



### SUBMISSION TO INQUIRY

This form must cover a submission to the inquiry

Name of Inquiry: Inquiry into medallic recognition for service with rifle company at Butterworth.

#### About the Submitter

Title or Rank: Mr.

Surname: BALTAIS

Given Names: Simon Joseph.

Postal Address: [Redacted]

Email Address: [Redacted]

Preferred contact number:  
 Mobile: [Redacted]  
 Home or other: N/A.

Is the Submission on behalf of an organisation? If yes, please provide details: No.

#### Desired Outcome

Provide a summary of your submission.

As per my submission

Please attach your submission and any supporting documentation



### Consent and Declaration

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

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


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

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

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

- a. persons or organisations required to assist with the inquiry; and
- b. persons or organisations with an interest in the inquiry.

I **declare** that the Information I have provided is correct.

Signature:

*S J Baltais*

Print name:

Simon Joseph BALTAIS

Date:

6 / July / 2022.

### Lodging your submission

Futher information, including the inquiry's Terms of Reference can be found at [www.defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au](http://www.defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au)

Once you are satisfied with your submission, return this form and all supporting documents

**By Post:**

Defence Honours and Awards  
Appeals Tribunal  
Level 1, 5 Tennant Street, Fyshwick  
Locked Bag 7765  
CANBERRA BC ACT 2600

**By Email:**

[dha.tribunal@defence.gov.au](mailto:dha.tribunal@defence.gov.au)

If you wish to speak with someone regarding your submission phone **02 6266 1019**



**From:** [Simon Baltais](#)  
**To:** [DHA Tribunal](#)  
**Cc:** [Matt.Keogh.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Matt.Keogh.MP@aph.gov.au)  
**Subject:** Inquiry into medallic recognition for service with the rifle company at Butterworth - submission - simon baltais  
**Date:** Wednesday, 6 July 2022 12:03:13 AM

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Defence Honours and Awards  
Appeal Tribunal

CC: Hon Matt Keogh MP

5 July 2022

Mr. Simon Baltais

- Former private 1RAR
- [REDACTED]
- mb: [REDACTED]
- private submission
- 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 the submission and information contained within as they require and distribute copies and content to those they wish to communicate with.
- My desired outcomes are stated below.

Dear Sir or Madam

I wish to make a late submission to the Inquiry into medallic recognition for service with the rifle company at Butterworth.

I would like it noted that I only found the notice to make a submission to this inquiry by chance, whilst searching content to address questions raised by my family about my army career. Consequently, as a former soldier in regular army reflecting upon my experiences, I would like my comments be acknowledged as my submission and respectfully request it be accepted.

I enlisted in the army on the 27th of March 1979 at the age of 18 (4400471). Trained at the Infantry Centre at Singleton in June – October 1979 and then posted to 1 RAR. I had one tour of service in Butterworth from 3rd March 1981 to 28th May 1981. I was qualified in a number of skills most notably, as a sniper and was deployed as such via Recon Platoon, 1RAR Battalion Intelligence section, and Brigade command in a number of instances. I left the army before my 6 years' service concluded to take up my role as a QLD Police Officer and then later an officer in the QLD Public Service where I have had a fruitful career.

In Malaysia, we were under no misconception as to what our duties were, that being to provide protection for Butterworth Air Base, its staff and their families. It was always communicated to us that the threat of CT (Communist Terrorist) actions against Australian and Malaysian assets was the reason we were in Butterworth. I clearly remember the Malaysian jungle, the torrential rain, deprivation of any comforts, scorpions, cobras, wilful primates, and even a curious tiger. I remember our patrol through a rubber plantation where we surprised a number of local workers as we passed through them, and I remember their look of terror. I asked my NCOs why they feared us, I can't remember the exact words but it was to the effect of, Australian troops jungle warfare capability was well known, and it was this reputation that was an effective deterrent to enemy action. I remember the live firing exercises in Malaysia where an incorrectly fired LAW rocket bounced metres in front of us and disappeared over the hill and the grenade fragments that clattered against the skeletal remnants of the armoured vehicles we hid behind. I also clearly recall the right flank of our platoon that lost its bearing and swung around clearing the jungle of vegetation with rifle and machine gun fire only a few metres in front of us. I remember we were being trained to be battle ready. I remember the times where we were trained to respond to the need to protect families in the compounds where Australian families lived, I remember my apprehension as to how I would perform these duties. I remember the ridiculous field arrangements where our NCOs carried the live ammunition to be distributed to the section if we were called upon to respond to an actual enemy threat. This arrangement must have also existed in the 7<sup>th</sup> Royal Malay Regiment (7RMR) who we worked with in the field. Though not present at the event I remember the conversation about the situation when one 7RMR soldier fired his weapon in a blank firing configuration but mistakenly used a live round, no soldiers were allegedly hurt.

I was young and enjoyed the adventure, I never thought of recognition in those days it was what I was trained to do, and it was simply my duty. Later in life upon reflection I realized my overseas service was neither acknowledged or respected.

Chance has been a familiar theme with post army career. It was only by a chance meeting with an old army mate that I found I was entitled to military medals to recognise my military service overseas. When I made the inquiry with Defence it was mixed emotions when the medals began to arrive. One arrived in a small package with a letter folded untidily to such an extent that it was obvious the objective was to fit it into the parcel and perhaps reduce postage costs and not deliver a message of gratitude. It may have been a very small matter but nonetheless it highlighted the lack of genuine consideration for my service. It was also a chance meeting late in life with an army mate who informed me that I was entitled to a Veterans Card. While it seems the Australian Tax Office can find me to ensure I paid my taxes Defence seemingly had lost its moral compass.

These chance meetings have only re-enforced my despondency, cultivated by the Australian Governments lack of consistent support for those exposed to potential dangers in the duty of protecting its citizens and Australian friends. However, I have to note the past robust and more capable efforts of former soldiers who raise the issue of the governments lack of recognition for soldiers serving overseas, particularly those who served in Butterworth who despite going through all the rigours of army life like other soldiers in other campaigns the only difference was we were lucky when it came to enemy fire. In a small way I would like to add my comments in support of their continuing efforts and the objectives they wish to achieve.

Regards

Simon Baltais