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Submission to Inquiry - Mr KERAN FRANCIS CARSBURG

Part 1 – Name of Inquiry

Name of Inquiry *

INQUIRY INTO MEDALLIC RECOGNITION FOR SERVICE WITH RIFLE COMPANY BUTTERWORTH

Part 2 – About the Submitter

Title or Rank *

<u>Mr</u> Surname *

CARSBURG Given Names *

KERAN FRANCIS Postal Address *

Email Address: *

Primary Contact Number *

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:

Recognition of my Service at RAAF Base Butterworth from 2-Feb-1982 to 24-Jan-1985 as War Like Service.

Part 4 - Your submission and Supporting Documentation

File Attached: RCB-SERVICE-TESTIMONY-27-June-2022.pdf KFC-Butterworth-Posting-Signal-with-effect-2-Feb-1982-to-24-Jan-1985.pdf

Part 5 - Consent and declaration

✓ I consent to the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal making my submission publicly available.

✓ 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

WP E-Signature by Approve Me - Sign Documents Using WordPress -

- 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

Keran Francis Carsburg Date

27/06/2022 /

Mr KERAN FRANCES CARSBURG

Signed by Mr KERAN FRANCIS CARSBURG Signed on: 27 June, 2022

Signature Certificate

Document name: Submission to Inquiry - Mr KERAN FRANCI ...



RAAF BUTTERWORTH SERVICE TESTIMONY

My name is Keran Francis Carsburg, my Service Number is A122215. I served as a RAAF CPL and SGT Firefighter at RAAF Base Butterworth from 02/02/1982 until 24/01/1985. (See attached documents)

RAAF Firefighters Roles

RAAF Firefighters are to respond to aircraft and airport emergency assistance requests, the primary function is to rescue people and property from an aircraft crash or fire and from other fires on the Air Base.

RAAF Firefighters must be able to respond to an aircraft incident at either end of a runway within three minutes from the initial call, and be able to apply firefighting agent at 50 per cent of the maximum discharge rate. Additionally, RAAF Firefighters must be able to respond to any part of the airport movement area within three minutes.

STANDBY PHASES

Normal

Working around the fire station must be able to man the vehicles in 30 seconds

Emergency Standby

Incident occurred and crews manned vehicles and vehicle engines running.

Emergency Response

Must be able to respond to an aircraft incident at either end of a runway within three minutes from the initial call

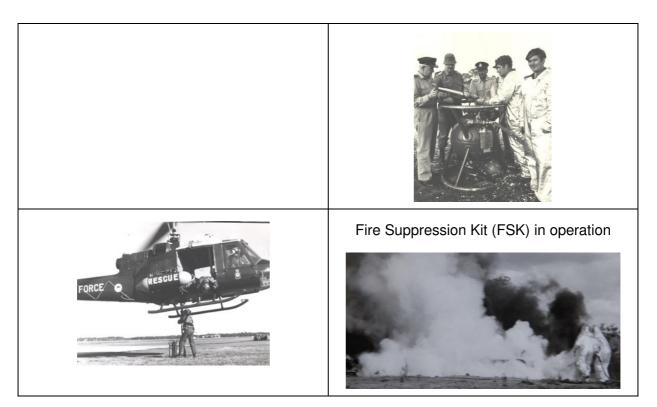
DI (AF) AAP 4230.001 RAAF Fire Manual Domestic Fire Services

Aircraft Incident off Base

If Defence helicopters are positioned at a Base, then RAAF Firefighters will man the Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopter in the event that an aircraft incident occurs in an area not immediately accessible by vehicles off base.

Search and Rescue (SAR)





Firefighters, as an integral part of their role, would take part in regular training being winched from and into SAR helicopters.

At Air Base Butterworth the RAAF at one time had Iroquois (UH-1) helicopters one of which was designated as the SAR chopper When the Iroquois (UH-1) helicopters returned to Australia the SAR role was taken over by the RMAF utilising their Nuri (Sikorski S-61A-4) helicopters. RAAF Firefighters would respond to off base aircraft incidents in the RMAF SAR helicopter.



I was posted to Air Base Butterworth as a Corporal (CPL) Firefighter from February 1982 until January 1985. On arrival all RAAF personnel and dependents were briefed on areas near to the base that were under 24-hour curfew and as such were off limits to all Australians. We were also briefed on what to do if there were any signs of disturbance in the vicinity of our married quarters including the requirement to have a stock of non-perishable food to last several days.

In late 1982 there was an incident in which an RMAF Alouette III helicopter gunship was shot down by ground fire near the Thailand border. A RAAF CPL Firefighter (ZZ) went to the crash site in the RMAF SAR helicopter. Also, on the SAR helicopter were approximately 10 RMAF HANDAU Special Forces personnel. The HANDAU were all armed with loaded weapons and disembarked the SAR helicopter to secure the crash site. Once secured the RAAF CPL disembarked at the crash site but there was no action required of him.

The SAR helicopter was escorted by two RMAF Alouette III helicopter gunships. The RAAF Firefighter reported that there were numerous penetrations in the fuselage of the crashed helicopter that appeared to have been caused by heavy calibre weapons (his opinion).

It was a regular occurrence at Air Base Butterworth during the period I was there for the RMAF F5s to take off, usually in flights of five aircraft, heavily loaded with live ordnance. We were informed that they were proceeding to the border, normally in the Thai Yala Province to conduct bombing missions as part of joint operations with Thai Forces against suspected Communist Party of Malaysia (CPM) camps. The aircraft always came back without the ordnance and on one occasion the RAAF Crash Crew turned out to an RMAF F5 which had declared a PAN. When the aircraft taxied to a stop at the Northern Operational Readiness Platform (ORP) several of us exited the fire vehicles to check the aircraft. During the inspection it was noted that there was damage to the left wing consisting of several jagged penetrations.

On Sunday the 15th of April 1984 the Crash Alarm was sounded in the Air Base Butterworth Fire Section. The Duty Airfield Fire Controller, was advised to man the Search and Rescue helicopter which at the time was an RAMF Nuri helicopter.

Standard Operating Procedures for the SAR fire crew at that time required the Fire Controller and the Corporal Fireman from the Rescue vehicle to make up the two personnel for the SAR response. The Sgt and Cpl Firemen proceeded to the RMAF flight line and were told to board the Nuri. There was also at least one RAAF Medic, a RAAF Service Policeman and approximately 10 RMAF *HANDAU Commandos who were seen to be loading live rounds into their weapons. They were also carrying boxes of some type of explosives.

When the Nuri departed Air Base Butterworth it was accompanied by two Alouette gunships which were armed with heavy machine guns.

* **HANDAU** - An elite force is known as Pasukan Pertahanan Darat dan Udara ('Air and Ground Defence Force'), or by its abbreviation, HANDAU, was established on 1 April 1980. The HANDAU were responsible for the security of RMAF airbases.





Articles from the Bangkok Post





Pilots die as RTAF jet explodes

TWO airmen were killed when their A37 Dragonfly jet exploded in mid-air and crashed into rugged mountains while on a bombing run against Communist Party of Malaysia guerrillas yesterday.

Filed military sources last night were unable to say if the bomber was downed by guerrilla ground fire or it developed trouble and exploded.

Sources said the A37, manned by Flt-Lt Phaibun Chammano and his co-pilot Flying Officer Prawat Song-Sawang, was involved with other aircraft in a Thai-Malaysian operation codenamed "Air Thamal 3".

The operations involved air strikes on suspected CPM hideouts in this salient, the sources said.

Two other RTAF A37s had already carried out their bombing runs when the ill-fated jet exploded.

The suppression drive began in earnest yesterday morning with Thai forces advancing on three communist positions while **Malaysian gunners provided artillery support**.

About **1,000 Thai soldiers**, Border Patrol Policemen and paramilitary rangers took part in the operation which also involved **one Malaysian brigade**.

One Malaysian trooper died and two were injured yesterday when they set off a communist booby trap.

A brief skirmish was reported between Thai forces and the guerrillas but it was thought there were no casualties.

Commander of the Thai-Malaysian Combined Task Force, Maj-Gen Jarb lemsiri, said the operations against the CPM (Marxist Leninist) guerrillas would continue "until the job is done."



17th April 1984

BRIEFS

CPM camp captured

Betong, Yala

The Thai-Malaysian border drive against Communist Party of Malaysia guerrillas met it first success yesterday when troops took the first of three target camps.

No resistance was offered as the guerrillas had already fled with their weapons from their hideout, about one kilometre from the border.

One report said the communist base was close to the site where the Royal Thai Air Force A37 Dragonfly jet crashed after a midair explosion yesterday. Attempts to recover the wreckage will be made today.

Early today, troops will start moving in on two other CPM positions about 22 kilometres northeast of Betong.



The THAI AVIATION Website <u>https://www.thai-aviation.net/</u> (A-37B aircraft (serial number 71-0796 –B.J. 6-1/15) of 211 Tactical Fighter Squadron of Wing 20 based in Ubon)

Thai Air Force 211 Squadron A-37B Cessna Dragonfly Serial # JG-1815-21111 crash in Yala province 15 April 1984.

https://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/3b4903 b2e2c2f7451c44e3b7a09e1cfbb80599.pdf

The first Commander of the 43rd Tactical Fighter Squadron (or 43 Sqn) during the time of the A-37B was Wing Commander Kan Phimanthip. He had previously been the final Commanding Officer of 17 Squadron and the callsign 'Cobra' was inherited by 43 Sqn. The English motto of the A-37B during its time with 43 Sqn was 'Small but Deadly'. When it entered service with 43 Sqn, the first mission was to bring its pilots to 'combat ready' status. This required the requisite number of pilots to be trained and exercised in order to conduct operations against the Communist insurgents. This insurgency was violent and on-going. At the start of November 1972, 43 Sqn sent a detachment to the annual air-delivered weapons competition for the first time. This competition was used as preparation for actual counter-insurgency (COIN) operations. In January 1974, 43 Sqn sent its A-37B aircraft out on operations for the first time. 432 Flight was raised as an Air Task Force (TF243) (sic). They operated from Nakhon Phanom Air Base. Their mission was to conduct aerial reconnaissance patrols and ground attack missions in support of Area 2 Communist Suppression Division, which had a contiguous area of responsibility of Sakhon Nakhon and Nakhon Phanom provinces.

Most of 43 Sqn conducted its normal operations in Takhli; however, from January 1973 a detachment of A-37B was conducting ground attack missions to destroy operating bases, troop concentrations, and food sources of the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT). This was conducted in support of Exercise JOINT OPERATIONAL FORCE (Training Year) 16, which was an exercise within an actual operational setting. The objective was the suppression of the CPT by regional forces within a specific timeframe, and the development of a concept for joint air/regional force operations. This resulted in a reduction in CPT influence and destruction of its forces in the lower Northern region of Thailand. In the three provinces of Phitsanulok, Phetchabun, and Loei. In those regions which required a more military response to the insurgency, the A-37B aircraft would be used to provide support to regional forces for another several years.

On 15 April 1984 at 0910h, in the Joint and Combined exercise AIRTHAMAL 3 was conducting a ground attack on a target on the Thai-Malaysian border in conjunction with the Royal Malaysian Air Force.

The target was in the region of Danaomaero district, Amphur Muang, Yala Province (in reality, AIRTHAMAL exercises were cover for actual bilateral air force operations against threat forces which were a threat to both nations).

These threat forces used an unknown type of weapon to engage an A-37B aircraft (serial number 71-0796 –B.J. 6-1/15) of 211 Tactical Fighter Squadron of Wing 20 based in Ubon. This resulted in the aircraft being shot down and caused the deaths of FLTLT Phaibun Chammano, and, FLGOFFR Prawat Song-Sawang.

In 2009 the wreckage was discovered in Yala Province.

So, if it was fact, then the RAAF personnel on the RMAF SAR helicopter on the 15th of April 1984 incurred danger from hostile forces. But, as Defence continually states, from 1968 until 1989 there was no danger to Australian Army or RAAF personnel or their dependents.

I am prepared to give this and possible further oral evidence if given the opportunity to appear before an independent inquiry (personally or by telephone).

Name: KERAN FRANCIS CARSBURG

Email:

Telephone:

Kenam Flans Cour

END OF STATEMENT

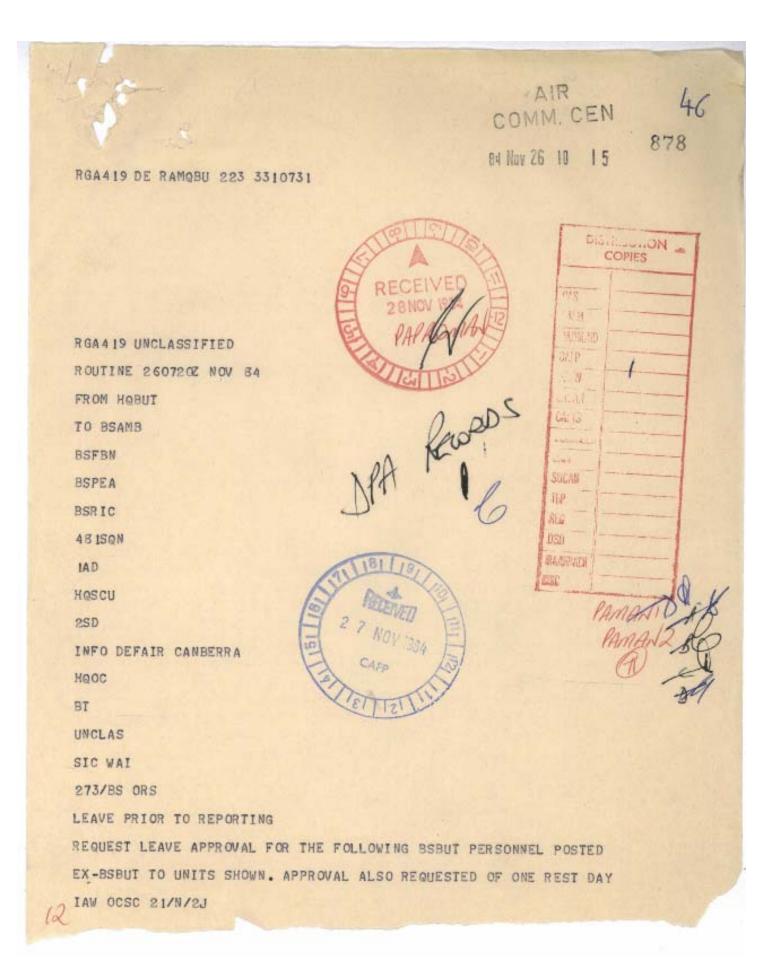
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- 2. CPL D.J. APPLEBEE A222363 RAAFPOL WEF 24 JAN 85 POSTED TO BSFBN AUTH 40200116539 PERIOD OF LEAVE FROM 25 JAN 85 TO 17 MAR 85 INCL ADDRESS, HOTEL MOTEL CANBERRA AREA
- 3. SGT R.C. COOPER A227656 CHEF. WEF 24 JAN 85 POSTED TO BSPEA AUTH 40200116520 PERIOD OF LEAVE FROM 25 JAN 85 TO 17 MAR 85 INCL ADDRESS, 267 JOHNSTON RD BASS HILL SYDNEY.
- A. FSGT HONEY A 61298 MESSPVR WEF 24 JAN 85 POSTED TO BSRIC AUTH 40200116518 PERIOD OF LEAVE FROM 25 JAN 85 TO 10 FEB 85 INCL ADDRESS, 19 BUCKINGHAM ROAD BERKELEY VALE NSW
- -5. SGT L.C. BENNET A 121761 SCLKSPLY WEF 24 JAN 85 POSTED TO BSRIC AUTH 40200115210 PERIOD OF LEAVE FROM 25 JAN 85 TO 10 MAR 85 INCL ADDRESS, CANUNGRA HOTEL 2 KIDSTON ST CANUNGRA
- G. LAC VANLAKERVELD A510022 MIFITT WEF 24 JAN 85 POSTED TO 481SQN AUTH 40200116557 PERIOD OF LEAVE FROM 25 JAN 85 TO 10 MAR 85 INCL ADDRESS, HOTEL MOTEL WILLIAMTOWN AREA.
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38. SGT W.J. LOVE A 122831 RAAFPOLIN WEF 24 JAN 85 POSTED TO HQSCU. AUTH 40200116521 PERIOD OF LEAVE FROM 25 JAN 85 TO 14 MAR 85 INCL ADDRESS, 49 WICKHAN ST NEWMARKET QLD 4051

→ 9. P.J. NUSKE A45948 MIFIIT. WEF 24 JAN 85 POSTED TO 2SD AUTH 40200116522 PERIOD OF LEAVE FROM 25 JAN 35 TO 10 MAR 85 INCL ADDRESS, HOTEL/MOTEL VILLAWOOD AREA

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