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22 April, 2022

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Submission to Inquiry - Private Trevor Wharton

Part 1 – Name of Inquiry

Name of Inquiry *

Rifle company Butterworth testimony.

Part 2 – About the Submitter

Title or Rank *

Private

Surname *

Wharton

Given Names *

Trevor

Postal Address *

[REDACTED]

Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Primary Contact Number *

[REDACTED]

Secondary Contact Number

Is the Submission on behalf of an organisation? If yes, please provide details:

Part 3 – Desired outcome

Provide a summary of your submission:

I perceive there was a chance of going into combat, as per rules of engagement that Major Green gave us and the training we received prior. Whilst in Butterworth this was enhanced as we had live ammunition at all times whilst on guard which was never happened when doing the same job in Australia.

Part 4 - Your submission and Supporting Documentation

File Attached:

Part 5 – Consent and declaration

☒ I do not consent to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal making my submission publicly available. My reasons are

I don't want my private details made public. The actual submission is fine to be made public

☒ I also consent to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal:

- using information contained in my submission to conduct research;

- providing a copy of my submission to a person or organisation considered by the Tribunal to be appropriate; and
- providing a copy of my submission to a person or organisation the subject of adverse comment in the submission;
- using content in my submission in its report to Government.

The Tribunal will decide which person or organisation is appropriate, and this may include:

1. persons or organisations required to assist with the inquiry; and
2. persons or organisations with an interest in the inquiry.

✓ I declare that the information I have provided is correct.

Name

TREVOR WHARTON

Date

22/04/2022 /

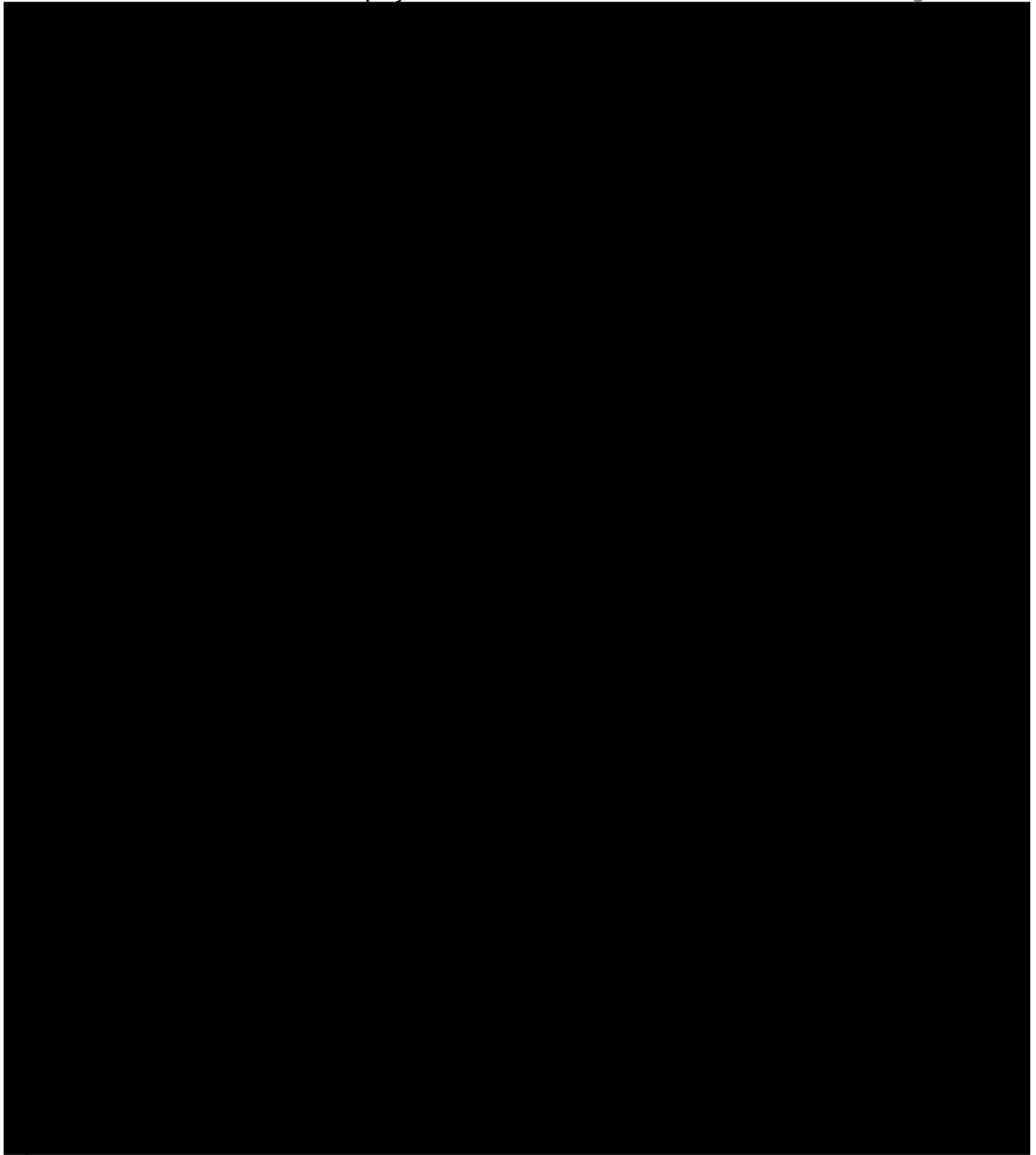
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Trevor Wharton', written in a cursive style.

Signed by Private Trevor Wharton

Signed on: 22 April, 2022

Signature Certificate

Document name: Submission to Inquiry - Private Trevor Whar...



From: [Trevor Wharton](#)
To: [DHA Tribunal](#)
Cc: [Trevor Wharton](#)
Subject: RCB Testimony - Trevor Wharton
Date: Wednesday, 20 April 2022 8:09:10 PM

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I DO NOT CONSENT TO THE DEFENCE HONOURS AND AWARDS APPEALS TRIBUNAL MAKING MY SUBMISSION PUBLICLY AVAILABLE.
I DO CONSENT TAKING A STAND AT THE APPEAL IF REQUIRED.

>
> Mr Trevor
Wharton
18/04/2022

>

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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VIC.

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EM; [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

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RCB SERVICE TESTIMONY

> Former Private [REDACTED], 2 Section, 7 Platoon, Charlie Company 5/7 RAR. Tour date 5 March- 4 June 1974

> I was a rifleman, carrying a 7.62 SLR, for the entire period of days whilst on duty at Butterworth Air Base, serving a total of 93 days. The rest of men carried their usual weapons, whether Small Arms or Heavy Weapons. When on QRF duties we were all supplied live ammunition. Magazines were half loaded with 10 live rounds only. We carried a tin trunk, same as the ones we had packed and shared between 2 of us to carry our webbing, backpacks, boots etc, from Australia all in the back of the truck which had a spotlight mounted on the roof, the trunk half loaded with magazines with also only 10 live rounds, whilst the truck rushed us to the VP. All weapons were loaded with live rounds, safety on, with no rounds up the spout, these were checked by our CPL and double checked by our Lcpl. Taped to the butt of our rifles we had a large bandage each, that had a big absorbent pad. We were briefed on how to use them, which wasn't needed as they could only be used one way, but if shot put the pad over the wound, then wrap the wound as tightly as possible, and if bleeding doesn't stop, then hold bandage down tighter with your hand; the bandage tape itself was long as, seemed to go forever; nowadays they call it Crepe Bandage.

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> I recall one night while on QRF duty we were called out to a VP; {vital point} as usual, not knowing whether it was going to be a contact, or an exercise as usual; being timed in speed of our response. This particular night I'm unable to recall if we had been fired upon or not, but I do remember we were in a lot of trouble; OC { Officer Commanding } of QRF { Quick Response Force } was desperately trying to contact our OC of BAB { Butterworth Air Base }, Major Green. According to our rules of engagement, if we believed that we were going to be, or perceived the threat of attack, or being fired upon, he was not to be contacted. That night our Duty Officer never was able to contact him, hence we laid on the ground, spread out in standard combat formation, ready to repel any enemy force. We laid there for a fair while, until we notified our OC, of the QRF that night, we believed the threat or shooting was finally over. The whole Company was put on full alert, for about a week or more. We were reminded of our ROE { Rules of Engagement }; we were not to fire back unless one or more of us were hit { wounded } or worse.

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> On another occasion, our whole platoon was called out, fully armed with 20 live rounds in the magazine, times 3 = 60. Heavy weapons were also used, loaded, A RAAF plane had crash landed about 10 Kms short of Butterworth Air Base. We were told we would be staying out until relieved by another platoon, this was going to keep going until every piece of the plane was removed, so the CTs { Communist Terrorists } could't use any

part in making bombs from them, we were also warned that we would be in danger and could come under attack, whilst guarding. Our ROE was to return fire immediately, if fired upon. Some spent ages waist deep in the paddy fields water, I was on the embankment. Around Dusk time, I noticed that we were being approached by 3 people, one carrying a torch. My CPL signalled myself and my "mate", fellow digger, to challenge them. Calling out BERENTI 3 TIMES, they acknowledged, by stopping immediately, we signalled by hand, for them to come to us, the whole time keeping our weapons trained on them, expecting anytime to be met with a firing force. It turned out 3 men were fishing, one holding bucket, one a Dolphin type torch, and the other using a Machete to cut the heads off the fish while swimming in the paddy field, made us feel quite uneasy to see how good they were with the weapon. We were also reminded by our OC that the quicker it was cleared up the less chance of being attacked from the CTs.

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> Prior to deployment, the first thing our OC did was to get our Company all on parade, once doing he told us he was looking for volunteers to go to guard Butterworth Air Base Malaya, my hand shot up thinking it would be great seeing another part of the world and it would be like guarding Victoria Barracks in Sydney. My dad warned me never volunteer for anything in the Army, didn't listen. Upon forming a full Company from various other Companies within the Battalion of volunteer's, only. We would be going for 93 days to make sure we received War Service Benefits, the dangers we could incur or will be facing was, 2 Regiments of hardened CTs camped less than 70 KLMS from BAB. We were given a run down on the activities they had been involved in. Which ranged from blowing up Police Stations, Rail Lines, any Government installations that helped the public. It didn't sink in for me, until we were made to write out our own Wills, asking why, we were told there's a chance some of us might not make it home. We were also told when off duty never to go out alone, or leave your mates behind by themselves. So we come to the conclusion that we were in Danger of losing our lives if we stuffed up no matter where we were, MALAYA ITSELF WAS NOT A SAFE PLACE. OC saying that we would be charged under war crimes act, If we went AWOL, or got caught misbehaving; which a couple of our diggers were.

> Prior to going we also had a exercise out bush for 3 weeks, then a 20 kms run back to the barracks with full pack and webbing and rifles, we were given a certain time to do it within, but I remember we all came in together under the time limit as a full company, OC major Green leading us. If we didn't make it, we wouldn't be going Malaya

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> Training over there was entirely different to Australia, we were forever exercising, first up was a 1 klm run before breakfast in runners, within 2 months it was 9 kms in boots webbing and rifle around BAB, including running along the beach. We did a lot of swimming at the pool usually 90 laps with a 5 minutes rest every 30, including being taught by a few RAAF men to do scuba diving. We did blindfolded weapon training on all the weapons we carried, and it had to be out of site of any Locals or onlookers. We had, as said small arms and heavy weapons, all of which we had to disassemble [strip], then move on to the next line and put the weapons back together, that the digger in front of you had stripped and so on. We also had unarmed combat, one which was charging at a particular CPL with fixed bayonet, he put us all on our backs disarming us as he did it, he was a VIETNAM VETERAN, it was all done in complete privacy. We also did assault craft training, in which one of our diggers almost lost his foot when it hit the propeller. We were in Malacca Straights being taught to just fall backwards off the assault craft, with life jackets on, then get winched up by the Huey. It flew us around for a while until we warmed up, with the blanket they had given us, as the rotors on the Huey nearly froze us, being wet dressed in our greens and boots. Upon returning close to the craft, I jumped from about 6 metres into the water, but instead of being pulled into the craft, the guys took off out of site at full speed, leaving me by myself in the Straights, about 20 minutes later they returned, saying they had chased a shark away that was heading for me. We did a 10-14 day survival exercise, down at Ipoh, travelling a Yellow School Bus. With all our gear we were sitting on top of our packs, or in my case sitting on the steps of the bus for 300 kms, one way, same going back, as there were no Military trucks to be had. We had live rounds in our mags, but this time we had tape over the bullet extraction.

> At no time did we ever go on any exercise with the Malaysian Army, in fact we only ever saw the ones who were on guard duty at the gates

> After leave when we arrived home we had inter Company sports, we won everything, as we were never so fit in all our lives.

21/11/2020

General Chief of Defence. General Tan Sri Datu Sri Affendi Bin

Buang RMAF. { Royal Malaysian Armed Forces }

Congratulated the Rifle Company Butterworth {RCB} of its 50th anniversary of establishment in Malaya, our presence and Sacrifice in Malaysian soil in Protecting the RMAF, BAB during the resurgence of the Communist Insurgency in 1970-1989

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> Concluding my experience of my time guarding BAB, we where there, up against 2,000 hardened CTs as our OC had told us; to guard the entire base from them, at no time where we assured that we would get help from the MALAYSIAN ARMY! ; What ARMY? WHERE WERE THEY? WE DID NOT KNOW, or help from anywhere else. We where also told that the married quarters where completely out of bounds, UNLESS under attack, which we where then to help them move to safety. We had our Airforce to help, but only if they could get airborne in time and the ground crew, plus the RAAF dog squad. The odds against us was almost 10 to1 if shit hit the fan. I perceived my time in BUTTERWORTH, WAS THE EXPECTATION that at any time we would come under attack from the 2 Communist Regiments. Why did we have to write a Will before we went ?, when a fellow digger Andrew Foskett, from another battalion trained overseas with other military Armies, such as England/Canada and USA, Wills weren't needed.

I BELIEVE I'M ENTITLED TO THE AASM, and if already offered the MALAYSIAN PINGAT MEDAL.

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Thanking you for your time, yours sincerely Trevor J. Wharton

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