push through the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, stay right up the arse of our artillery barrage 'till we hit the Green Line, pass it on". In the pre-dawn darkness the officer watched the luminous hands of his watch tick towards zero hour, his lips silently counting down 5, 4, 3, 2, then he heard the screech of outbound shells coming from behind. As the first detonations

erupted, whistles right along the lines blew in unison and the men rose as one and advanced.

The action was tough indeed but it had been well planned and well executed and, by midday, the newly won front was secure and being consolidated and strengthened. But in the ensuing days, it was also realised that it had also been a costly venture with a significant number killed and wounded.

Gil had fought his first real action and acquitted himself well, but there was no time for reflection as the word came down to "Stand To!"<sup>13</sup>, as the enemy launched a series of determined counterattacks, which were dispelled by machine gun, mortar and artillery fire. As battle continued into October, a further advance was ordered and the objective this time was the heavily fortified area known as Broodseinde Ridge. On 3 October, Gil, John and the others took their place at the jumping off point poised to go – "Berlin or bust hey mate?" Gil said with a snicker. Then they were off, hell bent on getting into it and getting the job done. In a see-sawing battle that lasted well into the next day, the Diggers were getting the upper hand as they cleared the ridge – pill box by bloody pill box.

Gil stuck close to John, ready to cover him and the rest of the Lewis Gun team if required. Suddenly a burst of machine gun fire sprayed into the ground in front of them. Gil crumpled to the ground as a ricocheted bullet slammed into his thigh. As he rolled into a shell hole, it felt like a hundred red hot poker were being jammed into his leg. John jumped in alongside his mate and tore open the bloodied leg of Gil's trousers. "You lucky bastard mate – that's a Blighty!"<sup>14</sup> wound for sure!" John said as he tore open the first field dressing. After applying the bandage, John crawled to the lip of the shell hole – "Stretcher bearer, stretcher bearer!" he called. As the bearers arrived they took charge of Gil. "Be seein' ya mate – you're in good hands!" John said, clutching one of Gil's shoulders. With that John picked up his rifle and took off after the rest of the company.

The wound was indeed serious enough to give Gil his 'Blighty' and it would take until the following January before he'd return to the unit. John was glad to see his mate back in the battalion and Gil was happy to be back among his mates.

In late May 1918, Gil and some of his mates were on patrol when they came across a partly bombed out farm house. As they conducted a quick search for hidden food, wine or souvenirs, one of the Diggers pulled open a drawer in a bedroom – "you bloody beauty!" he said coming across the veritable treasure trove. He quickly shared out the booty.

A couple of weeks later as they were enjoying a well-earned break in some rear-area billets, an equipment inspection was called. As the OC checked weapons and personal equipment, he noticed something strange protruding from Gil's pack. He

pulled the non-issued item from the pack and held it up – a pair of lacy silk women's underwear and matching silk top. "Well Robertson – taken to wearing women's clothes have we?" "No sir – not exactly," Gil grimaced. "Where did they come from then?" the OC demanded. "Found them in a farm house sir!" Gil replied. "You know that looting is strictly forbidden, don't you lad?" "Yes sir" Gil replied biting his lip.

Gil Robertson stood at attention in front of the Court Martial Board. As the charge was read out the commanding officer looked over his glasses at the young Digger. Looting was a serious offence in any army and the AIF was no different. As the finding of guilty was read out the CO looked Gil directly in the eye. "You're a good young soldier Robertson, but looting and theft is not tolerated in my battalion. I award you 42 days, Number 2 Field Punishment!"<sup>15</sup>. Regimental Sergeant Major, march out the guilty man!"

It was now August 1918 and the Australian forces had won stunning victories against the reeling German Army. In rapid advances, this time measured in miles and not mere yards, the allied forces pushed harder and harder. The 9<sup>th</sup> of August found the 2<sup>nd</sup> Brigade locked in battle at Vauvillers and Lihons. The 7<sup>th</sup> Battalion's main focus was Crepey Wood, the prominent high ground occupied by the enemy. From this vantage point the Germans could sweep the open ground, which the battalion had to cross.

As the 7<sup>th</sup> pressed home one such attack, the Germans countered with a devastating volume of fire. Machine guns raked the area and cut a swath through the ranks of the Diggers. The Aussies fought back with everything they had but, as the situation became untenable, the CO of the 7<sup>th</sup> had no alternative but to order his forward elements to withdraw and take up defensive positions in preparation for an expected German counterattack. As they prepared to meet the onslaught, the Diggers took stock. John and Gil's Lewis Gun team was relatively intact, but they were desperately short of ammunition, given the high casualty rate of the carriers who were now strewn across 'No Man's Land' and if they had any hope of beating off a concentrated German assault, then they would need every round. John Schumann scanned the ground. "Sir, what we need is out there, among our dead and wounded. I want to have a crack at crawling out and retrieving some of the panniers!" The officer lowered his head and thought for a second or two – "Right, out you go!"

Gil grabbed John by the arm. "What are you doing you fool – there's lead flying in all bloody directions out there!"

"Someone's got to do it mate or we're stuffed!" John replied. As John Schumann crawled forward, the Germans kept

up a steady stream of fire. As he reached the bodies of his fallen mates, he cut away the haversacks holding the vital ammunition drums. Collecting what he could, John started to make his way back, when suddenly a burst of fire caught him in the back. Gil heard his mate yell and immediately prepared to go out for him. Crawling forward, he'd pause periodically listening for the tell-tale moaning of his mate. He'd then crawl a few more yards, pause, listen then move. As he crawled in alongside his mate, Gil gave John a shake. "How you doing mate?" "Not too bad Gil, but I'll need a hand to get back!" John gasped. "Hold on, I'll get this lot back and I'll be to you shortly!" Gil replied.

Crawling back towards friendly lines, Gil gave a low whistle to signify that he was a friendly. He reached over the lip of the trench and handed over the badly needed ammunition. "Right – distribute these to the Lewis guns, toot sweet!" the lieutenant ordered. Gil turned about when the officer demanded "where are you going?" "Schumann's hurt bad – I'm going back for him!" and with that he was off.

Reaching John, Gil patched up his mate as best he could. "Right mate, I'm putting you on my back and we're going to run like buggery, so just hang on!"

With German machinegun fire still peppering the area, Gil launched his mate on his back and they were off. Running, stumbling, falling and running again the pair finally made the safety of the trench line where it seemed a hundred pairs of hands pulled them to safety. As Gil lay on the floor of the trench he gasped for air, as the word went out for the stretcher bearers to bind his wounds. As they put the wounded Digger on the stretcher John extended his hand to his mate. "I owe you one Gil – thanks"

For their actions both John Schumann and Gil Robertson were recommended for the Victoria Cross. John's recommendation was relegated to the Military Medal<sup>17</sup>, while Gil's was firstly relegated to the Distinguished Conduct Medal and then also relegated to being awarded Military Medal<sup>18</sup>. John's wounds required specialist attention and he was evacuated to England. Gil remained with the battalion and, the following week, was promoted to lance corporal.

Both John and Gil survived the war. John returned to the Wimmera where he married a young lass, Margaret. He was chuffed when he learnt that on 28 August 1918, his father had planted a tree in his honour on Boorookpi's Avenue of Honour<sup>19</sup>. John passed away on 12 June 1938.

Gil returned home and worked for 30 years at the CIG gasworks. He suffered throughout the post-war years from the effects of being gassed on the Western Front. It wasn't until 1964, that he applied for repatriation benefits.



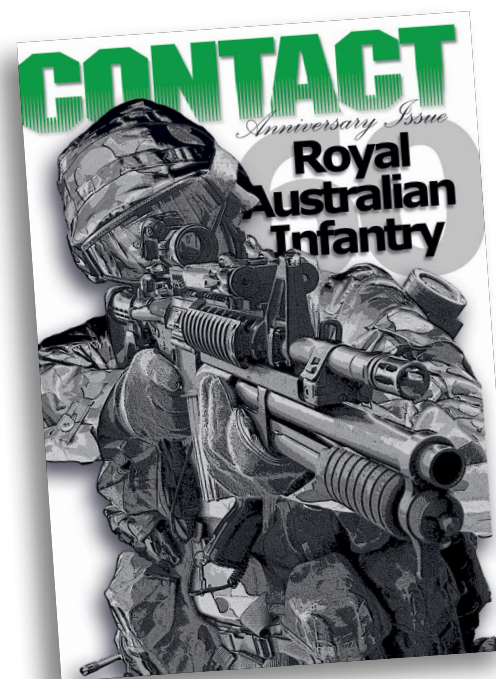
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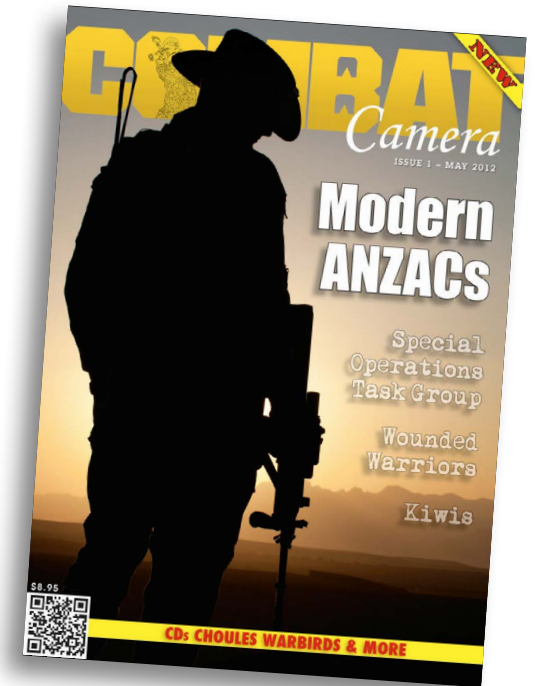
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## State-of-Origin reversed

By Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Holcroft

**Army Cadets from north Queensland and NSW were on a knife-edge when they tied for equal first in this year's 'State-of-Origin' Australian RSM-A Drill Competition.**

The eight-member team from 14 ACU in Blackwater, in Queensland's far north-west, saw the re-match against NSW's 22 AAC BN – Sydney North, as a re-run of the NRL's State of Origin series where the Maroons from Queensland took the title.

In the cadet-drill competition, the Blackwater crew had bested their NSW rivals last year and the year before that.

ABC Radio 612 in Brisbane, hailed their State's team: "Blackwater army cadet drill team best in Australia."

The radio station further claimed on its website: "The Army Cadet Unit in Blackwater may be smaller than many units in Australia – but their drill team can rightfully claim to be the best in Australia."

Blackwater is 825kms north-west of Brisbane, Queensland.

The town is west of Rockhampton in the Capricorn region and has six major open-cut and one underground coal mines.

The claim by ABC Radio 612 later faltered when the Australian Army Cadets' Regimental Sergeant Major, Warrant Officer Class One Peter Brown, separately assessed both teams in action.

"Both teams were excellent in their drill and individually were worthy of taking out the competition," RSM Brown said.

"The problem was in the dress and bearing of the Cadets when they performed their drill – who looked the best and had prepared their clothes best and the way they presented themselves on parade.

"The trophy went to NSW's 22 AAC Battalion in a clear-cut decision."

Commanding Officer of the outright winning team of 22 AAC Battalion (NSW) Major (AAC) Barbara Boss, said she was ecstatic by her team's win.



RSM-A and winning team, from left: CDT CPL Chak Lam Kan, CDT CPL Charlie MacLennan, CDT SGT Jack Wade, CDT SGT William Turner, RSM-A WO Don Spinks, CDT CPL James Cochrane, CUO Ashlie Wilkie, CDT CPL Blake Bano, CDT WO1 Liam Turner, CDT Brayden Tii-Tii and former CUO Kyle O'Dwyer.

"The whole team, cadets and their officers of cadets, put so much effort into ensuring they won," Major (AAC) Boss said.

"We even got down to the point of ensuring all the Cadets' clothes matched so they looked perfect as they performed the Catafalque party for the assessment."

Major (AAC) Boss said she had a real bugler play during the ceremony rather than play recorded music – for authenticity.

The original assessment for the NSW Team took place at Timor Barracks on Monday 16 May 2016.

The 2016 competition went down to a 'Drill Off' against the 14ACU team from NQLD.

The NSW final assessment was conducted by AAC WO1 Peter Brown on 30 June and following a tense wait, 22 AAC BN were informed of their success on 22 August.

RSM – Army, Warrant Officer Don Spinks, presented the coveted RSM-A trophy to members of 22 ACU at Timor Barracks on 11 December.

WO Spinks praised the commitment of the winning team and the other Cadets within the battalion along with support staff who were there in the background ready to step up.

## 416ACU really does give a toss

Home to the world-famous Tuna Toss, the Port Lincoln Tunarama Festival is held annually on the closest weekend to the Australia Day holiday in January – and local Army Cadets were there in force this year.

With a wide array of participation events, arts and cultural displays, local market stalls, and some of the freshest seafood in the world, there truly is something for the whole family to enjoy!

Port Lincoln-based 416 Army Cadet Unit certainly thought so, preparing their own float to participate in the Port Lincoln Community Bank Street Procession.



One of the highlights of the Festival and an event not to miss – The Port Lincoln community go to great lengths decorating themselves and their floats to showcase the many local business and community groups in the procession.

It is always colourful and fun, and often very professional as

entrants vie for best float.

This year included some floats from community arts, sporting clubs, local business groups – and 416 Army Cadet Unit.

The procession took place at 12 noon, 28 January 2017.

Cadet Sergeant Cameron Veraart sent us the photo above from inside the heart of the action.

## AAFC gets DOE cred

AAFC was recently awarded a National Award Unit Licence by the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award, which will benefit both organisations, and especially the youth of Australia, Group Captain (AAFC) Mark Dorward, Commander of the Australian Air Force Cadets, said.

"AAFC is only the second organisation in Australia granted a national licence for the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award," he said.

"Although we've been involved with the Award for more than 30 years, there has been some disparity between each of the States.

"We are the fourth-largest provider of the Duke of Edinburgh's International Award in the

nation, and now, following a successful audit, conduct and management of the program during a provisional arrangement granted last December, this national licence will greatly improve coordination between our two organisations, as well as deliver cost savings which will benefit our members."

"The AAFC is able to provide the program to our members around Australia at a single charge of only \$110 per level per person while operating from just one set of rules (The Duke of Edinburgh's International Handbook) instead of relying on State interpretations of what the award will and won't accept."

More than 600 Air Force cadets are currently participating in Duke of Edinburgh Awards.



## Future leader courses

By Pilot Officer (AAFC) Paul Rosenzweig

Cadets of all three branches completed a range of promotion courses over December and January with successful cadets now ready to take on increased leadership responsibilities.

No 6 Wing Air Force Cadets from South Australia and Mildura conducted their courses at RAAF Edinburgh, with incoming Commander Australian Air Force Cadets, Group Captain (AAFC) Mark Dorward, reviewing their end-of-course parade on 14 January – his first official engagement since assuming command.

Full-time, intensive leadership training courses such as those conducted during the summer school holidays give cadets skills in leadership and decision-making, initiative, self-discipline, time-management, public speaking, management and administration, and operational planning.

In particular, graduates of the Cadet Warrant Officer and Cadet Under Officer promotion courses qualify for award of the national TAFE Certificate III in Business Administration.



Above: CFSGT Kyle Roberts, 609 Sqn, Warradale Barracks, dux of the Cadet Under Officer Course, leads the end-of-course parade.

Left: CFSGT Kelsey Wurfel, 601 Sqn, Keswick Barracks, receives the perpetual trophy for dux of the Cadet Warrant Officer Course from GPCAPT (AAFC) Mark Dorward.

## Special Oz Day

Air Force Cadets of No 6 Wing were on parade or on duty for Australia Day again this year, demonstrating strong commitment to their communities.

While many cadets supported events in Adelaide and throughout rural SA, there were also two interstate events worthy of mention.

First, Air Force Cadets from No 623 Sqn supported a Flag Raising Ceremony in Nowingi Place hosted by the Mildura Regional City Council.

Also, in the NT, former South Australian Air Force

Cadet Lincoln Teagle of No 608 (Town of Gawler) Sqn was announced as the 2017 Young Citizen of the Year in the Nhulunbuy Corporation Local Government Citizenship awards.

Among the cadets on duty at Mildura were Lachlan Turlan and Josef Gerstenmayer who both won prizes on recent promotion courses, and both of whom were promoted to cadet sergeant just before Australia day.

Big congratulations to all.

Just promoted and therefore still wearing old rank slides – from left CCPL Shannon McKee, CFSGT Josef Gerstenmayer, CFSGT Lachlan Turlan and CUO Jacob Adolph.



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