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13 July, 2022

Signed On : <https://defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au>

Submission to Inquiry - Mr Leslie Alan Morgan

Part 1 – Name of Inquiry

Name of Inquiry *

RCB

Part 2 – About the Submitter

Title or Rank *

Mr

Surname *

Morgan

Given Names *

Leslie Alan

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:

RCB SERVICE TESTIMONY RCB/RAAF Butterworth Service Summary I served with 6 Platoon, B Company, 8/9 RAR at Air Base Butterworth as a member of an RCB. At the time, I was 179061 Cpl Les Morgan. My primary task was the command of a rifle section. My normal weapon was an M16 while the rest of the company carried their normal small arms weapons required for operational service. The company's heavy weapons were also readily available along with ammunition on base. While on QRF duties, section machine guns were routinely deployed. Before deployment, I was trained in how to conduct operations in a suburban environment, cordon off and search buildings and vehicles, identify materials that could be used in bomb-making, and deploy my section to protect buildings and other areas of importance. I served 1 tour of RCB between 4 June to September 5, 1985. Enemy In the months leading up to deployment, we received weekly briefings on Communist Terrorist activities in Malaysia and Southern Thailand, with the main focus on the area around Butterworth Airforce Base. We were initially told that the communist terrorists were not very active and could expect a quiet time, although we had to be on alert at all times. Upon arrival at Butterworth, prior to collecting any of our gear from the aircraft, the company was ushered into the theatre. There we were told that there had been in the last 24 hours several attacks on Malaysian Government buildings and military posts and they were heading south, therefore the threat level to the base had increased significantly. Danger In light of the

aforementioned increased threat, we were again reminded of the rules of engagement and our training was increased. Due to the increased threat, we were not permitted to leave the base for the first few weeks at Butterworth. We drove and walked around the base to familiarise ourselves with strategic locations to determine the best avenues of approach and where to position our machinegun and other section weapons. It was impressed upon us that if we had to fire our weapons, we were responsible for where the rounds went. Therefore, determining that fields of fire did not include habited areas was very important. We also went off base to again familiarise ourselves with the area in which RAAF families lived, we were told that if they needed to be evacuated then we had to know the layout of their living quarters and where the evacuation points were located. When we were on duty, as the Quick Reaction Force (QRF), we always carried live ammunition. The rules of engagement were on the wall in our ready room, this was a reminder that if we had to use our weapons, we had to follow the rules of engagement. The standby section would have all its equipment in the ready room and if the QRF were called out, the standby section had to move to the ready room in the event the QRF required backup. I understood this was not training but it was real. I spent 9 years in the military, and never had I been issued live ammunition to guard a base. In fact, during live firing exercises we received safety briefings and had safety officers for every 2 or 3 men. In Butterworth, we received rules of engagement, no safety briefing, and no safety officers. Expectation of Casualties We were also instructed on casualty evacuation, where the hospital was located and the best routes to get there, in the shortest time. We were provided with extra battle first aid and carried extra field dressings and materials for making a stretcher to carry the injured. Training with the Malaysians Throughout our preparations for deployment to Butterworth the subject of training with the Malaysians was never raised nor did it occur while we were on duty in Butterworth. I have heard in the years since that our purpose in being in Butterworth was to train with the Malaysians. If this was the purpose of being deployed to Butterworth then it failed in its mission. Actual tasks Throughout our preparations and deployment to Butterworth we were constantly told our main task was to defend the air force base at Butterworth, specifically Australian assets and personnel against possible communist terrorist attacks. I remember senior NCOs and officers telling us that would mean our official record would have a notation of "Whilst on War Service". Much of our time on duty, but not as QRF, was spent training on the airbase, practicing cordoning and searching of buildings, and familiarizing ourselves with the airbase and surrounding residential areas. The QRF was called out once a night which was usual, however, several times my section received a second and sometimes a third callout. On most occasions, we cleared the area and then returned to the duty room. But when we were called out for a second or more times in the one night, we were generally told to set up a defensive perimeter around the point and wait, but remain alert. From memory, we remained in these locations from 10 to 30 minutes before being told to return to base. On many occasions during our deployment, we saw the Malaysian Airforce, F5s, taking off with full bomb loads. When I asked where they were going, we were told they were heading up to the Thai/Malay border to attack Communist Terrorist forces and they returned sometime later, minus their bombs. I am prepared to give this and possibly further oral evidence if allowed to appear before an independent inquiry personally or by telephone. Name: Leslie Morgan Email: lesmlsm@hotmail.com Telephone: 0439 580 660

Part 4 - Your submission and Supporting Documentation

File Attached:

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
- 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

Les Morgan

Date

13/07/2022 /

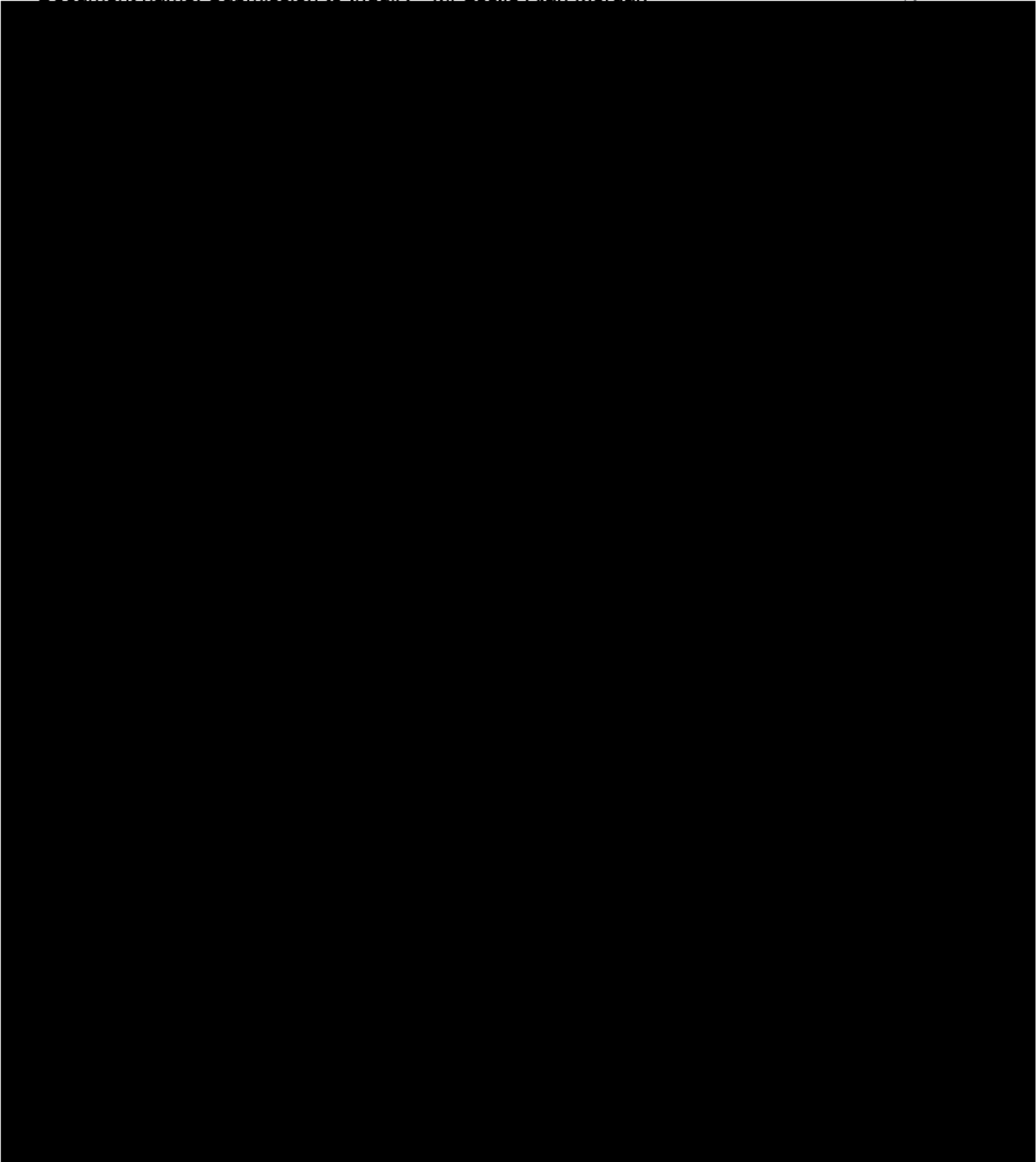
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Les Morgan', written in a cursive style.

Signed by Mr Leslie Alan Morgan

Signed on: 13 July, 2022

Signature Certificate

Document name: Submission to Inquiry - Mr Leslie Alan Morgan



RCB SERVICE TESTIMONY

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Danger

In light of the aforementioned increased threat, we were again reminded of the rules of engagement and our training was increased. Due to the increased threat, we were not permitted to leave the base for the first few weeks at Butterworth. We drove and walked around the base to familiarise ourselves with strategic locations to determine the best avenues of approach and where to position our machinegun and other section weapons. It was impressed upon us that if we had to fire our weapons, we were responsible for where the rounds went. Therefore, determining that fields of fire did not include habited areas was very important. We also went off base to again familiarise ourselves with the area in which RAAF families lived, we were told that if they needed to be evacuated then we had to know the layout of their living quarters and where the evacuation points were located. When we were on duty, as the Quick Reaction Force (QRF), we always carried live ammunition. The rules of engagement were on the wall in our ready room, this was a reminder that if we had to use our weapons, we had to follow the rules of engagement. The standby section would have all its equipment in the ready room and if the QRF were called out, the standby section had to move to the ready room in the event the QRF required backup. I understood this was not training but it was real. I spent 9 years in the military, and never had I been issued live ammunition to guard a base. In fact, during live firing exercises we received safety briefings and had safety officers for every 2 or 3 men. In Butterworth, we received rules of engagement, no safety briefing, and no safety officers.

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Actual tasks

Throughout our preparations and deployment to Butterworth we were constantly told our main task was to defend the air force base at Butterworth, specifically Australian assets and personnel against possible communist terrorist attacks. I remember senior NCOs and officers telling us that would mean our official record would have a notation of "Whilst on War Service". Much of our time on duty, but not as QRF, was spent training on the airbase, practicing cordoning and searching of buildings, and familiarizing ourselves with the airbase and surrounding residential areas.

The QRF was called out once a night which was usual, however, several times my section received a second and sometimes a third callout. On most occasions, we cleared the area and then returned to the duty room. But when we were called out for a second or more times in the one night, we were generally told to set up a defensive perimeter around the point and wait, but remain alert. From memory, we remained in these locations from 10 to 30 minutes before being told to return to base.

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Name: Leslie Morgan

Email: [REDACTED]

Telephone: [REDACTED]