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14 July, 2022

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Submission to Inquiry - Mr Robert (formerly Marian Richard Bak Bak

Part 1 – Name of Inquiry

Name of Inquiry *

Rifle Company Butterworth Review Group

Part 2 – About the Submitter

Title or Rank *

Mr

Surname *

Bak

Given Names *

Robert (formerly Marian Richard Bak

Postal Address *


Email Address: *


Primary Contact Number *


Secondary Contact Number


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

Yes. It is also a personal submission. Integrated Servicepeople's Association of Australia, ABN 90 268 122 115
We are a Ex Service Association (ESO) with 277 members, consisting of; Ex Army and still serving 149; RAAF
62; Navy 40; War Widows 26. We are self funded and do not rely on any Government Funding. We raise funds
through raffles, and selling Military Memorabilia.

Part 3 – Desired outcome

Provide a summary of your submission:

I am providing this submission to assist the RCB Review Group and all RCB Veterans living and deceased. I
served in Singapore 1971-1973. During the deployment I served at Butterworth for 6 weeks. In 1976 I served in
Butterworth for another 3 months with A Company 6th Battalion the Royal Australian Regiment. On both
deployments to Butterworth, we were Defence Posture 1st Class, (DP1), meaning Fully armed and equipped
for war. The company as a whole arrived in Airbase Butterworth with front line ammunition. Parades were
conducted every morning and updated on the current threat from the Communist Terrorists. We were armed
with Rules of Engagement and live ammunition with weapons at the Action State of readiness, that is a round
in the chamber with the safety catch on 'Safe', and 3 full magazines each except for the Machine Gunner who
had live 100 round link belt attached to the weapon. The gunner with his No2 carried 300 Plus live rounds.

During my 1st tour of Butterworth I did notice a helicopter drop off some Malaysian Army casualties at the airstrip. This was a most sobering experience for me and probably others in my group, realising that yes there is a war going on. This in turn made us more vigilant in the performance of our duties. During my second tour, the routine was much the same except this time we had to lay an ambush on the southern side of the Airbase. We had live ammunition with loaded weapons and operational Ambush Orders which are lethal. The ambush was laid due to intelligence briefs handed down to the Commander Rifle Company Butterworth. After several hours lying in wait the ambush was not sprung and we withdrew from the bush site. At no time during both tours were we informed that we were there for Peacetime Guard Duty for the airbase. We were told we were there for the protection of the airbase and RAAF families. To compare the deployment to Butterworth as a peacetime guard duty in Australia is laughable at best. We never carried loaded weapons when on Guard Duty in Australia, and to my knowledge we still do not. Personally and on behalf of the 'Integrated Servicepeoples Association of Australia', we do support the RCB Review group in changing the current status from 'Peacetime Service' to 'Warlike Service'. This is the most honourable thing to be done to recognise Butterworth Service People for their sacrifices and their families. Finally, let's put real meaning to the governments words: Defence personnel are our 'very special people'. Yours Truly Robert Bak, President ISAA

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

Robert Bak

Mr Robert (formerly

14/07/2022 /

Marian Richard Bak

Bak

Signed by Mr Robert (formerly Marian Richard Bak
Bak

Signed on: 14 July, 2022

Signature Certificate

Document name: Submission to Inquiry - Mr Robert (formerly Marian Richard Bak Bak



