

ISSUE 60

# CONTACT

AIR LAND & SEA

DECEMBER 2018

THE AUSTRALIAN MILITARY MAGAZINE

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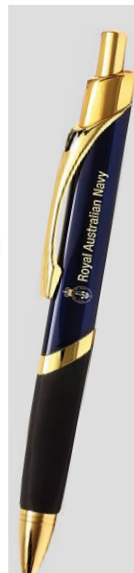
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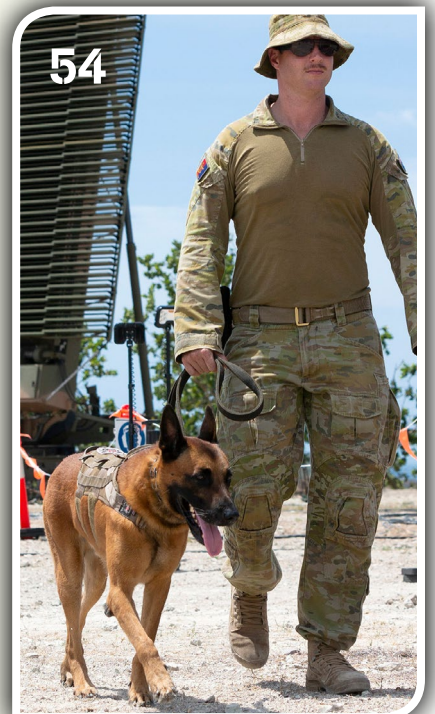
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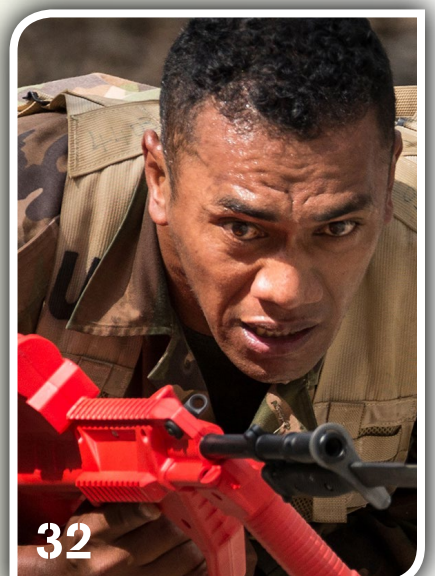
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**CONTACT**  
AIR, LAND & SEA



**IRAR's THAI TAKEAWAYS**

Photo by Corporal Matthew Bickerton

Story page 40

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Welcome to issue number 60 of **CONTACT** – which actually marks the magazine's 15<sup>th</sup> birthday.

Can you believe that? I can barely get my head around it.

Just recently, the Royal Australian Regiment celebrated it's 70<sup>th</sup> birthday at the Australian War Memorial – and all I could think was, "how the hell is it 10 years already since we published the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary infantry-only special issue?"

On other days, though, it feels like I've been doing this forever. And you know what – it has actually been three day jobs and a sea change since we published issue number 1.

Speaking of the passage of time – the first Australian Warrior Expo came and went in October

As media partner, **CONTACT** spent most of this year doing our bit to promote AWE2018 and trying to be a good partner.

And we weren't disappointed. I won't say it was the best event ever, but I will say it was a very promising start to what promises to be a great new event on the military-events calendar. Everyone I spoke to in Brisbane seemed to be in agreement. Even a few who were very sceptical, even negative, in the lead up, were converted by the experience. And, it was a very good event for **CONTACT**.

No dates have been settled for the next one yet – but I do know phone canvassing has already started to see if there's enough support for the idea of running AWE again next year, instead of waiting two years.

There are a few very good reasons why I encourage that idea. One is to run it on the opposite year as Land Forces Conference. Another is that doing it again so soon would cement the name in peoples' minds. I also think it could test (and hopefully prove) the notion that a retail-focused event such as this could possibly be justified as an annual event (those hard-working organisers will probably shoot me for even suggesting such a thing).

Anyway, whenever it is run, I hope they will invite **CONTACT** to be their media partner again. It was definitely worth the effort for us.

On a different subject – I was recently asked to be an ambassador for the **Bears to School** program.

I've never been an ambassador before and am totally chuffed at being asked. I tried to get *her indoors* to call me Mr Ambassador – and have nearly recovered from her response!

Seriously though, I am very humbled and proud to see my photo prominent among a notable list of VIP ambassadors, headed by Keith Payne VC – and very easily leant my support to what I think is a massively worthwhile program.

More detail on page 78, or go straight to the [web site](#).

You know, I shouldn't call *her indoors* 'her indoors'. The truth is, she's the one who goes out 40-hours-plus-overtime a week so that I can stay indoors to keep **CONTACT** running. She is to be thanked immensely for that (and much more). Thank you Rosie.

Finally, I want to make note here that I've recently changed the name of our "CONTACT Patron Army". Find out why and what the new name is on page 71.

And welcome, again, to the 15<sup>th</sup> birthday, issue number 60, of **CONTACT Air Land & Sea** – Australia's best boots-on-the-ground military magazine.

Sincerely,

Brian Hartigan, Managing Editor



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# DAWN DRILLS

HMAS Parramatta's sea boat conducts drills at dawn during a transit across the Coral Sea. HMAS Parramatta and her crew completed a successful four weeks of training and assessment, in October and November 2018, with HMA Ships Sirius, Warramunga and Success in support. The Royal Australian Navy conducts various exercises and scenarios in training to prepare ships and their crew to ensure they are the most capable assets they can be, ready to answer the call.







## HAWKEI HOT FOR REMOTE WEAPON SYSTEM BUT ADF NOT COMMITTED

Hawkei Protected Mobility Vehicle – Light (PMV-L) underwent a live-fire integration activity at the Department of Defence's Proof and Experimental Establishment-Graytown in July 2018.

The aim of the activity was to demonstrate that the Electro Optic Systems (EOS) RS400 Mk2 remote weapon system (pictured above) could be integrated onto the Hawkei via its integral computing system.

In September EOS launched a new stabilised, lightweight platform for remotely mounting weapon systems – the r150 – designed to be half the weight, but with exactly the same performance characteristics as the R400 when fitted with weapons up to and including the 12.7mm (.50cal) machine gun.

Developed as part of a Commonwealth Priority Industry Capability Innovation Proposal to develop the next generation of sovereign remote weapon systems, the R150 has finalised testing and is scheduled to enter production by the end of this year.

However, Defence said LAND 121 Phase 4 was not scoped to deliver a Hawkei fitted with weapons, and there was no requirement to purchase an RWS for Hawkei at this time.

"This demonstration was a simple proof of capability for the platform to inform potential future requirements," a Defence spokesman said.

"This test did not generate precedence for an RWS supplier."

The EOS R400 is in-service with the Australian Army on Bushmasters and has also been selected as the remote weapon system for the Boxer combat reconnaissance vehicle support vehicles.



## SOLDIERS FIELD TEST EQUIPMENT BEFORE ROLL-OUT TO UNITS

The Australian Army tested a range of new capabilities during a land-trial exercise in Townsville over September and October, to ensure they were ready for roll-out.

Land Trial involved more than 200 people from Army's 3rd Brigade, 6th Brigade and 17th Brigade, Defence Science and Technology, Defence Industry Division and the Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group.

During the trial, testing was conducted through a range of combat-team scenarios with some of Army's newest capabilities including protected mobility vehicles Hawkei and Bushmaster, the soldier combat ensemble, enhanced night-fighting equipment, the Black Hornet nano unmanned aerial system and battle management system.

Army's Head of Land Capability Major General Kath Toohey said the trial demonstrated the modernisation of Army and its technology.

"This is an exciting time for the Army as it transitions from testing and evaluating individual pieces of equipment to testing and evaluating its capabilities as part of a complete system," Major General Toohey said.

"This process of continually testing and evaluating is important as it ensures that Army personnel are always ready and prepared now and into the future."

Major General Toohey said soldiers had the opportunity to test and provide feedback on the capabilities they will be using in the near future.

"Their input combined with the feedback from key Defence capability experts informs final adjustments and decisions before the roll-out of equipment to units."

"This trial is an important final step to ensure some of the Army's latest capabilities are ready for introduction to units," Major General Toohey said.

## RAAF COMMITS TO REAPER

RAAF has selected General Atomics MQ-9 Reaper as "the system that best meets the capability requirements for Australia's first armed remotely piloted aircraft system".

The actual model, capabilities and cost of the platform are yet to be negotiated.

RAAF also confirmed to CONTACT that it has not yet decided which squadron would operate the aircraft.

Minister for Defence Christopher Pyne said the medium-altitude, long-endurance aircraft could be integrated within the Australian Defence Force and would be fully interoperable with our allies.

"These new aircraft will provide enhanced firepower and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance support to a range of missions," Minister Pyne said.

"Medium-altitude, long-endurance, remotely piloted aircraft have a far greater range than smaller remotely piloted aircraft and can continuously observe an area of interest for much longer than manned aircraft."

Maintainers check an MQ-9 Reaper Block 5, on 23 June 2017, before the type's first combat sortie in 'Southwest Asia'. USAF photo by Senior Airman Damon Kasberg.



"Remotely piloted aircraft allow military commanders to make more informed decisions faster while providing the option to conduct strike and reconnaissance operations without risking the safety of aircrew."

"The aircraft will be used to watch and protect ADF and coalition land forces," and, unable to resist the PR BS opportunity, the minister also said

the lethally armed tank-killing drone "will provide reconnaissance support for search-and-rescue, humanitarian-assistance and disaster-relief operations".

Minister for Defence Industry Steve Ciobo said the project would provide opportunities for Australian industry with associated infrastructure development and sustainment activities.

## \$500MIL AWM EXPANSION

\$498million has been committed to a major new expansion of the Australian War Memorial.

Redevelopment works will significantly increase exhibition and public program space to more substantially tell the stories of current and recent conflicts, operations, peacekeeping, and humanitarian missions.

No timeframe for the start of building works has been announced.

## SAS DOG GETS 'VC FOR ANIMALS'

Australian Army special operations military working dog Kuga was posthumously awarded the Dickin Medal – thought of as 'the VC for animals' – for conspicuous gallantry at a ceremony in Canberra on 26 October 2018.

Kuga served with the SAS from 2008 and was recognised for his actions

during an SOTG patrol in Uruzgan on 26 August 2011 after alerting his patrol to an enemy ambush.

Kuga was shot five times in the engagement and, despite extraordinary efforts to treat him in Afghanistan and Germany, he died of his wounds the following year, at home in Australia.

Kuga, a Belgian Malinois, is the 71st recipient, and the first Australian dog, to be awarded the Dickin Medal.

## AWD JOINS FLEET

Royal Australian Navy welcomed a new ship into the fleet on 27 October with the commissioning of the second of three Hobart-class guided missile destroyers.

HMAS Brisbane (III) is the third ship to carry the name.

She is now undergoing extensive test, evaluation and training workups.

The first of the three Air Warfare Destroyers, HMAS Hobart, was commissioned last year.

The third ship, Sydney, was launched at Osborne in May and will be delivered to the Navy early next year.

The AWD program is about two years behind schedule and \$1.2billion over budget.

## SUPPLY LAUNCH!

Just 12 months after her first keel section was laid down, the first of two new replenishment ships for the Royal Australian Navy was launched in Spain.

NUSHIP Supply hit the water, gliding backwards down a slipway in front of a large crowd at the Navantia shipyard in Ferrol on 24 November.

Chief of Navy Vice Admiral Michael Noonan was on hand for the ceremony.

The next day, Vice Admiral Noonan laid a keel coin to mark the formal start of construction on sister ship Stalwart, which is expected to be launched about this time next year.

NUSHIP Supply



## LITTLEBIRDS WANTED

Australia is looking to possibly buy a fleet of light helicopters for special-ops insertions.

Project LAND 2097 Phase 4 is collecting information and proposals to inform concepts.

Defence says the helicopters being sought must be proven (already in service) commercial- or military-off-the-shelf.

They should also be optimised for operating in dense urban environments, and capable of being rapidly deployed by RAAF Boeing C-17A Globemaster.



# HEADS UP



## M1A2 SEPv3?

General Dynamics Land Systems Australia showcased the Abrams main battle tank at Land Forces Conference 2018 in Adelaide in September and were keen to discuss upgrades with the Australian Army.

General Dynamics Land Systems recently signed a delivery order to upgrade 100 additional M1A1 Abrams MBTs to the state-of-the-art M1A2 System Enhancement Package Version 3 (SEPv3) configuration for the US Army.

The delivery order is part of a US Army requirements contract, through which

Abrams model at Land Forces 2018.

they can upgrade up to 435 M1A1 Abrams to M1A2 SEPv3 configuration.

A spokesman for GDLS said Abrams, which is currently operated by the Australian Army's three armoured cavalry regiments, was a proven capability that provided soldiers with a decisive edge on the battlefield by combining speed, heavy protective armour and a fearsome 120mm gun.

M1A2 SEPv3 configuration features technological advancements in communications, reliability, sustainment and fuel efficiency, plus upgraded armour.

GDLS-Australia vice president Kevin Connell said, "We're delighted to showcase recent innovations in this proven main battle tank and discuss how Australia can benefit from the US Army's recent investment".

"This latest generation Abrams continues to set the standard for protection, survivability and lethality, and has the ability to ensure that the Australian Army has decision superiority on the battlefields of today and in the future," Mr Connell said.

a lighter-weight design (less than 7kg), a round counter, improved safety, plus intelligent features, such as compatibility with future intelligent sighting systems and programmable ammunition.

The weapon is fully backwards compatible with all ammunition types, however, Australian munitions company NIOA will upgrade Defence's existing 84mm Carl Gustaf inventory to meet current specifications.



ARMY BUYS CARL-GUSTAF M4

The Australian Army has placed an order for several hundred new Carl-Gustaf® M4 84mm multi-role weapon systems.

This is Saab's sixth customer for the Carl-Gustaf M4 system since its launch in late 2014.

Deliveries to the Australian Army will take place during 2020.

This newest version of the venerable Carl-Gustaf retains all the effectiveness and versatility of the proven Carl-Gustaf system while introducing a range of major enhancements – including

## \$1BILLION FOR NEW GEAR

The government has approved a project to enhance and continuously improve the equipment used by the ADF personnel.

The Integrated Soldier Systems project, valued at up to \$1 billion over 13 years, will deliver a range of equipment for use by individuals.

Minister for Defence Christopher Pyne said the project was taking a flexible approach, investing up to \$240 million between now and 2023, with the flexibility to update and change as technology developed.

"This project will deliver a broad range of equipment to ensure our personnel continue to meet emerging threats, are less detectable, less susceptible to enemy attacks and able to fight longer and more effectively in challenging conditions," Minister Pyne said.

"The first tranche will deliver supplements to the basic equipment used by soldiers, including body armour, helmets, hearing and eye protection and load carriage equipment; as well as field equipment such as water purifiers, helmet torches, storage bags, cooking gear and sleeping bags.

"In the future, the project will continue to enhance the basic equipment used by soldiers to keep it up to date, as well as looking at things such as hand-held translators, portable unmanned aerial vehicles and ideas like exoskeletons or 'mule' unmanned vehicles to help soldiers carry their equipment."

Minister Pyne said this investment, under Project LAND 125 Phase 4, would ensure our soldiers had the mobility and protection to deploy quickly and achieve their mission as an integral component of the ADF.

"Delivery of subsequent tranches will be subject to a range of variables centred on incorporating emerging technologies, some yet to be fully developed, to ensure our soldiers continue to have the best capabilities available."

Companies are encouraged to register with AusTender, which will provide details on related tenders.

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Wing Commander Darren Clare, Commanding Officer of Royal Australian Air Force No. 3 Squadron, in front of an Australian F-35A Lightning III on the flight line at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, USA.

Royal Australian Air Force pilots and maintenance personnel are embedded in United States Air Force units and partnering with Lockheed Martin to prepare for the introduction of Australia's first fifth-generation air-combat capability.

Australia currently has 10 F-35s embedded in the global training fleet in the USA – and our first two A-based aircraft will arrive at their new permanent home at RAAF Base Williamtown near Newcastle NSW on 10 December 2018.



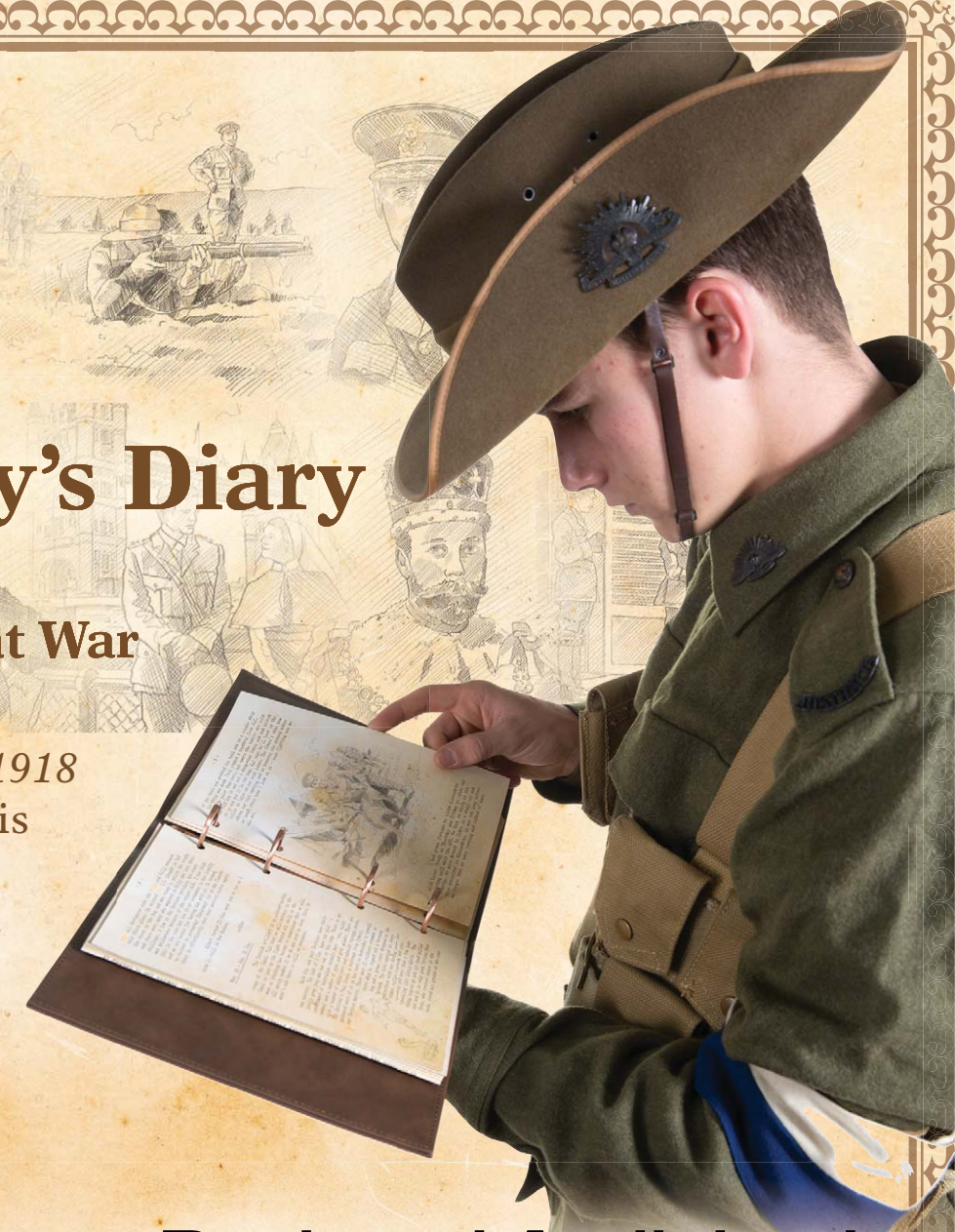
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Australian Army Aviation Corps marked 50 years since formation, on 18 October 2018, celebrating with a ceremonial parade, flypast and a variety of displays at the Army Aviation Training Centre, Oakey, Queensland, and around the country.

Head of Corps Brigadier Scott Benbow said he was proud to join past and present personnel to mark the important milestone.

"From a small corps formed in 1968 flying light fixed-wing aircraft, the Australian Army Aviation Corps has grown to be an advanced, state-of-the-art force," Brigadier Benbow said.

"Today, the Australian Army Aviation Corps flies a variety of capabilities, including the Tiger armed reconnaissance, Chinook medium lift and Taipan multi role helicopters."

The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary also saw the final flight and retirement of Army's Bell 206B-1 Kiowa fleet after almost 47 years of service.

"The Kiowa fleet has provided stalwart service to the Army since 1971," Brigadier Benbow said.

"All personnel, past and present, who have operated, maintained and supported the Kiowa can be proud of the part they played in Army's history."

Dear Editor,

It was with some interest I read of your history with the Kiowa\*. We have a small piece of land that falls within the Oakey low flying training area and once a year landowners are invited to an open day. This is usually held at the neighbouring Army Aviation museum where they throw on a BBQ and allocate a couple of beers. They drag a couple of choppers out and a few pilots attend, just to say thanks for them buzzing the cattle etc. It's appreciated and I adore choppers so for me it's a great day. This year being the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Army Aviation they threw in a flying capability display and during this event it was disclosed that it was also the final flight ever for the remaining Kiowas. So I hope you like the attached photo's. I thought you'd appreciate seeing some of your old girls' final moments.

Thank you also for your tireless efforts with the magazine. I can not comprehend the hours and dedication you put in but the end product is remarkable!

Kindest regards  
John Jennings

Photos by John Jennings

\*CONTACT Editor Brian Hartigan worked on Kiowa helicopters at 162 Reconnaissance Squadron from 1992 to 1997, as an Aircraft Fitter (helicopter engine and airframe mechanic) – very fond memories.





# PREDATORS RETURN



Words Major Kris Gardiner

**Cultana, South Australia – the “Gateway to the Outback” – became a hotspot of Army activity in September as disparate units from the 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade came together over 3000 kilometres, descending on the region for their key collective training activity for 2018.**

Exercise Predator’s Run 18, held from 3 to 28 September saw almost 3000 personnel deploy to the Cultana Field Training Area to undertake rigorous combined-arms training as the

1<sup>st</sup> Brigade commenced the readying phase of Army’s Force Generation Cycle.

Including part-time soldiers from the 9<sup>th</sup> Brigade, and specialists from 6<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Brigades, the exercise provided an excellent opportunity to start building combined-arms teams that will work together next year during the Joint Warfare Series in the lead-up to certification for known operations and as contingency forces.

The focus of the exercise was to practice combat teams based on the 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Regiment and the 5<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> Battalions, Royal Australian Regiment, in core combined-arms competencies in a complex environment.

Nine combat teams conducted a series of combined-arms activities incorporating air-mobile operations with 5<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment, obstacle breaching and urban-assault operations integrated with the 1<sup>st</sup> Combat

Engineer Regiment and B Company, 1<sup>st</sup> Military Police Battalion, plus battlefield-clearance teams from the 1<sup>st</sup> Combat Service Support Battalion.

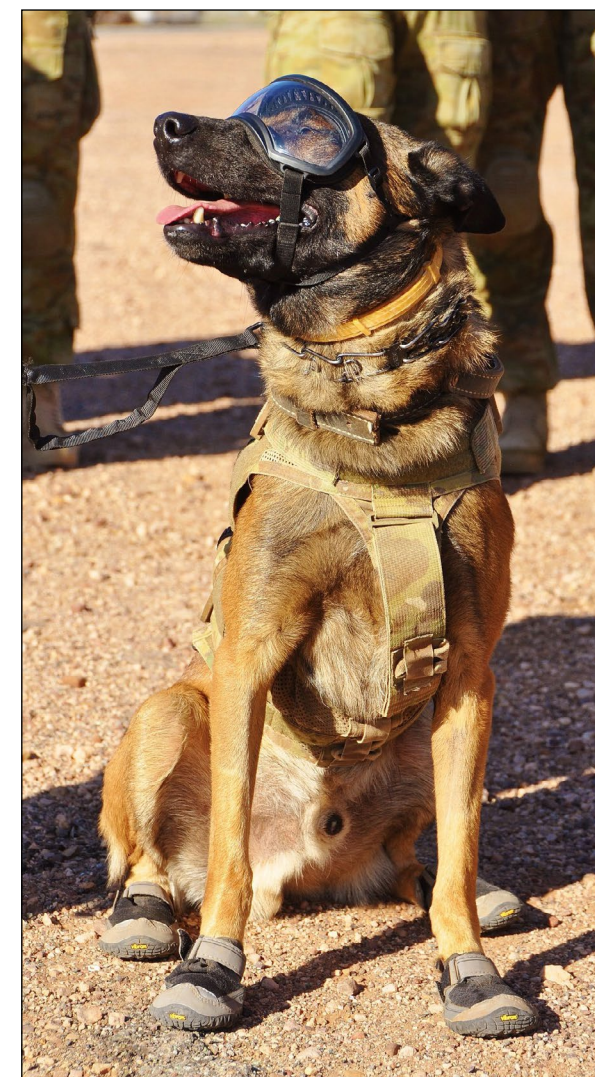
Digital communications and information management delivered by the 1<sup>st</sup> Combat Signals Regiment were integral to enabling ground and air manoeuvre and training over more than 2500 square kilometres.

The exercise culminated in a live-fire defensive action with all Support Company





CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: Soldiers break down a pallet of blank ammunition ahead of their first training activity on Exercise Predators Run 2018. Military police dog Max looks forward to a helicopter ride. Soldiers from 7RAR enter the fray. A B Squadron, 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Regiment, M1A1 Abrams tank. PREVIOUS PAGE: Soldiers board a 5<sup>th</sup> Aviation Regiment MRH-90 helicopter.



the successful execution of Exercise Predator's Run 18's training objectives was down to a fundamental application of the brigade's traits.

"Being soldiers, we are expected to exhibit the highest standards of professional conduct and, as such, we must be brilliant at the basics, work together as a team, strive for excellence and understand the bigger picture," Warrant Officer Class One Landy said.

"In my opinion, Exercise Predator's Run 18 achieved this outcome.

"It was great to see each and every soldier dedicated, enthused and working together to achieve our mission and objectives."

Exercise Predator's Run 18 also saw two landmark moments with the execution of the first Joint Precision Airdrop System delivery to non-special forces in Australia and the refuelling of an M1A1 Abrams tank directly from the fuel tanks of a RAAF C-130J Hercules.

Brigade air liaison officer Squadron Leader Nathan Thompson said the 1st Brigade on Exercise Predator's Run 18 was the perfect opportunity to demonstrate both capabilities.

"This exercise has allowed us to employ a number of air force capabilities for the combat brigade," Squadron Leader Thompson said.

"The amount and quality of air-land integration will set 1st Brigade up well for the remainder of its readying period."

With the completion of Exercise Predator's Run 18, the 1st Brigade will now shift its focus to individual career-progression courses, cyclone preparation and detailed planning for 2019, including the Joint Warfare Series and Exercise Talisman Sabre 19.

"There's no doubt the 1st Brigade have a busy training year ahead, but the 2018 Predator series of exercises has given us a strong foundation in core skills and teamwork, and a couple of focus areas to work on," Brigadier Pearce said.

weapons, including 81mm mortars and Mk 47 automatic grenade launchers, integrated 155mm danger-close artillery missions fired by 8th/12th Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery, and M1A1 tanks in attack-by-fire positions.

Commander 1st Brigade Brigadier Matt Pearce said the formation received outstanding support from across Army and RAAF, and the results of Exercise Predator's Run 18 were extremely satisfying.

"The exercise has provided an excellent chance to build teams and confirm procedures at every level," Brigadier Pearce said.

"But definitely the most challenging aspects came from the force-on-force activities that tested commanders to out-think and out-maneuvre their opponent to safely achieve their respective missions.

"Learning was aided by observer trainers from the Combat Training Centre who identified, through a detailed after-actions review process, lessons learnt for each combat team."

Regimental Sergeant Major 1st Brigade Warrant Officer Class One Michael Landy said



# PRT TALIBAN WHAT PRICE MOBILITY?

When deployed forces are poorly equipped,  
who sorts out the mess?

Words and photos by Mark Meredith

In 2004, I was working for a non-government aid agency in north-east Afghanistan, around Yakolang and Panjab, west of Bamian.

Also stationed in the area was a provincial reconstruction team – PRT – consisting of New Zealand Defence Force troops. I observed these soldiers carrying out their duties in this high, mountainous area and I was very impressed by the professional and caring attitude they brought to their mission.

As a PRT, they were on a hearts-and-minds mission in very difficult country. The area they operated in was remote and had been devastated by war and years of neglect.

The latest episode of destruction was when the Taliban took over the area and did such things as destroy the whole bazaar in Yakolang, and line up the adult male population and shoot whoever they wanted to, as payback for opposing them.

The country is barren and mountainous, and more than 3000 metres above sea level. Much of the population is crowded along the steep river valleys. As a result, this is where the roads are also located.

Snow is very heavy during the long hard winter, and this same snow provides most of the water for agriculture and domestic use. That's the upside.

The downside is that when the snow melts it causes floods that often destroys the roads.

NZDF troops were using locally purchased cars – used ones. These cars were the same as provided to the Taliban by Osama bin Laden, so I nick-named them 'Taliban Tours'.

They were using locally purchased cars because the NZDF apparently did not have any suitable transport to send to Afghanistan. This lack of mobility even extended to the New Zealand SAS, who solved the problem by 'appropriating' vehicles from the US Military.<sup>1</sup>

Unit military skills seemed to be very good, but local knowledge seemed quite poor. So, not content with sending troops with bad equipment, it seemed to me the NZDF/NZ government had not provided proper or appropriate training either.

As if this wasn't enough for the troops on the ground to contend with, someone higher up the command chain decided that the unit in question really could, literally, become a 'tour company'.



On one occasion, the PRT was designated to provide tour services to a group of diplomatic staff from Islamabad, Pakistan. This meant picking up the staff from an isolated airport and taking them on a tour of one of the most scenic areas of Afghanistan – Band I Amir. All in the one day I might add.

Band I Amir is a lake complex, on the road to Bamiyan, which, in any other part of the world would be visited by thousands of tourists each year.

This particular task was where a lack of local knowledge and bad equipment really showed up.

The lack of local knowledge was shown by the tour convoy following a road into a valley to view one of the lakes that Band I Mir is famous for. But this valley had only one way in and one way out.

This was a significant problem for security of the PRT and their diplomatic tourists.

But, the locally purchased cars added to their woes, as they proved incapable of actually climbing the steep road back out of the valley. This was because of two problems, 1 – the cars were equipped with sand tyres, which looked good but were next to useless on rocky hills. As a

Taliban car they would have been fine because most of the Taliban cars operated in areas where sand was common. 2 – the cars were Toyota Hilux 4-wheel-drives and, while unbreakable, were woefully underpowered by a small four-cylinder engine, which, at the altitude they were operating, were starved of oxygen. Also, the fuel supplies in Afghanistan were of spurious quality at the best of times. This was one of my biggest issues and I never did find out the cause of the fuel-quality problem.<sup>2</sup>

With only limited power to start with, these cars did not have the reserve to make up for the lack of oxygen at this altitude and a whole PRT detachment and diplomatic 'tourists' were left stranded, unable to climb out of the valley.

Worse still, they were actually blocking the road for other groups trying to get out.

Luckily, Afghans are generous people and up for a challenge.

And so it was that local Afghans worked cooperatively with the New Zealand PRT to get all their cars up the hill.

As an aside – once we had the PRT on their way, the Afghans took it as a challenge to get up the





## IT WAS OBVIOUS THE PRT DIDN'T WANT THIS TOUR JOB IN THE FIRST PLACE AND EXPLAINING THIS EXTRA ISSUE ONLY ADDED TO THEIR DOOR MOOD

hill in our Land Cruisers, uncided. This consisted of having two Afghans in each car – one to drive and the other to change gear. And the Land Cruisers, with more power reserves and better tyres, completed the task easily.

The local driving technique was something to behold – the more so because I was in charge of maintenance!

But it was late and we needed to get out and home too. The late hour led to what was for the Afghans probably not a good advertisement for NZDF/Afghan collaboration. Once we got the PRT up the hill, they packed up their passengers and left immediately. I actually agreed with this and accepted their apology, because I understood they had to get their passengers back to the airport and home to Islamabad that day, while we could afford to take a little more time. But seeing the PRT drive off after the trouble we had gone to to get them off the hill was not popular with our Afghan staff.

While working to get the cars up the hill, I could not help noting that most of the 'tourists' were female and, to put it diplomatically, were very

badly dressed for a Muslim country. Actually, tits and bums everywhere, to be honest. I tried to point out that this was not ideal for Afghanistan, but found that no one seemed to understand the possible problems this could cause. In fact it was quite obvious that the PRT did not want this 'tour job' in the first place and explaining this extra issue only added to their door mood.

Perhaps some insight into how the PRT were seen by the aid groups is in line.

Hate would be the bottom line. No good guys and bad guys. The military were not accepted and that was it. Anyone in uniform was the enemy. This seemed to be a general view, but was not helped by some PRT early actions.

The first time the PRT came into contact with our group was when they brought a sick child to our hospital. The usual practice for aid groups is to exclude all weapons from areas they control. The idea is, no guns no problem – no guns, nowhere to escalate to.

You can agree or disagree with this but it has been generally successful.





In this case, the soldiers concerned entered the hospital fully kitted out. Shall we say they were quickly informed that this was not how things were done around here, and the mood was tense.

My next interaction with the PRT was when they brought two sick children to another hospital. This time no soldiers made any attempt to come inside. They waited outside the gate and we had to go to them. The soldiers themselves were not the problem, it was the weapons they were carrying. Our medical staff wanted nothing to do with anybody carrying weapons.

I was not so squeamish. I could see big advantages in being on the PRT side and staying friendly. Better comms and access to helicopters were a big plus. I had done the same on previous missions. I am also sure our medical staff would have tempered their distaste of weapons and uniforms if there had been any problems!

Anyway, in this case, the PRT did the right thing and made no effort to enter the hospital. I tried to explain the reasoning behind the medical staffs' attitude and I think it was accepted.

Since we were all operating in the same area, interaction between the PRT and ourselves was fairly common.

Since I was the only one who would actually talk to the PRT, I was often asked questions. One obvious question was "how are the two children we brought to the hospital?" Quite reasonable I thought, but the medical staff concerned said, "tell them nothing". Needless to say, that was not the answer I gave.

But the attitude I think is enlightening – there was a genuine dislike for anybody in uniform.

Getting back to my point, though – I found it hard to believe that a government could send troops to a country so prone to problems, such as Afghanistan, with such poor equipment and training as I observed – and then to turn them into a tour company as well!

Mind you, Afghanistan at that time was not as bad as it was in later years.

In fact I myself went for an unescorted tour around Kabul in perfect safety a few years earlier. Well at least I got away with it! On another trip, five members of our aid organisation were killed in an ambush.

But I think this episode with the PRT and their 'Taliban Tours' was a little over the top, with the poor sods on the ground left to sort out the mess as best they could.

<sup>1</sup> NZSAS, *The First Fifty Years*; page 361.

<sup>2</sup> *I suggested many times that we have the fuel tested. The reply was that we would not be able to do anything about the fuel even if we knew what was wrong. My argument was that if we knew the problem maybe we could do something. Chicken and egg? In any case I must have convinced somebody that testing was a good idea, because, just before I left Afghanistan, I was given a plastic drink bottle of local fuel to take on the plane with me to Europe for testing. As far as I know it is still there waiting to be tested!*



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# GETTING BACK IN THE SADDLE WITH

My goal was to just get some time away with my sons. It didn't matter where or when, but if I didn't take action soon, it was never going to happen.

My two sons, eldest 25 years old and my youngest, 20 years old, are each dealing with their recent and historical resurfacing trauma. This was ultimately compounded by dealing with my own personal "shit storm," a phrase coined by Dion Jensen – the 'black dog' otherwise known as PTSD.

I'm a dog handler by trade, but I didn't want that visual cue of being seen with a PTSD dog at work, and therefore I chose to explore other available methods that gave me separation. I figured I could explore the K9 option later if required.

It was my eldest son who showed me the newspaper article on the Remount program, since it featured a former ADF member, in the lead up to Veterans Week activities in ACT.

The RSL organised a meet-and-greet with the remount family on their farm in Bowning, near Yass, NSW. From there, I got in contact with the founder, Ben Maguire.

Ben had met Colonel John Mayer, USMC, in 2013. Mayer raised the US Horsemanship Program during his tenure as Commandant of the Wounded Warrior Project. Ben was so inspired by the work Colonel Mayer had done, he formed Remount at home here in Australia.

While it is a not for profit, Remount greatly appreciated support from private and corporate sectors to sustain the program, solely for the veterans' benefit.

On our arrival at the Remount facility, we were greeted with a hot breakfast, welcomed like family and introduced to the team, consisting of ringers (admin/catering staff), stockmen (instructors/mentors), and friends and family.

After introductions, we dived straight into informal lessons on the history of horsemanship, safety and equipment training (how to handle bridle, mouthpieces, saddles and reins), then headed down to the stables for mounting and arena work.

The combined years of horsemanship experience of the Remount crew was reassuring at every stage of the program. There was no intrusiveness or judgment, just respect and praise for those attending the course, no matter their skill level. As long as you treated everyone with respect – especially the horses – and were happy to give it a go, you were off to a good start.

The Remount family aren't from a military background, yet they have established Remount as a way to say thank you to those who serve, something Ben made clear on his introduction, and it rings true throughout the program.

The relaxed easy-going nature of the stockmen and ringers assisted greatly for first-time riders.

By mid-morning, we were allocated horses. I had Wizard, a 12yo horse that Ben had raised from 2yo.



Cody



Mark and Wizard



Travis

Words Mark Nelson

The horses are raised, owned and used on the program, by the stockmen, and are a part of the family as much as any human.

We led the horses around the arena and continued to form a connection – something I was familiar with from dog handling. Later, on top of the horse 6 to 7 feet off of the ground, you respect this huge animal – and the true meaning of 'horse power'.

Guidance from the stockmen and women reinforced the fact that you had to have a mutual respect, otherwise a bond and eventual relationship wouldn't work. How true is this in life in general?

This would lead to the horse, or in my case, 'Wizard', responding to minute pulls in the slightest direction and respecting a new form of leadership.

Once shown how to mount up, we were off and riding within the arena and, later, open paddocks, conducting riding and control drills. Learning rein control, with foot and hand movements in unison.

One thing to remember – just like a dog, horses don't understand English – yet it was amusing to see one guy actually talking and giving verbal commands to his horse with no rein or leg movements!

Part of the course on the second day, is cutting and basic principles of mustering half a dozen cattle.

The course usually ends there, but not for us.

Instead, we were all fortunate enough to have been trained well enough and given the trust and opportunity to assist later, in a team of six, to muster approximately 400 head of cattle through three open properties, over several kilometres, topped off with morning tea brought out by the trusty ringers.

This was a rare opportunity in anyone's book and to have achieved it with my sons was even more special.

Over the two days we were all taken out of our comfort zones in various ways, trained to the Remount standard and connected with horses for the first time, while making friends and learning a lot about each other on the way.

This activity is different from most other current forms of working through PTSD, and may not be for everyone – but it is one, very good way to begin your journey if you are open to it.

It ended up being the best experience that's ever happened to me on Fathers' Day, and has now set the standard and foundation for many more experiences as we grow and build resilience together as a family and individually.

Thank you to Ben, Adrian, Mark, Lindsey, Richard, Melissa, Marina, Dave, Lynette and the Remount family for the opportunity.





# International mil skills comp

The Chief of Army's annual military skills competition, Exercise Hydra, brought Seven teams from Brisbane's 7<sup>th</sup> Combat Brigade and five international teams together for a week of challenging activities designed to test teamwork, physical stamina and mental rigour.

Teams from the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF); the French Army New Caledonia; His Majesty's Armed Forces Tonga (HMAF); United States Marine Corps, Marine Rotational Force – Darwin; and, the Papua New Guinea Defence Force were hosted by 7 Brigade for the competition.

Run at the Greenbank Training Area, activities included shooting, urban clearance drills, quick-decision exercises designed to test teamwork and problem solving skills, and a 'pilot-down' casualty evacuation.

Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera, hosted the final activity, featuring muscle-endurance and bayonet assault courses.

Teams were awarded bronze, silver or gold standard at the conclusion of the exercise.

However, Commander 7 Brigade Brigadier Andrew Hocking said the competition was not the most important part of the week.

"The most valuable part of this exercise was building trusting relationships and friendships through soldiering – with a healthy degree of competition," he said.

"We realised that although we are culturally different, we have the same values."

Corporal Nakalevu Kamnieli, a participating soldier from RFMF, said his team enjoyed experiencing life in the Australian Army.

"The Fijian team did well in the competition, and we learned a lot from our colleagues in the Australian Defence Force over the week," Corporal Kamnieli said.

"What we enjoyed most was making friends with the ADF members and soldiers from other countries."

Tevita Fifita, an Officer Cadet from HMAF, appreciated meeting people from across the Asia-Pacific region.

"The exercise was physically and mentally challenging," he said.

"The soldiers in my section had a good time interacting with military personnel from different countries, especially Australia, and everyone is looking forward to coming back next year."

7th Combat Brigade will host the competition again in 2019, with additional teams from Thailand, Timor Leste and Singapore, who observed this year's competition, expected to participate.







Words Major Jacob Osborne

# EXERCISE WIRRA JAYA 2018 ROCKS ON



**Army's premiere training activity between Australia and Indonesia was held in Darwin in September with the seventh iteration being hailed an enormous success.**

Exercise Wirra Jaya, from the 3 to 14 September 2018 saw soldiers from the Tentara Nasional Indonesia-Angkatan Darat (TNI-AD), join their Australian Army counterparts at Robertson Barracks in Darwin.

Approximately 85 members from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Kostrad Infantry Division's 411 Mechanised Raider Battalion and 100 members from 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (5RAR), 1<sup>st</sup> Combat Service Support Battalion (1CSSB) and 8<sup>th</sup> Close Health Company (8CHC) built on the lessons learnt from the earlier Exercise Ausindo Rhino, improving cultural understanding, exchanging and enhancing tactical procedures, and fostering closer relationships between the two militaries.

Officially opened by Lieutenant Colonel Andreas Nanang, Deputy Operations Assistant, 2<sup>nd</sup> Kostrad Infantry Division and Major Jacob Osborne, Lieutenant Colonel Andreas recited a speech on behalf of the Commanding Officer 411 Battalion Lieutenant Colonel Widi Rahman, highlighting the importance of working together closely, to improve both countries military skills and shared knowledge.

Commanding Officer 5RAR Lieutenant Colonel Travis Gordon said the training program was designed to maximise opportunities to interact without unnecessary formalities.

"During the lessons, both theory and practical, there were breaks that allowed easy interaction between all members involved in the exercise," Lieutenant Colonel Gordon said.

"This was extremely valuable as it allowed the soldiers from Australia and Indonesia to build genuine friendships, work on their language skills and exchange military training stories."

Exercise Wirra Jaya incorporated a variety of training activities including range shoots, sports competitions, practical urban drills and a mounted and dismounted clearance of the urban facility at Mount Bunder Training Area (MBTA).

Lieutenant Colonel Gordon said the execution of this final activity demonstrated how far both nations working relations had progressed.

"The impact of the training leading up to the clearance of the urban facility was demonstrated clearly with a seamless integration of soldiers from both nations," Lieutenant Colonel Gordon said.

"No matter what nationality, the soldiers could trust each other's skills and as a result there was an accurate and confident application of drills to complete their allotted tasks."

Closed with a farewell parade reviewed by Panglima Kostrad, Lieutenant General Andhika Perkasa and Commander of the 1st Brigade Brigadier Matt Pearce, planning for the 2019 edition of the exercise has already begun.

It is expected that training will become more complex as the series moves forward.

LEFT: Members of the 411 Mechanised Raider Battalion climb the rock wall in 5RAR's compound at Robertson Barracks, Darwin.

OPPOSITE: Australian soldiers practise applying tourniquets on Indonesian soldiers.





Words Sergeant Max Bree  
Photos Kylie Canty and  
Private Brodie Cross



# 1RAR – WORKING THE YARD

A 1RAR section is bombarded with music and flashing lights as the soldiers move through the battalion's new combat training facility known as the Yard.

Weapons ready, they prepare for clearances when the lights abruptly go out. The first soldier goes in under night vision and sees an enemy, but moves back to a wall giving the signal for one enemy. A second, more experienced soldier goes in next, capturing the enemy.

"We put the first soldier in a situation he'd never experienced before," Lieutenant Dylan Brown, platoon commander of the Yard, said.

"Because he was overwhelmed, he wasn't able to remember where he was in the stack. He wasn't able to remember his actions. We had to show him afterwards."

It's here the first advantage of the Yard becomes apparent. A series of infra-red cameras track soldiers as they progress through scenarios, allowing for detailed debriefs on large monitors.

Soldiers can grapple with sensory overload in the Yard's day/night facility, destroy doors in a breaching area and clear buildings in an outdoor urban ops compound.

The Yard was converted from 1RAR's old pioneer warehouse after a pair of the battalion's corporals pitched the idea to their commanding officer.

Army HQ then provided innovation funding to get the project under way.

"The cost of the Yard is a drop in the ocean compared to doing battalion-level exercises," Lieutenant Brown said.

"We can run training that would take weeks and months to organise at Townsville Field Training Area, but here we can 'rinse and repeat' multiple times.

"People can do this sort of training while they're at work and still go home to their families."

Lieutenant Brown and a team of mostly junior NCOs at the Yard also run combat-shooting courses and use the same 'adult learning environment' when putting soldiers through the facility's different scenarios.

It's not all shooting and breaching, though. The Yard also hosts combat trauma packages using several medical dummies with simulated wounds.

Instructors at the Yard have run courses for posted medics coming to work with the battalion.

"It gives them the ability to properly treat an enemy if they're in a particular situation and learn how to be a team member," Lieutenant Brown said.

"Even briefing them on how infantry set up equipment, they say they've never been shown it before and they're already excited to be a part of the battalion. It's not making them infantry, it's giving them a knowledge base.

"Also, infantry fight harder if they know they have a medic with them."

2<sup>nd</sup> Cavalry Regiment is also planning to use the Yard to help re-raise its cavalry scout capability.

The team is also preparing the Yard for the expected introduction of 5.56mm non-lethal marking rounds in coming years.

The 100-by-150m compound has attracted the interest of Combat Training Centre as well as other brigades looking at establishing a Yard of their own.

The Yard officially opened on 9 September.



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# HOW 1RAR 'TRAINS TO FIGHT' IN CLOSE COUNTRY

Words Major Emlyn Mordike  
OC A Company, 1RAR  
Photos Corporal Matthew Bickerton

Recent history has seen The Royal Australian Infantry Corps (RAInf) evolve in structure, 'up gun' through the procurement and development of its weapon fleet and increase its capacity to detect its enemy with modern, state-of-the-art equipment.

As a corps, RAInf is developing world's best practice to ensure training gets the best from our people and equipment. Training within 1RAR focuses on enhancing cognitive conditioning to boost performance and decision making in stressful environments, redesigning combat shooting to maximise employment of primary weapon systems and progressive physical training program, Advanced Operational Conditioning Program (AOCP), to optimise battlefield fitness.

This article aims to provide a contemporary perspective on how we train and fight in the jungle environment, incorporating the recent lessons learnt by Alpha Coy 1RAR during jungle-warfare training in the South East Asian archipelago (Australia's primary operating environment (POE)). Specifically, this training occurred during Exercise Chapel Gold in Thailand earlier this year.

# INTO THE JUNGLE

Private Brandon Bowen, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, on a patrol in Chiang Mai Province, Thailand, during Exercise Chapel Gold 2018.



## RCB

Alpha Coy 1RAR conducted a Rifle Company Butterworth (RCB) rotation in Malaysia and Thailand over the period 29 May to 31 August 2018. This served as a fantastic opportunity to test our tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs) in one of the most arduous operating environments – the jungle.

The first jungle training experience of RCB was Exercise Jungle Genesis.

This exercise was a complete training package encompassing individual, section and platoon-level jungle warfare led and facilitated by the Jungle Training Team (JTT), drawing on experience and personnel from 2<sup>nd</sup>/30<sup>th</sup> Training Group and the Combat Training Centre (CTC).

Alpha Coy's headquarters spent considerable effort aligning training objectives with the JTT to ensure standardisation, shared understanding and a common operating picture.

This set the conditions for a smooth transition in command and control, mitigating potential friction between a modern force accustomed to evolved teaching methodologies and a team entrenched in tried-and-true techniques derived from lessons learnt 'in the mud'.

Ultimately, Alpha Coy would approach Jungle Genesis with an open mind and positive approach to ensure they learned as much as possible from the training offered by a team with vast experience. The approach was simple:

1. complete the training as delivered, without trying to change, alter or argue with either the methodology, delivery or content; and,
2. pay particular attention to maximising the technological advantage afforded by modern equipment and weapon systems.

## KEY LESSONS LEARNED

Alpha Coy's lessons learned/confirmed can be grouped as follows:

1. The enduring need for battlefield-fit individuals;
2. The enduring need for superb individual close-combat skills;
3. The enduring need for small-team expertise;
4. Optimising our leading equipment to gain a competitive edge over our adversaries; and,
5. Other opportunities identified to exploit during training.

## BATTLEFIELD FIT

1RAR believes that an infantry soldier is a tactical athlete, being mentally prepared and physically capable of conducting an array of demanding tasks in all operating environments.

Operating in our POE requires supreme battlefield fitness.

To effectively prepare for training in Australia's POE, Alpha Coy relied heavily upon the AOCP and acclimatisation.

The training program ensured the soldiers received progressive training to conduct weight-loaded activities in hot and humid conditions for long periods.

Results at the completion of Jungle Genesis were very satisfying – with only two minor injuries across the jungle training exercise (both slip and fall related), from a company-strength group.

Previous groups had sustained significant lower-limb injuries or muscle-related injuries, many requiring return to Australia.

Anecdotal evidence strongly supports the claim that the judicious application of AOCP translates to battle fitness.

## CLOSE-COMBAT SKILLS

Jungle warfare is always conducted as a close fight. The team that has the ability to rapidly gain the initiative and inflict overwhelming controlled violence will win. As such, time spent preparing soldiers before immersion into the jungle is paramount.

Key areas of preparation for Alpha Coy focussed on training and development of skills common to all operating environments, including:





1. Establishing effective neural pathways and cognitive conditioning. This was achieved through individual to small-team training within the Yard training facility.
  - a. Consistently training, observing and enforcing correct posture, movement and actions builds the right foundation of muscle memory.
  - b. Slowly increasing complexity and intensity of training, through noise, stress, fatigue, lack of light and so on, allows identification of how intrinsic (personal) and extrinsic (environmental) factors can alter the way a soldier behaves or reacts in certain situations.
  - c. Once reactions are identified and discussed, the training is conducted again to allow the soldiers and teams to identify, adjust and work through these factors to achieve the desired results.
2. Normalising excellence for their trade.
3. Conduct of enhanced combat shooting techniques and consistent dry practices (DPs) for rapid target acquisition and weapon employment. This is achieved through competition and upholding high standards. For example, when conducting combat shooting serials, always end the training with a competition shoot. Soldiers want to win, providing the opportunity to do so fosters increased desire to learn and improve.

## SMALL-TEAM EXPERTISE

As highlighted previously, the requirement for superior small-team expertise is vital. To train a superior small team you must encourage strong discipline, drilled TTPs and SOP and most importantly, strong leadership.

Take every opportunity to empower the lowest-level commander to do their job. Good leadership throughout any training is imperative to achieving success.

One participating platoon commander said, *"Strong leadership at every level, but especially in small teams, is critical. Junior leaders must lead by example, and display the discipline and fieldcraft they expect from their diggers. All senior soldiers, junior NCOs and junior officers need to understand how closely their standards will be monitored – and emulated – by the more junior members of the platoon".*

*"Junior NCOs and officers must also learn to fault-correct poor performance. Junior NCOs too often avoid 'gripping up' their mates in the platoon out of a misplaced sense of loyalty or by attempting to be the 'good guy'. Failure to rectify poor drills or lack of discipline is actually just weak leadership. Fault correction isn't personal; it requires maturity from both*

*parties, and if used correctly will lead to well-drilled sections and platoons with a clear understanding of the required standard.*

*"This needs to start with the platoon commander and platoon sergeant. When PHQ are seen to be constantly on the move, checking and inspecting the men and the pits, identifying shortfalls and areas to improve, it achieves three things: Firstly, the command team can quickly fault-correct minor issues in discipline, security etcetera as they move around the harbour; secondly, the men can see the leaders of the platoon active and present, rather than lounging about in PHQ; and thirdly, the platoon commander and sergeant can inspect people's feet, or make sure everyone has had a chance to eat, or check that everyone has been sleeping and are tracking OK. These three things reinforce standards, foster a team mentality and boost morale."*

Good leadership must start at the top to develop the right environment for fault-correction and the pursuit of excellence. More importantly, junior commanders must be empowered to fault-correct. To achieve this they need to know their job, and be supported when exercising command.

## OPTIMISE LEADING EQUIPMENT

1RAR's current suite of electronic night-fighting equipment (eNFE) proved to be excellent in the jungle – the binocular night-vision device (BNVD) is a force multiplier, even in extremely low ambient light conditions under a thick jungle canopy. Use of the eNFE also enhanced the ability to operate silently in low-light situations. Operating silently encompasses moving through the jungle with ease and being prepared to react to tactical situations at a moment's notice.

Challenges associated with jungle warfare largely preclude a reliance on frequent A1 echelon resupply. This directly challenges the 1RAR 'fight light' SOP, where the preference is to wear and carry the least amount of equipment as is practical (within mission requirements) then call forward a compliment of required resupply via the A1 echelon. The greatest lesson learned in this regard was having the organisational flexibility to transition from 'fight light' to largely self-sufficient for 72 to 96 hours, while trying to achieve a balance with signature management.

One of the simplest methods of signature management would have to be the use of disruptive-pattern uniforms. The AMCU uniforms currently used were deemed



Private Jake Saward, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, on a patrol in Chiang Mai Province, Thailand, during Exercise Chapel Gold 2018.



largely unsuitable for use in jungle warfare. The materials are heavy, restrictive, do not breathe adequately and retain excessive amounts of moisture. Positively, all concerns have been included for rectification in the next tranche of uniform upgrades.

The greatest tool to achieve flexibility and self-sufficiency is correct equipment choice. Increased water, ammunition, ration carriage and shrude weapon selection being the most notable increase to a 'fight light' soldier loadout.

The only exception to this was during training conducted in Thailand. Within a predominately mountainous region, the Royal Thai Army rely heavily on the use of mules in order to conduct logistic resupply and CASEVAC.

Modern Armies will attempt to replicate this SOP with quad-bike technologies. However, the first obvious shortfall in this is noise and smell, followed closely by endurance and sustainability.

The advantage that rudimentary techniques such as pack animals provide nests neatly in sustainability, survivability (signature management) and manoeuvrability within close and complex terrain by day and by night.

As mentioned, because of limited logistic resupply, sage weapon choice conducted against mission and threat factors is vital.

Alpha Coy confirmed, through live-fire range practices, that the shotgun was not always effective in close terrain. Similarly the 40mm

grenade launcher is unreliable because of rounds bouncing off trees causing uncertainty and unpredictability.

By far and away the most reliable, accurate and effective weapon systems used were the EF88 and Minimi 7.62mm.

Although not trialled during RCB 122, lessons learnt from Afghanistan and Vietnam highlight that direct-fire weapons such as the 66mm rocket launcher could be another weapon of choice in close country.

Alpha Coy's consensus was that consideration should be given to up-gunning sections and platoons wherever possible to include more machine guns (LMG/MG).

## OPPORTUNITIES TO EXPLOIT

Arguably, the most significant opportunity that isn't practiced during jungle warfare training in recent times is combined-arms manoeuvre.

The use of offensive support, engineers and armour enablers during the battles of Coral and Balmoral keenly remind us of the practicalities and successes that are possible when integrating these arms in jungle warfare.

While the practicalities of using armour on RCB – and in Tully – inhibit this type of training, there should be a focus of combined-arms training wherever possible to ensure teams already have an established working relationship.

Officer Commanding Alpha Company, 1RAR, and this article's author Major Emyln Mordike, briefs a platoon commander during Exercise Chapel Gold 2018.





Australian and Thai soldiers saddle mules for a jungle patrol during Exercise Chapel Gold 2018.

## JUNGLE WARFARE TRAINING

Jungle is characterised by steep, arduous, close terrain in challenging, often debilitating climatic conditions. Lessons confirmed during RCB began with classroom theory, progressing through several modified rehearsal-of-concept (ROC) drills, before concluding with full scale ROC, on open ground, to ensure shared understanding and common practice.

This simple science of progressive training is tried and tested and ensures all elements of the combined-arms team understand their role in simple, yet highly effective tactics, techniques and procedures (TTPs). Given the overpowering friction and uncertainty associated with operating in such a complex and demanding environment, tactical actions must be understood and undertaken instinctively.

This training can be simply replicated in barracks and progressed through individual, small-team and large-scale collective training.

Jungle warfare requires an intimate understanding of a diverse array of complex 'drills' designed to maximise an organisation's lethality while improving survivability. Although the list

is comprehensive, it includes; contact drills to the front, flank and rear; counter-ambush drills (to each cardinal point and against varying threats); RV (rendezvous) procedures; marry-up drills; short and long halts; reconnaissance drills; harbour drills; search procedures; tracking; patrolling techniques and formations; and, administrative/daily routines. Each drill must be instinctive demanding constant practice and rehearsals.

The drills taught during Jungle Genesis training worked extremely well, developed from years of experience working and fighting in the jungle. These drills will be included in a developing Jungle SOP for 1RAR.

## SUMMARY

The current equipment, weapons and training methodology set the conditions for orchestrated sub-unit-level operations within Australia's POE. Lessons learned and confirmed by Alpha Coy 1RAR on their Rifle Company Butterworth rotation reinforced the requirement for battlefield-fit individuals, superb individual close-combat skills, small-team expertise, optimising our leading equipment to gain a competitive edge over adversaries and identification of the need for further combined-arms training in our POE.



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# CAMBRAI PARADE

By MAJ Kris Gardiner

**Following time-honoured tradition, past and present members of the Australian Army's 1st Armoured Regiment gathered in Adelaide to commemorate Cambrai Day with Australia's premier armoured unit.**

The parade on 17 November 2018, was the second in Adelaide after 1st Armoured Regiment, after its move from Darwin last year.

Recognised as 'Armour's day', the unit was joined by family, friends and guests at 1st Brigade's RAAF Base Edinburgh parade ground, to recognise the battle of the same name, which was fought from 20 November to 7 December 1917.

Mounted in a variety of armoured fighting vehicles including the M1A1 Abrams main battle tank and Australian Light Armoured Vehicle (ASLAV), the soldiers of the regiment paraded past reviewing officer Deputy Chief of Army Major General Jake Ellwood with turrets traversed and main weapons lowered – the traditional salute of armoured corps the world over.

Commander 1st Armoured Regiment Lieutenant Colonel John Holloway said that with the 100th anniversary of the end of World War One just passed, the impact of the Battle of Cambrai had not diminished.

"The Battle of Cambrai marked a completely different approach to fighting at the time, which had stagnated under obsolete tactics," Lieutenant Colonel Holloway said.

"While the battle was unsuccessful for the allies, the new combined-arms approach that lay at the heart of Cambrai would, within months, put an end to the stalemate of trench warfare in the Great War, and established the importance of armour as a dominant weapon of land warfare."

Australia's involvement in the battle was limited to Australian Artillery and the Australian Flying Corps – however, it set the foundation of tactics that would be perfected and used to great success by Australian Lieutenant General Sir John Monash at the Battle of Le Hamel about six months later.

Lieutenant Colonel Holloway said Cambrai Day, which is also commemorated by other Commonwealth and allied armoured regiments around the world, offered an opportunity to reflect on the sacrifice of tank crews, the importance of

innovation, and the ADFs achievements over the past 100 years.

"Cambrai Day is our time to recognise the bravery of those who have gone before, as well as contemplate the imagination, mettle and tactical aptitude that has personified armoured soldiers time and time again," Lieutenant Colonel Holloway said.

"Cambrai reminds us that success in battle requires innovation and adaptation, to out-think and out-maneuvre our adversary.

"I'd like to think those extraordinary pioneers of more than a century ago would be gratified to find that the levels of dedication they showed in establishing and developing the capability are mirrored today in the current generation of fighting men and women."







# APEC 2018 Papua New Guinea

The Australian Defence Force and the Australian Federal Police, Departments of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and Prime Minister and Cabinet, supported Papua New Guinea in hosting APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum) in November 2018 – to the tune of about \$100million.

More than 10,000 delegates and guests from 21 countries were involved in APEC 2018, hosted in what is officially rated as the world's sixth most dangerous city to live in (an improvement from its number one ranking just over 10 years ago).

Around 1500 ADF members were deployed to assist with security for the leaders' summit, which, while apparently very successful from a security point of view, was generally considered a diplomatic failure because of US/China tensions over trade.

New Zealand, American and other countries' security organisations were also involved in securing the forum, temporarily bolstering what is one of PNG's largest industries – private security.

It is officially estimated that more than 30,000 people are employed in private-sector security in PNG (with many more not officially registered or counted) – easily outnumbering all government-employed security agents across all departments.

Australia's Minister for Defence Christopher Pyne said the ADF provided specialised capabilities to partner with, and enhance, local security arrangements in Port Moresby, providing planning

and coordination support, maritime security assistance, airspace security and additional niche capabilities.

ADF support during Leader's Week included ships (including our biggest – HMAS Adelaide – and Armidale-class patrol boats HMA Ships Larrakia and Glenelg), F-18F Super Hornet fighters, Wedgetail AEW&S, a KC-30A in-air refueller, C-17A Globemaster and C-130 Hercules transport aircraft, MH-60R Seahawk and MRH-90 Taipan helicopters, drones, radars, air-traffic controllers, divers, military working dogs and more (some of which, undoubtedly, was secret).

US Navy amphibious transport dock ship USS Green Bay with approximately 350 crew plus a compliment of US Marines and numerous helicopters lent considerable support to the mission also.

New Zealand sent the Royal New Zealand Navy's offshore patrol vessel HMNZS Otago and its 75 crew members, plus a Royal New Zealand Air Force P-3K2 Orion aircraft and 20-member support detachment, as well as 30 NZSAS soldiers to support the security effort.

APEC Haus, Ela Beach, Port Moresby  
– purpose built for the summit





Members of the PNGDF and 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, deploying exclusion-zone markers in Port Moresby Harbour. Photo Able Seaman Kieren Whiteley.



Leading Aircraftman Aaron Peacock and MWD Jag patrol around a RAAF tactical air defence radar in Port Moresby. Photo Able Seaman Kieren Whiteley.



A Royal Australian Air Force No. 1 Squadron F/A-18F Super Hornet is refuelled above Port Moresby during an APEC 2018 security patrol. Photo Corporal Glen McCarthy.

Chief of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force Major General Gilbert Toropo, Commander of the Australian Joint Task Force Major General Paul McLachlan and chief of joint operations of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force Colonel Ezekia Wenzel visited Otago while it conducted a security patrol in the lead-up to APEC 2018 Leaders' Week.

"It was a privilege to host them and an excellent opportunity to show them our rapid-response capabilities," Otago's Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Lorna Gray said.

With around 10,000 delegates accommodated on three cruise ships specially rented for APEC accommodation, securing the maritime environment around Port Moresby was seen as a key element to the security package. Australian clearance divers examined every inch of the huge cruise ships' hulls, while other sailors marked out maritime exclusion zones around the harbour.

"Australia is pleased to enhance PNG's maritime security arrangements for APEC by providing these capabilities," Defence Minister Pyne said.

"This support is a clear demonstration of Australia's close and longstanding defence relationship with Papua New Guinea and the interoperability our defence forces have developed over a number of decades."

Assistant Minister for Defence David Fawcett said the ADF stood ready to respond to security tasks if requested by PNG's Joint Security Task Force.

"The Joint Security Task Force continues to demonstrate it is well prepared to handle all security arrangements for Leaders' Week," Senator Fawcett said.

"This is another example of genuine teamwork from a wide range of PNG agencies and the Australian Defence Force."

Thankfully, no major (or even minor) security breaches were reported during APEC – though, ironically, some of PNG's own security personnel turned on their government after the foreigners went home, rampaging through parliament house in a protest over non-payment of allowances for their efforts in securing APEC.

## Australia's Pacific future

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said that after APEC ended, Australian police would continue the close relationship and cooperation they've built in the lead-up to that important meeting.

Prime Minister Morrison said Australia was also cooperating to develop the PNG Defence Force's Lombrum Naval Base on Manus Island to increase the inter-operability between our defence forces and our ability to tackle challenges like transnational crime.

"That will mean more Australian ships can visit PNG," Mr Morrison said.

"Also, I recently signed an agreement with Prime Minister Peter O'Neill to elevate Australia's relationship with PNG, with an annual leaders' dialogue.

"The strategic architecture of our [wider] Pacific 'step-up' is taking shape.

"[This is all] part of a larger vision of Australia as a force for good in the Pacific, working with

others to ensure our region is secure, stable and sovereign.

"The ADF already plays a pivotal role across a wide canvas, from traditional military engagement with counterparts, to humanitarian and disaster relief, to Operation Render Safe where we assist in safely disposing of World War Two explosive remnants.

"As part of our commitment to the Pacific, the ADF will play an even greater role, working with our partners on training, capacity building, exercises, building interoperability to respond together to the security challenges we face.

"To help achieve this, we will establish an enduring rotational ADF Pacific Mobile Training Team, which will be based in Australia, and will travel in the Pacific when invited to undertake training and engagement with other forces.

"This will see ADF members working more with regional partners in areas such as humanitarian [aid] and disaster response, peacekeeping, infantry skills, engineering, logistics and planning.





TOP: Gunner Jack Innes, 20<sup>th</sup> Surveillance and Target Acquisition Regiment, launches a Puma UAV over Port Moresby.  
 ABOVE: PNGDF Able Seaman Willie Eriki and Private Isaac Bradbury, 8<sup>th</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> Battalion, RAR, prepare exclusion-zone markers in Port Moresby.  
 Photos Able Seaman Kieren Whiteley.

"We will also put in place arrangements to ensure that Australia has a dedicated vessel to deliver our support to our partners in the Pacific.

"The Royal Australian Navy will also undertake more deployments to the Pacific so they can conduct maritime training exercises with our neighbours.

"This will enable them to take advantage of the new Guardian-class patrol boats we are gifting to them, to support regional security.

"We are also strengthening our links with Pacific police forces.

"We will deepen our already strong people-to-people links with Pacific security forces.

"We will establish annual meetings of defence

and police and border security chiefs and deepen our collaborative efforts.

"We're also expanding our diplomatic footprint.

"Our diplomatic network is already larger than any other country in the Pacific – as it should be – and we are going to expand it.

"We intend to open diplomatic missions in Palau, the Marshall Islands, French Polynesia, Niue and the Cook Islands.

"This will mean Australia is represented in every member country of the Pacific Islands Forum."

Mr Morrison was addressing Australian troops – and the media – in Townsville before APEC, outlining new missions and opportunities as Australia pays more attention to its strategic outlook in the Pacific.



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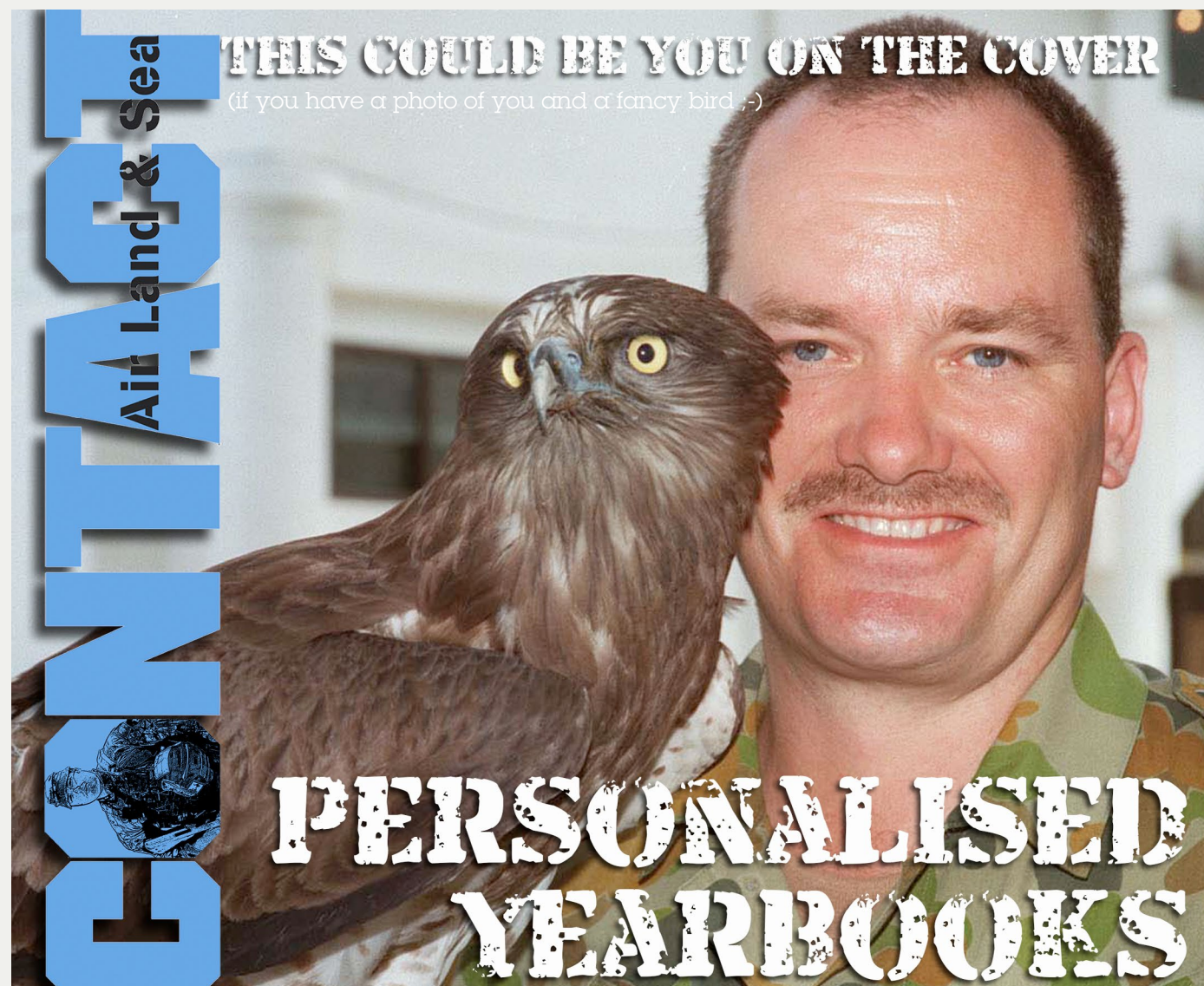




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Protecting deployed troops from hostile actions is the priority for an Australian Army infantry officer embedded with Train Advise Assist Command-South in southern Afghanistan.

Force protection officer Captain Aaron Condon, of the Command Headquarters, is based at Kandahar Airfield while deployed on Operation Highroad.

Captain Condon is responsible for force protection measures to ensure the safety of the coalition military and civilian personnel based at Kandahar Airfield.

He is also responsible for the preventative security measures taken for the NATO advisors who travel to Afghanistan National Defense and Security Force bases and other advisory locations in the area of responsibility.

Train Advise Assist Command - South covers the provinces of Kandahar, Uruzgan, Zabul and Daykundi and consists of troops from Bulgaria, Romania and the USA with a small team of Australians integrated.

Forces train, advise assist and enable the Afghan forces through security force integration of effects to develop long-term sustainability and posturing.

Captain Condon's duties include performing objective risk assessments using a system developed by Headquarters Resolute Support, based on a risk assessment tool designed by his predecessor, Captain Jason Law.

"The modified risk assessment tool is now used by NATO forces across Afghanistan at all sites we conduct advising activities," Captain Condon said.

# Force protection Afghanistan





ABOVE: Captain Aaron Condon and US Army officer 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant Daniel Spencer discuss security with an Afghan National Police officer manning a guard tower. Photo by Sergeant Mark Doran. BELOW: Australian soldiers practice weapon drills in preparation for their Afghanistan deployment. Photo by Sergeant Janine Fabre.



ABOVE: VIP security for Defence Minister Christopher Pyne at Camp Qargha near Kabul, Afghanistan. Photo by Sergeant Mark Doran.



"I work closely with a US civilian contractor and a US Army Military Police officer who are the command anti-terrorism officers.

"In conjunction with force protection assessments we also conduct anti-terrorism assessments, which are a requirement of the US Department of Defense, where we look at the security posture of each site.

"We need to know who controls security, what is the security of the perimeter, where are the entry control points and guard towers and what procedures are used, such as a quick reaction force and its notice to move."

Captain Condon and his team are responsible for the force protection assessments of nearly 30 operational sites as well as the locations for the Expeditionary Advising Packages, where a group of advisors 'fly to advise' the four brigades in the region for short-term missions of five to 30 days.

When the Security Force Advisory and Assistance Teams who advise the Afghan National Army 205th Corps, Provincial Governors and Afghan National Police on deliberate operations move to new locations they are often joined by Captain Condon and his team.

Captain Condon said joining a team on a train, advise, assist mission gave him opportunities to meet Afghan base commanders during the risk assessments and advise on opportunities to improve their security measures.

"Usually we'll be assigned an Afghan escort to guide us around the sites and let the local security forces and personnel manning the guard towers know what we are doing," he said.

"The Afghans are very receptive, and we can offer informal force protection advice on areas such as guard shift times, sectors of defence, range cards, the employment of weapon systems and how to manage entry control."

The US-led Force Protection Element includes soldiers of the US Army and the Romanian Land Forces, who provide guardian angel support for activities outside Kandahar Airfield.

Soldiers of the Bulgarian Army manage one of the primary entry control points at Kandahar Airfield and do perimeter patrols of the base.

Captain Condon said his experience as an infantry officer with an engineering background gave him a good grounding for the role.

"To ensure we are compliant with Resolute Support's policies we've increased our force protection measures at Kandahar Airfield and other bases with persistent surveillance of the perimeters, which feed into the Base Defence Operations Centre," he said.





ABOVE: Captain Aaron Condon discusses security with US Army Master Sergeant James Fox at the Joint Readiness Afghan National Defense and Security Forces Centre in Kandahar. Photo by Sergeant Mark Doran.

"We've also enhanced the defensive positions at Kandahar Airfield with additional vehicle fighting positions."

As one of the six Australians embedded, Captain Condon said it was interesting learning about the force protection procedures in the US-led coalition environment.

"The Australians integrate well with the US military because we are a small but dynamic workforce who are willing to work hard with our partners.

"I also need to negotiate with civilian agencies who don't operate the same way as the military."

Captain Condon said the highlight of his mission was contributing to the mission to maximise the effects of Afghan Forces counter-insurgency operations in southern Afghanistan.

"It's been rewarding ensuring the best possible security for the 10,000 coalition personnel employed in this region," he said.

About 300 Australian personnel are deployed on Operation Highroad, which is Australia's commitment to the NATO-led Resolute Support mission.

They join more than 16,000 personnel from 41 NATO member states and partner countries deployed across Afghanistan in support of Resolute Support.

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Six others have subscribed at base levels.

The amazing **CONTACT** fans listed on these pages are Direct Funding Supporters of our Work, financially supporting what we do – not because they have to, but simply because they want to. With their support, **CONTACT** can continue to deliver what we already deliver + a few extra rewards exclusive to DFW Club members. PLUS – if/when we reach our support goals, **WE WILL PRINT CONTACT AGAIN**. Our current goal is to hit target by 10 January 2019, so that the next printed magazine can be issue 61 on 1 March. Find out how you can join the DFW club via PayPal at [aussiecontact.com](http://aussiecontact.com) or [patreon.com/contactmagazine](http://patreon.com/contactmagazine)

DIRECT FUNDING SUPPORTERS OF OUR WORK

The CONTACT Patron Army has been renamed the **CONTACT DFW Club** for two reasons. One, because the Army rank structure was unfair for Navy and RAAF supporters; and, two, because Patron was derived from Patreon and we are now also recruiting supporters via PayPal.

What is the DFW Club?

What started out as the "CONTACT Patron Army" on [Patreon](http://Patreon), has evolved (thanks to fan feedback) to now include [PayPal](#) and [paper-based subscription options](#). Also, other feedback suggested a Patron 'Army' was putting Navy and RAAF fans off. So, fair enough, I came up with DFW, which, while it is an Army acronym, it is now moulded to our needs too – **D**irect **F**unding **S**upporters of our **W**ork.

Why I want to print CONTACT again...

We've conducted a [reader survey](#) (if you haven't done it yet, please do) and talked to heaps of fans face to face. It seems the audience is just about 50-50 on the idea of printing CONTACT again. Many of those who said "don't bother" also said they'd be happy to pay for the electronic version. So, if printing doesn't get off the ground, that could be the next plan. But, printing is my preferred option. It ain't real unless it's real – in print. Right?

The grand plan...

Printing presses are expensive to set up. In fact, it would cost about \$12,000 to print and distribute 1000 magazines. But, with the press already set up to print 1000 magazines for our subscribers, it will 'only' cost about another \$4000 to print and distribute an extra 6000 magazines. Based on our own track record, I would expect to sell an average of 2000 magazines in newsagents, at roughly \$4 margin back to me. If you do the maths, that right there is the basic wage I need to keep me and CONTACT going in the long term.

The key...

The key to this whole plan is recruiting enough 'members' in advance to cover print costs in advance (I just don't have \$16k to print it myself). Some DFW Club members (see opposite) pay more than asked – not because they have to, but just because they want to help keep CONTACT going. Thanks to the extra generosity of those very special members, I calculate that fewer than 1000 total members will make this work. We have 66 – so please consider [joining](#) them.

Decision deadline...

10 January 2019 is the decision deadline to say whether I will or will not print CONTACT again. If the answer is 'yes', the first printed magazine will be 1 March – issue number 61 – five years since we stopped printing. If the answer is no, then we may have to put a paywall on the CONTACT web site – all of it – and that will only work via Patreon (I can't do it via PayPal – so keep that in mind when deciding which platform to use). Find more info at [#printCONTACTagain](#)

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# JUST SOLDIERS

BY MAJOR DARRYL KELLY

# Bluey AS ROUGH AS BAGS

**'Bluey' Farrell was your typical country bloke – honest, hardworking, with a keen larrikin streak a mile wide. He was the sort of bloke who'd give you his last sixpence if you needed it. But he was also a man that was not to be crossed either, as he was handy with his fists and could give as good as he got.**

He was born in the tiny Victorian town of Pernum and, after finishing school, took up a trade as a butcher.

As he stood in the pub with his mates, they read the paper with interest. The Germans were rampaging across France and Belgium, and Great Britain had given them the choice – withdraw or take on the power of the British Empire.

"If there's a stoush are you going to join up, Blue?" his mate asked.

"Nah – I reckon the old Poms will kick the Hun's bums all the way back to Berlin!"

That night as Bluey lay in bed, he thought about the possibility of war.

Besides, his mum had recently died and his dad was here, all alone.

"Nah – nothing will happen anyway, so why worry," he said to himself as he rolled over.

But war did come and Australia answered the call.

Bluey was reserved as he had a final drink with his mates before they set off to Warrambool to enlist in the AIF.

"Can't talk you into comin, Blue?"

"Nah mate, it's the old man you know. I feel like a mongrel leaving him."

Bluey read of the landings at Gallipoli and, as the casualty lists started to appear, he recognised familiar names among the dead and wounded.

It was June 1915 and Bluey, now 26, sat with his dad at the kitchen table.

"Bad business, this war stuff?" he said, just to make conversation.

"Look son, I know you're busting your boiler to join up. Why don't you get yourself down and do it?"

"You sure dad?" Bluey answered.

"Course mate, I'll be right. Go on – get going before it's all over."

Bluey was allocated to the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion as a reinforcement. He did his basic training on Melbourne's outskirts, at the Broadmeadows camp, and embarked aboard the troopship Anchise on 26 August 1915, bound for Egypt.<sup>1</sup>

Bluey made it to Gallipoli towards the end of the campaign. He was shocked by the state of the Diggers. Disease and poor diet had taken their toll on the troops, reducing them to mere shadows of their former selves.

He'd been there only a few days when he also took sick and was ill enough to warrant evacuation to Malta for specialist treatment.<sup>1</sup> But, by mid March of 1916, he was pronounced fit for service and returned to Egypt to rejoin the battalion.

"Farrell," the Company Sergeant Major said, "I see you were a butcher in civvy-street. We're going

## Corporal John Herbert Farrell DCM, MM and Bar 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF<sup>8</sup>



to put your talents to good use – you're off to C Company as a cook!"

"But sir, I joined as an infantryman – not as a ruddy cook," Bluey protested.

"You'll do as you're bloody well told, lad!" the CSM curtly replied.

He envied his mates as he watched them undergo their daily training. He was ever conscious that even though he hated his job, his mates deserved the best food, so he set about providing just that.

Bluey was with the battalion as it travelled to France. He undertook the compulsory training in the use of helmets and gas masks, but was always shunted off to the kitchen when the 'real training' was undertaken.

In mid 1916, the 6<sup>th</sup> moved up with the other battalions towards the fortified village of Pozieres. The area surrounding the village was designated as 'key terrain' by both sides and, in the ensuing battle, friend and foe gave no quarter in the seizing and holding of ground.

Farrell and the other cooks worked long into the night to ensure their boys got a hot meal where possible. He saw the constant stream of wounded being carried to the rear and longed to get up to the front to do his bit. But this was all in vain.

Following the carnage of Pozieres, the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion withdrew to lick its wounds.

Bluey decided he'd had enough of sitting out of battles and it was about time he did his bit in the line.

He badgered his company commander to give him a go and get him back into his old platoon.

"I'm loathe to lose a good cook, Blue," the officer said.

"Come on sir, I didn't join up to fight the enemy from a kitchen. Put me where I'll do some bloody good."

"Alright, you win – I'll put you back with 11 Platoon."<sup>2</sup>

Bluey was infatuated with the new Lewis light machinegun, which had been issued to the battalion on its arrival in France. The weapon was a light-weight, drum-fed arrangement delivering a high volume of fire.

He was made Number 3 on a gun under the watchful eyes of a couple of 'old hands' – Norm Lindhe<sup>3</sup> and Forbes Tweedie.<sup>4</sup>

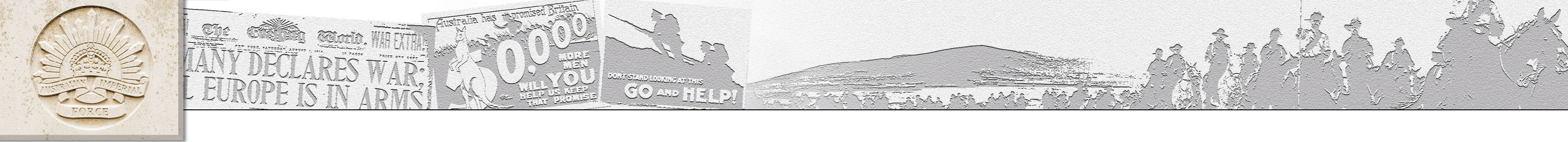
Farrell proved his worth in the line time and time again. He was strong and dependable and never backed off from a fight. He was a natural with the gun and used it with deadly effect.

It was now October 1917 and the allied advance pushed towards a feature known as Broodseinde Ridge. The 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion was locked in a see-sawing battle but was slowly getting the upper hand, when its progress was stopped by a number of pill-boxes that dotted the landscape.

The battalion set about taking them out, one by one.

Bluey and his team were leading from the front as usual. They kept the enemy machine-gunners





The author wishes to add a special note of thanks to the Returned Services League of South Australia's Virtual War Memorial Australia for their assistance in this story.

**Men of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion, Australian Imperial Force, rest in a trench on the Western Front near Lihons on 10 August 1918 – two days after what would become known as 'the black day of the German Army'.  
AWM E02866**



busy by peppering the gun apertures of the pill-boxes, while their mates crept forward to fumigate the fortifications with bombs and, in some cases, bayonets. As they took out one emplacement, they'd regroup then move forward to take out the next.

Farrell kept up the pressure until a wound took him out of the fight.

On re-joining the unit about a month later, he learnt that he'd been awarded the Military Medal for his actions at Broodseinde.<sup>5</sup>

"Well done on the gong – Blue," a mate remarked.

"That's Lance Corporal Blue to you, young fella," he jokingly said, pointing to the single stripe on his arm.

He was lucky enough to score a 'Blighty leave' in mid-January 1918 and proceeded to 'paint the town red', but all too soon it was back to the front.<sup>1</sup>

In July 1918, Blue was promoted to corporal and shortly after was summoned to speak to his company commander.

"I am going to send you to an NCO school when we come out of the line," Captain Carne said.

For Bluey this was the end of the world. They all knew that he was as rough as bags on parade with no inkling of a word of command.

"Don't do that captain....," the corporal protested.

"Well Farrell, if you bring me in a little Fritz for identification purposes, I won't send you," the officer jokingly replied.

That night, the battalion moved forward and, after taking a few casualties, reconsolidated their line. Captain Carne was sitting in his dugout

going over the new trench maps, when suddenly five unarmed Germans were marched in, closely followed by Bluey Farrell, with a captured machinegun over his shoulder.

Bluey looked the officer in the eye and grinned, saluted and asked, "No school?"<sup>2</sup>

The captain later learned that Farrell and his platoon sergeant, a man by the name of Lockhart<sup>6</sup> had ventured out alone toward an enemy post. They were almost on the post when a German NCO spotted them and made a dash for his machinegun. Farrell and Lockhart rushed the post before the gun could be brought into action. Their sortie netted them two machineguns and eight prisoners. Blue's actions would see him recommended for the Distinguished Conduct Medal – but eventually awarded a Bar to his MM.<sup>5</sup>

Farrell's sorties didn't stop there. During one of the 'big stunts' he was allocated to the left-out-of-battle elements. These were key men who were kept out of the line in case the battalion got badly knocked about and they would be needed to form the nucleus of the rebuild unit, if required.

During the middle of the night, Farrell and a few of his mates took off, only to re-appear a couple of hours later looking a bit under the weather. A sergeant found they had a pack filled with bottles of Gold Top champagne and had been going out each night to party at a nearby deserted wine cellar they'd just happened to find.<sup>2</sup>

In early August 1918 and a fresh allied offensive was launched. The Diggers were able to punch a significant hole in the German line near the town

of Lihons. The breach was exploited and the Aussie battalions now enjoyed open-country fighting with the mud of the trenches far behind them. Gains of ground, which months before would have been thought impossible, were now occurring on a daily basis – the greatest occurring on 8 August, which would become known as the Black Day of the German Army.

The next day, as the 6<sup>th</sup> moved forward, it was forced to spread out and fill a gap between its sister units. Suddenly it came under a concentrated barrage of German artillery and machinegun fire. As rounds speared in around him, Bluey Farrell found he was the only man left from his section. Realising that he was useless on his own, he attached himself to a nearby company, of his own accord, taking charge of their Lewis Gun section whose commander had also become a casualty.

Suddenly, he spied an enemy post located in a small quarry. Rushing forward at the head of his new section, he hooked in with his Lewis Gun, killing all the defenders.

The Germans were now on the run and Bluey again pushed his new section forward. He kept up a torrent of fire until suddenly he was hit. Crawling forward, he continued to direct his section's fire until he was hit again, this time in the chest.<sup>1</sup>

The wound was serious and his prognosis was touch and go for many weeks. As he underwent treatment in England, he learnt that a Bar to his Military Medal had been confirmed and, later that year, he also learnt he had been awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal for his work at Lihons.<sup>5</sup>

Bluey made it home to Australia and later married Margaret<sup>1</sup>, who would stand by her soldier husband until he sadly passed away in 1938, aged 49.

Veterans of the 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion gave a simple and fitting tribute to a great soldier and tremendous mate when they said, "A strafe never seemed so bad when you shared a dugout with him."<sup>7</sup>

Bluey's decorations and campaign medals are now on display in the Australian War Memorial.

#### NOTES:

1. National Archives of Australia: B2445, WW Service Records, 2612 J.H. Farrell DCM, MM and Bar, 6th Battalion AIF
2. 'Rough as Bags' – The history of the 6th Battalion, 1st AIF, 1914-1919. Ron Austin, R.J. & S.P. Austin, McCrea, Australia, 1992
3. National Archives of Australia: B2445, WWI Service Records, 2199 N.F. Lindhe, 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF
4. National Archives of Australia: B2445, WWI Service Records, 3966 F. Tweedie, 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF
5. AWM 28, Recommendation Files for Honours and Awards, AIF, 1914-1918 War
6. National Archives of Australia: B2445, WWI Service Records, 4664 J.A. Lockhart, 6<sup>th</sup> Battalion AIF
7. Melbourne Argus 29 Sep 1938, National Library of Australia (nla.gov.au)
8. Photo – 2612 J.H. Farrell DCM, MM and Bar, South Australian Returned Services League Virtual Memorial.



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Twenty-five per cent of every donation also goes towards supporting the work of the donor's nominated military charity.

Keith Payne VC is the Bears to School National Ambassador, with other prominent Australians also rallying behind the program, including Malcolm Turnbull, Bill Shorten, Darren Chester, Kerry Stokes, General Angus Campbell, Air Marshall Leo Davies – and CONTACT editor Brian Hartigan, who is waiting for granddaughter Hayley to choose her new school before donating.

Please donate a bear today via the Bears to School website [AnzacBears.com.au](http://AnzacBears.com.au) – it will make you feel good and help to teach our younger generation about our proud Anzac heritage.



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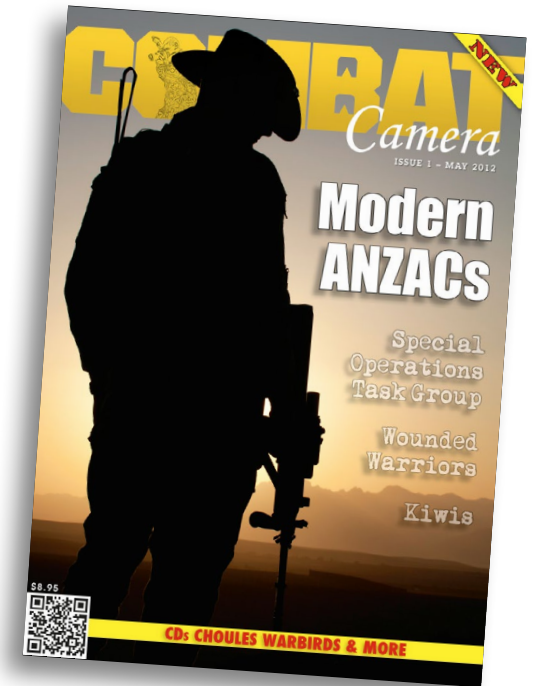
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MAIL INCLUDED





AAF Cadet Corporal Breydon Verryt-Reid at the Le Hamel Australian Memorial, France.

Over the period 6 to 9 August, 16 Australian Defence Force Cadets were selected to represent Australia, joining young people from other participating nations (Canada, France, UK and USA) to commemorate the Centenary of the Battle of Amiens and the last 100 Days of World War I.

Among those who travelled to the north of France was Cadet Corporal Breydon Verryt-Reid from No 612 Squadron, AAF, based in Mount Gambier, South Australia.

Since his return, CCPL Verryt-Reid has written up a summary of his trip for his local newspaper, and will be interviewed on local ABC Radio.

As part of the selection process, candidates were subject to endorsement by their Commanding Officer and Wing Officer Commanding, and then selected based on a written submission – one paragraph describing General Sir John Monash's leadership style at the Battle of Amiens. The final stage was a phone interview with senior staff.

AAF candidates were each required to complete an individual research project. CCPL Verryt-Reid's assigned project was to review the service of Lieutenant John Gould-Taylor, who was posthumously awarded a Distinguished Flying Cross for bravery during the Battle of Amiens.

In addition, all cadets participated in a group project which was to research the battles before Amiens and then Amiens itself, as well as

collecting some images of remembrance.

Before departure, CCPL Verryt-Reid said, "I'm most excited to see the battlefields and learning more about the historical significance of the event".

With his fellow ADF cadets, CCPL Verryt-Reid attended a service at Amiens Cathedral on 8 August, and visited the Somme battlefields of 1916.

They joined with the multi-national group for a mix of classroom and hands-on-learning activities, hearing from experienced Western Front tour guides, as well as Professor Sir Hew Strachan, a highly respected WWI historian who travelled with them throughout the tour.

CCPL Verryt-Reid said, "The activities gave us a chance to reflect on the bravery, courage and fortitude shown by the brave men and women who participated in World War I".

"It was a great experience seeing the battlefields as it brought some context to the stories of ancestors and distant relatives that fought on the Western Front during WWI".

Flying Officer (AAF) Paul Rosenzweig, 6 Wing Public Affairs & Communication Officer, said "Many of the fallen on the Western Front came from South Australia, so it was fitting that a South Australian Air Force Cadet could be among those paying respects on this pilgrimage."



6 Wing Chaplain Flight Lieutenant (AAF) John Bennett blesses the new 622 Squadron Banner. Photos by Flying Officer (AAF) Paul Rosenzweig.

At Woodside Barracks on 20 October, 602 Squadron hosted the Combined Annual Parade of 602 and 622 Squadrons, Australian Air Force Cadets.

This parade included a special ceremony for the banner blessing and presentation of the new Banner of No 622 (Rural City of Murray Bridge) Squadron.

No 622 Squadron provides learning, leadership and development opportunities for youth from the Murraylands, mid-Murray, Mallee, Bremer and Strathalbyn regions.

With the parade in place, the cased Banner of No 622 Squadron was marched on by Cadet Warrant Officer Walter Harris, and placed in position on a drum pile, in preparation for the blessing and presentation.

Cadet Flight Sergeant Tyler Willis was the Banner Warrant Officer.

The drum pile is a significant and traditional part of a banner blessing, representing an impromptu 'altar' often used during wartime to conduct religious ceremonies.

In late 2017, 622 Squadron was granted Freedom of Entry to the Rural City of Murray Bridge, a rare honour.

The new banner was commissioned bearing this new title, based on the existing approved emblem.

622 Squadron AAF derives its insignia – a long-eared owl clutching a flash of lightning in its claws – from the heraldry of RAF No 622 Squadron, a heavy bomber unit of WWII Bomber Command.

## Leadership

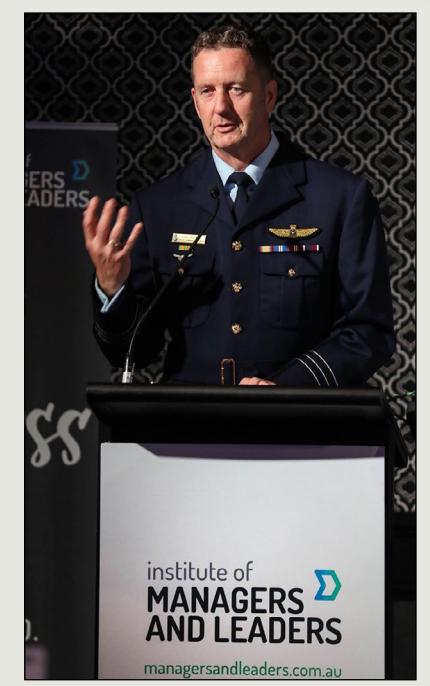
Wing Commander (AAF) Paul Hughes addresses the Sir John Storey Leadership Awards audience in Sydney.

Wing Commander (AAF) Paul Hughes, Officer Commanding 3 Wing Australian Air Force Cadets, received a prestigious Sir John Storey Outstanding Intentional Leader Award from the Institute of Managers and Leaders (IML) during a ceremony in Sydney in November.

Appointed in 2012, Wing Commander Hughes is currently responsible for training and developing more than 2400 cadets and 500 staff between the ages of 13 to 78 spread across NSW and ACT.

He also leads the administration of more than 40 separate units from Lismore to Canberra and Albury.

Wing Commander Hughes is credited with developing a vision and mission for 3 Wing, providing his team with a sense of purpose and meaning. He implemented programs changing business delivery with consideration of the diverse group of volunteers. He also devised a strong communication strategy that was conveyed by personally connecting to his people and not through corporate jargon. He took five weeks away from his day job to visit all 40 units around NSW and ACT to provide people with a voice in playing a part in the organisation's future. His leadership style is said to emphasise the importance of emotional intelligence, transparency and collaboration.







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