

Australian Rifle Company Veterans Group
Response to request dated 15 December 2022

“As foreshadowed in discussion at the hearing, the panel would appreciate receiving from you, by 31 January 2023, anything further that you wish to say in relation to the degree of likelihood of casualties arising from RCB service, and in particular copies of any contemporaneous evidence documenting the official rating of that likelihood.” The above quote is from a letter sent by the DHAAT.

Thesaurus Definitions:

1. **Expectation:** a strong belief that something will happen. See synonyms for expectation - one of which is likelihood.
2. **Likelihood:** the state or fact of something's being likely to happen; probability - the chance that something will happen See synonyms for likelihood: it does not include expectation.

Irrefutable facts

Defence was asked to conduct “analysis in depth” of submissions made to the Tribunal by veterans and veteran groups. The following are irrefutable:

- RCB was deployed on a “war footing” (i.e. all troops at DP1).
- RCB troops were subject to being “whilst on active/war service” for disciplinary action.
- RCB troops carried weapons every single day of their deployment.
- RCB troops were issued live ammunition every single day of their deployment.
- RCB troops carried weapons and live ammunition outside the air base, but not on leave.
- RCB troops were issued Rules of Engagement (ROE) that permitted the application of lethal force by individual personnel without seeking prior authority from higher levels of command.
- The RCB ROE applied outside the air base as well as inside it.
- RCB troops had a stated military objective.
- RCB troops were trained to deal with battle casualties.
- RCB troops had medium machine guns and 84mm recoilless rifles to support an offensive role.
- The GDOC was activated to “Amber” level (attack imminent) during the period 1970 – 1989.
- There were casualties during RCB’s wartime deployment 1970 – 1989, but non-combat in nature
- Australian Infantry 1970 – 89 were not trained to “shoot to wound”. Every shot was a kill shot.

Of the 9,000 who served at RCB, we estimate less than 1,500 will benefit from the recognition of their service at Air Base Butterworth 1970 – 1989 as some have other qualifying service.

Perhaps the Tribunal could benefit from some historic and additional factual information to assist them in their deliberations.

When an individual enlists in the military, they forego certain basic human rights. They are expected to perform certain duties without question and may be sent into harm’s way. Such is the unique nature of military service. See Annex “A”

The Vietnam war and the Communist Insurgency in Malaysia

Defence seems to selectively engage in comparisons, and they have yet to furnish the Tribunal with their response to the matrix worked up by the RCBRG with regard to medal “upgrades”. Perhaps it might be beneficial to examine some different comparisons.

The Vietnam war

1962 – 1975 (Australian combat troops deployed 1965 – 1972: 7 years) Effectively a civil war where external entities contributed to varying degrees Australia was not formally “invited” to send troops.

Initially classified as a “police action” to the Australian public.

Troops briefed on warlike conditions pre-deployment and in-country.

Troops brought up to DP1 prior to deployment.

Troops given ROE and authorised to apply lethal force at lowest levels.

Troops deployed initially to defend an airbase (Bien Hoa) – later expanded to other areas.

The Communist Insurgency in Malaysia aka “Second Malayan Emergency”

1968 – 1989 (Australian combat troops deployed 1970 – 1989: 19 years) Effectively a civil war where external entities contributed to varying degrees Australia was not formally “invited” to send troops.

Initially classified as a “training exercise” to the Australian public.

Troops briefed on warlike conditions pre-deployment and in-country.

Troops brought up to DP1 prior to deployment.

Troops given ROE and authorised to apply lethal force at lowest levels.

Troops deployed to defend an airbase (Butterworth), but also deployable externally as required.

NB: “Police action” in military/security studies and international relations is a euphemism for a military action undertaken without a formal declaration of war. Since World War 2, formal declarations of war have been rare especially actions conducted by developed nations in connection with the Cold War. In Malaysia, the term (State of) “Emergency” was used to avoid difficulty with claims from Lloyds of London for plantation owners.

It should not be lost on the Tribunal that RCB generated a mass of SECRET and TOP SECRET documents. Defence would be hard-pressed to produce any similar array of documents for a peacetime or non-warlike activity undertaken by Infantry forces of company strength in the same era.

The Role of the Infantry

The role of the Infantry is *“to seek out and close with the enemy, to kill or capture him, to seize and hold ground, and to repel attack by day or night, regardless of season, weather or terrain¹.”*

¹ Infantry Training, Volume 4, Part 1, The Battalion, 1967, p.68, para 1.

The role of the Infantry was personified in the activation of vital points several times each and every day by the QRF at Air Base Butterworth for the period 1970 – 1989 and only ceased on the signing of the peace accord on 3 December 1989, marking the cessation of hostilities.

At no point is it the role of the Infantry “to conduct threat assessments”, “to formulate risk matrices” or any such activity². Those are the duties of Intelligence and Command structures – “all corps” functions and higher through all military services upwards via Chiefs of Staff Committee, JIC, Defence Committee, PM and Cabinet Office. Paralleling that is DFAT and the Intelligence networks. Once those tasks have been conducted, decisions made and plans prepared, the Infantry is deployed to perform the tasks indicated above. An integral part of those tasks is the assessment of casualties, medical facilities and resources required for the evacuation of casualties. Indeed, any combat radio operator in the Infantry will have among his formatted transmissions a “contact report”, which indicates the outcome of contact with enemy forces where shots were fired (either one-way or both ways).

Orders issued to Infantry from Command level down contain the following topics:

- Situation
- Mission
- Enemy
- Admin and Logistics
- Command and Signals

At no point is there any reference to likelihood – or expectation – of casualties. In the example attached (Annex “B”) there is a “Quick Decision Exercise” (page 46) that exemplifies a pre-combat situation where troops are sent to secure a “green on blue” situation. Casualties have already been sustained and the location of the perpetrator is unknown. You are being sent to secure the site and provided the resources to do so. No reference to more casualties because such an outcome is an expectation/likelihood in any situation where troops are put in harm’s way.

What follows is detail from the Vietnam war in 1967. The rationale for selecting 1967 is that OP LEETON was an operation where Australian Infantry were deployed (among others) to defend a static facility (a barrier minefield) and assist in the construction of a fence next to said minefield. The timing is just prior to the commencement of the Communist Insurgency in Malaysia and covers the year before the advent of the famous 1968 Tet offensive, which has been seen by many as the turning point of the Vietnam war. Was it the outcome of the Tet offensive that encouraged the Malay CTs to commence their insurgency in June of that year? That is open to speculation, but it cannot be totally dismissed.

At Annex “C” File 571/13/1 contains HQ1ATF AMR&O during the Vietnam conflict³ and “ORDERS FOR DRIVING OF MECHANICAL VEHICLES IN SOUTH VIETNAM”. Specifically, at sub para 17 is the instructions for when “A driver collides with any person, object or animal”. Is this a likelihood of collision? Is it an expectation of collision? In the following paragraphs are the steps to be taken by the driver in dealing with – among other things – casualties resulting from a collision.

² Having said that, every Infantry soldier is constantly conducting dynamic threat assessments for his immediate vicinity.

³ <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C2631180>

AWM103 R569 – Operations⁴ (HQ1ATF) – Operation Leeton

7RAR was engaged in protecting a group of Engineers re-building a barrier minefield fence in Vietnam.

Duties performed by the Infantry included convoy protection, close protection, ambushing, defensive positions, patrols and construction of the wire fence.

Interestingly, at page 59 para 5 (Annex “D”), the Officer Commanding “C” Coy states, *“The tasks given to C Coy were successfully completed and the lack of VC contact may, in fact, have been due to continuous patrolling by this sub-unit in depth.”* In other words, acting as a deterrent, just like RCB in Malaysia 1970 – 1989.

At page 61 (Appendix I to Annex H) (my Annex “E”), there is a report on an escort task undertaken on Route 326. At para 3 it states, *“At least two companies of D445 and a local guerrilla coy were believed to be in the LONG HAI hills South of Route 326, and there had been several enemy contacts in the general area of Route 326 during the period of OP LEETON. The VC could have expected to have mined the road and the ground near the road.”*

At page 65, the Commander’s daily Situation Report (SITREP) (Annex “F”) includes events of the previous day (30 May 1967) and although the report includes details of enemy KIA by SAS patrols, friendly casualties from an accidental mine explosion and then proceeds to mention (at para 9) “Plans for next 24 hours” a comment which can be characterised as “more of the same” or “business as usual”. No mention of any expectation/likelihood of casualties despite reporting on both friendly and enemy casualties in the preceding paragraphs. Indeed, at page 73 (the Warning Order for the Operation), no mention of any expectation/likelihood of casualties, yet there was a detailed presentation of the operation for all units and sub-units engaged in OPERATION LEETON.

At page 75 (Annex “G”) (at the time classified “CONFIDENTIAL” and a higher classification available to most junior Infantry officers and soldiers of junior rank), is the Orders for OP LEETON issued on 24 May 1967. This was an extremely complex operation involving allied (i.e. Australian, US and Vietnamese) forces of many different force elements, plus liaison between those forces. By examining the document, at page 80 it is possible to see the only prospective reference to casualties in the entire 189 page document – and that is a cursory *“Dust-Off” procedures as normal.* AS NORMAL.

At page 82 (Annex “H”) is a detailed reference to the recent enemy activity in the area of OP LEETON, yet no reference is made to “expectation/likelihood of casualties” despite (at para 5) ... *“Elms of D445 [Battalion] have recently been ident in the northern base area and the LONG DAT Coy is believed to be in base areas in the LONG HAI hills. In the last week there have been minor clashes between ARVN and VC in DAT DO and near PHUOC LOI. LO GOM is a tgt [target] for spasmodic mor [mortar] attacks and this contingency should be considered in planning.”* It then goes on to say,

“6. There is increasing evidence that the fence is proving to be a growing source of annoyance and inconvenience to the VC and maximum preventative action should be taken to prevent him from conducting either close recce or undetected assembly for counter-attack at any level against our ops.”

⁴ <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C2601702>

The document could have been written about CT activity in the vicinity of ABB. Yet, no mention of an expectation/likelihood of casualties.

At page 99 (Annex "I"), there is an Orders Group from 5RAR containing orders for both OP LEETON and OP PORTSEA dated 14 Mar 1967. At no time in this complex orders document encompassing the activities of at least two Australian Infantry battalions and supporting arms on operations in Vietnam is there any mention of an "expectation/likelihood of casualties". It is interesting to note that there were no Australian KIA in OP PORTSEA, but there were some soldiers WIA as the result of a contact. In this document there is not even the reference to a "Dust-Off" being "as normal", yet history tells us that the evacuation of casualties did, in fact, take place. An indication of the complexity of the Operations might be gained from the fact that 72 copies of the orders were circulated (not counting "file" and "spare" copies).

In 1967, Australia suffered 84 casualties, including 42 KIA (killed in action), 21 DOW (died of wounds) and the balance NBCAS (non-battle casualties). Those casualties are listed at the end of this document in tribute to those men who made the ultimate sacrifice.

Lest we forget.

So, any reasonable person at the start on 1967 (our first casualty for that year was on 28 January) or at any time in that year, would expect casualties from any activity in Vietnam, given a casualty rate of seven per month on average. That's nearly two per week on average.

If we just focus on Infantry, given that RCB was mostly an Infantry endeavour, in Vietnam in 1967 there were 54 Infantry, plus eight AATTV advisor casualties – an average of just over one a week for the year and half the total for the year.

What commander in their right mind would NOT expect casualties? Yet, there was no directive given to any combat unit in the Task Force to expect casualties for the entire year. Available records do not show any commander being removed from Vietnam for being unfit to command, so we can only assume that all those who served were reasonable, sane men who were competent in their duties. Is it not reasonable to assume that the expectation/likelihood was held, but perhaps in most cases simply not articulated? In this examination of RCB, is it not reasonable to state that in a lot of instances, casualties were expected, but that expectation/likelihood was not committed to print? In some cases, the expectation/likelihood was articulated, as has been demonstrated in other submissions.

For a commander to articulate the words of an expectation/likelihood of casualties (verbally or in print) would be tantamount to admitting poor leadership, poor training, poor planning, poor tradecraft on the part of the soldiers in the field and would be a potential body blow to the morale of the audience of those comments.

If the Defence Department is going to insist on an "expectation/likelihood of casualties" to be the lynch point for a classification of "peacetime", "non-warlike" or "warlike" service, it is perhaps prudent for them to recommend to the Minister that the definition and the legislation be amended to insert the word "stated" before "expectation/likelihood of casualties" to ensure no soldier, sailor or airman suffers as RCB veterans have.

Mohr J said (in the Mohr Report at pp 2 – 4):

"On the assumption that we are dealing with rational people in a disciplined armed service (i.e. both the person perceiving danger and those in authority at the time), then if a Serviceman is told there is an enemy and he will be in danger, then that member will not only perceive danger, but to him or her

it will be an objective danger on rational or reasonable grounds. If called upon, the member will face that objective danger. The member's experience of the objective danger at the time will not be removed by 'hindsight' showing that no actual enemy operations eventuated."

According to available records, Malaysia's military lost 155 killed and 854 wounded during the communist insurgency 1968 – 1989. That is an average of four casualties per week (for 21 years and double the rate of Australian casualties for 1967 in Vietnam) without considering civilian casualties.

Vietnam was a country engaged in a civil war. Infantry was deployed in harm's way. In those situations, casualties are always expected and dealt with when they occur. It is "the cost of doing business" in an Infantry environment. Malaysia during the Communist Insurgency was a country engaged in a civil war. Infantry (RCB) was deployed in harm's way. Troops were at DP1, which meant every man carried a field dressing capable of staunching a gunshot wound to allow evacuation to higher level medical care.

At this point it should be remembered that RCB was a deterrent force (as 7RAR was on OP LEETON in Vietnam) and while other RMAF airfields and bases were attacked from time to time during the Communist Insurgency in Malaysia, ABB was not effectively targeted. Such was the robust nature of the RCB deterrent with constant high-profile patrolling inside the wire and rapid response times to potential breaches of the wire, it can be assessed that the CT did not have the courage to make any substantial attempt to breach the ABB wire, yet they had no hesitation of doing the same elsewhere. Had an attempt been made to breach the ABB wire, RCB was sufficiently armed and trained to respond appropriately to achieve their military objectives with minimal casualties.

If we move away from Vietnam, we can now investigate if "expectation/likelihood of casualties" is present in other conflicts that ADF personnel were deployed to.

Comparison with Ubon 1965 – 1968 (Annex "J")

It is instructive to conduct a further comparison – that of the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal into Ubon, the report of findings dated 18 February 2011. Indeed, if one were to view that report and replace certain geographic, political and associated elements with those consistent with RCB's deployment to RAAF Butterworth, the result appears to be almost identical. Surprisingly, other elements were patently different e.g. Thailand was a country at peace. Malaysia was a country at war. To quote the report, "By 1965 it was apparent that the threat to Thailand had passed...." Yet in Malaysia the opposite was true. Malaysia was a country at war and had been at war almost continuously since 1948 (see Annex "K").

Some excerpts from that inquiry:

Terms of Reference

"The Tribunal is to examine relevant documentary evidence and consider the nature and context of the service in relation to the criteria for Australian and Imperial awards that existed at that time, in order to arrive at a fair and sustainable response to claims for recognition."

NB: No retrospective application of legislation.

Summary of RAAF service at Ubon

"5. By 1965 it was apparent that the threat to Thailand had passed and it was proposed by the RAAF that the Squadron return to Australia."

NB: The threat to Malaysia (including Butterworth) existed from 1968 – 1989. It was never proposed that the RAAF return to Australia.

“7. From March 1965, the USAF increased its bombing of North Vietnamese targets under Operation ROLLING THUNDER. Ubon was one of the bases used for this operation. As a result it was perceived that Ubon had become a significant target for retaliatory raids.”

NB: Butterworth was one of the bases used to support operations in both Malaysia and Vietnam. As a result, it was perceived that Butterworth had become a significant target for retaliatory raids.

“10. High-level government discussions occurred from time to time on the broadening of No. 79 Squadron’s activities but these were not proceeded with, largely because of the perceived sensitivities of the Thai and Malaysian Governments to be seen to support the USAF’s involvement in the Vietnam War and as such activities were outside the SEATO treaty obligations.”

NB: Similar to the Butterworth dilemma. Butterworth was a support base for Vietnam. US activities in the region were supported in an effort to ensure their continued involvement. Note that Thailand and Malaysia were not members of SEATO.

Award sought

At para 16.

“There is no doubt in the Tribunal’s view that the conditions of service there were warlike – as has been recognised by the Government by awarding the persons serving there the AASM 1945-75 with Clasp ‘THAILAND’ and granting eligibility for repatriation benefits. The only war that was producing these warlike conditions was that against North Vietnam.”

NB: There was no reference to “expectation/likelihood of casualties”, nor any reference to the elements of the government’s justification for awarding the AASM; simply a statement of its award. *“The only war producing these warlike conditions was that against North Vietnam.”* It is prudent to remember that forces in Ubon were not permitted to leave Thailand. Nor were they ever directly involved in the Vietnam war. Australian forces at Ubon were never directly involved in the war that was producing the “warlike conditions”. RCB troops were mostly (with the exception of “A” Coy 2/4RAR in April 1975) not directly involved in the Vietnam war either, but as they were based at Butterworth, which was involved in the Vietnam war, should all RCB troops be awarded the Vietnam Medal or the Vietnam Logistic & Support Medal? Perhaps the Tribunal could request an extension to the Terms of Reference (pursuant to s110W(3) Defence Act 1903(Cth)) to address this error. Indeed, at para 50 it states, *“No evidence has been found stating that No. 79 Squadron was based in Ubon as part of Australia’s commitment to the Vietnam War.”*

“In the Tribunal’s view it is time for it to be recognised that the squadron was making a significant contribution to the air campaign directed against North Vietnam. It provided the protection of an important base on behalf of the USAF. This is how the US viewed what the squadron was doing and the Tribunal considers that it is the correct view of the squadron’s actions.”

NB: RAAF Butterworth made a significant contribution to the campaign against North Vietnam and Malaysian Communists (as recognised by the Malaysian government annually). RCB provided protection of an important base on behalf of the Malaysian and Australian governments. This is how the Malaysians viewed what RCB was doing. Is it not appropriate that, like the Ubon decision, the Tribunal should consider RCB’s role as warlike?

At para 60, quoting Mohr J:

“‘Alert State Five’ required that two fully armed aircraft be at the end of the runway with pilots in close presence, ready and able to be airborne within five minutes to engage an intruding aircraft with a view to its destruction, subject to identification or lack of it. The danger of casualties was clearly forecast.”

NB: QRF duties for RCB required that a section (expandable to a full company) of fully armed Infantry be on standby (at the end of the runway) ready and able to be at a Vulnerable Point within five minutes to engage an intruding enemy with a view to their destruction, subject to identification or lack of it. The danger of casualties was clearly forecast.

Further in para 60, it states:

“... the ADGs patrolled both day and night outside the perimeter of the base and in so doing saw evidence of terrorist activity. So far as it is known they were never engaged in an exchange of fire, but the danger of terrorist activity in the general area was known and precautions taken. These patrols were armed and authorised to fire if the situation called for fire.”

“The Rules of Engagement for the RAAF contingent from 1965 onwards signified that contact with hostile forces of an enemy should be expected and that these hostile forces were to be engaged in armed combat with the aim of destroying them. In these circumstances there was an expectation of casualties.”

NB: The above quote could refer to RCB at any time. Note that *“in these circumstances there was an expectation of casualties.”* But there is no reference to said expectation/likelihood being recorded anywhere.

Conclusion

“It is my opinion that, in the final analysis, the period of service at Ubon in the period 1965-1968 was warlike in nature. Their service, most certainly comparable with many other groups of the three services in other similar limited conflicts, should properly be rewarded with the appropriate repatriation and medal entitlements.”

NB: RCB service is most certainly comparable to many other groups of the three services in other similar limited conflicts and they should be rewarded with the appropriate repatriation and medal entitlements. The exposure of this will be underlined in the matrix compiled by the RCB Review Group and submitted to the Tribunal.

Conclusion on eligibility for award

“65. The extent to which Australian decision-making was tailored to the political sensitivities of the time is demonstrated by the evidence to the Tribunal of the subterfuges practised to replace aircraft stationed at Ubon with new aircraft based at RAAF Base Butterworth in Malaysia when routine maintenance was required.”

NB: “Subterfuge” would be an understatement in the fact of the Australian government and Defence Department’s continued representation of RCB service as “training” and “normal peacetime service” in spite of all the evidence to the contrary.

INQUIRY INTO THE REFUSAL TO ISSUE ENTITLEMENTS TO, WITHHOLDING AND FORFEITURE OF DEFENCE HONOURS AND AWARDS (source: DHAAT 7 September 2015)

Para 40 states:

"40. Section 5 [of the Defence Act 1903] was repealed and a new section substituted which applied the Defence Act to all members of the Air, Naval and Military Forces subject to the Naval Defence and Air Force Acts. There was no change to s 9. There was no change to s28. In 1964 ss 53 and 54A were repealed. A new s 54 was substituted which provided:

"Members of the Military Forces, whether on war service or not, while-

(a) serving beyond the territorial limits of Australia;

(b) on their way from Australia for the purpose of so serving; or

(c) on their way to Australia after so serving or after war service

shall be deemed to be on war service and are subject to the Army Act with such modifications and adaptations as are prescribed."

According to the Defence Act 1903 (Cth) the following applies:

5 Application of Act

This Act applies to, and in relation to, the Defence Force, and to all members of the Defence Force whether appointed or enlisted, or deemed to be enlisted, under this Act or under any other Act and **whether serving within or beyond the territorial limits of Australia.**

(There does not appear to be any evidence of this legislation being repealed.)

Allotment for service

Despite the Chair of the Tribunal stating that RCB should have been allotted for service under the Repatriation (Special Overseas Service) Act 1962 (Cth), said allotment never took place. It is not too long a bow to draw to implement the principle held in *Walsh v Lonsdale*⁵ and other common law cases:

- a. equity will not suffer a wrong without a remedy and
- b. equity looks at the intent not at the form and
- c. equity looks on that as done which ought to be done.

Using the final maxim at "c" above, it is reasonable for the Tribunal to recommend that warlike service at RCB be assumed as if the allotment had been performed as/when it ought to have been.

During the period in question, all troops deployed to RCB had to be DP1. That included lodging a will, being of required age and passing the Battle Efficiency Tests that were the standard "fitness for battle" regime at the time. Included in those tests was the "fireman's

⁵ *Walsh v Lonsdale* (1882) 21 ChD 9

carry" which is the manner in which an Infantry soldier evacuates a casualty from the battlefield if he doesn't have the luxury of a stretcher and team of stretcher bearers.

So, inherent in the requirement to be DP1 is the requirement to be prepared to evacuate a casualty from the battlefield. Ipso facto, you will have an expectation/likelihood of casualties.

Some interesting legislative information

The Veterans Entitlement Act 1986 (Cth)

In the Veterans Entitlement Act (VEA) there is a reference to "warlike" and "non-warlike" service that bears examination. It is as follows:

6F Operational service—warlike and non-warlike service

A member of the Defence Force is taken to have been rendering operational service during any period of warlike service or non-warlike service of the member. **7 Eligible war service**

(1) Subject to subsection (2), for the purposes of this Act:

- (a) a person who has rendered operational service shall be taken to have been rendering eligible war service while the person was rendering operational service;
[highlight added]

It appears that there is a contradiction in the definitions of "Operational service", "warlike service" and "non-warlike service", particularly when it comes to "Eligible war service".

According to the definitions above, Operational service is both warlike and non-warlike (s6F). It is also "eligible war service" (s7(1)(a)). So, a person rendering non-warlike service (as in s6F) "shall be taken to have been rendering eligible war service" (s7(1)(a)).

Paraphrasing Mohr J *"the digger should not be disadvantaged if there's been an administrative failure."*

If the above legislative excerpt is correct, this obviates the requirement to demonstrate an expectation/likelihood of casualties or to apply equitable principles for allotment to have taken place.

Inquiry into Unit Recognition for ADF Service in Somalia

In the public hearing of 23 November 2022, the Chair indicated that the nexus of the matter for recognition of RCB's service as warlike was whether it was non-warlike or warlike service.

In the Somalia inquiry (see Annex "L") it was stated (at para 86) that:

"Non-warlike service exposes ADF personnel to an indirect risk of harm from hostile forces. A non-warlike operation is an Australian Government authorised military operation which exposes ADF personnel to the risk of harm from designated forces or groups that have been assessed by Defence as having the capability to employ violence to achieve their objectives, but there is no specific threat or assessed intent to target ADF personnel. The use of force by ADF personnel is limited to self-

defence and there is no expectation of ADF casualties as a result of engagement of those designated forces or groups."

Reacting to a breach near a Vital Point (VP) would put RCB into *direct* contact with CT forces. Therefore, it does not satisfy the above "non-warlike" definition and by virtue of that, only leaves a warlike determination.

Elsewhere in the document (at page 19, footnote 31) is the statement "*Given 1RAR was under 'hostile fire', medallic recognition was declared 'warlike service' for the purpose of the Australian Active Service Medal on 7 April 1993.*" Nowhere in the document is 'hostile fire' defined and the word is not used in any other definition available, such as:

- a. The Australian Active Service Medal Determination of 25 October 1991.
- b. The Australian Active Service Medal Regulations.
- c. The Australian Active Service Medal Letters Patent of 13 September 1988.

From yet-to-be confirmed reports, 1RAR Battalion Group was never in direct contact with the hostile forces present in Somalia with perhaps the exception of confiscating weapons at checkpoints or similar. Accordingly, it is difficult to understand how they were "under hostile fire" or what that term even means.

Coincidentally, there is no mention in the document of an expectation/likelihood of casualties, except in the definitions for peacetime, non-warlike and warlike service.

Summary

The information presented above is designed to address more than the simple request of the Chair of the Tribunal as to the expectation/likelihood of casualties. It is meant to address every possible permutation that Defence has relied upon over the past decades to deny RCB veterans their rightful recognition in the off chance that the Tribunal decides – perhaps – that the incurred danger test might just be the correct test, or that allotment for service was the correct avenue. We have ignored the ridiculous assertions that "the Communist Insurgency simply did not take place" and other sleights to the intelligence of the reader, despite Defence – in the past – sinking low enough to proffer that as a reason for recognition not being granted.

In recent media reports, the current government has finally decided to recognise the service of those men who worked on the atom bomb tests at Maralinga, Montebello Island and Emu Field. To quote author Frank Walker in his book "Maralinga", "*The chilling expose of our secret nuclear shame and betrayal of our troops and country.*" He goes on to say, "*The facts are shocking. The treachery is chilling*" when describing the conduct of Defence and other agencies to deny the troops their rightful recognition of service.

The facts speak for themselves. The lived experience of those who were on the ground at RCB should be given sufficient weight by the Tribunal, regardless of the ongoing subterfuge of Defence.

The likelihood of casualties was high under the circumstances of the Communist Terrorists stated military objectives to wrest power from the democratically elected government of Malaysia by force, hoping to foment an uprising of the general population to assist them in their aims.

Their actions in ambushing, setting booby traps and sabotage, plus the deployment of indirect weapons employed against physical structures, installations and air assets, clearly demonstrate their

intentions and their disregard for the causation of casualties in the process. Area weapons such as rockets and mortars, plus mines and booby traps are indiscriminate weapons capable of wreaking maximum psychological value from their use.

Communist doctrine dictates that the propaganda value of such actions can sometimes outweigh the military benefit and should not be discounted as a productive outcome.⁶

Conclusion

It appears that there is good reason for Defence to fear the awarding of warlike service for RCB service. As alluded to by BRIG Holmes on 23 November 2022, it will provide an avenue of claim for other veteran groups. If that be the case, so be it. Perhaps this is one of the primary reasons for the denial of RCB veterans of their just and rightful entitlements for over 50 years. If that were to be the case, there can hardly be any alternative but to recommend to the Minister that this situation be rectified with all haste before one more RCB veteran passes away with their service unrecognised.

If it be the Tribunal's determination to find in favour of Defence's position, we request that the matter be referred to the Federal Court for independent judicial determination - again with all haste.

The author is willing to make this submission in person at subsequent public hearings and to be cross-examined on its content.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P Kelly', with a stylized, cursive script.

Peter Kelly

On behalf of the RCB Veterans Group

⁶ See references to "Plan Downstairs" in submissions by the RCB Review Group. Plan Downstairs was the contingency for the evacuation of Australian dependents in the event of a CT attack on the air base.

Vietnam casualty list for 1967

2RAR

1 Aug 67	PTE P. S. McGarry KIA LCPL R. M. Woolford KIA
25 Aug 67	PTE T. J. Cutliffe DOW
20 Sep 67	SGT J. W. Twomey DOW
28 Sep 67	LCPL P. E. McDuff NBCAS PTE D. E. Nelson NBCAS PTE S. E. Radomi NBCAS
30 Sep 67	PTE W. J. Brett KIA PTE L. J. Weston KIA
27 Nov 67	PTE N. S. Harald DOW PTE N. C. Pettitt DOW PTE J. C. Rivett KIA
30 Nov 67	PTE R. J. Bell KIA
1 Dec 67	PTE F. A. Hyland DOW
4 Dec 67	PTE F. J. Fewquandie NBCAS

5RAR

14 Feb 67	MAJ D. M. Bourne KIA CAPT R. B. Milligan KIA
21 Feb 67	PTE D. M. Clark KIA LCPL G. B. Green KIA PTE M. D. Poole KIA PTE R. W. Sandow KIA PTE J. C. Webster KIA
24 Feb 67	LT J. Carruthers KIA
5 Mar 67	MAJ M. B. McQualter DOW
7 Apr 67	2LT K. P. Rinkin DOW
18 May 67	PTE R. E. Lloyd KIA

6RAR

28 Jan 67	PTE G. L. Tweedie NBCAS
6 Feb 67	PTE B. W. Kelly DOW WO2 J. W. Kirby DOW
7 Feb 67	PTE D. R. J. Powter DOW
17 Feb 67	PTE P. J. Arnold KIA PTE M. J. Birchell KIA LCPL K. M. Rooney KIA PTE B. D. Waters KIA PTE D. R. Webster KIA PTE W. M. Riley DOW PTE A. W. Rich DOW
29 Mar 67	PTE P. R. Hart DOW
30 Mar 67	PTE D. H. Bracewell DOW
3 Apr 67	PTE W. J. Ashton KIA
19 Jun 67	PTE P. E. Mathieson DOW

7RAR

26 Jun 67	PTE J. G. Cox DOW
6 Aug 67	PTE D. R. Aylett KIA PTE E. F. Brophy KIA CPL J. F. Hayes KIA PTE D. G. Milford KIA PTE J. M. O'Connor KIA PTE B. A. Harstad DOW
10 Nov 67	PTE N. G. Allen KIA PTE B. E. Fallon KIA
27 Nov 67	PTE B. T. Cullen DOW PTE N. V. Hawker DOW

SAS

10 Apr 67	PTE R. J. Copeman DOW
1 Oct 67	SIG G. O'Shea NBCAS

AATTV

20 Feb 67	WO2 M. P. Hanley KIA
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7 April 67	MAJ P. J. Badcoe, VC KIA
19 Apr 67	WO2 J. M. Stone KIA
13 Aug 67	CAPT K. W. Baudistel KIA
21 Aug 67	WO2 A. P. Siggers NBCAS
5 Dec 67	WO2 A. J. Robertson NBCAS
16 Dec 67	WO2 M. A. Henderson KIA
	WO2 R. Seiler KIA

RAE

10 May 67	PTE R. J. P. Deed NBCAS
18 May 67	PTE G. T. Bartholomew NBCAS
20 May 67	PTE G. V. Brady NBCAS
	SPR J. L. O'Hara NBCAS
22 May 67	PTE D. L. Brooks NBCAS
30 May 67	SPR T. J. Renshaw KIA
	SGT J. Ruddy NBCAS
10 Jul 67	SPR D. S. Wride NBCAS
30 Jul 67	SGT D. J. Briggs NBCAS
16 Nov 67	CPL M. J. Hutchison KIA
	WO2 B. J. Moore KIA

RAA

6 Feb 67	PTE R. W. Cliff DOW
14 Feb 67	LT R. G. Birse NBCAS
5 Nov 67	PTE B. Tregear KIA

RA Sigs

28 Mar 67	SIG B. A. Logan KIA
9 Aug 67	CPL D. J. Donnelly NBCAS

Aust Int

15 Oct 67 CPL J. W. Freeman NBCAS

RAAC

17 Feb 67 TPR V. I. Pomroy KIA

21 Feb 67 LCPL K. L. Mitchinson KIA
TPR R. P. Wilsen KIA

RAAF

19 Jun 67 LAC G. La Grasta NBCAS

RAN

28 Aug 67 W. Sagorny NBCAS

Source:

https://vwma.org.au/honour_roll?campaign_id=&conflict_id=&date%5Bday%5D=&date%5Bmonth%5D=&date%5Byear%5D=1967&died_in_service%3F=true&died_year=1967&last_unit_id=496&memorial_id=965&page=2&unit_id=&utf8=%E2%9C%93

LEST WE FORGET



DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

Patron-in-Chief: His Excellency Mr Michael Bryce AM AE

The Unique Nature of Military Service.

Introduction

1. This paper is intended to help clarify and strengthen an understanding of the elements of military service which render it unique as an activity (or vocation) within a democratic society such as Australia. It should be seen as an exploratory discussion rather than a definitive and complete examination of the question.

Background

2. In recent years there has been a tendency among those responsible for administration of public finances to question some long – held assumptions about the way those who render military service should be compensated. This questioning not only relates to the just reward due for the serviceman’s labours, but also to the restitution owed to him and his dependents if he becomes disabled due to disease, injury or death suffered in the course of his service. There is being heard more frequently a notion that the serviceman’s salary and conditions contain an element of “danger money” which represents substantial compensation “in advance” for any disability incurred while serving and that this reduces the obligation to provide compensation after the event. It should be the Association’s position, in my view, that the questions of pay and conditions and compensation for disability should be kept strictly separate, as matters of policy. Pay and conditions are directed not only towards just recompense for services rendered, but also to attraction to service of high quality volunteers. They may vary from time to time to suit changing circumstances. Compensation for disability is a matter of justice alone, and reflects recognition of the essential nature of military service. Allied to the notion of “compensation in advance” is a growing perception that military service can fairly be compared to a number of other callings in our society that involve those engaged in them an element of exposure to danger. Police and Emergency services are most often cited in this context.
3. In examining military service as a unique calling we should understand that exposure to danger and the courage to face it are of themselves not unique features of military service. In arguing our case, we do not maintain that the serviceman has a higher requirement to show courage, nor a greater willingness to make sacrifices – even of his life – than others who serve the society and protect it from danger.



We claim only for the serviceman a distinction from all other callings, in that he, and he alone, is under a compulsion to face danger and make sacrifices – even of his life – once either he has committed himself to serve, or has been compelled to serve by the State.

Rights and Obligations.

4. The spirit of the times places great emphasis on the concept of Human Rights and their close ally, Civil Rights. The concept is usually taken to apply to the rights of an individual citizen in relation to other citizens or to the State. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations on 10th December 1948, in Article 3, declares baldly that “Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of the person.” The first paragraph of the Preamble describes the rights that should be recognized as being “equal and inalienable.” Australia has acceded to the declaration. These Human Rights are equivalent to those “inalienable” and God-given rights set out in the American Declaration of Independence – Life Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness. Australia, and indeed all modern liberal democracies pay at least lip service to these rights, and none would argue with their spirit. Our discussion will take these three undisputed rights as its starting point. It will be based firmly on the proposition that these are rights possessed by each and every citizen as an individual.
5. The origin of these rights lies in the recognition of the individual citizen as the unit of autonomy in a liberal democratic society. Social structures are composed of individuals freely associating, or freely assenting to imposed association, for the common good. The most basic and most strongly coherent of social structures is the family; others are both more complex and less coherent as they progress through communities, municipalities, states or provinces, up to the nation state itself. In the community of nations, each state possesses a sovereign right to manage its own affairs in relation to other states. This sovereignty is exercised on behalf of, and in the name of, “the people”. Within the state sovereignty rests with the individual, who possesses his basic rights, and his vote, as an individual. He is governed, and takes his place in the social structure by his own consent. This is true even in cases where he disagrees with the actions of state to which he belongs, or with the outcome of a particular election in which he cast his vote. Recognition of the right of the majority of individual citizens to determine the colour of the government of the state is an inescapable consequence of acceptance of the democratic state itself.



6. It is obvious that the position of the individual in a democratic system is not sustainable unless there is general assent to the system by the population as a whole. There must be in all matters essential to the peace and good order of the state, a body of shared values. It is these shared values that underpin acceptance of rights and obligations by both individuals and the State.
7. Though not usually identified as a “human right” in social discourse, the right of an individual to defend himself from attack – physical or moral – is almost universally acknowledged and is enshrined in law in all democratic societies. Though primarily related to the individual himself, this right extends to his right to assist in the defence of others; family, community, fellow citizens and the state itself.
8. The right to assist in the defence of family, community and nation does not of itself create an obligation to do so, though shared values may well act to induce in an individual a sense of obligation. His act in offering himself to assist in the defence of others is, nonetheless, a free act of the will. For its part the state may impose on the individual an obligation to assist in the defence of the nation as a whole, but it is able to do so only with the assent of the governed, through the mechanism of shared values. In this way even compulsory military service, in which the basic human rights of those called to service appear to be appropriated, are, and in fact voluntarily surrendered.
9. Practically all modern states maintain standing forces to discharge the responsibility entrusted to them by their citizens, of protecting their people from threats of coercion by use of military force. Usually these standing forces’ role is to support the policy objectives of the state, principally in the area of foreign relations. To maintain force levels they usually rely on citizens’ voluntary service. But the highest purpose of military forces is to maintain the capability of meeting an enemy on the battlefield and winning.
10. The State has been entrusted by its citizens with the obligation to protect them. If it is to discharge this obligation, it therefore has a right to expect, even to demand, that the people will provide the means to do so, in the form both of treasure and manpower. The right to self-defence thus inevitably imposes a general obligation to render military service.

The Individual and the State

11. The relationship between the individual and the State in a democratic society is a very complex one. It rests on the somewhat imprecise concept of shared values, and



manifests itself in a not very clearly defined network of mutual rights and obligations, and the expectations they create. The mechanism by which the relationship is moderated has been termed the “social contract”. Under the social contract the individual citizen accepts that he or she must contribute to maintaining the means of defence. He expects that the state will organize, administer and regulate the defence forces, and that it will set limits by way of laws and regulations on the manner in which the forces may be employed.

12. Those who offer themselves for military service accept that they place themselves under the authority of the State to the degree necessary to achieve the State’s military objectives. Though the authority of the state may be bound and moderated by policies, customs and usages, even by laws, all understand and accept that at bottom the relationship is one of obedience. For all practical purposes the authority of the state over the individual as exercised by military superiors on its behalf, is limitless. The obedience required by the exigencies of military service is total.
13. The State for its part accepts as an obligation that the individuals under its authority who render service are sustained in bodily health and are entitled to be treated at all times with fairness and justice. This is not to say that in extreme circumstance extreme demands will not be made; but in all circumstances the social contract requires that the highest possible value will be placed by the State on the safety, welfare and life of each individual. It also requires that in recognition of the service rendered, the State will assume, as an obligation, responsibility for the dependents of those who have lost their lives in its service, and responsibility for the care of, and compensation for, those who have suffered disability as a result of their service.

Unique Service

14. It is precisely here that the unique nature of military service lies. In ordinary times military service is freely rendered by volunteers. In extreme circumstances the social contract may be invoked by the State by compulsion. In either case, however, once the individual has entered military service, the relationship of obedience is established. This relationship **necessarily** requires the surrender of the individual’s “inalienable” right to liberty, and alienates his right to life and security of the person, by placing responsibility for their preservation in the hands of others.



Not every person who renders military service encounters the enemy on the battlefield, but every person who enters military service must accept that he is expected to do so, if ordered, and is trained to do so.

15. A consequence of military service is that individual autonomy, the fundamental repository of sovereignty in a democracy, is surrendered to the common good. Freedom of choice as to the individual's own destiny, which lies at the heart of all civil liberties, is negated. In their place is the truth that the service person may be, by the decision of others against which there is no appeal, placed in extreme peril of life, and lose that life, if that were the outcome of the decision.
16. In no other activity or vocation within a democratic state does the relationship of obedience to the authority of the State in the face of danger to life or bodily damage exist. Emergency services have an obligation **not** to accept extreme risks to their safety, lest they become consumers of the very service they are attempting to provide. Members of the Police Service are entitled to defend themselves from violent offenders, but are under no compulsion to endanger their lives or safety by the orders of a superior. The fact that many of them do, and display courage to the point of heroism in doing so, should not obscure the fact that they may not be compelled, nor be punished for failure, to incur serious danger.
17. Very different is the lot of the sailor, soldier, airman or airwoman. No matter what the danger, the clear duty is to the military mission, and to play his or her part in its achievement, obedience is required. The most abject coward, most terror-stricken faintheart, has no alternative but to expose him or herself to life-threatening danger, if so ordered. He or she may no longer invoke Civil or Human Rights to review his or her position as an autonomous unit of Society. Should the attempt be made, and a decision arrived at that is in opposition to that of his or her superiors, the individual service person commits an offence punishable by law. The offence is Dereliction of Duty, at the least. When engaged on the battlefield there is nowhere to go, morally or physically. The danger must be faced, and the consequences accepted, whatever they may be.

A service person's calling is unique.





Army

Edition 48

May 2017

Smart SOLDIER

Downtime on OPS
Orders
Working with combat arms
First aid
Private John Carroll VC

Pick your
favourite article
and win.
See page 48
for details.

Serving our Nation

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Disclaimer

Articles and opinions that appear are those of their respective authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of AKG, CAL or the ADF. Links contained within this publication are correct at time of release; however, some links may change due to data management practices.

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Conditions of release

This publication has been cleared for release to the public by Australian Army Headquarters.

Introduction

This edition of *Smart Soldier* contains four articles designed to help you prepare individually and collectively for exercise or deployment. It also contains a Quick Decision Exercise to challenge your tactical acumen.

Our first article looks at the often overlooked element of preparation for deployment, the need to plan for any downtime you may have. There can be limited time or opportunity in which to relax, so you need to plan for how you are going to best use any time provided to you whether it is scheduled or not.

Our second article looks at one of the most important skills for a soldier and JNCO to learn; the preparation and delivery of an effective set of orders. There is no excuse for skipping this vital step in preparing yourself and your soldiers for a mission whether you are conducting a convoy, resup or a fighting patrol. It is a skill that needs to be practised consistently so it becomes second nature, rather than an overwhelming task. SGT John Tynan at WONCO Wing has provided guidance on how to write a set of orders, and there is a pull out/printable template for you to keep in a vui tui as a handy guide.

Our third article looks at creating an understanding of other assets on the battlefield and their capabilities. In the first of a series of articles, Trade Training Cells at CATC have written an article with some tips for working with combat arms assets. Future editions will focus on other Australian Army corps and capabilities as well as others assets with which you might have to work. Gaining an understanding of Army's overall capability is an important part of your development as a soldier. It will also allow you to be prepared to provide a brief on your role, capabilities, employment and mission to combat arms assets that might be supporting your loc.

Our other articles look at First Aid techniques (from a 1940s perspective), apps that are designed to help your professional development and support your career choices, finding inspiration in the courageous actions of Private John Carroll VC in the Battle of Messines Ridge and we have included an idea to inspire your fitness program.

Finally, there is a QDE for you to complete as an individual or a group. There are book prizes for the best responses to the QDEs, so remember to submit yours when you're done.

In summary, we think this edition provides a great deal of useful information to aid in your professional development, or just for an enjoyable read. We hope you like it!

The Australian Army has had continuous deployment experiences since Timor Leste in 1999. More recently, many soldiers have also deployed on major field exercises. The Centre for Army Lessons (CAL) has collected and published many lessons from these experiences, focussed on war craft, field craft, tactics and corps specific issues. There is, however, one recurring theme that is important to individual and collective resilience. The following article, written by CAPT Steve Ellis, will provide tips for soldiers able to enjoy down time on operations.

DOWN TIME on OPS



Downtime on deployment has been highlighted as an area that requires careful consideration and planning prior to any sort of deployment. Achieving a balance between work and structured purposeful downtime is an art. Too much downtime and you run the risk of becoming bored or complacent, or develop a tendency to focus on the negatives. Conversely, too little downtime will result in burnt out, ineffective personnel. Downtime requires planning by the individual and the junior leader so that the most can be made of opportunities to rest whether they are planned, accidental or intentionally won.

In 2015, a range Army personnel provided their tips and lessons to CAL regarding downtime on deployment, and this article is the result of their feedback. We appreciate the time they took to share their experiences so that others may benefit from what they have learned.

Planning and goal setting

Tip 1: Plan well before deployment. Plan what you want to do during your downtime before you deploy. Thinking about this during the deployment may mean that you are not as prepared as you could be. Senior soldiers should help other soldiers by assisting them in developing a plan that will be realistic and suitable.

Tip 2: Set some goals to achieve on deployment. Set yourself a goal or goals before you deploy, such as improving your fitness, completing a course or even learning an instrument.

Tip 3: Include friends and family in the planning process. Preparing means more than just getting ready the equipment that will be needed to relax and unwind on your deployment. It also means preparing your loved ones who are being left behind. Get a calendar and mark all the important dates that you will miss such as birthdays and anniversaries. Make arrangements for something to be delivered or 'found' on these dates.

Time and task management

Your priority will always be the next mission and preparing for that. You will need to organise your rest schedule around your work schedule. Ensure that you manage your time accordingly to enable sufficient rest time before your next mission. (Do not become

the liability because you failed to manage your work/rest balance). This is not just an individual responsibility, but the responsibility of junior leaders to ensure sufficient rest time is included in their planning.

Tip 4: Manage your time well. Plan to take time off or it won't happen. On operations, it is very common for many personnel to spend long hours at their job because they don't believe there is anything else to fill the time between sleeps. Personal time needs planning for an operational environment, especially in a busy role.

Tip 5: Create opportunities for downtime by being effective and efficient at your tasks. Be proactive to help generate sufficient downtime. Being trade proficient, able to work with minimal supervision and work well within a team will help you to find opportunities to rest or relax.

Tip 6: Whatever you do, do something. Make sure that there is a clean break between work and rest. Quiet time is nice in small doses, but you need to distract yourself or you will remain focused on your work. You need to ensure that your downtime does not become work time. Have a method in place where you separate your work and your rest. It could be a specific mode of dress, a location, an activity or even having a show to 'wash the day away'. You could also have a visual or physical cue that 'flicks a switch' to downtime. Whatever method you choose, it is important to have a line in the sand that separates what you are doing now from what you are going to do next.



Exercise

“Going to the gym was my go to activity. It gave you clear goals that you could measure throughout the duration of the deployment. It also allowed your mind to focus on something else rather than the job.”

Tip 7: Find the time to exercise. It should surprise no one that the most popular downtime activity recommended was fitness. This included going to the gym to use weights, using cardiovascular equipment, running or just getting to physical training if it is available. Whatever the chosen ‘punishment’, it will help in releasing many deployment stressors and enable you to switch off. Even though it may be hard to find the time to do this early in a deployment, once into a routine and with proper time management, you will be able to develop a plan and stick to it.

Tip 8: Develop a fitness plan and stick to it. If fitness is an aim for downtime, you need to develop a plan for what you would like to do. Find out what gym equipment will be available and whether the unit will provide an organised physical training program with a physical training instructor. If there is a gym, get a gym program ready beforehand and know how to perform the activities properly to maximise the gain and avoid injury. If there is no gym, it may be possible for a unit to organise something. Alternatively, consider running, walking and weight walking, or a combination of a rowing machine with other exercises. Another option is to purchase portable fitness equipment such as suspension cables or resistance bands that take up little weight in your luggage.

Home

Tip 9: Keep in touch with friends and family. Communicate with family and friends via email, phone, Facebook, Skype or even an old-fashioned letter. In addition to providing comfort to your family and keeping up-to-date with what they are up to, it can also help you to unwind and relax. Balancing this is covered in Tip 9.

Tip 10: Limit calls home to two to three times per week. Even if you have access to a phone on a daily basis, consider limiting your calls home to two or three times per week. Doing so will mean that you will look forward to the contact, and it will ensure that both you and your family will have something to talk about. If you ring every day, you could end up with nothing to say and feel flat and/or let down. Additionally, limiting contact with home will enable you to remain focused on your job. There are examples where

people have become distracted by family situations to the detriment of their work and the people working around them.

Tip 11: Manage expectations. Let your loved ones know that their news, even about daily occurrences, is of interest to you. Some families may feel that their daily occurrences are unimportant in comparison with your daily challenges and tasks. Families should be reassured that a ‘little taste of home’ can provide comfort. If you are without regular contact (and this also applies on exercise), ensure that you let your family know they might not be able to contact you as regularly as they would like.

Tip 12: Try to allow your family to be independent and make decisions without you. Your family needs to be self-reliant, have their own network, and should not expect you to fix any minor problems when on a deployment. If you have done your planning well, then minor issues will not stress you, and you will be able to relax when talking with your family.

Friends and colleagues

Tip 13: Establish, develop and maintain friendships during deployment. We all know that having a mate is essential. A person with whom you can share personal thoughts and concerns and look out for is an important part of a support network. If you deploy with people you already know, then you have a ready-made support network. However, if this is not the case, it is a good practice to identify a couple of people with whom you can ‘buddy up’. That way there is someone to communicate with, even if one of them has gone on leave or is required in another location.

Tip 14: To have a good mate, you must be a good mate. Look out for each other. Looking out for a mate, in its simplest form, means making sure they are okay. Check to make sure they are coping with the deployment. Do they have someone to ring to chat to, and are they doing that periodically? Look for any changes in their behaviour, and if so chat to them over a brew. If a soldier is struggling, provide or seek support for them.

Tip 15: Interact socially with your mates and work colleagues. Unit planning should include the conduct of social activities, such as quiz nights or games nights. For example, one year a Christmas Eve pool party in the Solomon Islands came complete with glow sticks strung along a Unimog. These social events can create opportunities for soldiers to interact with others outside of the normal circle of friends and perhaps create new professional relationships. Socialising is very important as it can form part of a support network if something goes wrong.

“On my deployments the most important thing to me was some quiet time. When you are living, eating, exercising, working, sleeping, showering with the same people all day, every day, it was difficult to find downtime, and I always had a phone and someone nearby. I found it very important to get some quiet time, just to be alone. This was never always achievable, but necessary, so much that when I returned I did not carry a mobile phone for about two months and found myself often much happier being alone, to the disappointment of my family who just wanted me around. Single rooms, and personal space on a deployment, although not always possible, would make life easier.”

Games and creative use of time

Tip 16: Pack a laptop or gaming console. A personal laptop can be a useful item for unwinding, relaxing and learning. While access to the internet enables soldiers to communicate with family and friends back home, it can also be used for other purposes. These include:

- enabling soldiers to play games and communicate with other soldiers when connected to an internal LAN¹
- watching movies and television shows, and sharing movies can become a bit of a social event
- listening to audio books and downloaded music
- accessing and watching online entertainment providers

Have a reasonably powerful laptop to ensure that it will perform the entertainment functions that you want. Gaming can also be achieved by taking a console of your own choice. Before packing a device of any kind, however, it is best to ensure that it does not breach security for your location.

Tip 17: Use your time creatively. Use your ingenuity to create things to do when there are none. Pack some basic sports or games equipment as you might not always have access to electronic devices, or even try the following to relax:

- play sports like table tennis or volley ball – if you don’t have the equipment, build it

- play board games
- build ‘stuff’ (such as furniture) or models, or knit, paint or colour in
- drink coffee or do your laundry
- play cards - always have a pack of cards handy for solitaire or games with your friends
- attend church
- write down thoughts in a journal (both positives and negative) as a means of expressing your thoughts and emotions in a productive manner

Read

Tip 18: Relax or develop professional knowledge through reading. Reading is an opportunity for soldiers to relax and take their mind off the stressors of the deployment, and at the same time develop professional knowledge. One soldier commented that they had access to a large library on the deployment. However, its content may not have met the interests or needs of each soldier.

Tip 19: Packing a device will save you room. Soldiers wanting to read should purchase and ‘bomb up’ a digital device or laptop with e-books. Hundreds of books can be stored in a digital device; they are easy to search and they can also hold unclassified doctrine. You may still need to consider operational security limitations regarding where such devices can be used.



¹ Local Area Network

Learning and professional mastery

‘Encourage the JNCO²s to keep their soldiers interested. Give those JNCO some latitude to become good junior leaders without telling them they cannot do something.’

Tip 20: Provide an environment in which a soldier can improve. Soldiers have an opportunity for self-improvement during a deployment. Junior commanders could help facilitate this by engaging them to determine what goals they have, be that physical, educational or spiritual. The junior commander can help in many areas by getting to know enablers such as the education officer (this also applies back home). Set the conditions for soldiers to improve, and they will typically exceed your expectations.

Tip 21: Use your deployment as an opportunity for further studies. A deployment provides an opportunity for personal study, such as learning a new language or undertaking a short course. One soldier undertook a university course while deployed. He had good access to internet and was able to order the required references online. The soldier said that he did not want to waste spare time watching movies that he would not usually watch. He was able to get study sponsored through the Army before deployment. If you choose to study, there may be times when work commitments mean that assessments cannot be completed on time, but you can request extensions. You can also ask the people on deployment with you to proofread your work³, particularly if you find someone with a similar qualification.

Tip 22: Learn another language. Another option is to use application software to learn a new language. There are free language apps available commercially that can be downloaded onto an appropriate device. Download them before deployment in case the required internet access is not available. Learning a new language can not only give you new skills but can actually enhance your career prospects in the Army.

Tip 23: Work on your professional mastery. There is no doubt that soldiers need to find the time to relax and unwind from the stressors unique to an operational deployment. However, many operators identify that it is important and beneficial for deployed soldiers to reflect and improve upon their work-related, professional knowledge. Soldiers operating in a high tempo environment are less likely to have time for additional professional

development. For those with time to relax and consider professional development, the following are provided as considerations:

- Review intelligence reports and AAR⁴, and try to incorporate inventive fixes to the problem. Imagination breeds innovation, which in turn saves lives.
- Be prepared to conduct some AAR in downtime. As annoying as this may be for some soldiers, use it to learn and improve on skills.
- Conduct planning and preparation for the next mission.
- Talk to other elements within Army or coalition forces, especially when it comes to capability.
- Talk and share ideas with peers or, even better, others outside your immediate team. Socialise with deployed civilian specialists who may have limited knowledge of the military but know their discipline very well, including special knowledge relevant to the mission. This is a good way to identify personal and professional development opportunities not previously considered, and it can often provide a refreshing change in perspective.
- Reflect on the day, and write down the lessons so you do not forget them.
- Conduct frequent weapons drills, including dry fire practice, so these skills become instinctive.

“Commanders provide a lot of informative and engaging articles. I find that the best time to read these articles is during slow periods whilst out field.”

Conclusion

There are many suggestions for what you can do during downtime on an operation. Quite a few of them require some degree of planning and preparation prior to the deployment. Consider this well before the deployment so that you do not find yourself with nothing to do except go to the gym. Do not leave the planning too late, as you will have plenty to do in the immediate lead up to the deployment.

² Junior non-commissioned officers

³ Make sure you check the university policy before you do this.

⁴ AAR: after action reviews

O

Orders

Orders for the Junior Leader

This article was written by Sergeant Jon Tynan, who is an instructor at South Queensland Wing, Warrant Officer and Non-Commissioned Officer Academy (WONCO-A). Sergeant Tynan is a RAEME¹ soldier with over 16 years of experience in Army, including trade and technical postings and numerous instructional postings at Kapooka², Australian Defence Force Academy and WONCO-A. The information below is from personal experiences during his time on deployment and in the training environment.

¹ Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

² Location of Army Recruit Training Centre



Ten soldiers, wisely led, will beat a hundred without a head.

Euripides

The process of developing and delivering effective orders can be an imposing task. This has resulted in the current trend of junior leaders delivering 'soldiers' fives' or 'briefs' instead of orders. Orders are a set of directions to subordinates, and include the outcomes to be achieved. They are based upon analysis and a well-considered plan. Orders can either be written or given verbally. It takes time to conduct analysis then write a tactically sound, war-gamed, mission-specific plan on a page which can then be disseminated – and it takes longer if you do not do it enough to be thoroughly familiar with the process. Hence, this article has been written to provide practical tips on the analysis and planning necessary to construct and deliver an effective set of orders.



Receiving Orders

Tip 1: Make the orders your own. After receiving orders you will need to analyse - not regurgitate - what was given to you. For example, the topography brief will be given to you from the point of view of the entire AO. You will be allocated a specific area. Therefore, you will need to conduct a map reconnaissance of the area, utilising previous knowledge (eg patrol reports from other teams who have operated in the area) to enhance the information given and make it applicable to the actual area in which you will be operating.

Tip 2: Ask questions. If you are unsure about what you need to or can achieve, never be afraid to ask questions; there will always be someone with more experience than you. Utilise that experience and knowledge to help provide insight, thus improve the quality of your orders.

IMAP vs CMAP

Tip 3: Select the best method to analyse your mission and develop your orders. The Individual Military Appreciation Process (IMAP) gives you the best ability to analyse and formulate a viable plan in the time you will have available. It generally has the end product of a fully developed course of action that can be implemented at H-hour. It utilises a constant feedback loop throughout the process to ensure that the end product meets the requirements for the mission and the team.

Derived from the IMAP, the Combat Military Appreciation Process (CMAP) is predominately used as a post H-hour decision-making tool to be used when an incident or situational change has occurred. It requires the commander on the ground to understand the IMAP and to have knowledge of the formal orders either received from higher or given to their specific element. This knowledge enables the commander on the ground to make quick, informed decisions.

When developing deliberate orders, there is considerable benefit to applying the IMAP to a problem in order to best develop your courses of action in the pre H-hour setting. It is much better to apply the full process during the planning phase of your orders as it will develop robust and well considered courses of action. Having this knowledge will enable you to identify potential shortfalls before H-hour and to adapt quickly to changing situations post-H-hour through the CMAP. The CMAP is better suited to situations that require a more immediate and/or reactive decision as it is a more abbreviated process.

Mission analysis is a key step in the process

Tip 4: Ask how you can relate the commander's mission to your own. The purpose of mission analysis is to gain an insight into the commander's intent, both one and two levels up. An understanding of the commander's intent for the force as well as your specific role within it is critical. This enables you, as a junior commander, to understand where you fit into the bigger picture. As the commander on the ground, you need to relate the '5Ws': 'who, what, where, when and why' to your commander's intent in order to allow you the freedom of action to complete your own mission.

At the end of mission analysis and during development of the subsequent courses of action, ask yourself:

- Have I met the commander's intent?
- Do I have the ability to reduce any risks?
- Have I met all my task requirements (specified, essential and implied)?



Other key elements

Tip 5: Develop a concept of operations. The use of a concept of operations (CONOPS) is a valuable tool which can be used to test your plan against your commander's intent. Back-briefing your commander allows him/her to also become involved in the process and they have the opportunity to provide feedback to enhance your plan.

Tip 6: Use your planning to create comprehensive 'actions on'. To make your plan as good as it can be, it is essential to include comprehensive 'actions on' that enable your soldiers to act instinctively with a sense of direction and purpose. The consideration and development of the 'actions on' requires significant thought and planning. An example of a less-than-desirable 'actions on' that is often used by inexperienced trainees at WONCO-A is the use of 'actions on lost': 'you are to move to the nearest RV and await our return'. The issue with this particular action is that if you are lost, you do not know where you are; therefore, how can you move to the nearest RV? Think logically about how you want your subordinates to act or react if an incident or action occurs.

Preparatory Orders - The Warning Order (WNGO)

Tip 7: Use a WNGO to prepare your soldiers whilst you are developing your plan. A WNGO will enable section members to gain an understanding of the situation, and knowledge of the task(s) that may be undertaken and what stores or specialist equipment may be required. The 2IC's role is to disseminate the WNGO and ensure the tasks are completed. This also provides a positive link in the chain of command and gives the 2IC a chance to begin preparation of the mud model.

Tip 8: Follow the sequence below to create a clear and effective WNGO:

- **Situation.** provides a snapshot of what has been - or is - occurring that will influence the task at hand, and gives everyone a 'warning' of what should be delivered during formal orders.
- **Likely task(s):** explains the tasks that the team will likely have to conduct.
- **Timings or degree of notice:** allows the section to understand timings, including notice-to-move times and any restrictions on timings that are pertinent to the plan or delivery of orders.



- **Rendezvous (RV) and time for orders group:** provides information on where and when the orders will take place, noting that you must ensure external agencies can meet these requirements.
- **Preliminary moves and/or re-groupings:** allows for the prepositioning of stores or equipment, and allocation of any attachments or detachments to fit within the section construct.
- **Limitations on moves and/or reconnaissance:** details what may restrict or reduce the effectiveness of the movement, and any information that may be gathered from external sources to provide valuable assistance in formulating a viable plan.
- **Administrative instructions:** gives details on rations, water and ammunition requirements as well as the requisition of specialist equipment.
- **Acknowledgement instructions:** are used to ensure all have an understanding of what is required, by whom and when.

Orders format

Tip 9: Use SMEAC. Although there are numerous formats to orders, it is important to remember that all use the same basic SMEAC format:

S = Situation: topography, enemy forces (SALUTEHIM¹), friendly forces, attachments/detachments and civilians

M = Mission: who, what, where, when and why

E = Execution: general outline (scheme of manoeuvre), groupings and tasks, coordinating instructions

A = Administration and logistics: food, water, ammunition, medical plan, specialist equipment

C = Command and signals: locations of commanders, radio (callsigns, radio checks), improvised communications, code words, seniority, synchronisation of watches, questions (both to and from the group)

A handy and easily accessible way of confirming what is actually required in the detail and sequence of orders can be found in *LWP-G-0-2-4 All Corps Junior Commanders Aide Memoire*, Table 1-2: Sequence of Orders.

Delivering your orders

Tip 10: A confident delivery will give your soldiers confidence in both your plan and leadership. It is easy to say 'just get up and talk about your orders as if it is the word of God', but in reality not everyone is a confident public speaker. To assist in delivering a good set of orders, you need to make them your own: dominate them. You need to have a great understanding of your own plan prior to getting up in front of people and delivering. Where possible, you should take the opportunity to rehearse your orders; as you say the words and work through your orders you may find that potential issues with your plan become apparent, or you might identify areas of your plan that require additional explanation. What is most important is confidence: if you are confident with your plan and the process you have used to develop it, you will be more confident when it comes time to convey it to others through your orders.

¹ Size, Activities, Location(s), Unit(s), Tactics, Equipment, Habits, Intentions, Morale

Tip 11: Know your soldiers. As an army, we need to have a better understanding of those around us and work within their constraints; not everyone is a speed writer or can grasp the concept of intent. Therefore, stating 'these are my orders, no questions til the end' should be avoided. Allow subordinates to become involved in your orders; as you deliver them, give subordinates a chance to ask pertinent questions relating to information they have missed. You still need to set guidelines to guard against subordinates running your orders group, but allow them to ask questions as they come to mind. Include everyone within your team in the process to ensure that they understand 'the' plan.

Tip 12: Use a 'mad minute' to consolidate the plan. The mad minute (a brief scheme of manoeuvre) should be conducted after the orders are completed in order to refresh your team with 'the' plan and ensure that they are fully conversant with mission objectives and execution.

Conclusion

Drafting effective orders requires significant analysis and planning. Utilising the steps and tips provided in this article will ensure that not only will you be well prepared for the tasks at hand, but your soldiers will understand their responsibilities. Preparing and delivering effective orders will set your team up for success.

References:

LWP-G 0-2-4 All Corps Junior Commanders Aide Memoire
LWD 5-1-4 The Military Appreciation Process

CAL has produced a vui tui sized PDF containing the Sequence of Orders, as extracted from LWP-G 0-2-4 All Corps Junior Commanders Aide Memoire, and the warning order tips provided in the article above. These have been placed on our website, Army Knowledge Online. Contact CAL via CAL.lessons@defence.gov.au if you would like a link sent to you.





This article has been written by Combined Arms Training Centre's corps subject matter experts to provide you with information on the capabilities and employment of arms corps assets. No matter your corps, these tips will help you to understand what armour, artillery, engineers, infantry can provide for you and how to work with them on deployment or exercise. Thanks to WO1 P Swinfield RAAC Corps RSM, MAJ M Gowling and WO1 D McGarry (Regimental Master Gunner) from the RAA Trade Training Cell, MAJ S Thomas from the RAE Trade Training Cell and MAJ G Warnock from the RAInf Trade Training Cell for writing and compiling this article.

Working with **COMBAT ARMS**



General Points

Tip 1: Develop relationships early. As early as possible, establish then frequently maintain enduring, communicative relationships with other specialist personnel. This will prove to be the most successful way to get the best out of the specialists outside of your own corps, sub-unit and chain-of-command.

Tip 2: Actively inform your counterparts of requirements. Commanders of all elements in the combined arms environment need to actively seek out and brief their counterparts regarding their requirements, how they can integrate with other elements and what assistance they may need to do this.

Tip 3: Focus on critical relationships during Hand Over / Take Over (HOTO). HOTO time with your replacement or understudy should not necessarily focus on those relationships that are well established or already habitual. Instead, it should focus on those deemed most important to the mission.

Royal Australian Armoured Corps

The Royal Australian Armoured Corps (RAAC) provides armoured mobility and firepower on the battlefield through a range of tracked and wheeled armoured fighting vehicles that provide mobility, communications, endurance and combat power. The role of armour is to locate, identify and destroy or capture the enemy, by day or night, in combination with other arms, using fire and manoeuvre.



General safety tips

Tip 4: Never stand behind an Armoured Fighting Vehicle (AFV). AFVs can reverse rapidly, and the jet exhaust temperature (two large black grills on the rear) from the M1A1 Abrams is extreme.

Tip 5: Working with AFVs at night. When AFVs are manoeuvring around your defensive position at night they will always have a guide walking in front of the vehicle. Do not cross between the guide and vehicle, and do not shine white light at the vehicle's driver. If you are concerned at the proximity of the AFV to you or other troops then gain the attention of the guide only.

Tip 6: Follow the AFV safety brief. If travelling in an AFV, you will receive a safety brief usually from the vehicle commander. This will include all 'actions on', first aid kits, PPE requirements, items not to be touched, mount and dismount drills and footings, stowage locations for crew equipment and where to stow your equipment, degrees of weapons readiness whilst in the AFV and weapon stowage.

Tip 7: Know where to stand when the AFV is firing. Never stand/lie in front of an AFV when it is firing. A good rule to use is never be forward of the second road wheel from the AFV's front which is approximately in line with the AFV gun trunnions (main armament mount), and maintain a good distance either left or right from the AFV's tracks/wheels. The M1A1 Abrams has very specific safety regulations when it is firing its main armament (120mm cannon). These safety regulations and a safety brief will be given to you before any live firing practice occurs. If ever unsure, ask.

Tip 8: Follow AFV harbour drills. AFVs in night harbour locations or defensive positions will attempt to maintain what is known as a track plan. Therefore, it is vital that you and other troops do not sleep or hutchie-up on AFV tracks or under trees that are near the track plan. Always inform the AFV commander of your sleeping location (usually the right hand side of the AFV) and maintain that sleeping location as an SOP for future taskings. **Never** sleep next to or under an AFV. Ensure you fully understand the 'actions on' for the AFV if the enemy is detected or 'break hide, harbour' is ordered.

Tip 9: Become familiar with AFV tactical manoeuvre. Know and understand the AFV callsigns and the basics of AFV tactical manoeuvre. Information can be found by reading *LWD 3-3-4 Employment of Armour* and *LWP-G 7-7-1 All Corps Individual Soldier Skills*.

Fire support

Tip 10: Understand AFV target indication. AFVs are a great source of fire support due to their range of weapons, type of weapon systems and communication systems. Enemy targets may be indicated to the AFV commander by utilising fall of shot, GRIT (target group (size and disposition), range, indication and type of fire required), GRID (grid, range, indication and direction), smoke and control measures, to name a few. Remember that as the fighting crew are in the turret, you will need to use the axis of the barrel as the reference for target indication.

Communications on the ground

Tip 11: Know how to communicate with the AFV commander. The vehicle commander is in full control of the vehicle. If you need to pass information to the vehicle commander, always gain the commander's attention visually or by using the tank telephone which is located at the rear of the vehicle. If using the tank telephone, ensure it is fully extended and that you are on the right hand side of the AFV, which is the commander's side, and keep away from the vehicle's final drive (track drive sprockets). When finished, inform the commander that you are about to stow the tank telephone then fully stow the tank telephone in the housing and ensure it is locked into place. Always inform the AFV commander before climbing on and off an AFV.

Resupply safety

Tip 12: Stay in line with – or on – resupply vehicles. AFVs generally require resupply every 24 hours of operations (day and night) in a linear formation controlled by the Squadron Sergeant Major (SSM). This formation can spread out over hundreds of metres and is noisy, dangerous and vulnerable to enemy action. If dismounted, the safest place is to be in line with the resupply vehicles as AFVs will not cross over from either side of the resupply. If not required for any tasking in the resupply, you should stay on the resupply vehicles at all times. Know exactly what you are to do and where to go if the resupply comes under enemy threat. You will receive detailed orders via the SSM on the conduct of the resupply.



Royal Australian Artillery



The Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery (RAA) supports the other arms and services, by establishing such fire supremacy in the battle area that the enemy can neither interfere with our operations, nor develop their own effectively. The RAA role is to maximise the ADF's fighting power through the provision of offensive support (OS) coordination and targeting, indirect firepower, surveillance and target acquisition, and ground based air defence.

Offensive support

Tip 13: State the effect you require of OS. When working with OS artillery commanders, you must ensure that you communicate your requirements in terms of 'effect', and not specific assets or calibres. The OS SME, Artillery conduct extensive training on terminal target effects, which means your joint fire team (JFT) is very qualified to determine what to employ to satisfy your needs.

Tip 14: Use sensor capability of Joint Fire Teams (JFT). JFTs are another sensor available to commanders as they possess guaranteed communications, enhanced optics and are able to network with other enablers such as tactical unmanned aerial system (TUAS) or air.

Call for Fire

Tip 15: Understand the 'all arms call for fire' procedure. If you need help to defend your position, you need to know how to call for assistance. Ensure your target grid is accurate, and your description of the target is correct. This will enable artillery to provide the correct response in a timely manner. Remember that a gun battery can provide rounds on the ground over a 200 m x 200 m area and a gun regiment over a 300 m x 300 m area. For more detailed information, read *LWP-G 0-2-4 All Corps Junior Commander Aide Memoire*, chap 12.

Ground based air defence (GBAD)

Tip 16: Liaise with GBAD early. Conduct liaison with GBAD artillery as early as possible to establish limitations and constraints on their employment and/or disposition. Although GBAD detachments will not necessarily be assigned to you, they may occupy areas near your position to provide air security for you and other friendly forces. They use ground-to-air missiles to engage enemy aircraft and are linked through satellite communications to RAAF and Army aviation, and other detachments to monitor the complete air picture and provide a response. If you are available, the detachment may request support with their local defence.

Tactical unmanned aircraft system (TUAS)

Tip 17: TUAS can assist in obtaining knowledge of the terrain and detecting threats. When assigned to your unit, a TUAS commander will work with you as your 'eye in the sky' to provide you with the knowledge of what is around you and what is the threat. The commander and his/her team will normally be assigned to your lead elements. Although they are self-sufficient, they may require some protection.

General RAA employment

Tip 18: Prepare to work with RAA by reading doctrine. More information about the capabilities and employment of RAA assets and personnel can be found by accessing *LWD 3-4-1 Employment of Artillery*.



The Royal Australian Engineers (RAE) is responsible for the provision of combat, logistic, general engineering support and geospatial engineering within the ADF. Their role is to provide geospatial, combat and force support engineering capabilities to enable joint manoeuvre and survivability.

within the manoeuvre plan, it will help ensure the engineer assets are best utilised. More information can be found by reading *LWD 3-6-1 Employment of Engineers* and *LWP-G 7-7-1 All Corps Individual Soldier Skills*.

Tip 20: Be prepared to provide force protection. In order to ensure the maximum effect of the engineering effort, all engineer assets need to be concentrated to provide massed effects. Therefore, they will require force protection. If you are given engineer assets, plan on providing them with protection until otherwise directed. This can be done by allocating a manoeuvre element to the engineer force for local protection, or by providing area protection. If engineers have to provide their own protection, the mass is taken away from the engineer effect and away from the specialist engineer task.

Royal Australian Engineers



Tip 19: Understand the intended effect. Engineers will be allocated to a platoon or a section in order to give the manoeuvre commander an organic engineer effect for single or multiple phases. The engineers will have their own specified tasks to support the higher commander's intent. If you understand how the engineer effect is to be integrated and employed

Tip 21: The conduct of reconnaissance is essential for engineers to plan their tasks and be effective. Engineers require specific equipment to achieve desired effects, and manoeuvre plans can easily fail if those effects are not achieved. Engineer reconnaissance will enable forward planning and pre-positioning of key engineer equipment so that the manoeuvre element can maintain momentum. Without engineers involved in the reconnaissance, the correct equipment may not be in the right place at the right time, delaying the manoeuvre force.

Tip 22: If unsure, ask. Early engagement with an engineer advisor will ensure that appropriate time and resources are allocated to engineer tasks. Engineer commanders will then be able to prioritise their effort so that the effect enhances the manoeuvre plan. Engineers understand their limitations and will readily advise if a task is unachievable. If unsure whether the effect required can be achieved, ask the engineer.



Royal Australian Infantry Corps



The role of the Infantry is to seek out and close with the enemy, to kill or capture them, to seize and hold ground and to repel attack by day and night, regardless of season, weather or terrain. RAI relies heavily on the skilled application of tactics, effective teamwork and cooperation with other corps.

Establish a professional relationship

Tip 23: Discuss your SOPs with Infantry commanders. In the combined arms environment, it is vital that at an early stage you discuss your unit's SOPs with the infantry commander for matters such as individual soldier dress and work routines. This is not only to protect your troops from friendly fire, but it enables Infantry to quickly identify and engage with the enemy in using the appropriate level of force.

Tip 24: Enable better passage of information through consistent relationships. Where possible, you should have your same troops work with the same infantry

element to habituate the relationship. This will enable better passage of information on the requirements of your role and tasks such as the need to move about a defensive position, a forward operating base or compound late at night on routine tasks, or any necessary movement during contact with the enemy.

Tip 25: Provide Infantry with an overview of your situation. A quick tour or brief on your role, tasks and area will allow supporting infantry to better understand how they can do that task to support you. Conversely, if you are supporting them then you should insist on educating as many infantry soldiers as possible as to your requirements.

Orders

Tip 26: 'Actions on' must be detailed. Even though actions-on are detailed in SMEAC orders, it is vital that sub-units or individuals put thought into these beforehand and consider an early briefing of detailed actions-on for your specific role, equipment or specialist personnel. Articulate this to the Infantry commander early to see where they can assist, share in tasks and provide protection to your specialists as they concentrate on their role. For example, it may be that a piece of equipment cannot be allowed to fall into the hands of the enemy and needs to be destroyed before this eventuality. The method, sequence and other requirements of the destruction, such as the last possible safe moment and the authority to do so, need to be clearly stated as soon as possible.

Tip 27: Make sure that your infantry assets are aware of your control measures. Again, even though control measures should be covered in orders at the earliest opportunity, it is invaluable for infantry to be aware of specific requirements that may be outside of the norm or not reasonably apparent to those personnel outside of your trade or specialty. While SOPs for vehicle routes and movement, for example, are well known to most, it is vital that you identify to the infantry element your specialist equipment and any danger areas, radiation hazard or fragile components that need to be protected either from the enemy or accidental damage.

Infantry Requirements

Tip 28: Consider a lift capacity for personnel or equipment in your planning. Infantry operations can be physically demanding at the best of times and the requirement to carry even more specialist equipment, batteries and force protection measures in recent years - such as body armour, helmet and ECM - can have a considerable impact on Infantry's effectiveness and morale.

Tip 29: Make allowances for increased weights of individuals and their equipment. This will be significant when infantry in marching order is taken by aviation or vehicle lift. They will also need additional space for equipment and stores.

Tip 30: Give the infantry some space in your location. In cases of short duration patrols and tasks, such as QRF, allocate space in planning areas, billets or vehicles to store a small, additional amount of water, ammunition, batteries, medical consumables and food to top up what is initially carried by infantry. This will reduce their overall burden and enable them to operate more effectively.

Specialist CSS requirements

Tip 31: Check CSS support availability when attached to Infantry. Travelling light and with a small CSS footprint can be the norm for the infantry; they have limited ability to work dismounted for durations in excess of 72 hours without resupply of batteries, food and water. As they travel light, Infantry units do not necessarily retain the ability to provide the same level of CSS support that attachments may require or assume will be available to them, particularly if attachments are themselves overloaded with their specialist equipment.

Tip 32: Engage early to manage distribution of unique ammunition. Ammunition is a heavy item that is becoming more specialised and tailored to individuals and small teams. Standard small arms requirements are easily catered for, but the demand, transportation and special handling of some natures, such as having a 'prepared charges area' identified, can all be made easier with good relationships and early engagement between commanders.

Further your own knowledge

Employing these tips will prepare you to work more effectively with combined arms teams. The more you work with other corps, the more you will learn. In the meantime, however, as the information provided has only just touched the surface, it is up to you to further educate yourself using the references from this article, speaking with others who have worked amongst combined arms teams and speaking to personnel from others corps in order to work with them more effectively.





FIRST AID FOR FIGHTING MEN

Written in the early 1940s, *First Aid for Fighting Men* was a little fold-out card for soldiers to slip into their pockets. It's a simple idea with a clear message – first aid is everybody's job and it should be provided asap!

Most information from the card is presented for you below. For each point on the original card, the Army Logistic Training Centre's Army School of Health (ASH) has provided the correct modern day procedures and advice. Some sections have been left out as they are too dated with regards to current practices.

1. FIRST AID IS COMMON SENSE plus a little specialised knowledge. First Aid saves lives and stops panic.

ASH: Good first aid is often the difference between life and death. Hence our focus today is under the notion that 'common sense is only common to the exposed', says SGT Pyper. Hence, we must teach and recertify first aid skills.

2. A LIGHTLY WOUNDED MAN, if given First Aid, can go on fighting. Act quickly.

ASH: This is still relevant. Stop all haemorrhage early and be cognisant of the signs of shock.

3. A BADLY WOUNDED MAN looks pale and sweaty. Be prepared for this. Treat him like a child. Calm him. Calm the men in your post. This is First Aid.

ASH: The signs of shock are a medical emergency. Stop all haemorrhage, no matter how small. Calm the casualty and raise their legs. Seek rapid evacuation.

4. WOUNDS CAN LOOK FRIGHTFUL. Be prepared for this. Remember modern surgeons can do wonders. Kindly, Nature does her best to heal all wounds. But give Nature a chance. Stop wounds getting worse. That is your job. That is First Aid.

ASH: Don't be distracted by 'frightful' wounds. Treat obvious large wounds first then actively search for hidden injuries.

5. DON'T DISTURB A WOUNDED MAN too much unless you have to. Nature will tell him how to lie in the safest and most comfortable position.

ASH: Conscious patients will often get into the most comfortable position to reduce pain and lessen the damage. However, in the absence of advanced medical care, semiconscious or unconscious patients need full protection and are best treated in the lateral position.

6. LOOK, THINK AND THEN ACT. There may be three men wounded at once. Treat the most urgent first. Keep under cover. If mechanised, turn off petrol. Look out for falling walls. Any fool can be brave and get killed; be brave and don't get killed, and save your friend instead. Look, think, and then act.

ASH: This is still very relevant. D for Danger still has the highest priority at any treatment level/ situation.

7. STOP BLEEDING. A man bleeds to death very quickly. Stop it with your hands. There is no time to wash. Put your fist into the wound. Hold it there. This gives you time. Stuff in a piece of cloth or field dressing. Tie a bandage over it tight. Use another field dressing or strips of cloth for this. Anything will do—but be quick (fig 1).



ASH: Bleeding is still the leading preventable death in battlefield wounds. Be prepared with the best kit you can. To stop bleeding, use the issued FAD¹, pack the wounds tight, ideally with haemostatic dressing. In cases of desperation only, you can use your fists/ clothes and other adaptive measures. Never use adaptive practices as your main SOP.

8. BROKEN BONES. Place the limb in its most natural position and you can't go wrong. Don't let a broken limb flap. Sharp ends of broken bone can cut arteries and nerves to pieces. Tie a broken arm to the chest with any kind of bandage. But tie it firmly (fig 2). Tie a broken leg to the other leg. Use as many bandages as possible. Foot to foot, knee to knee, thigh to thigh (fig 3).



ASH: This advice is current for first aiders. Advances are available for higher medical staff. AFA should practice their splinting techniques as it is a fading skill set with modern advancement in clinical care.

¹ FAD: first aid dressing

9. CARRYING A WOUNDED MAN under fire. Keep under cover. Tie his wrists together. Crawl on hands and knees on top of him. Put your neck under his wrists, and drag him along underneath you. You can go miles this way and you will not give away the position of your post to the enemy (fig 4).



ASH: A number of techniques are available, depending on the situation. The following are considerations:

- Only move if you have to.
- Under fire, small bounds to cover are best.
- Use devices such as stretcher/tops, drag lines etc whenever available.
- Use planned movements to evacuation points/ casualty control points whenever possible.

Other lifting techniques can be found in the LWP-G 1-2-5 Army First Aid.

10. SMALL PUNCTURED WOUNDS are often more dangerous than dreadful bloody ones. A spent bullet from the air can go right through a man. Punctured wounds must be seen by a Doctor.

ASH: Consider underlying structures with puncture wounds. If the puncture wound is in the chest, apply a SAM® seal over wound. All puncture wounds are dangerous.

11. CHEST, HEAD AND BODY WOUNDS. Cover them. Stop the bleeding as best you can. They look much worse than they are.

ASH: Follow DRSABCD for any injury. For specific management, refer to the detailed procedures taught in the AFA training².

² See Smart Soldier 47 for information about the Army First Aid Course update.

12. WHEN TO GIVE A MAN A DRINK. Give a wounded man a drink of anything you have—but do not give a drink to a man with a wound in the belly, or to a man who can't swallow. You will kill them if you do. Remember, no drink to those two men. But you can moisten the lips.

ASH: Because of the advancements in evacuation timings and the use of initial wound surgery for most battle field/ dirty wounds, it is still recommended to not provide drinks to any casualty who will be evacuated as a priority 1 or 2. Lips may be moistened.

13. SHOCK. Shock kills more men than bullets. Shock is a mixture of pain, fear and cold. Do what you can to stop all three. Shock kills brave men.

ASH: Shock technically is the cause of all death. It is the lack of circulating oxygenated blood to organs. It has numerous causers. The most common to an AFA being haemorrhage, heat, cold, respiratory injuries and burns. All casualties should be monitored of early signs of pale clammy skin, disorientation and a rapid pulse.

The psychological definition of shock is still relevant, but poses little threat compared to the medical definition.

14. BURNS. Cover burns. You can do no more. Wrap him around in blankets. Keep him warm.

ASH: Stop the burning process, cool the burn with water/ impregnated dressings. Once the burn is cool, lightly wrap with non-adhesive dressing/strips of gladwrap.

15. GAS. Provided dated gas response actions.

16. KEEP YOUR FEET CLEAN. Keep your underclothes and socks clean. Dirty wounds fester.

ASH: Non battle injuries/illness (NBI) represents the greatest need of evacuation from duty. This has been the case in all conflicts fought throughout history. The importance of hygiene has been extended to clean underwear and socks, feet care, hand hygiene and regular washing (bird bath/ showers). These simple hygiene techniques not only reduce your risk of an NBI, but also your teams'.

17. TO STOP A SNEEZE. Place a finger underneath your nose and press your lip hard against your gum. A sneeze at night will give away your position.

ASH: Not one we get asked a lot, arguably not as important in modern warfare. However, the trick is to find the catalyst. It can be caused by allergies, infection, irritation eg sunlight, small aerosol particles and smells. Placing the finger helps mostly for non-particle based irritation, most commonly the sunlight ('photic') sneeze reflex. It works the same as any pressure based technique - including earlobe, roof of mouth with tongue - by interrupting the signals with baro (pressure) receptors, removing the urge to sneeze.

To reduce the likelihood of other sneezes, eg allergies/ infection/ common irritant, see medical staff before deployment. Depending on the source, medication can be used to reduce the irritation.

18. TO STOP A NERVOUS COUGH. When excited and under exertion you may be breathing through your mouth. This causes your throat to get dry and you want to cough. Check this by swallowing your saliva until the throat is well lubricated. A sip of water will also do this.

ASH: Regular water intake is vital for overall health and the prevention of many illness and hyperthermia. If your throat is dry, 'swallowing saliva' will be difficult because of the lack of production. The use of lozenges will increase saliva production and lubricate your throat.

19. THAT IS ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW. Courage in disaster. Courage in the presence of a wounded man. First Aid can save a situation and save a friend.

ASH: Courage and willingness to provide treatment is always helpful in an emergency. To increase the effectiveness of care, a soldier should increase their knowledge, exposure to treatment and the use of specialised equipment.

Much of the information from this 1940s card remains true today. It shows that lessons from the past can be a source of instruction for today's soldiers. Of particular relevance to soldiers seeking professional development will be experiences from recent ops. Information from recent ops is stored on the CAL website: <http://ako.drn.mil.au/wps/portal/cal/welcome/>

Some sections were removed as the information contained within them was no longer relevant. Should you want to read the missing 'tourniquet' and 'make water safe' sections from First Aid for Fighting Men and the ASH response for each then go to the CAL website, in the paragraph above, and look for it in the 'Soldiers Five' icon. If you cannot find it then send an email to CAL.lessons@defence.gov.au.

Name: John Carroll VC
Rank: Private
Unit: Battalion, 9th Brigade, 3rd Division
Date: 7-11 June 1917
Place: St Yves, Belgium (battle of Messines Ridge)



'Every soldier works for the team'

At 0310h on 7 June 1917 at St Yves in Belgium, a huge explosion from 19 mines obliterated the German front-line trenches creating massive craters. The Australian attack was largely unopposed except on the extreme right flank, where the 33rd Battalion advanced.

During an attack, immediately the barrage lifted, Private John Carroll rushed the enemy's trench and bayoneted four of the enemy. He then noticed a comrade in difficulties, and at once proceeded to his comrade's assistance and killed one of the enemy. He continued working ahead with great determination until he came across a machine-gun and team of four men in a shell hole. Single-handed he attacked the entire team, killing three of the men and capturing the gun. Later on, two of his comrades were buried by a shell and, in spite of very heavy shelling and machine-gun fire, he managed to extricate them. During the ninety-six hours the battalion was in the line, Private Carroll displayed most wonderful

courage and fearlessness. His magnificent example of gallantry and devotion to duty inspired all ranks in his battalion.

This action lasted from the morning of 7 June to the morning of 11 June 1917.

On 9 July 1917, Carroll was part of a working party in a forward area when he was wounded in the chest. He re-joined his battalion on 19 August, and was subsequently promoted to lance corporal on 19 September. On 12 October, during the first battle of Passchendaele, Carroll was again wounded and evacuated to England. He returned to Australia in August 1918 to help with recruiting, and was demobilised on 1 January, 1919. He died at the Repatriation General Hospital in Perth in 1971.



Victoria Cross inspiration

Extract from *Victoria Cross: Australia's Finest and the Battles they Fought*, by Anthony Staunton, printed with permission of the Australian War Memorial.

Tactical tech talk



Useful apps for the mind

As with physical fitness apps described in *Smart Soldier 46*, there are many to be downloaded for fitness of the mind. These apps can be used to achieve a desired end state (i.e. selection for a course or trade), or just to challenge yourself.

There are multiple apps that can be used to help you with your job, your professional development and your future employment goals. For this Tech Talk, CPL Ricky Chambers highlights the benefits of the 'ADF Trainer – YOU Session Preparation ADF Trainer' app, that is otherwise known as 'YOU'.

The YOU app contains a series of aptitude tests that can assist the preparation of civilians prior to their YOU session. It can also be used by serving members to help prepare for corps transfers, SF selection or selection for the Royal Military College. Additionally, you might like to use it for your own personal development to avoid skills fade.

The app features:

- 510 different questions
- detailed explanations of correct answers
- customised tests
- score progression charts
- answer statistics
- two modes of training

The algorithms in the app ensure that you do not get the same question twice in the six test categories. Those categories are as follows:

- arithmetic questions
- number series

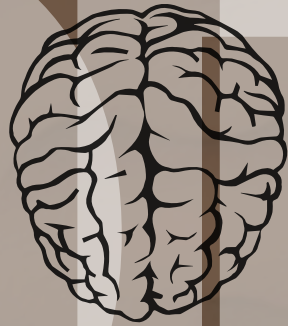
- abstract reasoning
- word analogies
- word meanings
- mathematical ability

CPL Chambers stated that the app's best features include its speed, simplicity and the ability to review all questions. He said the practice tests also allow you to review each of your answers thereby allowing you to learn from your mistakes.

To help him with his own personal and professional development, CPL Chambers has also been using the 'Lumosity' and 'PEAK' apps, which seek to improve memory, problem solving, language, mental agility, focus, emotion and coordination.

If you are going to use mental training apps, establish some personal and professional goals that you would like to work on this year, and do your research at the app store. Although CAL does not specifically endorse these apps, finding tools to help you with your mental agility and problem solving skills can only enhance your performance at work and in life.

ADF Trainer – YOU Session Preparation costs \$7.99 from the Apple app store and \$7.45 from an app store for Android-based devices. Free versions are available too, such as 'ADF Trainer Lite – YOU Session Preparation' from the Apple app store; however, they only provide a limited number of questions.



Quick Decision Exercise (QDE)



Secure overwatch

This Quick Decision Exercise was drafted by Observer Trainer Wing, CTC Live.

Situation

General. You are the commander of the quick reaction force (QRF) section within A Coy, 11 Inf Bn – you are on 30 mins notice to move. The Bn is deployed in a neighbouring country to conduct 'train, advise, assist' (TAA) operations. A Coy includes a tp of Protected Mobility Vehicles (PMV) and a tp of Australian Light Armoured Vehicles (ASLAV). A tp consists of two patrols of three vehicles. The Coy is partnered with an inf coy of indigenous soldiers. You are located at the Coy HQ (a large forward operating base (FOB)) and the remainder of the Coy is dispersed in pl-sized positions nearby. 1 PI is in a FOB ~5Km to the north with a sect of indigenous soldiers located on the high ground overlooking the FOB. The other two pl are located to the south of the Coy FOB.

Human Terrain

- **Enemy.** Enemy insurgents are active in the area and have used road-side IEDs and insider attacks to target both Australian and indigenous forces.
- **Civilians.** Your Coy has been in the area of operations (AO) for several months, and the local population is supportive of your presence.
- **Indigenous forces.** TAA of the indigenous forces has been without incident within your AO, although three insider attacks have occurred in other coy and coalition AOs.

Topography. There is a single main supply route (MSR) that connects the Coy FOB to 1 PI's FOB. The MSR is well used by the local population, typically busy with motorcycles and pedestrians. It is lined with houses and compounds the majority of the route, and there are several water crossings. The MSR is wide enough for movement by ASLAVs and PMVs in single file.

Update. You are called to the Coy command post (CP) at 1545h. The OC informs you that:

- There has been an incident at 1 PI's FOB: an indigenous soldier has fired from the observation post (OP) (using a .50 cal machine gun) into 1 PI's FOB.
- There are three Australian casualties: two priority 2 and one priority 3.
- The rogue soldier is believed to have withdrawn from the OP and disappeared.

- The remaining members of the OP have returned to 1 PI's FOB - there is likely to be uncertainty within their ranks.
- Aero-medical evacuation (AME) has been requested for the casualties; however, the estimated time of arrival is unknown.
- The PI can no longer secure the FOB or the OP.

Task: OC A directs you to secure the FOB and re-establish the overwatch position by no later than 1715h. The OC allocates you two PMV, a patrol of ASLAVs and four engineers under direct command. You have communications with 1 PI.

Provide a back-brief to your OC to explain your concept of operations (CONOPS).

A CONOPS is best described in terms of SMEAC: Situation; Mission; Execution; Administration and Logistics; and Command and Sig; alternatively, you can just cover the key points in your plan.

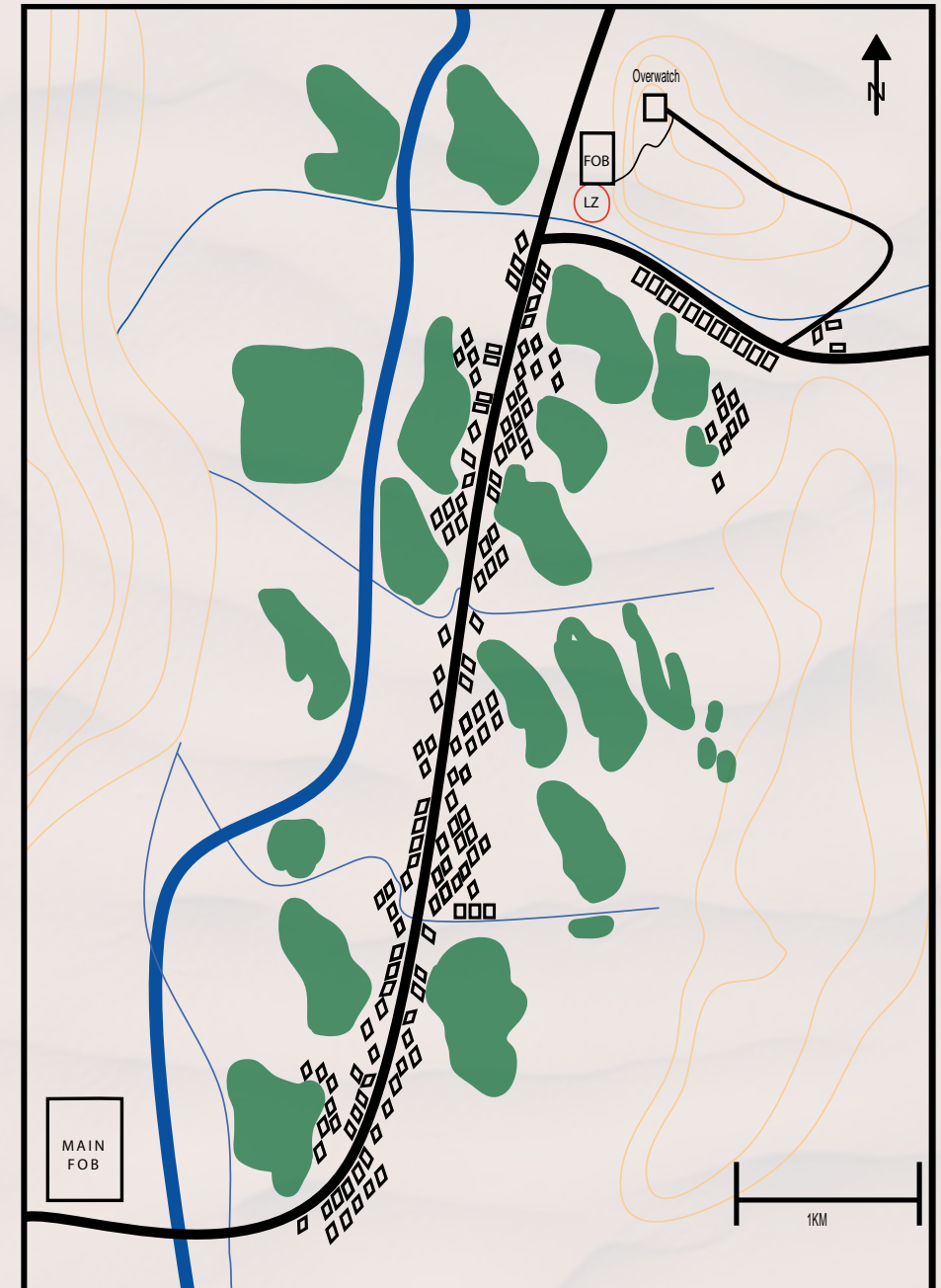
Smart Soldier

Later this year, the Centre for Army Lessons will produce *Smart Soldier* 50!

To celebrate this milestone we are asking you, the readers, to tell us your favourite articles from past *Smart Soldier* publications.

There are five military history books to be won just by telling us your favourite article and, in just a few words, why. Submit the title of your favourite article to; CAL.lessons@defence.gov.au

Submissions close on 15 September 2017



Managing Army Lessons

Outcomes of Army Lessons Board 1/17

The Army Lessons Board (ALB) is the Chief of Army's sole body for managing lessons. It is a one-star level board attended by AHQ (all Director Generals), the three formations (FORCOMD, SOCOMD, 1 DIV), HQ JOC, VCDF and DSTG. It meets bi-annually; however can also consider lessons out of session. The ALB considers lessons that have been submitted by anyone within Army, then decides on actions required to implement and validate them as a 'sustained' or 'improved' behaviour. In short, the ALB is a means of continuously improving the way Army prepares land forces for war. If you have a lesson to share, send it to cal.lessons@defence.gov.au – it will be considered.

The following lessons were approved and directed for implementation.

Lesson 1. When structuring and assigning forces, maintaining doctrinal span and scope of command is more likely to deliver effective command and control.

This lesson will be implemented by having all future major exercises designed with a Land Component Command above the Combat Brigade (CB) HQ to allow the CB to focus on tactical manoeuvre. Further experimentation will also be conducted to optimise the Divisional C2 structure.

Lesson 2. CBs who are equipped with fully trained staff are more likely to generate robust plans and desired battlespace effects

This lesson will be considered by Director General Career Management with a view to ensuring key appointments within CBs in the readying and ready phase are fully qualified during reset or prior to commencement of their posting. Further, an online education tool to prepare personnel for staff appointments may be developed.

Lesson 3. The early integration of specialist staff (e.g. aviation, ISR, joint fires and Special Forces) into the combined arms team increases the likelihood of generating robust plans and the desired battle space effects.

This lesson will be implemented by ensuring exercise design enables the assignment of ISR assets as early as possible on the Road to Hamel and reviewing doctrine to ensure emphasis is placed upon the early integration of supporting elements.

Lesson 4. Headquarters that address the considerations for selecting and preparing

liaison officers are likely to experience more effective synchronisation and relationships with partner HQs.

This lesson will be implemented by amending LWD 5-1-1 Staff Officers' Guide to include the consideration for selection and preparation of Liaison Officers and ensuring a Liaison Officer competency is delivered in the Officer Training Continuum.

Lesson 5. When training, the separation of the combat service support training audience from those elements that provide logistic support to the exercise is more likely to maximise the training benefit to the entire training audience.

This lesson will be implemented by adjusting EX HAMEL design to maximise the training value for CSS elements where possible and developing a multi-year plan to ensure all CSS capabilities are exercised against training objectives that will be included in the Training Management Framework (TMF).

Lesson 6. The consistent application of doctrine is more likely to result in operational effectiveness.

This lesson will be implemented by implementing methods to increase access to doctrine and by confirming doctrine is being used as the basis of all training in the officer and soldier training continuum.

Lesson 7. Cultural awareness training that is delivered or supported by people from that culture is more likely to provide a realistic appreciation of the sensitivities and characteristics for that specific theatre.

This lesson will be implemented by HQ 1 DIV developing an SOP to ensure the integration of appropriate host nation personnel into OPGEN training.

Lesson 8. When planning for operations, the early inclusion of all contributing agencies significantly increases the likelihood of operational success.

This lesson will be implemented by HQ JOC and the Australian Civil Military Centre continuing to engage with the whole of government (WoG) during operational planning and encouraging continued WoG participation in major exercises.

Lesson 9. The use of personnel with contemporary operational experience to support the preparation of a deploying force is likely to enhance the performance and training benefit of both individuals and formed bodies.

This lesson will be implemented by integrating veterans with recent experience into OPGEN training and tasking deploying force elements to be prepared to support OPGEN training upon return to Australia.

Lesson 10. Regular Battlespace Management System (BMS) training and education that is consistently applied across combat and enabling brigades is more likely to result in effective command and control on operations.

This lesson will be implemented by adjusting the ACOSTC to incorporate the BMS training strategy and confirm the basis of provisioning meets the requirements of the BMS strategy.

Lesson 11. The improved alignment of the CMC to the FGC ensures the Readyng Bde is sufficiently manned with qualified personnel, particularly junior officers and NCOs, and is therefore more likely to execute successful military operations.

This lesson will be implemented by reviewing how the career management cycle is aligned with the force generation cycle to ensure the CB is manned with the appropriate personnel during the readyng year.

Lesson 12. CBs require appropriate armoured obstacle breaching capabilities for both current and future AFVs in order to manoeuvre effectively in a conventional mid-intensity conflict.

This lesson will be implemented by sustaining the progression of Projects Land 400 and Land 8160 to ensure Army's need for an armoured engineer capability is clearly understood and delivered.

Lesson 13. A reduction in soldier loads is likely to result in increased combat effectiveness and a reduction in injuries

This lesson will be implemented by DSTG conducting a review of research to develop a set of standardised weight carriage tables so commanders can make informed judgements regarding the load their soldiers are carrying and the impact upon them and their mission.

The Chairman of the ALB thanks all personnel from across Army who have contributed their observations and lessons – you should be confident that if you have knowledge to share, then it will be considered. If you would like to submit a lesson simply go to Army Knowledge Online (Click the tab on the left hand side of the page labelled 'Submit Observation') or send CAL an email via cal.lessons@defence.gov.au.



Exercising over the Holidays

Smart Soldier 47 contained an article about maintaining operational fitness, describing it as a continuous process that requires consistency, persistence and discipline. Soldiers should plan their physical fitness program so that they can maintain a high level of fitness. To help achieve this, PTI SGT Penhall has provided a physical training concept that offers a point system against a wide variety of activities. The harder the activity, or the greater the effort in doing each activity, the more points that can be gained.

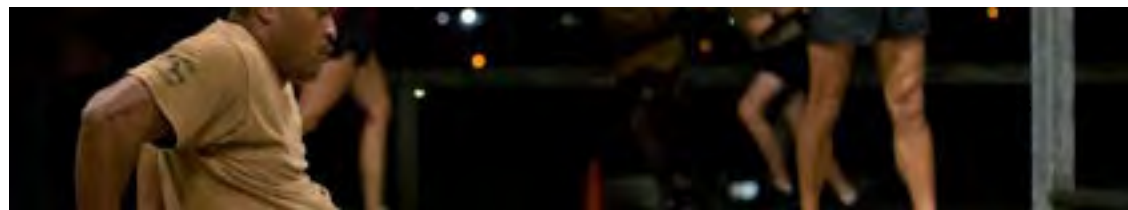
Tip 11 of the operational fitness article informs readers to maintain motivation by recording results. This fitness concept includes an example table to show how points are tallied up each week, so you can set goals, track your progress and make comparisons with your mates.

An example of how it works:

1. Pick how many points you want to achieve for that week and write it in the 'Total Points' column.
2. At the end of the week add up all the 'earned points' to check that you have achieved your desired total points.
3. Once the forecast points for the week are written down, they should not be changed, so think carefully about your week of training.

When deciding on your physical activities against which to earn points, ask a PTI for a program. They are trained to provide PT programs tailored for individuals. Also, remember the tips in the *Smart Soldier 47* article to assist in avoiding injuries, such as wearing appropriate shoes and clothing, warming up and cooling down, hydrating and more.

To access this physical training concept, 'Exercising over the Christmas Break', go to <http://ako.drn.mil.au/> and then click on 'Soldiers Five' and browse for it. If you cannot find it, send an email to CAL.lessons@defence.gov.au.





Improve your soldiering skills

Visit the Army Knowledge Online intranet site

Type AKO (or <http://ako.drn.mil.au>) into your internet browser address bar to access Army Knowledge Online. You can then search by topic and also contribute to lessons by submitting your tips and observations via: CAL.Lessons@defence.gov.au

Army Knowledge Group is now on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/armyknowledgegroup/>



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7.

AUSTRALIAN FORCE VIETNAM ROUTINE ORDERS FOR DRIVING OF MECHANICAL VEHICLES IN SOUTH VIETNAM

1. By virtue of the Naval Discipline Act, the Army Act and the Air Force Act, members are subject to the provisions of English Criminal Law. The provisions of English Law relating to the driving of mechanical vehicles, which may fairly be translated to the conditions in South Vietnam, apply. In such provisions are included the offences of dangerous driving, drunken driving, and driving without due care and attention.
2. The following Orders are published for local conditions and are supplementary to the provisions of English Law already applying.
3. Subject to any Orders specifying the maximum speeds for particular vehicles, and in the absence of any road sign fixing a lower speed, members are not to drive vehicles:
 - a. In a built up area in excess of the maximum speeds specified hereunder:
 - (1) Cars, motor cycles, and trucks up to 2 tons tare weight: 30 mph.
 - (2) Buses, and trucks over 2 tons tare weight: 25 mph.
 - (3) Semi trailers, and vehicles with long loads, or towing heavy trailers, and all heavy or tracked vehicles: 15 mph.
 - b. Outside a built up area in excess of the maximum speeds specified hereunder:
 - (1) Cars, motor cycles, and trucks up to 2 tons tare weight: 55 mph.
 - (2) Buses, and trucks over 2 tons tare weight: 50 mph.
 - (3) Semi trailers, and vehicles with long loads, or towing heavy trailers, and all heavy or tracked vehicles: 25 mph.
4. Members are to drive as near as practicable to the right hand side of the carriageway.
5. The driver of a vehicle passing another vehicle travelling in the same direction is to pass on the left hand side of that vehicle.
6.
 - a. Where portion of a road is marked into lanes for vehicles travelling in the same direction, the lane nearest the right hand side of the road is for use by two and three wheeled vehicles and animal drawn carts; drivers of four wheeled vehicles are to travel in the lane second from the right hand side of the road.
 - b. Where a road is marked into lanes and there are three lanes marked for traffic travelling in the same direction, drivers are to use the third lane only for overtaking and for making left hand turns.
 - c. Drivers desiring to move from one lane to another are to do so only when it is safe to do so and when the movement can be made without hindrance to other traffic.
7.
 - a. Notwithstanding the provision in paragraph 4 of this Order, the driver of a vehicle about to make a left hand

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turn from a two way road is to drive the vehicle as near as practicable to the centre of the road from which he intends making the turn but so that no part of the vehicle crosses the centre of the road before the commencement of the turn.

b. Notwithstanding the provision in paragraph 4 of this Order, the driver of a vehicle about to make a left hand turn from a one way road is to drive the vehicle as near as practicable to the left hand side of the road from which he intends making the turn before he commences to turn.

8. a. The driver of a vehicle approaching an intersection or junction at which there is no sign regulating right of way is to give way to any vehicle approaching that intersection or junction from his right.

b. The driver of a vehicle approaching an intersection or junction, at which a sign is placed requiring that he shall stop before entering the intersection or junction, is to give right of way to vehicles approaching the intersection or junction from his right and from his left.

9. The driver of a vehicle about to enter or leave private property is to give way to all vehicles on a public road regardless of their direction of travel.

10. The driver of a vehicle approaching a traffic circle is to give way to vehicles travelling in the traffic circle.

11. Drivers are to give way to funeral processions and are not to hinder or interrupt the passage of any person in such a procession.

12. Drivers are to give way to, and are not to hinder the passage of vehicles on which are sounding siren, flashing light or other indication of urgency of movement.

13. Drivers are to comply with directions on road signs. The signs used in South Vietnam, and their meanings, are contained in the booklet "Vietnamese Traffic Signs with English Translations". A copy of this booklet is attached to this Order as Annex A.

14. All drivers are to obey the traffic directions of Australian Military Police, Vietnamese National Police, and US Military Police. Directions by police take precedence over traffic signs and traffic lights.

15. a. A member is not to drive a vehicle within three hours of consuming intoxicating liquor.

b. Drivers are not to consume intoxicating liquor while on duty.

16. Members are not to smoke when driving vehicles:

a. In built up areas.

b. When conveying passengers, unless granted permission by the senior passenger.

c. When smoking constitutes a fire hazard.

17. A driver who collides with any person, object or animal is to:

a. Stop his vehicle.

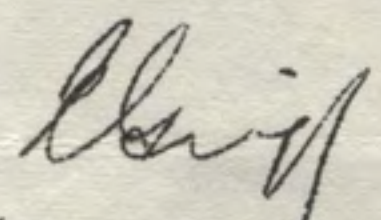
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- b. Check for fire.
- c. Attend injured persons and in particular ensure that they are in a position where they are not likely to receive further injury.
- d. Ensure as far as possible the security of the contents and load of his vehicle.
- e. Report the collision to Australian Military Police.
- f. Note the particulars of:
 - (1) The other vehicle or vehicles involved.
 - (2) The name and address of the other driver.
 - (3) The name and address of any injured person.
 - (4) The name and address of any witness to the collision.
- g. After a collision involving damage or injury a driver is not to move his vehicle from the position in which it stops until directed to do so by Military Police or Vietnamese National Police unless further hazard is involved to person or property.
- h. Drivers are to report collisions to their unit headquarters as soon as practicable after the collision.


(E. GRIFF)
Colonel
Chief of Staff

Annex: A. Vietnamese Traffic Signs with English Translations (on file 52-1-10).

Distribution

List D

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b. The close protection of bull-dozers is a very tiring and exacting task which requires the assistance of APCs to give the group reasonable mobility.

c. Civilians encountered within the AO can become a problem unless the commander on the ground is given some flexibility in the subsequent handling of them.

d. An "apprehend and evacuate" order can become extremely difficult to carry out if the numbers get into double figures.

5. Assessment of Op

The tasks given to C Coy were successfully completed and the lack of VC contact may, in fact, have been due to continuous patrolling by this sub unit in depth.

(G K CHAPMAN)
Maj
OC C Coy

Appendix I to Annex H

ESCORT TASK ON 1 JUN 67 ON ROUTE 326

Reference: 1. VUNG TAU - 6429/IV/NORTH E
2. PHUOC HAI - 6429/I/NORTH W

Situation

1. When the two bulldozers had completed their task on OP LEETON on 31 May 67 that had to be moved from LO GOM 5054 to TAM PHUOC 4458 for further movement by lowloader to the HORSESHOE 4961.

2. The dozers could not cross the narrow bridge at 510563 on Route 44 or by-pass the bridge because of wet ground conditions. Movement was limited to Route 326, however this road had been cut in three places by the VC restricting the movement of a low-loader and thereby limiting the speed of the dozers to 2 MPH. The flooded paddy to the north of Route 326 prevented the dozers from moving off the road in this direction. Movement was also restricted to the south of Route 326 in most places due to terrain conditions.

3. At least two companies of D445 and a local guerilla coy were believed to be in the LONG HAI hills South of Route 326, and there had been several enemy contacts in the general area of Route 326 during the period of OP LEETON. The VC could have expected to have mined the road and the ground near the road.

4. The following troops were available for the escort task:

D Coy 7 RAR with:

Under Command	One tp APCs
	One sect of Mors in APCs
	One sect Fire Aslt Pl (trained as pioneers)
	One SIOUX helicopter

Under command for movement

Two engineer bulldozers

In direct support

FO party 106 Bty RAA
161 Bty RNZA

In support

One med Bty (US)
Light Fire Team (US)

In addition 7 RAR liaison officers used in ARVN posts during OP LEETON and stationed along Route 44, had to be collected.

Concept of Operations

5. The plan was not to make contact with the enemy but to neutralize likely enemy ambush positions using artillery, the rapid deployment of infantry in APCs to secure both ends of the road, and establishment of a fire base on the most dominating feature in the centre of the route.

...This was....

(3) Pl comds giving inaccurate locstats when moving in APCs

(4) Bad packing of heavy infantry packs in APCs so that infantry cannot get out of APCs easily

(5) Troops riding on top of APCs (many troops do not like being enclosed inside APCs).

c. The value of the SIOUX helicopter for route surveillance and its capacity to pick up an artillery observer from the escort force to engage likely targets, or the commander of the group for co-ordination and control under certain circumstances.

d. The need for a high powered APC mounted wireless in Tp HQ that can be used by the infantry commander of the administration/air net in addition to the set now used on the battalion command net.

This was coupled with continuous search of the road for mines, with mine sweepers from each end of the route, and clearance of the timber on the sides of the road with infantry. They were to search for enemy parties and cables to command detonated mines. Speed and security were essential to prevent the enemy reacting to our movement.

The Execution of the Task

6. A reconnaissance by helicopter was carried out just before last light on 31 May 67. The helicopter did not fly directly over the route and only made one pass.

7. A platoon mounted in APCs was sent on a long but fairly secure route from PHUOC HAI 5153, along route 44 to DAT DO 4860, along route 23 to LONG DIEN 4359, to TAM PHUOC 4458. It was accompanied by a pioneer element with their minesweepers and an FO ack. Its task was to clear Route 326 to the south east.

8. Another platoon mounted in APCs and accompanied by a mortar FO and pioneers with their minesweepers moved from PHUOC HAI to 5153 to the junction of routes 44 and 326 in square 5055. Its task was to clear and secure route 326 to the north west and escort the dozers after they were handed over by the third APC/platoon group.

9. The third platoon of D Coy mounted in APCs, (together with CHQ and Tp HQ) escorted the two dozers from the military post at LO GOM 5164 to the location of the platoon on Route 326 moving north west, collected the LOs at the ARVN posts along Route 44, then secured a fire base in the vicinity of 476570. During the latter stage of this move the artillery FO was picked up by helicopter to register then neutralize a likely enemy ambush position in the timber between 475566 and 482558. The helicopter was left on the task of route surveillance until this move was complete.

10. Whenever the ground would permit, the dozers were moved off the road to save the time required to clear the road with minesweepers. The dozers were also used to fill and repair culverts that had been destroyed by the VC so that they could cross.

Conclusion

11. The dozers were escorted to TAM PHUOC and handed over to Engr escort party with the low loader without incident.

Comments

12. The following points arose during this move which could prove of value under similar circumstances:

a. The need for exceptionally close co-operation between the APC and Infantry commanders during the planning and execution of such a move.

b. Practice by troops riding in APCs to avoid:

(1) Pl Comds "jamming" the net when they use armoured veh wireless sets for communications.

(2) Confusion by infantry commanders with the large number of callsigns on the armoured nets.

File - Sgt Brooks

569-2-26CONFIDENTIALAUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES
HEADQUARTERS 1ST AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE VIETNAM
NUI DAT

31 May 67

SUBJECT: Commander's Daily Situation Report (SITREP)
From 300001H to 302400H May 67.TO: Commanding General,
II Field Force, Vietnam (4)

1. OPERATIONS SUMMARY.

a. General.

- (1) 1 ATF continued Operation LEETON with negative contact. Patrolling of the TAOR continued with minor contact. At YS644807 at 1028H a LRRP contacted two VC along a track. One was seen to be carrying a weapon. Results 1 VC KIA (poss) 1 VC WIA (poss). The patrol was extracted at 1715H.
- (2) LRRP
 - (a) Number of patrols extracted of less than 24 hours duration - Nil.
 - (b) Number of patrols extracted of more than 24 hours - One.
- (3) A Sqn 3 Cav Regt continued participation in Operation LEETON with 2 Tp under operational control of 7 RAR. There was negative contact. Location 2 Tp is YS527541.
- (4) Task Force Artillery continued support for Operation LEETON and patrolling of the TAOR. 65 H and I missions were fired in the reporting period. Locations are unchanged.
- (5) 2 RAR arrived in country and assumed operational control from 6 RAR at 1359H.
- (6) 6 RAR concluded operations in Vietnam at 1359H.
- (7) 7 RAR continued Operation LEETON with negative contact. At 0800H at YS507558 a mine was detonated causing 1 Aust KIA, 2 Aust WIA. Possible cause of detonation was fuze failure. At 1530H HQ 7 RAR, A Coy, B Coy, C Coy returned to base loc. Night location of D Coy was YS527542. At 1912H at YS437693 a standing patrol at the water point fired on 1 VC approaching their location. There was no result.
- (8) Air Support. At 1215H at YS557694 an airstrike on a VC base camp and staging area destroyed two large and two small bunkers and uncovered 20 metres of trench.
- (9) Plans for next 24 hours. Operation LEETON concludes 311800H. Patrolling of the TAOR continues.

-/2.

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2. STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS

C. Objectives - No change

D. Forces

D1. 1 SAS 301028H/301035H AUST NIL NIL

D2. 7 RAR 301912H/301915H AUST NIL NIL

K. Losses/Damages

K1. Enemy

D1. 1 SAS 2 VC/UNK 1 VC KIA (Poss)/NIL NIL NIL
1 VC WIA (Poss)/

D2. 7 RAR 1 VC/UNK UNK/UNK NIL NIL

K2. NIL

K3. NIL

K4. NIL

K5. Company - NIL
Platoon - Three
Squad - NIL

K5A. Two

GRAHAM
BRIG

Copies to:

HQ AFV (2)
HQ NZ Force Vietnam (2)
Lists A, D and E.

Internal:

Ops 1
Ops 2
G2 (Air)
CP (2)
PR (2)

May be destroyed after reading, but in any
case to be destroyed after 30 days.

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Williamson Capt

Duty Officer for
MAIZEY
S3

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569-2-26
~~HQ Coy~~
CP FILE

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AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES
HEADQUARTERS 1ST AUSTRALIAN TASK FORCE VIETNAM
NUI DAT

30 May 67

SUBJECT: Commander's Daily Situation Report (SITREP)
From 290001H to 292400H May 67.

TO: Commanding General,
II Field Force, VIETNAM (4)

1. OPERATIONS SUMMARY.

a. General.

(1) 1 ATF continued Operation LEETON with negative contact. Patrolling of the TAOR continued with negative contact.

(2) LRRP

(a) Number of patrols extracted of less than 24 hours duration - NIL

(b) Number of patrols extracted of more than 24 hours duration - Nil.

(3) A Sqn 3 Cav Regt continued Operation LEETON with 2 Troop under Op control of 7 RAR. There was negative contact. Location 2 Troop YS507560.

(4) Task Force artillery continued to support Operation LEETON and patrolling of the TAOR. Forty-two H and I missions were fired in the reporting period. Remaining H and I missions were cancelled as there were five fire plans fired all night into the area of LONG HAI Hills centre of mass YS 4555.

(5) 6 RAR continued Operation LEETON and patrolling with negative contact.

(6) 7 RAR continued Operation LEETON with negative contact. The wire barrier is nearing completion. 2072 mines were laid leaving 100 metres to be completed. Locations Bn HQ YS515549, A Coy YS507560, B Coy YS515550, C Coy YS510556, D Coy YS526542.

(7) Air Support. At 1120H at YS450534 an airstrike was made against a possible VC battalion location. No BDA was possible. At 0500H an airstrike on VC camps at YS472540, YS464550, YS468550 and YS471548 uncovered 15 tunnel entrances, destroyed 3 bunkers, and 3 metal roofed structures and collapsed 5 underground rooms. At approx 1730H an airstrike on a camp at YS544708 destroyed 2 large bunkers and 30 metres of trench.

(8) Plans for the next 24 hours. Operation LEETON and patrolling continues.

-/2.

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- 2 -

b. Major Unit Operations.

(1) through (9): no change

2. STATISTICAL SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS.

C. Objectives No change

D. Forces

K. Losses/Damages

K1. Nil

K2. Nil

K3. Nil

K4. Nil

K5. Company - Nil
 Platoon - Two
 Squad - Nil

GRAHAM
BRIG

Copies to:

HQ AFV (2)
HQ NZ Force Vietnam (2)
Lists A, D and E.

Internal:

Ops 1
Ops 2
CP (2)
PR (1)
Diary (2)

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W. B. Smith
f Duty Officer for
MAIZEY
S3

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569-2-26

(39)

Copy 42 of 80

CONFIDENTIAL7 RAR
AP AN PHU
SOUTH VIETNAM

24 May 67

Op 4 (OP LEEON)

Reference Map: VIETNAM 1:25,000 6429

1. Situationa. En Forces Annex Ab. Friendly Forces

(1) ARVN/RF/PF posts are loc as fol:

(a) 1 Coy 3/48 Bn YS 515535

(b) One Pl 1 Coy 3/48 Bn YS 514541

(c) 2 Coy 3/48 Bn YS 500570

(d) 612 RF Coy (-) YS 502558 (str 126)

(e) 3 Pl 612 RF Coy YS 511549 (str 20)

(f) 36 PF Pl YS 515536 (str 30)

(2) Sector intends to build up pl posts vic YS 523541 and YS 507560.

(3) 2 RAR/6 RAR assume responsibility for TAOR ptls and barrier protection.

(4) 1 ARU assume responsibility for def of WP and check points from 240800 hrs.

(5) ARVN accept responsibility for def WEST of Route 44 and will NOT mov EAST of present locs.

c. Atts and Dets(1) Under op con from 250600H - One tp and two mor APC. A Sqn 3
Cav Regt.
One tp 1 Fd Sqn.(2) In DS 106 Bty RAA
One OH13 161 Recce Flt.(3) In sp Max effort 9 Sqn RAAF
LSM
Two dozers 17 Const Sqn
Rebro (HORSESHOE)
CH47 sorties (as required)CONFIDENTIAL

...Mission...

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2. Mission. 7 RAR is to erect a wire barrier from the ARVN pl outpost vic YS 523541 to RF pl outpost vic YS 511549 and the proposed outpost YS 507560.

3. Execution

a. Gen Outline

(1) One coy mounted in APC's plus sect pnr and one sect mor in mor carr mov to and secure area NORTH EAST of PHUOC HAI 24 May 67. Pnr pl commence clearance of proposed fence line and layout of markers and stores. Remainder pnr pl fly in when area secure.

(2) Coy secures LZ NORTH EAST of PHUOC HAI for fly in of remainder of 7 RAR. After fly in 25 May 67 one coy each to build two Type 2 catwire fences, one coy on local protection and one coy protecting approaches.

b. A Coy

(1) Grouping. Normal.

(2) Task.

(a) First fly in 25 May 67.

(b) Erect WEST fence, Type 2 catwire, along line marked by pnr pl and navigation party. Protect fence by ni.

c. B Coy

(1) Grouping. Normal.

(2) Task.

(a) Second fly in 25 May 67.

(b) Erect EAST fence, Type 2 catwire, along line marked by pnr pl and navigation party. Protect fence by ni.

d. C Coy

(1) Grouping. Normal.

(2) Tasks.

(a) Fourth fly in 25 May 67.

(b) Maintain ptls and ambushes on approaches to the barrier in the area shown on trace Annex B.

e. D Coy

(1) Grouping. Normal plus:

(a) Under comd from 240600H to 250900H Sect Pnr pl, sect mor pl.

(b) Under comd from 241200H to 250900H Pnr Pl, Bn navigation party, AQ cell.

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.....(c).....

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(c) Under op con from 240745H to 250900H Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt.

(d) Att one interpreter.

(2) Tasks

(a) Mov by APC to PHUOC HAI YS 522540.

(b) Clear area near LSM YS 529541 beaching point of mines and booby traps and secure it.

(c) Guide LSM to beaching point and assist as req in unloading.

(d) Protect pnr pl and navigation party during their marking and laying out of def lines.

(e) Follow up pnr pl and assisted by APC's clear area of mines and

(f) Provide protection for dozers working vic map square 5055.

(g) Secure LZ for fly in of 7 RAR vic YS 522541 by 250700H.

(h) Provide close protection for work parties for duration of the op.

f. Mor Pl

(1) Grouping

(a) MFC to each coy.

(b) One sect under comd D Coy from 240600H to 250900H.

(c) Two sects under comd OC Base Area.

(2) Tasks

(a) One sect mov in mor carr with D Coy.

(b) Two sects remain in base area.

(c) Provide fire sp as required.

g. Pnr Pl

(1) Grouping

(a) One sect under comd D Coy from 240600H.

(b) Under comd D Coy from 241200H to 250900H.

(2) Tasks

(a) One sect to mov by road with D Coy with all mine detectors.

(b) Pl less one sect to mov by hel to LZ YS 529541 at 241100H.

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.... (c)...

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-4-

- (c) Clear LSM beaching point of mines and booby traps.
- (d) Clear fence lines, 80 meter gap between fences 20 metres each side of EAST and WEST fence.
- (e) Clear area, to be cleared by dozers, of mines and booby traps.
- (f) Provide technical advice to coys doing wiring.
- (g) Assist tp 1 Fd Sqn in laying minefield (mines without anti-lift devices only).
- h. Fire Aslt Pl
 - (1) Grouping Nil.
 - (2) Task. Protection of Fire Sp Base and tasks as ordered.
- j. Base Area
 - (1) Grouping
 - (a) Normal rear elms plus 10 fit men per coy.
 - (b) Comd by OC Admin Coy.
 - (2) Tasks
 - (a) Maint of 7 RAR.
 - (b) Def of base area.
- k. Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt
 - (1) Grouping. Under comd D Coy from 240745H to 250900H.
 - (2) Tasks
 - (a) Mov D Coy plus one sect pnr (103 pers) to YS 529541.
 - (b) Assist D Coy in knocking down scrub along fence lines.
 - (c) Ptl on EAST approaches as ordered by OC D Coy and later Pm HQ.
- l. 106 Bty RAA
 - (1) Grouping. FO party to each coy.
 - (2) Task. Fire sp as required from 161 Bty on priority call.
- m. Tp 1 Fd Sqn
 - (1) Tasks. Lay mines with anti-lift devices between fences commencing 26 May 67.

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n. OH13 161 Recce Flt

- (1) Tasks. Remain on call in present loc.

o. 9 Sqn RAAF

- (1) Tasks. Lift pers as fol:

- (a) 241100H. Pnr pl less one sect from LUSCOMBE to YS 529542 (24 pers).
(b) 250730H. A Coy from LUSCOMBE to YS 523542 (94 pers).
(c) Fol by B Coy " " " " (94 pers).
(d) Fol by Bn HQ and Fire Aslt Pl from LUSCOMBE to YS 523542 (81 pers).
(e) Fol by C Coy from LUSCOMBE to YS 523542 (92 pers).

p. Co-ord Instr

- (1) Timings

- (a) APC's report 7 RAR 240745H.
(b) D Coy, sect pnr pl, mor sect mov 240800H.
(c) Fly in pnr pl less one sect, and AQ cell commences. 241100H.
(d) LSM arrives PHUOC HAI 241100H.
(e) Fly in 7 RAR commences 250730H.

- (2) Staff

- (a) LOs with radios are appointed as fol:

- (1) 1 Coy 3/48 Bn 2Lt O'BRIEN c/s 9F.
(11) Pl 1 Coy 3/48 Bn Sgt ALLEN c/s 9G.
(111) 2 Coy 3/48 Bn WO2 MAHONEY c/s 9H.
(1V) 612 RF Coy 2Lt MARTIN c/s 9J.
(v) 3 Pl 612 RF Coy Sgt MAY c/s 9K.
(VI) 36 PF Pl Sgt ADSHEAD c/s 9L.

- (b) LO's to accompany navigation party and AQ cell under comd IO in four trucks $\frac{1}{4}$ ton escorted by two "gun ships". IO to posn LO's and arrange interpreters as required.

- (c) IO's party depart 240830H.

- (3) Fence Lines

- (a) Direction. See trace Annex B.

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....(b)....

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(b) Type. Type 2 catwire with tie down.

(c) Distance between fences. 80 metres.

(4) Navigation Party. SOP.

4. Admin and Log

Rations.

a. All 7 RAR to carry 3 days plus one emergency rat. Further supply by Maintdem.

b. 7 RAR to provide lunch from 25 May to end of op for 100 ARVN per day (US type one meal packs).

c. Armour and Engr atts to provide own rats.

d. LO's (and their att interpreters) to carry 6 days rats.

Water.

a. 4 full water bottles per man - resupply by one-for-one system.

b. 124 filled water cans to move on Landrovers with A/QM to op loc.

c. 7 RAR to provide water for Engrs and ARVN as required.

Med.

a. Med asst with D Coy to handle all cases until arrival RAP.

b. RAP loc Bn HQ 523541 wef approx 0900 hrs 25 May.

c. "Dust-Off" procedures as normal.

Ammo.

a. Normal 1st line on tps.

b. All magazines in base to be filled and aval at TIGER 5 for emergency resup.

c. Mor ammo - 85 HE, 10 Illg, 5 SMK per Mor.

Radio Btys. One bty per set plus one res carried for each set.

POL. 7 RAR vehs - full tanks plus one jerrycan of petrol and one jerrycan of water.

Wiring Stores and Eqpt. Distr to be advised by 2IC in loc on 25 May.

5. Comd and Sig

a. Bn HQ

(1) Mov in third lift.

(2) Remain vic YS 522541.

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b. Radio

(1) SOP plus:

C/S 9F LO 1 Coy 3/48 Bn

C/S 9G LO P1 1 Coy 3/48 Bn

C/S 9H LO 2 Coy 3/48 Bn

C/S 9J LO 612 RF Coy

C/S 9K LO 3 pl 612 RF Coy

C S 9L LO 36 PF Pl.

(2) Rebro on HORSESHOE.

c. Line. Bn HQ area only as ordered.

d. Codes. As issued plus additional points of origin as fol:

(1)	250800 to 260800 May	CONDIMENT	5255
(2)	260800 to 270800 May	CITY	5156
(3)	270800 to 280800 May	GIRLS NAME	5254
(4)	280800 to 290800 May	CLOTHING	5155
(5)	290800 to 300800 May	TOOTHPASTE	5154
(6)	300800 to 310800 May	COUNTRY	5254

ACKNOWLEDGE

(Eric H SMITH)
Lieutenant Colonel
Commanding Officer

ANNEXES: A. En Forces.
B. Layout of Ops.

Official



(D.K. ATKINSON)

Maj
S3

Distribution. List C.

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Annex 'A' to 7 RAR
OP 4 dated May 67

EN FORCES

1. The AO lies astride the southern approach route used by the VC to enter and/or harass the populated areas of southern PHUOC TUY. PHUOC HAI has been the tgt for mor attacks; LO GOM was attacked by a VC Bn on 21 Mar, and other villages on Route 44 have suffered attacks and harassment by main force, provincial and district units.
2. Main base areas used by VC are the thickly timbered country NORTH of the SONG BA DAT and the LONG HAI hills to the WEST. VC def posns (incl up to coy size posn), camps and food caches have been found recently NORTH and SOUTH of the RACH ONG HEM, specifically in squares 5256, 5355 and further to the EAST in 5556.
3. The area has been used as an AO by 2 Bn 275 Regt. It is a traditional AO for D445 Bn, and the LONG DAT District Coy makes forays against it from the LONG HAI hills.
4. VC production units (generally small groups) may be encountered working the fields or sending livestock throughout the AO. These people are contacted by commo-liaison personnel from either VC province procurement cells or VC logistic representatives of Group 84. Logistics units of Group 84 up to coy str may also be discovered on procurement missions in or close to the AO.
5. No main force units are believed to be presently in the AO. Elms of D445 have recently been ident in the northern base area and the LONG DAT Coy is believed to be in base areas in the LONG HAI hills. In the last week there have been minor clashes between ARVN and VC in DAT DO and near PHUOC LOI. LO GOM is a tgt for spasmodic mor attacks and this contingency should be considered in planning.
6. There is increasing evidence that the fence is proving to be a growing source of annoyance and inconvenience to the VC and maximum preventative action should be taken to prevent him from conducting either close recce or undetected assembly for counter-attack at any level against our ops.
7. Once the VC can judge the intended dir of the fence he may attempt to booby trap along that line.

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2.

(2) You are to assist Sector forces as far as possible in the const of the ARVN pl outpost.

(3) You are to provide your own security during the const of the barrier.

b. Tasks in Particular.

(1) You are to secure the LSM landing site by 250800 May.

(2) You are to const the barrier 80 metres wide. Each fence is of double cat wire with strainers inside.

(3) You are to leave a gap, 15 metres wide at the SE cnr of the outpost at YS511549. This gap is to have four thicknesses of wire either side of the gap.

(4) You are to clear as much of the vegetation EAST of Route 44 as is possible consistent with your main task.

4. Admin and Log.

a. Engr and Def Forces.

(1) 1000 metres of cat wire Type 2 wiring stores will be carried on the LSM, on 5 X 2½ ton trucks.

(2) Balance of wiring stores will be del by CH47 under arrangements HQ 1 ATF.

(3) All wiring tools less a small unit reserve at present held by units 1 ATF will be del to QM 7 RAR on F1A by 241700 hrs for the period ending 311500 hrs.

(4) Reinforced shell cases, to be used as 4 inch dollies for US pickets, will be carried on the LSM.

(5) Mines M16 will be del by CH47 commencing 26 May.

b. Resupply.

(1) Units are responsible for their own resupply.

(2) Unit forecasts in excess of capability are to be submitted to DAQMG ASP.

5. Comd and Sig.

a. HQ 1 ATF remains present loc.

b. Callsigns and frequencies as shown in SOI except for rebro, details later.

c. Password and Q hr as notified.

d. Points of origin as notified, plus:

(1) 250800 to 260800 May CONDIMENT 5255.

/((2)

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SECRET

3.

(2)	260800 to 270800 May	CITY	5156.
(3)	270800 to 280800 May	GIRLS NAME	5254.
(4)	280800 to 290800 May	CLOTHING	5155.
(5)	290800 to 300800 May	TOOTHPASTE	5154.
(6)	300800 to 310800 May	COUNTRY	5254.

ACK

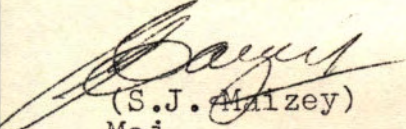
(S.C. Graham)
Brig
Comd

Annex: A. En Forces.

Distribution:

List Z
2 RAR (73-74)

Authentication


(S.J. Malzey)
Maj
Ops 1

SECRET

SECRET

Copy No

1 ATF

231435 May 67

OPS 825

Frag 0 2/67 (Op LEETON)

To: Lt Col E.H. Smith, CO 7 RAR

Maps: VIETNAM 1:25,000 Sheet 6429 I NW

Time Zone used throughout this order: HOTEL.

1. Situation.

a. En Forces. Annex A.

b. Friendly Forces.

(1) The loc of ARVN/RF/PF outposts are as fols:

- (a) 1st Coy 3/48 Bn YS515535.
- (b) One pl 1st Coy 3/48 Bn YS514541.
- (c) 2nd Coy 3/48 Bn YS500570.
- (d) 612th RF Coy (-) YS502558. (Str 126)
- (e) 3rd Pl 612th RF Coy YS511549. (Str 20)
- (f) 36th PF Pl YS515536. (Str 30)

(2) Sector intends to build a pl post at approx YS523541 and YS507560.

c. Atts and Dets.

- (1) Under op con from 250600 May -
One tp and two mortar APC A Sqn 3 Cav
One tp 1 Fd Sqn Regt
- (2) In DS - One bty 1 Fd Regt
One OH13 161 Recce Flt
- (3) In sp - Max effort 9 Sqn RAAF
LSM
Two dozers 17 Const Sqn
Rebro (HORSESHOE)
CH47 sorties (as required)

2. Mission.

a. You are to erect a wire barrier from the ARVN pl outpost at approx YS523541 to link the RF pl outpost at YS511549 and the proposed outpost at YS507560.

b. Your task begins on 24 May and ends 30 May.

3. Execution.

a. Tasks in Gen.

- (1) Engr stores and dozers will be landed by LSM on 25 May, details later.

/(2)

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SECRET

Annex A to 1 ATF
FRAG O 2/67 of 23 May 67

EN FORCES

The AO lies astride the southern approach route used by the VC to enter and/or harass the populated areas of southern PHOUC TUY. PHOUC HAI has been the tgt for Mor attacks; LO GOM was attacked by a VC Bn on 21 Mar, and other villages on Route 44 have suffered attacks and harassment by main force, provincial and district units.

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The area has been used as an AO by 2 Bn 275 Regt. It is a traditional AO for D445 Bn, and the LONG DAT District Coy makes forays against it from the LONG HAI hills.

VC production units (generally small groups) may be encountered working the fields or sending livestock throughout the AO. These people are contacted by commo-liaison personnel from either VC province procurement cells or VC logistic representatives of Group 84. Logistics units of Group 84 up to Coy str may also be discovered on procurement missions in or close to the AO.

No main force units are believed to be presently in the AO. Elms of D445 have recently been ident in the northern base area and the LONG DAT Coy is believed to be in base areas in the LONG HAI hills. In the last week there have been minor clashes between ARVN and VC in DAT DO and near PHOUC LOI. LO GOM is a tgt for spasmodic mor attacks and this contingency should be considered in planning.

There is increasing evidence that the fence is proving to be a growing source of annoyance and inconvenience to the VC and maximum preventative action should be taken to prevent him from conducting either close recce or undetected assembly for counter-attack at any any level against our ops.

Once the VC can judge the intended dir of the fence he may attempt to booby trap along that line.

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Sept Beasts
Enemy message file.
in display.
16/5

OPS 2

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Copy No 53 of 76

5 RAR
 AP AN PHU
 SOUTH VIETNAM

142130H Mar 67

OPS 601

Frag 0 1/67 (OP LEETON)

Ref : No change from OPO 8/67 (OP LEETON)

Time Zone used throughout this order : HOTEL.

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1. Situation.

a. En Forces. No change.

b. Friendly Forces.

(1) 1 ATF Concept of Ops.

(a) OP LEETON. No change.

(b) OP PORTSEA. The op is scheduled to commence not before 18 Mar and has the fol tasks.

i. Search and destroy the enemy in the area EAST of Dat Do to the Song Rai River.

ii. Open Route 23 from Dat Do to the Song Rai River and later to Xuyen Moc.

iii. Open Route 327 from Duc Thanh.

iv. Clear Route 328 to the sea.

v. Repair and extend the existing airfield at Xuyen Moc.

vi. Relocation of certain villages and squatters.

c. Atts and Dets.

(1) Remaining under comd

One tp and two mor APCs from A Sqn 3 Cav Regt.

One TD 15B

One combat engr team.

(2) Under comd from 160700H

One combat engr team

Two mor APCs from A Sqn 3 Cav Regt.

(3) Remaining in DS

103 Fd Bty RAA.

(4) Remaining in sp

One H13.

2. Mission. 5 RAR is to complete OP LEETON and prepare for OP PORTSEA.

3. Execution.

a. Gen Outline.

(1) OP LEETON.

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- (a) A Coy (-). TAOR patrolling.
- (b) B Coy. Standby/duty coy.
- (c) C Coy(4). Build a wire . fence from Horseshoe feature at Phuoc Loi.
- (d) D Coy. Continue with prep of the Horseshoe feature.

(2) OP PORTSEA.

- (a) A Coy in APCs clear AO ALICE.
- (b) B Coy. Patrol the TAOR.
- (c) C Coy (+). No change.
- (d) D Coy. No change.

b. A Coy.

(1) OP LEETON.

- (a) Grouping. One pl under comd C Coy from 160700H. This pl will revert to under comd D Coy from 1800H to 0700H nightly.
- (b) Tasks.
 - i. Continue patrol programme. See 5 RAR R569-1-9(A) of 10 Mar.
 - ii. All patrols must be capable of returning to the base within 12 hours.

(2) OP PORTSEA.

(a) Grouping.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------|
| i. Under comd | Sect mor pl in APCs |
| | One combat engr team |
| ii. Reverting to under comd | One pl from C Coy. |
| iii. In Sp | One tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt. |

b. Tasks. Clear AO ALICE.

c. B Coy.

(1) OP LEETON.

- (a) Grouping. No change.
- (b) Tasks. Duty/standby cov. 5 RAR R569-1-9(A) of 10 Mar refers.

(2) OP PORTSEA.

- (a) Grouping. No change.
- (b) Tasks.
 - i. Provide a five day foot patrol inside Line ALPHA /in the NW

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in the NW of the TAOR. Details later.

ii. Be prepared to take over the construction of the wire fence from C Coy.

d. C Coy.

(1) OP LEETON.

(a) Grouping.

- i. Under comd from 160700H One sect Aslt Pnr Pl
Recce Pl
Combat Engr Team.
- ii. Under comd from 160700H until 1800H daily One pl A Coy.
- iii. In sp from 160700H One tp (+) A Sqn 3 Cav Regt
One TD 15 B.

(b) Tasks.

- i. At 160700H move by APCs to the Horseshoe Feature and build a wire fence from the Horseshoe Feature to Phuoc Loi.
- ii. Release the pl of A Coy to D Coy at 1800H each day.
- iii. Move into a harbour/ambush position by night to cover approaches to the wire fence and to protect engr stores.
- iv. Recce Pl in APCs to patrol the Horseshoe TAOR and provide protection to the wiring party.
- v. Effect liaison with Sub-Sector Dat Do regularly to determine the exact location of the fence gaps.

(2) OP PORTSEA.

(a) Grouping.

- i. Under comd D Coy from 1800H/0700H. One pl
- ii. Reverting to under comd A Coy. One pl
- iii. Reverting to under comd A Coy Tp A Sqn 3 Cav Regt
less two mor APCs

(b) Tasks.

- i. Provide one pl from 1800H to 0700H nightly to assist D Coy protect the Horseshoe Feature.
- ii. Continue to build the wire fence.
- iii. Be prepared to take in support elms of ARVN to assist in the construction of the fence.

e. D Coy.

(1) OP LEETON.

(a) Grouping.

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- i. Remaining under comd One sect Aslt Pnr Pl
- ii. Under comd from 161800H to 0700H nightly One pl A Coy.
- iii. In loc One sect M r Pl

(b) Tasks. No change.

(2) OP PORTSEA.

(a) Grouping.

- i. Rel to under comd A Coy One pl A Coy
- ii. Under comd from 1800H to 0700H nightly One pl C Coy.

(b) Tasks. No change.

f. Mor Pl.

(1) OP LEETON.

(a) Grouping.

- i. Pl less one sect remains in the base area.
- ii. One sect in loc D Coy.

(b) Tasks.

- i. Base Area Sects. Base area def and sp for the A Coy patrols.
- ii. D Coy Sect. Support of C Coy and D Coys.

(2) OP PORTSEA.

(a) Grouping.

- i. Pl less two sects in base area.
- ii. Sect in loc at D Coy.
- iii. Sect in APC under comd A Coy.

(b) Tasks.

- i. Base Area Sect. No change.
- ii. A Coy Sect. Be prepared to move in APCs from the base in sp of A Coy.
- iii. D Coy Sect. Be prepared to move with C Coy to give sp to C and D Coys when wiring teams move out of range.

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g. Aslt Pnr Pl..

(1) OP LEETON.

(a) Grouping.

- i. One sect/^{remains}under comd D Coy.
- ii. One sect under comd C Coy from 160700.

(b) Tasks. C Coy sect to assist C Coy in the construction of the wire fence.

(2) OP PORTSEA. No change from OP LEETON.

h. Recce Pl.

(1) OP LEETON.

(a) Grouping. Under comd C Coy from 160700H.

(b) Tasks. With the aid of APCs patrol the Horseshoe TAOR and protect the C Coy wiring party. OC Recce Pl is to comd the APC/Recce Pl gp.

(2) OP PORTSEA.

(a) Grouping. No change.

(b) Tasks. Patrol by foot and protect the C Coy wiring party.

i. A Sqn 3 Cav Regt

(1) OP LEETON.

(a) Grouping. No change.

(b) Tasks.

i. At 160700H move C Coy (+) from their lines to the Horseshoe feature.

ii. Provide two APCs to assist C Coy with the loading of def stores.

iii. Provide tpt to ~~the~~ Recce Pl to protect the C Coy wiring party and patrol the Horseshoe TAOR.

(2) OP PORTSEA.

(a) Grouping. As for OP LEETON except:

- i. Under comd A Coy Two Mor APCs
- ii. Under comd 5RAR One ACV

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(b) Tasks.

- i. Move A Coy to AO ALICE.
- ii. Provide one tpt to A Coy to search AO ALICE.
- iii. When ordered provide two mor APCs to move a sect of mors in sp of C Coy and to carry def stores to C Coy.

j. Arty.

- (1) OP LEETON. No change.
- (2) OP PORTSEA. Details later.

k. Engrs.

(1) OP LEETON.

(a) Grouping.

- i. Remaining under comd D Coy. One engr combat team.
- ii. Under comd C Coy from 160700H. One TD 15B One engr combat team.

(b) Tasks.

- i. C Coy team. Daily mine clearing.
- ii. D Coy team. No change.
- iii. Clear a path for the wire fence.

(2) OP PORTSEA.

- (a) Grouping. Under comd A Coy. One engr combat team

(b) Tasks. A Coy C Coy D Coy teams - mine and booby trap clearing.

l. 161 Recce Flt. No change.

m. Air. No change.

o. Coord Instrs.

(1) Timings.

(a) 160700H. C Coy (+) move to commence fence construction.

(b) D Day OP PORTSEA. Not before 18 Mar.

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(2) AO ALICE. South of the Soug Ba Dap and EAST of Route TL 44 excl PHUOC HAI.

(3) Wire Fence.

(a) Type.

i. Two double cat wire fences approx 100 metres apart.

ii. There is to be a single apron on the outside of each fence.

(b) Location.

i. Details later.

ii. Rough location - SE from the Horseshoe feature to LTL 23 then SOUTH along the EAST BUND of Dat Do to 502577 on the Phuoc Loi bund thence along the Phuoc Loi bund to Route TL 44.

(c) Gaps. Details later.

(d) Def Stores. In loc at the Horseshoe feature.

(e) Wiring Stores. Available from the Asst QM from 151600H.

(4) A Coy, B Coy Patrols. Details later.

5. Administration and Logistics.

a. Water. For tps operating near the Horseshoe all water is to be drawn from the Horseshoe feature.

b. Rations.

(1) OP LEETON. Three days combat rations to be carried by the C Coy group.

(2) OP PORTSEA. Three days combat rations to be carried by the A Coy group and Bn HQ and 5 days for B Coy.

6. Command and Signals.

a. Rear Area Comd. Capt BADE.

b. Bn HQ.

(1) OP LEETON. Remain present location.

(2) OP PORTSEA.

(a) Personnel as per SOP less following:

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- i. RP's. CO's escort to go on op.
- ii. Sp Coy ord and clerk.
- iii. RMO and RAP elm.
- iv. Int dutyman. One Int dutyman required on op.

(b) Sig pl linesmen to be returned to Nui Dat when line tasks for Bn HQ and D Coy is complete.

(c) Bn HQ to move to Horseshoe feature.

c. Radio.

(1) Current SOI apply with amendments as detailed below.

(2) Bn Comd Net.

(a) Frequencies. Main 45.6, Alt 55.1.

(b) Deletions. From 160700H - Recce Pl.

(3) Additions and deletions to coy internal nets will be made as required. Pls use their own callsigns regardless of net joined.

(4) AQ Flick Net. Frequency 37.8.

(5) C Coy Comd Net. Frequency. Main 57.2
Alt 45.2

(6) Rear Base Def Net.

(a) Frequency. 43.2 (Admin Coy Net).

(b) Callsigns.

Control	90
A Coy	1ØB
B Coy	2ØB
C Coy	3ØB
D Coy	4ØB

(c) Effective from commencement of OP PORTSEA until completion of OP PORTSEA.

(d) When any coy vacates its base loc for any operation, the coy rear details will join the Bn Comd net using the callsigns shown allocated to companies in Para 5 c. (6) (b) above.

d. Line.

(1) Normal Bn HQ line will be laid.

(2) Line to be laid from Bn HQ to D Coy.

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(3) Sig Pl linesmen to continue on linelaying within D Coy Horesehoe feature.

- e. Point of Origin Code, Q Hour. As issued.
- f. Codes. As issued.
- g. Nicknames. To be effective at commencement of OP PORTSEA. Time to be advised.

<u>Nickname</u>	<u>Meaning</u>	<u>Issued By</u>
BOOT BRUSH	Move/Moving	All callsigns
TIE PIN	Clearing Ptls Out	"
HAT BAND	" " In	"
SHIRT TAIL	Stand To	"
SHOE LACE	Stand down	"
CHIN STRAP	Ambush	"
BOOK WORM	Lift ambush	"
BULL WHIP	Harbour	"
STICKY TAPE	Cordon in posn	"

Ack Instrs ACK.

W. J. A. Warr
(J.A. Warr)
Lt Col
CO
Add

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Sig Pl	1	13
Admin Coy	3	14-16
A Sqn 3 Cav Regt	3	17-19
1 Fd Regt	5	20-24
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Bty A 1/83 US Arty	1	27
161 Fd Bty RNZA	1	28
1 Fd Sqn	1	29
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Cherishing our hard-won peace, 33 years after the end of communist insurgency

By [Raymond Goh](#) - November 27, 2022 @ 9:45am



Surviving veterans at the National Monument (Tugu Negara). The writer is first from right.

DURING the Malayan Campaign in World War 2 from 1941 to 1945, the Japanese army attacked and occupied Malaya. In response, the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (MPAJA) rose and fought alongside the British colonialists against the Japanese forces.

After Japan surrendered on Aug 15, 1945, the MPAJA and communist pro-independence fighters of the Malayan National Liberation Army, comprising about 5,000 men, turned against their British masters who returned to administer Malaya and extract her rich resources of tin and rubber.

The guerillas organised themselves into the Malayan Communist Party (MCP), claiming to fight for the independence of Malaya so that the rich resources like tin and rubber could be retained to develop the country.

As a result, the British administration declared the Malayan Emergency when the communists came on their bicycles and fatally shot three planters in their office at a rubber plantation in Sungai Siput, Perak, on Aug 16, 1948. The fourth planter escaped death because his arrival was delayed when his vehicle broke down.

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Nov 2, 2022 @ 6:22pm

With the independence of Malaya won in London under our first prime minister Tunku Abdul Rahman on Aug 31, 1957, the MCP lost its rationale as a war of colonial liberation against the British administration of Malaya.

The Emergency ended when the last significant group of MCP insurgents surrendered in Teluk Anson, Perak, in 1958. However, some communists did not give up and fled northwards to the Thai border. As no major MCP activities were detected in Malaya, and seeing that peace had returned, Tunku Abdul Rahman declared the end of the Emergency on July 31, 1960.

INSURGENCY RENEWED

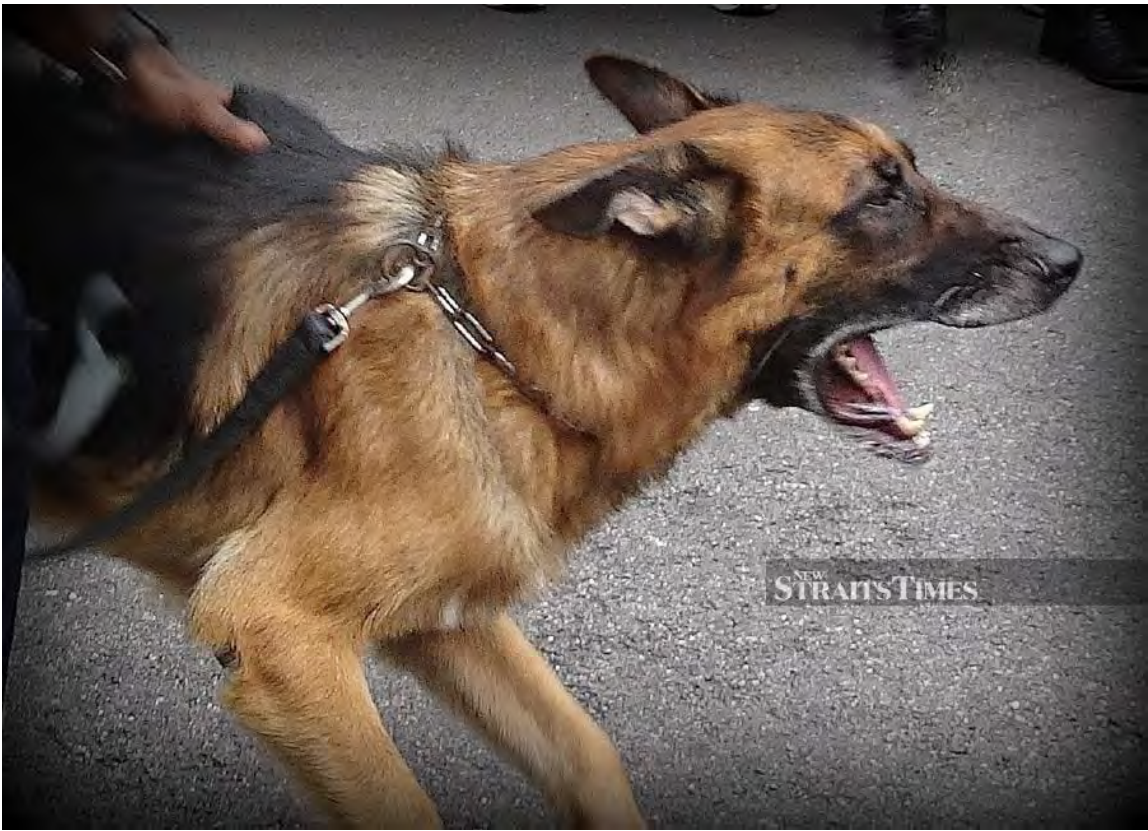


Preparing for a patrol along the East-West Highway.

However, after reconsolidating their ranks and reorganising themselves along the Thai border, MCP secretary-general Chin Peng and his followers renewed the insurgency against the Malaysian government, declaring its return to armed revolt in 1968 to coincide with the 20th anniversary of the beginning of the Malayan Emergency.

The Indonesian Confrontation (1963) had hardly ended on Aug 11, 1966, when the second Emergency erupted.

This time, instead of British colonialists, the communists had declared armed revolt against the sovereignty and democracy of Malaysia, which lasted up to 1989. Just after the second Emergency officially began on June 17, 1968, our security forces at the Kroh-Betong road in northern Perak was ambushed by insurgents.



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Tracker dogs were also deployed to track down enemies.

The build-up to the second Emergency could probably be attributed to regional events in that period. After World War 2, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia fell under communist influence while trying to gain independence from France, which returned to reclaim its Indochina colonies in 1946.

The French return to Vietnam was immediately met with resistance from the Viet Minh. Just after six months from November 1953, the Vietnamese, with four infantry divisions of 49,000 troops and supported by a 100 artillery guns, defeated a French garrison of 12,000 troops in the decisive battle of Dien Bien Phu (northwest Vietnam) on May 7, 1954. The French garrison commander surrendered to prevent further loss of lives.



The 600-metre rifle range built by army engineers in Bukit Merbau, Kelantan.

On July 21, 1954, at the Geneva Convention, the communists were allowed to establish a government in North Vietnam with jurisdiction until the 17th parallel (the provisional military demarcation line established in Vietnam by the Geneva Accords in 1954) as instructed by then China premier Zhou Enlai after negotiations with French prime minister Pierre Mendes, who agreed to pull French forces out of Vietnam.

South Vietnam remained a democracy with the help of American forces. This was to prevent the "Domino Theory" of southeast Asian countries falling into communist hands as propounded and expounded by US president Dwight D. Eisenhower.

However, on April 30, 1975, the North Vietnamese overcame the mighty American forces via left-flanking guerilla attacks through Laos and Cambodia, and united Vietnam.

This gave encouragement to the MCP, whose members and leadership were inspired by the success of the Vietnamese forces. The resurgence of the MCP insurgency was also strongly supported by China, which wanted to spread its ideology.

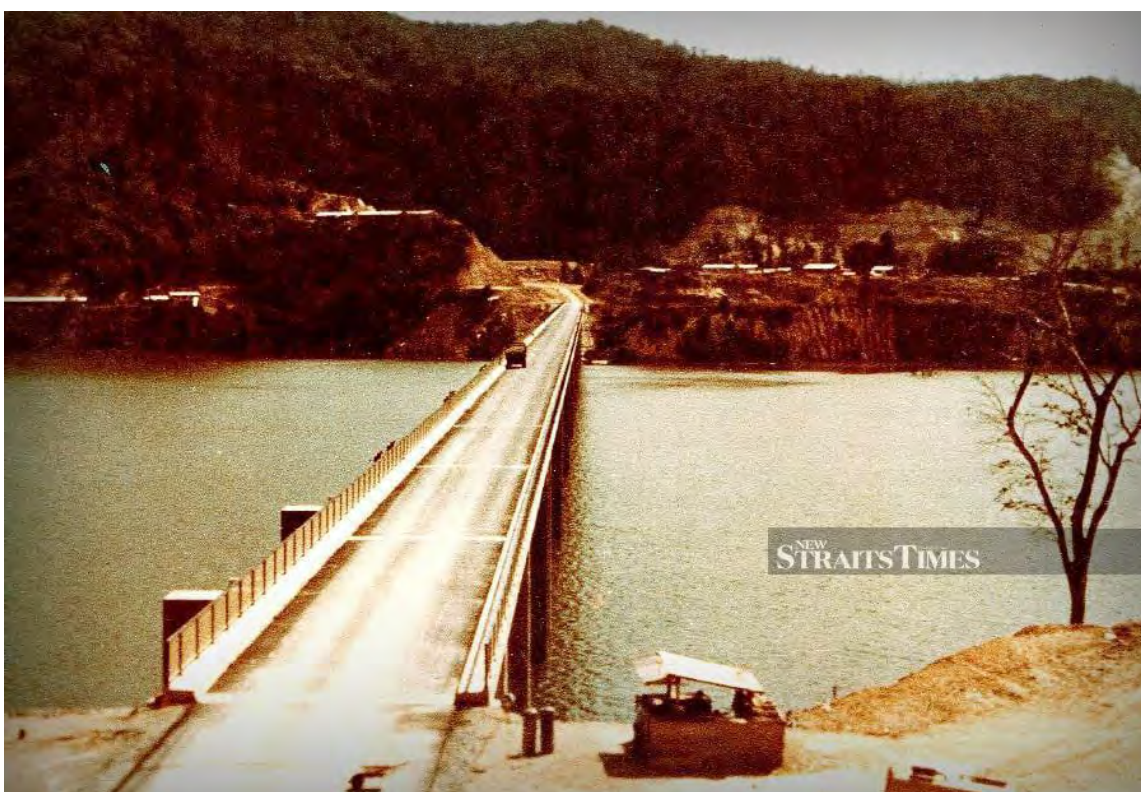
PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATION



The writer at the tactical HQ in Jeli camp of the East-West Highway.

After my command of the Royal Engineers School in Kluang in 1985, I was given command of the Royal Engineer Regiment in 4 Infantry Division in Kuantan, Pahang, under General Officer Commanding Major-General Datuk Osman Zain.

My area of operations covered Pahang, Terengganu and Kelantan. As a brainchild of prime minister Tun Abdul Razak Hussein, the "Security and Development" concept of operations was introduced to win the hearts and minds of the people. This marked the birth of the five-year Malaysia Plans since 1966. This was the people's war and it became known as psychological operations.



The Banding bridge.

The 127km East-West Highway connecting Jeli in Kelantan to Grik in Perak was the biggest project by the Public Works Department in 1970. It had the longest bridges connecting Pulau Banding (880m on the west

side and 640 metres on the east side) in Temenggor lake. Security was provided by our army along the highway.



Artillery guns at East-West Highway to provide harassing fire at enemy locations.

The purpose of this highway was to prevent communist forces from infiltrating the peninsula from their sanctuaries at the Thai border. Our artillery guns were posted at various high points along the highway to provide harassing fire and bombardment of enemy locations gathered through our military intelligence.

Other major projects included the Temenggor dam, Pedu dam and Muda dam for power generation, agricultural irrigation and water supply to Kedah and Penang.

For civic action projects, our army engineers built the 36km road from Merapoh to Gunung Tahan National Park, a 6km road at Kampung Pek (Kelantan) and a house for Puan Zalimah (a young widow with two children whose old house was washed away by heavy floods in December 1986), which was sponsored by the Kota Baru Council. We also constructed the 600m rifle range at Bukit Merbau (Kelantan) for our troops in the event of counter-insurgency warfare.



Brigadier General Datuk Chong Thean Bok, Commander of 4 Infantry Brigade.

In support of the 4 Infantry Brigade, we provided combat engineers for counter-insurgency operations at hotspots in the Pahang-Perak border under the command of master tactician Brigadier-General Datuk Chong Thean Bok.

Meanwhile, our mission was to pursue Chong Chor, the chief of the MCP's 6th Assault Unit, and destroy his communist infrastructure, especially the food and ammunition dumps. Subsequently, Chong Chor was captured on March 2, 1988.

END OF HOSTILITIES



Headquarters 4 Infantry Division Group in August 1986.

In an unprecedented historic event on May 29, 1974, prime minister Razak, in good faith, made a goodwill visit to Mao Tse-tung, chairman of the People's Republic of China, as the first leader of an Asean country to forge peace with China in spite of the country's communist ideology.

Since then, Malaysia and China have established good diplomatic relations and increased trade with each other. Following China's open foreign policy in December 1978, president Deng Xiao Peng was instrumental in urging the MCP to seek peace with the Malaysian government in 1980.

China's support for MCP was then withdrawn. After 21½ years, the communist insurgency came to an end when the MCP agreed to lay down its arms. A peace deal was brokered over many months in 1989 by the Thai authorities in collaboration with our government.



Troops on standby for counter-insurgency operations.

On Dec 2, 1989, the peace treaty was signed between Malaysia and the MCP in Hat Yai, Southern Thailand.

Malaysia was represented by Armed Forces chief General Tan Sri Mohamad Hashim Mohd Ali and inspector-general of police Tan Sri Mohammed Hanif Omar, together with Home Ministry secretary-general Datuk Wan Sidek Wan Abdul Rahman.

The MCP delegation was led by Chin Peng, Abdullah C.D. (chairman) and Rashid Maidin (central committee member).

After 40 years, five months and 25 days from the beginning of the First Malayan Emergency on June 16, 1948, the communist insurgency in Malaysia finally came to an end on Dec 2, 1989.

As time passed by, we may have forgotten the fact that our nation had actually experienced armed conflicts over four decades (1948-1989) — the Malayan Emergency from 1948 to 1960, the Indonesian Confrontation from 1963 to 1966, and the second Emergency from 1968 to 1989.

May our nation remember and salute the thousands of fallen heroes and surviving veterans of our security forces. As a result, we've been able to enjoy three decades (1989-2022) of peace and prosperity.

May our younger generation appreciate these blessings of peace and freedom, even as the older generation have passed on to glory land. May the Almighty God bless our country with everlasting peace and prosperity for our posterity. Amen (So be it).

Ingenieur Lieutenant-Colonel (r) Raymond Goh Boon Pah KMN (Royal Engineers Veteran) is a graduate civil engineer from University of Malaya and combat engineer from College of Military Engineering in Pune, India. He's also a graduate in Defence Studies from the Malaysian Armed Forces Staff College and is a post-graduate in Defence Technology from the Royal Military College of Science in Shrivenham, England.



Australian Government

Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal

**INQUIRY INTO UNRESOLVED RECOGNITION ISSUES FOR
ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE PERSONNEL WHO SERVED
AT UBON BETWEEN 1965 AND 1968**

LETTER OF TRANSMISSION

Inquiry into Unresolved Recognition Issues for Royal Australian Air Force personnel who served at Ubon between 1965 and 1968

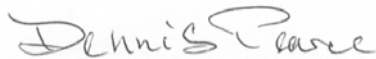
Senator the Hon David Feeney
Parliamentary Secretary for Defence
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Parliamentary Secretary,

I am pleased to present the report of the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal on the *Inquiry into Unresolved Recognition Issues for Royal Australian Air Force Personnel who served at Ubon between 1965 and 1968*.

The inquiry was conducted in accordance with the Terms of Reference. The panel of the Tribunal that conducted the inquiry arrived unanimously at the findings and recommendations set out in its report.

Yours sincerely



Professor Dennis Pearce AO
Chair

18 February 2011

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal shall inquire into and report on unresolved concerns regarding service of Australian Defence Force members at the Royal Thai Air Force Base Ubon between 25 June 1965 and 31 August 1968.

In conducting its inquiry the Tribunal shall:

- (a) make findings and recommendations as to the eligibility of Australian Defence Force members who served at Ubon for the Vietnam Logistic Support Medal or the granting of any other form of recognition for their service, and
- (b) consider any other material relevant to these claims, including, but not limited to, any previous reviews conducted with regard to recognition for this service.

The Tribunal is to examine relevant documentary evidence, and consider the nature and context of the service in relation to the criteria for Australian and Imperial awards that existed at that time, in order to arrive at a fair and sustainable response to claims for recognition.

The Tribunal may interview such persons as it considers appropriate and consider material provided to it that is relevant to these terms of reference.

The Tribunal is to report to the Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support on its findings in regard to the above and any recommendations that arise from the inquiry.

In making its findings and formulating its recommendations the Tribunal is required to maintain the integrity of the Australian honours system and identify any consequential impact any finding or recommendation may have on that system.

The Tribunal is to determine its own procedures, in accordance with the general principles of procedural fairness, when conducting its inquiry as set out in these Terms of Reference.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. The Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal (the Tribunal) is established under the *Defence Act 1903*. Its functions are set out in s 110UA of the Act. The Minister may direct the Tribunal to hold an inquiry into a specified matter concerning honours or awards and the Tribunal must hold an inquiry and report, with recommendations, to the Minister.

2. On 16 July 2010, the then Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support, the Hon Dr Mike Kelly AM MP, directed the Tribunal to inquire into and report on unresolved recognition issues for Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) personnel who served at Ubon (Thailand) between 1965 and 1968. A full copy of the Terms of Reference (TOR) is at the commencement of this report.

3. The inquiry was undertaken by the following members of the Tribunal:

Professor Dennis Pearce, AO (Chair)
Air Commodore Mark Lax, OAM, CSM (Retd)
Mr Kevin Woods, CSC, OAM

Summary of RAAF service at Ubon

4. Ubon is a Royal Thai Air Force (RTAF) base in South Eastern Thailand. In 1962, as part of Australia's SEATO commitment, RAAF No. 79 Squadron comprising eight Sabre jets, together with associated support staff, was posted to the base. The purpose of the posting was to provide support for Thailand against a possible communist invasion from Laos. The Rules of Engagement (ROE) for No. 79 Squadron allowed the use of force against aircraft attacking Thailand with weapons without warning. The Squadron's area of activity was limited to the Thai borders.

5. By 1965 it was apparent that the threat to Thailand had passed and it was proposed by the RAAF that the Squadron return to Australia. However, by this time the United States Air Force (USAF) 8th Tactical Fighter Wing had commenced to use Ubon, initially in support of Thailand but later as a base for air attacks on North Vietnam. Following high-level negotiations it was agreed that No. 79 Squadron would remain at Ubon with a view to providing a bilateral joint US/Asian military presence to confront the spread of communism in South East Asia.

6. An integrated air defence system for Thailand was developed involving the USAF, the RTAF and the RAAF with fighter planes on air defence alert. This system was part of the USAF's Mainland South East Asia Air Defence Network which was in turn part of the Pacific Air Defence Network operated by US Pacific Command.

7. From March 1965, the USAF increased its bombing of North Vietnamese targets under Operation ROLLING THUNDER. Ubon was one of the bases used for this operation. As a result it was perceived that Ubon had become a significant target for retaliatory raids.

8. On 25 June 1965, with the consent of the Australian Government, No. 79 Squadron commenced the highest sustainable armed air defence alert of Alert State Five. This alert level applied daily from dawn to dusk seven days per week. It meant that two of the Squadron's eight Sabres were continuously fully armed and made ready for takeoff on five minutes notice. New ROE permitted use of force against aircraft attacking forces in Thailand and before the attackers used their weapons. However, the restriction on flying only within Thailand airspace was maintained.
9. At about the same time a flight of Airfield Defence Guards (ADG) was sent to Ubon to protect the base from ground attacks. These guards patrolled the base on 24 hours seven days per week basis. They also undertook patrols outside the base perimeter which US forces were not permitted to do.
10. High-level government discussions occurred from time to time on the broadening of No. 79 Squadron's activities but these were not proceeded with, largely because of the perceived sensitivities of the Thai and Malaysian Governments to be seen to support the USAF's involvement in the Vietnam War and as such activities were outside the SEATO treaty obligations. No action was taken by the USAF to protect Ubon with aircraft while No. 79 Squadron was at the base. Rather the base was used as the take-off point for Phantom fighter bomber aircraft on 24 hours seven days per week basis.
11. No. 79 Squadron withdrew from Ubon on 26 July 1968. Before doing so, a request was made to Commander 7th Air Force for approval to release the Squadron from its alert status. This was duly given.

Award sought

12. The RAAF personnel who served at Ubon from 25 June 1965 till 26 July 1968 have been awarded the Australian Active Service Medal (AASM) 1945-75 with Clasp 'THAILAND'. They are also seeking the award of a campaign medal. The award sought is either the Vietnam Medal (VM) or the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal (VLSM). The personnel do not qualify for either of these medals under the present rules.
13. The claims for medallic recognition have been considered on a number of occasions. The two most recent of these are the *Report by the Independent Review Panel on Vietnam Campaign Recognition for RAAF Service at Ubon, Thailand 25 June 1965 to 31 August 1968, 2004*, (Riding Report) and the *Review of service recognition for RAAF Ubon (1965-68), 2008*, (Abigail Report).
14. The Riding Report recommended that the VM be awarded to the personnel who served at Ubon during the period referred to. This recommendation was not accepted by the government. The Abigail Report recommended that no action be taken to offer further recognition, including by way of the VLSM, for service of RAAF personnel stationed at Ubon. The government accepted this recommendation.
15. It was primarily because of the conflicting outcomes of these reports that the matter was referred to the Tribunal. In the Tribunal's view the conflict between the reports turns on the difference in result flowing from a close adherence to the formal legal status of No. 79 Squadron at Ubon, which was the approach taken by the Abigail Panel, and endeavouring to go behind that formal status to ask the question what was the task in fact

undertaken by No. 79 Squadron while based at Ubon - the approach taken by the Riding Panel.

16. The Tribunal received extensive evidence relating to the activities undertaken by No. 79 Squadron while at Ubon. There is no doubt in the Tribunal's view that the conditions of service there were warlike – as has been recognised by the Government by awarding the persons serving there the AASM 1945-75 with Clasp 'THAILAND' and granting eligibility for repatriation benefits. The only war that was producing these warlike conditions was that against North Vietnam.

17. The question therefore is whether, after 45 years, it is now possible to confront the reality of No. 79 Squadron's involvement in the Vietnam War. In the Tribunal's view it is time for it to be recognised that the squadron was making a significant contribution to the air campaign directed against North Vietnam. It provided the protection of an important base on behalf of the USAF. This is how the US viewed what the squadron was doing and the Tribunal considers that it is the correct view of the squadron's actions.

18. The VLISM was struck to recognise service personnel who had given essential and direct logistic support to Australian forces in Vietnam. The Tribunal considers that service at Ubon from July 1965 equates with the type of service for which the VLISM has been awarded. The USAF air war directed against North Vietnam was an integral part of the conflict in which Australian forces were engaged. There is no doubt in the Tribunal's view that the Australian personnel at Ubon performed an essential support role for the USAF. As recognised by the government, they were engaged in warlike activities and that war was the Vietnam War.

19. The Tribunal concludes that service at Ubon from 25 June 1965 to 31 August 1968 should be recognised with the award of the VLISM. The Tribunal does not consider that there will be any flow on effect for other service if such an award is made.

RECOMMENDATIONS

20. The Tribunal makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: RAAF personnel who served at Ubon air base in Thailand from 25 June 1965 until 31 August 1968 be awarded the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal.

Recommendation 2: The Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal Regulations be amended to give effect to this recommendation.

REPORT OF THE TRIBUNAL

Conduct of the Inquiry

1. The Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal (the Tribunal) is established under the *Defence Act 1903*. Its functions are set out in s 110UA of the Act. The Minister may direct the Tribunal to hold an inquiry into a specified matter concerning honours or awards and the Tribunal must hold an inquiry and report, with recommendations, to the Minister.

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Air Commodore Mark Lax, OAM, CSM (Retd)
Mr Kevin Woods, CSC, OAM

Steps taken in the inquiry

4. The inquiry commenced on 16 July 2010, with advertisements being placed in the major newspapers nationally giving notice of the inquiry and calling for submissions by 30 August 2010.

5. On 30 July 2010, the Tribunal wrote to key government organisations, the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet and the Department of Defence (Defence), advising them of the inquiry and inviting them to make submissions. The Tribunal also wrote to interested organisations and individuals who had previously made representations to the Minister.

6. The Tribunal received 24 written submissions from individuals and interested organisations. Attached at Appendix 1 is a list of the organisations and individuals who made written submissions.

7. The Tribunal conducted hearings in Canberra on 6, 8 and 21 October 2010 to hear evidence from various individuals, interested organisations and from Defence. A total of 10 persons made oral submissions to the Tribunal. Appendix 2 provides details of the Tribunal hearings and the persons who appeared at those hearings.

8. The Tribunal also considered additional supporting material including archival and departmental records and eye witness reports. The material is listed at Appendix 3.

Summary of RAAF service at Ubon

9. Ubon is a Royal Thai Air Force (RTAF) base in South Eastern Thailand. In 1962, as part of Australia's SEATO¹ commitment, RAAF No. 79 Squadron comprising eight Sabre jets, together with associated support staff, was posted to the base. The purpose of the posting was to provide support for Thailand against a possible communist invasion from Laos. The Rules of Engagement (ROE) for No. 79 Squadron allowed the use of force against aircraft attacking Thailand with weapons without warning. The squadron's area of activity was limited to the Thai borders.

10. By 1965 it was apparent that the threat to Thailand had passed and it was proposed by the RAAF that the Squadron return to Australia. However, by this time the United States Air Force (USAF) 8th Tactical Fighter Wing had commenced to use Ubon, initially in support of Thailand but later as a base for air attacks on North Vietnam. Following high-level negotiations it was agreed that No. 79 Squadron would remain at Ubon with a view to its providing a bilateral joint US/Asian military presence to confront the spread of communism in South East Asia.

11. An integrated air defence system for Thailand was developed involving the USAF, the RTAF and the RAAF with fighter planes on air defence alert. This system was part of the USAF's Mainland South East Asia Air Defence Network which was in turn part of the Pacific Air Defence Network operated by US Pacific Command.

12. From March 1965, the USAF increased its bombing of North Vietnamese targets under Operation ROLLING THUNDER. Ubon was one of the bases used for this operation. As a result it was perceived that Ubon had become a significant target for retaliatory raids.

13. On 25 June 1965, with the consent of the Australian Government, No. 79 Squadron commenced the highest sustainable armed air defence alert of Alert State Five. This alert level applied daily from dawn to dusk seven days per week. It meant that two of the Squadron's eight Sabres were continuously fully armed and made ready for takeoff on five minutes notice. New ROE permitted use of force against aircraft attacking forces in Thailand and before the attackers used their weapons. However, the restriction on flying only within Thailand airspace was maintained.

14. At about the same time a flight of Airfield Defence Guards (ADG) was sent to Ubon to protect the base from ground attacks. These guards patrolled the base on a 24 hours seven days per week basis. They also undertook patrols outside the base perimeter which US forces were not permitted to do.

15. High-level government discussions occurred from time to time on the broadening of No. 79 Squadron's activities but these were not proceeded with, largely because of the perceived sensitivities of the Thai and Malaysian Governments to be seen to support the USAF's involvement in the Vietnam War and as such activities were outside the SEATO treaty obligations.

¹ SEATO was the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation, a multi-national collective defence arrangement established between 1954 and 1977. Member states included Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, France, (East) Pakistan, The Philippines, ROC (Taiwan), USA and the UK. Notably, Singapore and Malaysia were not members.

16. No action was taken by the USAF to protect Ubon with aircraft while No. 79 Squadron was at the base. Rather the base was used as the take-off point for Phantom fighter bomber aircraft on a 24 hours seven days per week basis. Planes took off in groups of four every 15 minutes throughout daylight hours and in groups of two at that interval during the night.

17. No. 79 Squadron withdrew from Ubon on 26 July 1968. Before doing so, a request was made to Commander 7th Air Force for approval to release the Squadron from its alert status. This was duly given.

18. A fuller account of this history is included in an extract from the *Report by the Independent Review Panel on Vietnam Campaign Recognition for RAAF Service at Ubon, Thailand 25 June 1965 to 31 August 1968, 2004*, (Riding Report) set out in summary form at Appendix 4.²

Award sought

19. The RAAF personnel who served at Ubon from 25 June 1965 till 26 July 1968 have been awarded the Australian Active Service Medal (AASM) 1945-75 with Clasp 'THAILAND'. They are also seeking the award of a campaign medal. The award sought is either the Vietnam Medal (VM) or the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal (VLSM).

20. The VM may be awarded to Australian Defence Force personnel who rendered service in operations in Vietnam. The service that qualifies for an award is:

- Service of 28 days continuous or aggregated in ships or craft employed in operations on inland waters or off the coast of Vietnam;
- Service of one day or more on the posted strength of a unit or formation on land in Vietnam;
- One operational sortie over Vietnam or Vietnamese waters by aircrew on the posted strength of a unit allocated for direct support of operations in Vietnam.

21. The VLSM may be awarded for service of one day or more in the area of operations of Vietnam during the period 29 May 1964 to 27 January 1973:

- As a member of the crew of a ship or aircraft operating in support of the Australian Armed Forces;
- While attached to a unit or organisation operating in support of the Australian Armed Forces;
- While attached to, or serving with, a unit of the Australian Armed Forces or allied forces as an observer.

² Readers should also consult the two official histories: Chris Coulthard-Clark, *The RAAF in Vietnam: Australian Air Involvement in the Vietnam War 1962-1975*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, 1995, pp 10-16; and Alan Stephens, *Going Solo: The Royal Australian Air Force, 1946-1971*, AGPS, Canberra, 1995, chapter 14 (pp 272-281).

The area of operations of Vietnam is defined as the area of land and waters forming part of the territory of Vietnam; the waters off the coast of Vietnam; and the airspace above those areas.

22. It is accepted that service in Ubon does not fall within the qualifications for the award of either of these medals as presently stated.

Previous consideration of claims

23. Claims for recognition for service in Ubon have been considered on a number of occasions as set out in Appendix 5. The following is an outline of those reviews and their outcomes.

24. The *Committee of Inquiry into Defence and Defence-Related Awards*, 1994, (CIDA) recommended the award of the Australian Service Medal (ASM) 1945-75 with Clasp 'UBON' for all who served at the Ubon airbase for a period of 30 days or more. This recommendation was accepted by the government, although the clasp was amended to 'THAILAND'.

25. The *Review of Service Entitlement Anomalies in Respect of South-East Asian Service 1955-75*, 2000, (Mohr Review) considered that service at Ubon between 25 June 1965 and 31 August 1968 was properly to be regarded as 'warlike'. It accordingly recommended that medallic awards and eligibility for repatriation benefits should recognise this. These recommendations were based largely on the change in the ROE applicable to No. 79 Squadron by the removal of the requirement that engagement only be permitted against aircraft 'attacking with weapons'. The recommendations were accepted by the government which resulted in the upgrade of the ASM, awarded following the CIDA Report, to an AASM 1945-75 with Clasp 'THAILAND' for service during the period specified.

26. The *Report of the Review of Veterans' Entitlements*, 2003, (Clarke Review) recommended against extending eligibility for repatriation benefits to persons who served at Ubon in the period prior to 25 June 1965. Such service could not be classified as 'warlike'.

27. The *Report by the Independent Review Panel on Vietnam Campaign Recognition for RAAF Service at Ubon, Thailand 25 June 1965 to 31 August 1968*, 2004, (Riding Report) recommended that the VM be awarded to the personnel who served at Ubon during the period referred to. This recommendation was not accepted by the government.

28. The Ministerial direction to the Panel required it to consider 'whether additional information presented by the RAAF Ubon Recognition Group provided sufficient evidence for amending the regulations governing the award of the VLISM to cover Ubon service during the period 25 June 1965 to 31 August 1968'.³ The Panel recommended that the VM be awarded. This was technically outside its Ministerial direction which had directed it to the VLISM only. This was alluded to in the Minister's statement rejecting the Panel's recommendation.

³ AIRMSHL Riding advised the Tribunal that he was not given formal TORs, but merely a letter from the Minister to undertake the review.

29. The *Review of service recognition for RAAF Ubon (1965-68)*, 2008, (Abigail Report) recommended that no action be taken to offer further recognition, including by way of the VLSM, for service of RAAF personnel stationed at Ubon. The government accepted this recommendation.

30. The Abigail Panel's TOR required it to 'consider the merits of the claim for further service medal recognition by way of the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal. The panel will examine the documentary evidence available and consider the nature and context of service at RAAF Ubon to arrive at a fair and sustainable outcome'. In accordance with its Terms of Reference, the panel did not call for submissions. However, it took evidence from representatives of the RAAF Ubon Recognition Group (RURG) after complaint was raised about its methodology. It did not call on other witnesses.

31. It was primarily because of the conflicting outcomes of the last two reports that the matter was referred to the Tribunal.

32. In the Tribunal's view the conflict between the reports turns on the difference in result flowing from a close adherence to the formal legal status of No. 79 Squadron at Ubon, which was the approach taken by the Abigail Panel, and endeavouring to go behind that formal status to ask the question what was the task in fact undertaken by No. 79 Squadron while based at Ubon - the approach taken by the Riding Panel.

Representations to the Tribunal

33. The RURG was set up in 1990 to press for recognition of service at Ubon. The founder of RURG, Mr Mal Barnes, and its Executive Officer, Mr Richard Stone, appeared at a hearing of the Tribunal. Mr Barnes had served at Ubon in 1966 as a Leading Aircraftsman. Mr Stone had been there in 1968 as an Administrative Officer. Both men had given evidence to both the Riding and the Abigail reviews.

34. Evidence was given to the Tribunal also by:

Air Vice-Marshal Roxley McLennan AO, (Retd) National President,
Royal Australian Air Force Association
Air Vice-Marshal Peter Scully, AO (Retd)
Wing Commander Peter Larard (Retd)
Group Captain John Jacobsen (Retd)

With the exception of Air Vice-Marshal McLennan, each of these witnesses had served as a Sabre pilot at Ubon during the relevant period (1965-68), and each had also been the Detachment Commander. All of them had appeared before the Riding Committee but none had given evidence to the Abigail Panel.

35. At the invitation of the Tribunal, Wing Commander Glen Hombsch (Retd), the Flight Commander of the Ubon ADG in 1967-68, gave evidence to the Tribunal relating to the role of the Defence Guards at the base.

37. Air Marshal Douglas Riding appeared before the Tribunal at the Tribunal's invitation. Air Marshal Riding had served as a pilot at Ubon and was the chair of the Riding Review.

38. Major General Peter Abigail was invited by the Tribunal to appear before it but declined, indicating that he did not wish to add anything to his report.

39. The Department of Defence, represented by Mr Pat Clarke and Mr Brett Mitchell, appeared before the Tribunal. The Defence Department maintains that the recommendation of 'no action be taken to offer further recognition including by way of VLISM, for service of RAAF personnel stationed at Ubon' in the Abigail Report was correct.

40. Twenty-four written submissions were received and taken into account by the Tribunal. All submissions except that from Defence supported recognition for those who served in Ubon by the award of either the VM or the VLISM.

Analysis of evidence

41. A consistent picture was presented by all witnesses. Ubon was a major base for US aircraft from the early 1960s. Initially it was used as part of the US's SEATO commitments. However, from 1965 the base was used by the USAF only for the air war against North Vietnam. It was not used for the defence of Thailand except by a squadron of RTAF piston driven planes (No. 22 Squadron, RTAF) which engaged in local area patrol duties. The USAF activities were devoted to the Vietnam War, not to the defence of Thailand which was no longer considered to be under threat of attack from any quarter.

42. The Mohr Review's description of the position is instructive. It said:

The US stance in Thailand changed from being concerned, primarily, with that country's air defence to one of using Thailand as a base for the USAF's increased aerial commitment to the military effort in the Vietnam conflict. As a consequence, the threat of retaliation from either China or North Vietnam against bases in Thailand from which USAF aircraft operated grew markedly. There was an increased threat posed to airfields in Thailand by direct aerial attacks, attacks on the USAF aircraft returning to Thailand and from ground attacks on airfields by communist insurgents. As Ubon was one of the most important USAF bases for its air operations in the Vietnam conflict, the threat to that airfield grew to quite a high level.

The Australian Defence Committee in 1965 reviewed the implications for Australia of the USAF build up of forces at Ubon. Notwithstanding the increased threat to Ubon, the Committee felt that,

... while the operations by RAAF aircraft in the air defence role will be confined to the boundaries of Thailand, the fact that RAAF aircraft are being employed in the defence of an air base from which offensive operations are being mounted against North Vietnam could be considered by North Vietnam and Communist China as being similar to participation in the actual offensive operation.

Nevertheless, the Defence Committee considered:

... the probability of enemy air attacks [on Thailand] would be slight.

Despite this assessment, the RAAF's commitment to the air defence of Thailand was elevated to meet the increased threat posed by the USAF's escalating efforts in the Vietnam conflict. A critical conference was held on 12 June 1965 between Commander Second Air Division USAF and the Officer Commanding RAAF Ubon. At the conference it was proposed that the RAAF undertake the air defence alert tasks with its aircraft at 'Alert State Five', from dawn to dusk seven days a week.

'Alert State Five' required that two fully armed aircraft be held on an operational readiness platform, preflighted, with pilots in close presence, ready and able to become airborne within five minutes to engage an intruding aircraft with a view to its destruction. This was the highest 'alert state' that could be achieved. 'Alert State Two', which required pilots to be seated in their aircraft, was impossible because of extreme heat experienced in that climate, and the next alert state, which called for a 'Combat Air Patrol' to be mounted with two aircraft airborne at all times, was beyond the Squadron's capability.⁴

43. The RAAF Sabres were operated under specific ROE as specified in SEATO Plans 4 and 6, with the intention to preserve the integrity of Thailand's airspace. According to the RAAF Official Historian:

Pilots were given three conditions under which 'the use of force' against hostile aircraft was permissible: self defence; in the air defence of Thailand when instructed by the Air Board; and if requested by the Thai authorities in the event of an attack without prior warning and prior reference to the Board was not practicable.⁵

On 25 June 1965, the RAAF detachment officially became part of the Thai Integrated Air Defence System controlled out of the Headquarters in Bangkok. The ROE changed to allow the Sabre aircraft to be placed on five-minute alert. The order to 'scramble' the Sabres would come from the Thai Air Defence Commander and not the Australian Air Officer Commanding.

44. Upon the arrival of the USAF in April 1965, Australian, US and Thai forces regarded the base as an integrated entity. Australian forces personnel shared guard duties with the other forces. RAAF fire fighters participated in fire and rescue of US aircraft crash incidents, airfield accidents and ground fires. RAAF refuellers were also used to refuel US aircraft. There was a continuing exchange of information between the parties. Most significantly, the USAF did not allocate resources to the defence of the base. As noted previously, RAAF Sabres provided the air cover for the base and RAAF ADGs provided the ground cover by protecting the base perimeter and surrounding terrain.

45. The evidence to the Tribunal indicated that the perceived threat to the base was real. The author of the official history, the RAAF in Vietnam, noted that: 'The RAAF

⁴ Review of Service Entitlement Anomalies in Respect of South-East Asian Service 1955-75 (The Mohr Review), Chapter 6, pp 6-3 and 6-4. Italics in original. The official histories both agree with this position. Coulthard-Clark, p 89-90 and Stephens, p 277-78.

⁵ Stephens, p 276.

personnel so deployed there [to Ubon] had not the slightest doubt they were at war'.⁶ The Sabres of No. 79 Squadron were scrambled from time to time to meet an apparent threat from incoming aircraft. Orders to scramble came from the USAF. No engagement ever occurred but there were instances of suspected enemy aircraft turning away, presumably when the presence of the Sabres became known. While the Alert State Five applied only during daylight hours, there were occasions when the pilots were placed on standby at night.

46. The pilots' living quarters were alongside a very large fuel supply depot and adjacent to the runway from which the USAF Phantoms took off day and night. Sleep was problematic even when not on alert. Such a location meant the quarters were a target for enemy mortar attacks, another factor that highlighted the belief that the Australians were in a war-zone.

47. The ADGs conducted airfield defence duties 24 hours a day, seven days a week⁷. They conducted armed patrols outside the base perimeter at night as well as during the day. They occasionally conducted vehicle patrols outside of the base perimeter for up to distances of 20 kilometres. Patrols outside of the base perimeter were always accompanied by a Thai police officer.

48. All witnesses described the atmosphere on the base as 'tense'. They were always apprehensive of an attack. This was particularly because the USAF aircraft were not protected with revetments but were simply lined up on the airfield. There were usually around 70 aircraft at the base. They would have provided an opportune target for any enemy force. Witnesses who saw service in both Vietnam and at Ubon were unable to distinguish the sense of danger between the two areas of service. Indeed the guard work at Ubon was regarded by those who served in both theatres as more exacting than that in some areas of Vietnam.

49. The evidence all points to the purpose of the Australian engagement at Ubon in practice having changed in 1965 from providing assistance in the defence of Thailand under SEATO arrangements to providing support for the USAF air war against North Vietnam. This support was limited to the protection of the Ubon base and the USAF planes located there. Nonetheless, this was recognised by the US authorities as providing an essential element of their air operations under Operation ROLLING THUNDER. It was put to the Tribunal by one witness that the first step in any air power deployment is to secure the base from which operations are conducted. This step was taken for the USAF by the RAAF.⁸

The formal position

50. No evidence has been found stating that No. 79 Squadron was based in Ubon as part of Australia's commitment to the Vietnam War. This was sufficient to persuade the Abigail Panel that no further award should be conferred for service with No. 79 Squadron. That Panel said:

⁶ Coulthard-Clark, p 11.

⁷ It was suggested by Defence that Ubon did not operate on weekends. This is not correct. The base may have been closed then but the air operations and the guard duties continued throughout the weekend.

⁸ Wing Commander Larard (Retd), interview, 6 October 2010.

Throughout the entire period of deployment of RAAF Ubon, from 1962 to 1968, the purpose of the commitment remained to contribute to the air defence of Thailand and the forces were limited to operations within Thai territory. The commitment and limitations preceded the commencement of the USAF air campaign against North Vietnam in 1965, and subsequently ran in parallel with that campaign.

...

However, this type of co-operation [with the USAF at Ubon] and the provision of air defence within Thailand does not lead to a conclusion that RAAF Ubon was participating in the Vietnam War. It was not the primary purpose of the commitment. RAAF Ubon was never so assigned and the unambiguous policy intent of the Australian Government at the time is compelling in this regard.

51. If the matter is to be determined having regard only to the position stated formally by the Australian Government at the time, the Tribunal would agree with the Abigail Panel's conclusion. However, it was put to the Tribunal that the matter should be determined by looking at the factual circumstances that existed in their totality and not just as appears on official documents.

The case for recognition

52. The Tribunal has seen ample indication in the mass of documents relating to No. 79 Squadron's assignment to Ubon that indicates that there was sensitivity in Thailand and Malaysia about the role of the Squadron. The Vietnam War was a point of considerable contention among South-East Asian countries and there was a strong desire by some of them to avoid any appearance of commitment to either side in the conflict. References are common to Thai concerns about the role of Ubon as a support base for the USAF air war over Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. The Australian documentation reflects these concerns.

53. There can be no doubt that the Australian Government did not wish it to appear publicly that No. 79 Squadron was engaged in the Vietnam War. Whether one can, or should, take the next step of saying that the Squadron was not engaged in that War seems to the Tribunal to be less certain. The documentation reveals a continuing dialogue between Australian and US Government representatives about the involvement of Australian forces in the War. The Ubon operation featured regularly in these discussions. The documentation is directed almost exclusively to the Vietnam War. The protection of Thailand rates barely a mention.

54. On the ground, the Australian involvement in the management of the airfield and the activities based on it was almost exclusively with the USAF. The RTAF was seen as a fringe player.

55. It is apparent that the Australian Government did not wish to expand the role of the Squadron beyond the Thai border. However, this seems to have been driven more by Thai sensitivities referred to above than any decision that it should represent the extent of the Australian involvement. There are suggestions, supported by the Defence Committee, for an expanded role but these were rejected expressly on political grounds. It might be noted that, at the same time as the government was specifying the limits to No. 79 Squadron's involvement, it was agreeing to an expansion of the Army and Naval

commitment to the War, and considering the deployment of a squadron of RAAF Canberra Bombers.

56. It is accepted that, from mid-1965, there was no external threat to Thailand except such as might flow from the fact of air bases in Thailand being used to attack North Vietnam. The only 'enemy' was North Vietnam and its allies. The primary task of the Squadron was to defend the Ubon air base.

57. The position seems to the Tribunal to be that the formal position was that No. 79 Squadron was at Ubon to protect Thailand from external aggression. From mid-1965, the practical reason for being there was to assist the USAF in its air war against North Vietnam. This is recognised by the Abigail Report which stated:

... the Panel concludes that the activities of RAAF Ubon did provide de facto support within Thailand to the USAF air campaign in Vietnam ... The Panel believes it reasonable to conclude that this outcome was both understood and accepted by the Australian government at the time.

58. However, as indicated above, the Abigail Panel considered that this did not warrant a finding of participation in the Vietnam War.

59. The Tribunal agrees with the Abigail Report's factual conclusions both on the formal basis on which No. 79 Squadron was present at Ubon and on the activities that were conducted by the Squadron at Ubon. The question that it must address is whether those conclusions lead to the rejection of a claim for recognition as they did for the Abigail Panel or whether it is appropriate to look behind that formal position to reach a conclusion on whether the Squadron's actions at Ubon (together with base support personnel) warrant recognition with a campaign medal.

Identification of 'the war'

60. The Tribunal considers that it is relevant to take into account the finding of the Mohr Review that determined that service at Ubon was 'warlike'. This conclusion was based on the following finding:

'Alert State Five' was not peacetime or garrison duty, nor was it a training exercise. 'Alert State Five' required that two fully armed aircraft be at the end of the runway with pilots in close presence, ready and able to be airborne within five minutes to engage an intruding aircraft with a view to its destruction, subject to identification or lack of it. The danger of casualties was clearly forecast.

The question then remains as to whether or not this was 'warlike' or 'non-warlike'. Did the squadron face an objective danger? Did they 'incur' danger? Even though no danger eventuated in the sense that there were no actual combat engagements, they were armed for combat and had been told by those who knew more of the situation that danger did exist and they must hold themselves in readiness to meet it, not at some indeterminable time in the future, but at five minutes notice.

In regard to base security this fell into two distinct areas. First, there was security within the base itself. The Review heard from a number of those who have been at Ubon. It is clear from what was said that within the base itself the RAAF contingent had prepared defensive protection and arms had been issued for use if needs be. Second, the ADGs patrolled both day and night outside the perimeter of the base and in so doing saw evidence of terrorist activity. So far as it is known they were never engaged in an exchange of fire, but the danger of terrorist activity in the general area was known and precautions taken. These patrols were armed and authorised to fire if the situation called for fire.

The Rules of Engagement for the RAAF contingent from 1965 onwards signified that contact with hostile forces of an enemy should be expected and that these hostile forces were to be engaged in armed combat with the aim of destroying them. In these circumstances there was an expectation of casualties.

Conclusion

It is my opinion that, in the final analysis, the period of service at Ubon in the period 1965-1968 was warlike in nature. Their service, most certainly comparable with many other groups of the three services in other similar limited conflicts, should properly be rewarded with the appropriate repatriation and medal entitlements.

61. The Government accepted the Report's recommendation by its approval of the award of the AASM 1945-75 with Clasp 'THAILAND' to those serving at Ubon.

62. It is difficult to see what the operation was that could be classified as warlike other than the war against North Vietnam or its allies.⁹ There was no circumstance post-July 1965 involving Thailand that could be described as warlike – except the threat of attack from North Vietnam. This threat arose from the air campaign being undertaken by the USAF as part of the Vietnam War.

63. Whatever might have been said in the formal decisions relating to the retention of No. 79 Squadron in Ubon, it is clear that the real purpose of its posting was to assist the USAF air campaign against North Vietnam. There was no other reason for the Squadron to be there. Thailand was not under independent threat. The proposal was that the Squadron be returned to Australia when the threat to Thailand came to an end in 1965. It was in response to US requests that the Squadron was left at Ubon.

Conclusion on eligibility for award

64. It seems to the Tribunal to be splitting hairs to say that No. 79 Squadron was retained at Ubon for the defence of Thailand and not as part of the Vietnam War effort when it is recognised that it was the use of Thai bases in support of that War that was providing the threat to Thailand.

65. The extent to which Australian decision-making was tailored to the political sensitivities of the time is demonstrated by the evidence to the Tribunal of the subterfuges

⁹ The Tribunal noted that the Australian War Memorial Roll of Honour recognises the two members of the RAAF detachment who died during the Ubon detachment, 1965-1968.

practised to replace aircraft stationed at Ubon with new aircraft based at RAAF Base Butterworth in Malaysia when routine maintenance was required. Two Sabres would be flown in from Butterworth as escort for transport aircraft and swapped at the base for the Sabres that were to be serviced. This, it was said, avoided the Malaysian Government being made aware of the regular use that was being made of the Sabres at Ubon. Whether this deceived the Malaysians may be doubted, but it met the political niceties that were regarded as a necessity.

66. The question therefore is whether, after 45 years, it is now possible to confront the reality of No. 79 Squadron's involvement in the Vietnam War. In the Tribunal's view it is time for it to be recognised that the Squadron was making a significant contribution to the air campaign directed against North Vietnam. It provided the protection of an important base on behalf of the USAF. This is how the US viewed what the Squadron was doing and the Tribunal considers that it is the correct view of the Squadron's actions.

Recognition flowing from this conclusion

67. The Tribunal's TOR requires it to make findings and recommendations as to the eligibility of ADF members who served at Ubon between 25 June 1965 and 31 August 1968 'for the VLSM or the granting of any other form of recognition for their service'.

68. Some witnesses before the Tribunal urged the recommendation of the VM. They said that No. 79 Squadron and the ADG members were as much engaged in the Vietnam War as those in the geographical area of Vietnam. They were 'at the sharp end' of the conflict. It was said that the making of awards by reference to geographical areas based on a ground war failed to have proper regard to the practicalities of air war. Operations involving aircraft are often not confined to the boundaries of a war's area of operation (AO). It is not sufficient to recognise air support only in terms of flights over the designated AO. Significant contributions are made and danger encountered outside the AO which should be recognised by the campaign medal appropriate to service in the AO.

69. It was this line of approach that had resulted in the Riding Report recommending the award of the VM. The Tribunal has sympathy for this approach and it should be taken into account when determining eligibility in relation to future conflicts. However, the Government has rejected the award of the VM to the Ubon personnel and the Tribunal is not persuaded that there is such a clear case for its award as to warrant a fresh recommendation.

70. The Tribunal considers that the position in regard to the VLSM is different. This medal was struck to recognise service personnel who had given essential and direct logistic support to Australian forces in Vietnam. As noted previously, the VLSM is awarded to persons who served in the Vietnam AO as a member of the crew of a ship or aircraft operating in support of the Australian Armed Forces or while attached to a unit or organisation operating in support of the Australian Armed Forces. Service does not have to be on the Vietnam land area but includes service up to 185 km off the coast. This picked up the service of those who served on the HMAS SYDNEY. Service on RAAF Hercules transport aircraft also qualified for the medal.

71. The Tribunal considers that service at Ubon from July 1965 equates with the type of service for which the VLISM has been awarded. The USAF air war directed against North Vietnam was an integral part of the conflict in which Australian forces were engaged. There is no doubt in the Tribunal's view that the Australian personnel at Ubon performed an essential support role for the USAF. As recognised by the government, they were engaged in warlike activities and that war was the Vietnam War. The Tribunal concluded that service at Ubon from 25 June 1965 to 31 August 1968 should be recognised with the award of the VLISM.

72. The Tribunal was not pressed to recommend any other form of recognition for service at Ubon and it makes no such recommendation.

Possible flow on from award of VLISM

73. The Tribunal directed its attention to other service that might claim to be in a position equivalent to that of service personnel at Ubon. No other personnel of whom the Tribunal is aware served under like conditions to those at Ubon. Accordingly, the Tribunal does not consider that there is likely to be any legitimate claims for further recognition.

74. The Tribunal's recommendation is based on the immediate support provided by Ubon personnel to the USAF at the Ubon base, the level of preparedness that this support demanded and the nature of the threat to the base. These conditions were not replicated, for example, at RAAF Base Butterworth. Nor did they apply to RAAF personnel involved in the observation of the combat flying of USAF F-111s under Operation COMBAT LANCER at RTAF Base Takhli. These personnel are mentioned in the Mohr Review. However, they were not involved in direct logistical support of the kind provided at Ubon, nor were they under the same level of threat.

75. For the same reason that the Mohr Review did not find that service at Ubon prior to 25 June 1965 should be regarded as 'warlike', the Tribunal finds that such service does not qualify for the award of the VLISM.

RECOMMENDATIONS

76. The Tribunal makes the following recommendations:

Recommendation 1: RAAF personnel who served at Ubon air base in Thailand from 25 June 1965 until 31 August 1968 be awarded the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal.

Recommendation 2: The Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal Regulations be amended to give effect to this recommendation.

Appendix 1 – Submissions

The Tribunal received submissions from the following people and organisations:

Donald Godfrey Battams
Allen Burns
Squadron Leader Trevor Butler (Retd)
Vittorio Carbone
Terry Deery
Department of Defence
Warren E Dickson
Mike Fogarty
Claude Halsey
Group Captain John Jacobsen (Retd)
John Jeffreys
Cecil John Edmund Levien BEM
Peter Edward Lewis
Henry Michael Loeckenhoff
Robert Manning
Michael Morrissey
Maxwell James Pahl
Denys Potts
Royal Australian Air Force Association
RAAF Ubon Branch SA Division
RAAF Ubon Reunion Recognition Group
Joseph Douglas Richards
Sydney Ryan
Arthur Skimin

Appendix 2 – Tribunal Hearings

15 September 2010

Chair: Professor Dennis Pearce, AO

Members: Air Commodore Mark Lax, OAM, CSM (Retd) and Mr Kevin Woods, CSC, OAM

06 October 2010

Chair: Professor Dennis Pearce, AO

Members: Air Commodore Mark Lax, OAM, CSM (Retd) and Mr Kevin Woods, CSC, OAM

Witnesses:

Air Vice-Marshal Roxley McLennan, AO (Retd), National President RAAF Association

Air Vice-Marshal Peter Scully, AO (Retd) (via Teleconference)

Wing Commander Peter Larard (Retd) (via Teleconference)

08 October 2010

Chair: Professor Dennis Pearce, AO

Members: Air Commodore Mark Lax, OAM, CSM (Retd) and Mr Kevin Woods, CSC, OAM

Witnesses:

Group Captain John Jacobsen (Retd) (via Teleconference)

Pat Clark and Brett Mitchell, Department of Defence

Mal Barnes and Richard Stone, RAAF Ubon Recognition Group

Air Marshal Douglas Riding, AO, DFC (Retd)

21 October 2010

Chair: Professor Dennis Pearce, AO

Members: Air Commodore Mark Lax, OAM, CSM (Retd) and Mr Kevin Woods, CSC, OAM

Witness:

Wing Commander Glen Hombsch (Retd) (via Teleconference)

Appendix 3 – Additional Material Examined by the Tribunal

Archival Records

National Archives of Australia

Series A1209

1961/600 SEATO Plan 5 (Defence Committee)

1962/122 SEATO MPO Plan 7

Published sources

Chris Coulthard-Clark, *The RAAF in Vietnam: Australian Air Involvement in the Vietnam War 1962-1975*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, 1995

Alan Stephens, *Going Solo: The Royal Australian Air Force, 1946-1971*, AGPS, Canberra, 1995

Other sources

The previous official reports concerning Ubon service are listed and summarised at Appendices 4 and 5

Appendix 4 – Summary of RAAF Involvement at Ubon¹⁰

The RAAF Contingent was sent to Thailand in June 1962 under the aegis of SEATO Plan 5, a plan to counter communist insurgency in Laos.

The Contingent consisted of the Command Element, No. 79 Squadron and Base Squadron Ubon.

The original role of No. 79 Squadron was air defence of Thailand and Base Squadron Ubon's role was to support the squadron and provide airfield support services to SEATO air forces using the airfield.

Operational air defence command and control was coordinated through COMUSMACTHAI.

The ROE allowed the use of force against aircraft attacking Thai territory with weapons without warning.

In early 1963 the Laotian crisis passed and the Australian Government considered withdrawing the RAAF Contingent, following withdrawal of UK and NZ air forces and US ground forces deployed under Plan 5.

But it decided to leave the Contingent in place to provide a bilateral joint US/AS military presence to confront the spread of communism in South East Asia.

In response to a perceived air threat from North Vietnam in August 1964, the USAF and RTAF developed an integrated air defence system for Thailand with fighters on air defence alert and new ROE. The RAAF was invited to join.

This new Thai air defence system was part of the USAF Mainland South East Asia Air Defence Network which was in turn part of the Pacific Air Defence Network.

The RAAF/USAF and RTAF agreed new RAAF Roles, Tasks and ROE, significantly broadening the original, to mount an air defence alert and allow use of force against aircraft attacking forces in Thailand, and before the attackers used their weapons.

The context of this new air defence tasking had its genesis in December 1964 when the US signalled its intention to mount an air campaign against North Vietnam and the Communist supply routes through Laos.

In response to a request to assess what additional assistance Australia might provide to South Vietnam, one of the additional forms of assistance in the air campaign suggested by the Department of Defence was the employment of No. 79 Squadron at Ubon in the air defence role at a high state of alert. This was supported by the Department of External

¹⁰ *Report by the Independent Review Panel on Vietnam Campaign Recognition for RAAF Service at Ubon, Thailand 25 June 1965 to 31 August 1968, 2004, pp 17-19.*

Affairs who also suggested that perimeter defence forces at Ubon would be desirable, given the likelihood of an enemy retaliation to the air campaign.

US Operation ROLLING THUNDER commenced on 2 March 1965 with attacks against North Vietnam and Laos with reprisal raids for specific VC activity and on interdiction targets in the Ho Chi Minh Trail supply routes.

As a result, the perceived enemy threat against allied bases in Thailand increased, with air and ground attacks possible.

The likelihood of air attack was considered slight but would be catastrophic if carried out. Allied air defence forces were maintained at the highest sustainable level of air defence alert.

On 25 June 1965, No. 79 Squadron commenced the highest sustainable armed air defence alert of Alert State Five daily from dawn to dusk with the new ROE in effect.

The ground threat from insurgents was considered more likely, and the RAAF sent a flight of Airfield Defence Guards to protect the RAAF Contingent at Ubon. On 26 July 1965 President Johnson requested additional Australian forces for the war.

Expanding the role of No. 79 Squadron was considered but not taken up primarily because of Department of External Affairs' concern about deniability. In this context, the RAAF Sabres were a unique type of aircraft in the air campaign, and as they could only have come from Ubon in Thailand, this would have created political difficulties at the time for the Thai Government. As a consequence No. 79 Squadron's support for the air campaign remained in the air defence role.

In mid 1966 the US established a more comprehensive air defence plan (OPLAN 427-66) for Mainland South East Asia because of concern about the continuing vulnerability of vital equipment and bases in Thailand and South Vietnam to enemy air attack.

The Minister for Defence approved No. 79 Squadron's participation in this plan.

No. 79 Squadron was listed under 'Augmentation Forces' in OPLAN 427-66.

Overall air defence operations were conducted through a single control agency.

PACAF publications were the standard source of reference for all operations.

The Mainland SEA air defence region operated on a 24 hour basis.

No. 79 Squadron operations were subject to RAAF ROE including geographic constraint.

Alert states by all air defence forces were determined and ordered by the Commander 7th Air Force in Saigon and the host country air force.

No. 79 Squadron operated under this plan until its withdrawal on 26 July 1968.

To give effect to the withdrawal, which was necessary because of the Mirage III re-equipment program, Department of Air requested Commander 7th AF Commander's approval to release of No. 79 Squadron from its alert status.

7th AF approved release with effect 0001hrs local, 26 July 1968.

Appendix 5 – Summary of Previous Ubon Reviews

RAAF service at Ubon between 1965 and 1968 has been the subject of five previous reviews. This Appendix summarises the findings, recommendations and Government decision for each case.

TABLE 1 - SUMMARY OF REVIEWS

Review	Date Complete	Recommendation	Outcome
CIDA	1994	Service be recognised by ASM 45-75 with Clasp 'UBON'	ASM 1945-75 with Clasp 'THAILAND'
Defence/DVA Review	1997	Service be classed as 'Operational'	Service classed as 'Operational'
Mohr	2000	Service be classed as 'Warlike' ASM 1945-75 upgraded to AASM 1945-75	Service classed as 'Warlike' AASM 1945-75 with Clasp 'THAILAND'
Riding	2004	Service be recognised with the Vietnam Medal	No change
Abigail	2008	No further recommendation	No change

The Committee of Inquiry into Defence and Defence-Related Awards (CIDA)

Intent: A comprehensive two-stage public inquiry into the Australian system of honours and awards.¹¹

Dates of Review: May 1993 – March 1994.

Findings/Recommendations:¹²

The Committee recommended 'that service of Australian personnel at Royal Thai Airforce (*sic*) base at Ubon be recognised through the Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with Clasp 'UBON'. The relevant qualifying period should be 30 days.

The Committee recommended that members of 2 Field Troop Royal Australian Engineers and other Australian personnel who participated in Operation Crown and served in Ban Kok Talat between January 1964 and May 1966 should also be awarded the Australian Service Medal 1945-75 with Clasp 'UBON', with the relevant qualifying period of 30 days.

Outcome/Government Decision: ASM 1945-75 with Clasp 'THAILAND'

¹¹ Report of the Committee of Inquiry into Defence and Defence-Related Awards, March 1994 (hereafter called CIDA), p i.

¹² CIDA pp vi, 45-46

1997 Defence/DVA Report on Service Entitlement Anomalies Review (The Defence/DVA Review)

Intent: A joint-interdepartmental review to consider four specific periods of service by members of the ADF where it is claimed anomalies in regard to eligibility for repatriation benefit exists. One of the four periods of service examined was the RAAF contingent at Ubon in Thailand, 31 May 1962 to 31 August 1968.¹³

Dates: 1997

Findings/Recommendations:

It recommended that members serving at Ubon in Thailand from 31 May 1962 to 31 August 1968 be accorded operational service under the provisions of the *Veterans' Entitlement Act 1986*.¹⁴

Outcome/Government Decision: Upgrade of service from non-operational to operational.

Review of Service Entitlement Anomalies in Respect of South-East Asian Service 1955-75 (The Mohr Review)

Intent: A review of possible anomalies in service entitlements affecting those members of the Australian Defence Force who served in South-East Asia during the period 1955-75.¹⁵

Dates of Review: April 1999 – February 2000

Findings/Recommendation:

The Committee recommended that 'RAAF service at Ubon in the period 25 June 1965 until the Squadron was withdrawn on 31 August 1968 be classified as 'warlike' operational service and that personnel be eligible for the appropriate repatriation and medal entitlements'.¹⁶

Outcome/Government Decision: Upgrade of ASM 1945-75 with Clasp 'THAILAND' to AASM 1945-75 with Clasp 'THAILAND'.

Independent Review Panel on Vietnam Campaign Recognition for RAAF Service at Ubon, Thailand, 25 June 1965 to 31 August 1968 (The Riding Review)

Intent: To establish whether the additional information presented by the RAAF Ubon Recognition Group provided sufficient evidence for amending the regulations governing

¹³ 1997 Defence/DVA Report on Service Entitlement Anomalies Review (hereafter called the Defence/DVA Review), pp 9-13.

¹⁴ Defence/DVA Review, p 13.

¹⁵ Review of Service Entitlement Anomalies in Respect of South-East Asian Service 1955-75, February 2000 (hereafter called the Mohr Review), p v.

¹⁶ Mohr Review, pp xvi, 73.

the award of the VLSM to cover Ubon service during the period 25 June 1965 to 31 August 1968.¹⁷

Dates: June 2004 – July 2004.

Findings/Recommendations:

Inter alia, that ‘service by the RAAF Contingent at Ubon between 25 June 1965 and 31 August 1968 does not satisfy the purpose of the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal, but does completely satisfy the purpose of the Vietnam Medal as declared by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II in the Royal Warrant’.

The Review recommended to the Minister that ‘the Vietnam Medal be awarded to personnel who served on the posted strength of the RAAF Contingent at Ubon, No. 79 Squadron and Base Squadron Ubon between 25 June 1965 and 31 August 1968, and that a mechanism be found to amend the explanatory conditions of the Vietnam Medal’.¹⁸

Outcome/Government Decision: Recommendation not accepted as outside the TORs.

Review of Service Recognition for RAAF Ubon (1965-68) (The Abigail Review)

Intent: An independent panel to review the treatment of award recommendations stemming from the Battle of Lon Tan, and service medal recognition for service with RAAF Ubon.¹⁹

Dates of Review: October 2007 – March 2008

Findings/Recommendation:

The Panel recommended that ‘no further action be taken to offer recognition, including by way of the Vietnam Logistic and Support Medal, for the service of RAAF personnel stationed at Royal Thai Air Force Base Ubon between 25 June 1965 and 31 August 1968’.²⁰

Outcome/Government Decision: Government accepted the review findings.

¹⁷ Report to the Minister Assisting the Minister for Defence by the Independent Review Panel on Vietnam Campaign Recognition for RAAF Service at Ubon, Thailand, 25 June 1965 to 31 August 1968 (hereafter called the Riding Review), p 2.

¹⁸ The Riding Review, pp 35-36

¹⁹ Review of service recognition for RAAF Ubon (1965-68) (hereafter called the Abigail Review), p v.

²⁰ The Abigail Review, pp vii, 15.



Australian Government

Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal

**INQUIRY INTO UNIT RECOGNITION FOR
AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE SERVICE IN SOMALIA**

LETTER OF TRANSMISSION

Inquiry into unit recognition for Australian Defence Force service in Somalia

The Hon Matt Keogh MP

Minister for Defence Personnel

Parliament House

Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister

I am pleased to present the report of the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal's *Inquiry into unit recognition for Australian Defence Force service in Somalia*.

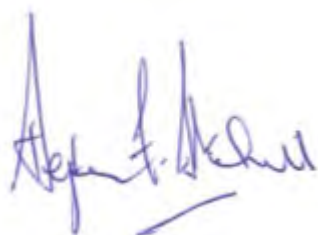
The Inquiry was conducted in accordance with the Terms of Reference approved by Government on 25 June 2021.

The Members of the Tribunal who conducted the inquiry arrived unanimously at the findings and recommendations set out in this report.

As required by the *Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal Procedural Rules 2021*, a copy of this report will be published on the Tribunal's website 20 working days after the day this report is provided to you.

I would be grateful for advice on your response to this report when available.

Yours sincerely



Stephen Skehill

Chair

Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal

31 October 2022

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TERMS OF REFERENCE

INQUIRY INTO UNIT RECOGNITION FOR AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE SERVICE IN SOMALIA

The Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal (the Tribunal) is directed to inquire into and report on recognition for Australian Defence Force units that served in Somalia between 1992 and 1995.

In particular, the Tribunal is to examine relevant evidence and consider whether it is appropriate that any Australian units that served in Somalia between 1992 and 1995 be awarded a Meritorious Unit Citation, or another form of further recognition for service. In doing so, the Tribunal is to have regard to the eligibility criteria for the Meritorious Unit Citation, as set out in the Unit Citations Regulations, or other relevant Regulations.

The Tribunal is to determine its own procedures, in accordance with the general principles of procedural fairness, when conducting its inquiry as set out in these Terms of Reference. In this regard the Tribunal may conduct its own research, interview such persons as it considers appropriate and consider material provided to it that is relevant to these Terms of Reference.

The Tribunal is to report, in writing, to the Minister for Defence Personnel on the findings and recommendations that arise from the inquiry.

In making its findings and formulating its recommendations the Tribunal is to have regard to the integrity of the Australian honours system and identify any consequential impact any finding or recommendation may have on that system.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. On 25 February 2021, in response to representations from Mr Jim Masters OAM, President of the 1 RAR¹ Association, the Hon Darren Chester MP, then Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel, directed the Tribunal to inquire into and report on unit recognition for the service of 1 RAR in Somalia. Following input from the Tribunal and consultation with Mr Masters, terms of reference were developed which directed the Tribunal to inquire into and report on unit recognition for 1 RAR and other Australian Defence Force units that served in Somalia between 1992 and 1995. These terms of reference were released on 25 June 2021 and are included on page 3.

2. **History.** In 1992 the international community attempted to provide some relief from escalating civil war and famine in Somalia, with an international campaign for aid. In July 1992 the first United Nations personnel were deployed to Somalia as part of the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) to monitor the short-lived ceasefire in Mogadishu, and to provide protection and security for UN personnel, equipment and supplies. In October the Australian Government decided to send a 30 person Movement Control Unit drawn from the three services to Somalia to coordinate transport for the UN mission. This Australian contribution to UNOSOM was known as Operation IGUANA. Those first Australians lived in spartan conditions in a dangerous environment, largely in Mogadishu. Unarmed, they were on occasion caught in firefights between warring Somali factions. A total of four Australian contingents, known as ASCs, were deployed on Operation IGUANA between 1992 and 1994.²

3. In November 1992, after the situation in Somalia had further deteriorated, the United States Government announced it would lead a Unified Task Force (UNITAF) to Somalia to enable aid agencies to distribute humanitarian relief in the Baidoa Humanitarian Relief Sector in south-central Somalia. Australia contributed more than 1,000 personnel to UNITAF, deploying a small national command element and the 1 RAR Battalion Group supported by HMA Ships *Tobruk* and HMAS *Jervis Bay* under Operation SOLACE, a 17 week long security operation. HMAS *Tobruk* spent 89 days in the area of operations, and HMAS *Jervis Bay* spent eight days in the area of operations. A number of Royal Australian Air Force Squadrons provided airlift support to these operations.

4. The last Australians assigned to Operation SOLACE left Somalia in May 1993, but it was not until November 1994 that the bulk of the Australians deployed on Operation IGUANA and attached to UNOSOM – by then known as UNOSOM II, left the country. One member of the 1 RAR Battalion Group died by accidental fire³ and four other ADF personnel were wounded or injured.

¹ The 1st Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment.

² Website, Australian War Memorial, Australians in Operation Iguana – Somalia, www.awm.gov.au/articles/blog/somalia, David Sutton, updated 18 October 2022.

³ Lance Corporal Shannon McAliney (1RAR) was accidentally killed whilst on patrol on 2 April 1993.

5. **Recognition.** 1 RAR Battalion Group was recognised with a Chief of General Staff Commendation on 23 November 1993. No other units were recognised. 19 individuals received individual medallic recognition for their service.

6. **Submissions.** Generally, the written submissions received by the Tribunal presented strong arguments in favour of the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation to the four ASCs, the 1 RAR Battalion Group, and HMAS *Tobruk*. A smaller number of submissions sought the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation for HMAS *Jervis Bay* and RAAF personnel. While arguably outside the terms of reference, a minority of submitters sought a discrete campaign medal for service in Somalia or a general service medal for service in Africa.

7. The written and oral submissions identified that the Australian contribution to Somalia represented the Australian Defence Force's largest land and sea operation since Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. At this point, the Australian Defence Force had very limited experience in peacekeeping operations. Submitters who had gone on to serve in other operations highlighted that serving in Somalia was more difficult and arduous, if not more dangerous.

8. The written and oral submissions strongly conveyed that the Chief of General Staff Commendation did not sufficiently recognise the significant achievements of the 1 RAR Battalion Group. Those who had served in the four ASCs submitted that their achievements had gone largely unrecognised. This was particularly evident in submissions concerning those who served on Operation IGUANA up to 30 April 1993, whose service remains classified as 'non-warlike' as opposed to the 'warlike service' recognised after that date (which roughly coincides with the commencement of UNOSOM II and the withdrawal of UNITAF). It became clear to us that the ASCs, the 1 RAR Battalion Group, and HMAS *Tobruk* served continuously and for long hours in difficult conditions. Their achievements were only possible through the dedication and work ethic of all personnel involved. A significant number were also required to perform additional critical roles for which they were not trained. Many of the duties performed were beyond what was expected of individuals in these roles but were absolutely necessary to ensure mission achievement.

9. **The Defence Position.** Defence was generally supportive of the Tribunal's consideration of further recognition of units serving in Somalia, and advised that the Tribunal was best placed to ascertain what, if any, further recognition was appropriate. Defence reiterated its view that the Chief of General Staff Commendation remained appropriate in respect of the 1 RAR Battalion Group, yet with a concession that the Group had provided sustained and outstanding service in warlike operations (thus largely satisfying the criteria for the Meritorious Unit Citation). Defence also supported the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation for HMAS *Tobruk* noting the sustained and outstanding service she had provided. Defence was not supportive of the Meritorious Unit Citation for HMAS *Jervis Bay*, noting that she had not provided extended service in the area of operations. Defence's view in relation to the ASCs deployed on Operation IGUANA was that they had provided sustained and outstanding service. Defence submitted that as the RAAF force elements (outside of personnel

attached to ASCs) participated in ‘normal operations’ they were not eligible for the Meritorious Unit Citation.⁴

Key Findings. In summary, the Tribunal found that:

- a. HMA Ships *Tobruk*, *Jervis Bay*, ASCs I – IV, the 1 RAR Battalion Group and Force Elements of 33, 34, 36 and 37 Squadrons were ‘units’ as defined in the Unit Citation Regulations and therefore for the purposes of the Inquiry;
- b. the award of the Chief of General Staff Commendation did not suitably recognise the performance of the 1 RAR Battalion Group as a unit;
- c. ASCs I – IV, the 1 RAR Battalion Group, and HMAS *Tobruk* all met the criteria for the Meritorious Unit Citation during their respective periods of service;
- d. service on Operation IGUANA in Somalia from 17 October 1992 to 30 April 1993 meets the criteria for classification as ‘warlike service’ for the purposes of medallic recognition.

⁴ Submission 29B Department of Defence.

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: ASC I (1 to 31 May 1993), ASC II, ASC III and ASC IV to Operation IGUANA be awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation to recognise their service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The 1 RAR Battalion Group be awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation for its service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION 3: HMAS *Tobruk* be awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation for her service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

- a) The Minister for Defence recommend to the Governor-General that service on Operation IGUANA from 17 October 1992 to 30 April 1993 be declared a warlike operation for the purposes of the Australian Active Service Medal; and
- b) the Meritorious Unit Citation then be awarded to ASC I for service from 17 October 1992 to 30 April 1993.

RECOMMENDATION 5: No action be taken to award HMAS *Jervis Bay* the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation or any other form of further recognition for her service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION 6: No action be taken to award Force Elements of 33, 34, 36 and 37 Squadrons the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation or any other form of further recognition for their service in Somalia.

REPORT OF THE TRIBUNAL

Chapter 1 - Background to and conduct of the Inquiry

1. **Introduction.** The Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal (the Tribunal) was established on 5 January 2011 under Part VIIC of the *Defence Act 1903* (the Act). Section 110UA of the Act sets out the functions of the Tribunal which include inquiring into matters concerning Defence honours or awards for eligible service. Section 110W of the Act provides that the Minister may give the Tribunal a direction in writing to hold an Inquiry into a specified matter. The Tribunal then must hold an inquiry into the matter and provide a report to the Minister on the outcomes of the inquiry. The Tribunal's report may include any recommendations the Tribunal considers appropriate and that arise out of, or relate to the inquiry.

2. This inquiry concerns a unit citation. As unit citations are not defined as defence honours or defence awards in the *Defence Regulation 2016*, reconsideration of decisions concerning unit citations in the Tribunal is limited to the inquiry function.

3. **Previous Tribunal Inquiry.** On 25 July 2009, the then Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal (DHAT)⁵ was directed to '*Inquire into Recognition of ADF service in Somalia between 1992 and 1995*'. The Terms of Reference for that inquiry directed the DHAT to, among other things, "*Examine relevant material and make findings with regard to the recognition of 1 RAR Group during Operation SOLACE...and consider the eligibility for a unit citation for that service.*"⁶ This was the first time that the DHAT had been explicitly directed to consider the eligibility of any unit for a unit citation.

4. The DHAT received 13 submissions supporting the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation to the 1 RAR Battalion Group for its service in Somalia. Two submissions were opposed. On

5 July 2010, DHAT completed its Inquiry. Regarding the 1 RAR Battalion Group, DHAT stated that it "*weighed the submissions for and against the upgrading of the CGS Commendation to the MUC while remaining cognisant of maintaining the integrity and intent of the Australian honours system and the policy that applied at the time of the operation.*" DHAT further stated that it concluded "*there was no error in due process leading to the award of a CGS Commendation rather than an MUC*". It determined that "*while the service of 1 RAR in Somalia was commendable, it was not 'sustained, outstanding, service in warlike operations' of the kind required to justify the award of an MUC*".⁷ DHAT however, provided little analysis or justification to support this conclusion.

⁵ In July 2008, the Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal (DHAT) was established as an administrative body, prior to being replaced on 20 May 2011 by the statutory body that is the present Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal (the Tribunal).

⁶ Report of the *Inquiry into recognition of ADF service in Somalia between 1992 and 1995*, Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal, 5 July 2010, p5.

⁷ Ibid, p.7.

5. During that Inquiry, DHAT largely focussed on the integrity of Defence's internal decision making processes concerning the Chief of General Staff Commendation awarded to 1 RAR Battalion Group. By contrast, in later inquiries, this statutory Tribunal has taken a merits-based approach, having regard to the performance of units concerned against the eligibility criteria for unit citations.⁸

6. **Recognition to date.** Depending on their individual circumstances, Australian Defence Force personnel serving in Somalia have received the Australian Active Service Medal (AASM) with Clasp 'SOMALIA', the Australian Service Medal (ASM) with Clasp 'SOMALIA' and United Nations medals.⁹ It is important to note that Australian Defence Force personnel who had only served on Operation IGUANA up to 30 April 1993 have been recognised with the ASM with Clasp 'SOMALIA' rather than the AASM with Clasp 'SOMALIA'. This is because service on Operation IGUANA up to 30 April 1993 has not been declared a 'warlike' operation by the Governor-General, unlike later service the same operation which has. This is incongruent, as service rendered on Operation SOLACE up to 30 April 1993 in Mogadishu, the same location as those deployed on Operation IGUANA has been declared to be 'warlike'.

7. On 23 November 1993, the 1 RAR Battalion Group was awarded a Chief of General Staff Commendation for its service in Somalia. This Commendation in full is set out at paragraph 45. At the time, a case had been made for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation to 1 RAR Battalion Group but this was rejected by the then Chief of the General Staff after taking advice from the Land Commander.¹⁰ The decision to not recommend unit awards was stated to be because it was "believed the action did not warrant such a recommendation".¹¹

8. In 2007, the Army Meritorious Unit Citation Committee recommended that the Chief of General Staff Commendation be upgraded to the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation, however this recommendation was rejected by the then Chief of the Defence Force. While it would appear that no comprehensive merits review of 1 RAR Battalion Group's performance was undertaken¹² it was again stated that "the action did not warrant such a recommendation."¹³

9. **Subsequent reconsideration sought.** On 26 August 2019, following a decision of Defence to award the Meritorious Unit Citation to a number of units for service in Rwanda in 1994, and having regard to recent merits-based inquiries by this Tribunal, Mr Jim Masters OAM, President of the 1 RAR Association wrote to General Angus Campbell AO DSC, Chief of the Defence Force, seeking reconsideration of 1 RAR's service for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation. This representation was rejected by the then Chief of Army,

⁸ See the Tribunal's inquiries into unit recognition for service with 547 Signal Troop in Vietnam, unit recognition for the Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam and unit recognition for service at the Battles of Fire Support Bases Coral and Balmoral.

⁹ See para 43

¹⁰ Chief of the General Staff Minute CGS 739/93, 'Operational Awards – Operation SOLACE' dated 12 August 1993. Enclosure 3 to Defence Submission 29.

¹¹ Submission 29 – The Department of Defence.

¹² Submission 28 - Lieutenant General John Caligari AO, DSC (Retd), on behalf of the 1 RAR Association.

¹³ Chief of the General Staff Minute CGS 739/93, 'Operational Awards – Operation SOLACE', 12 August 1993. Vice Chief of the Defence Force Minute VCDF/OUT/2008/3 'Meritorious Unit Citation for 1 RAR Battle Group – VCDF Response, 8 January 2008.

Lieutenant General Rick Burr AO DSC MVO having regard to previous assessments with the advice that the “previous decisions relating to Operation SOLACE remain extant”.¹⁴

10. **Ministerial Direction and Terms of Reference.** On 25 February 2021, the Hon Darren Chester MP, the then Minister for Veterans’ Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel, directed the Tribunal to inquire into and report on unit recognition for the 1 RAR Battalion Group’s service in Somalia. Following input from the Tribunal, and consultation with the 1 RAR Association,¹⁵ the final Terms of Reference were broadened to include all Australian Defence Force units serving in Somalia.

11. Correspondence from the Minister to the Tribunal made it clear that there was to be fresh consideration by way of a new merits-based Inquiry.¹⁶ While the findings and recommendations of the DHAT Inquiry are a matter of public record, the current Inquiry is neither a re-opening of the DHAT Inquiry nor an extension of it.

12. Through this inquiry, the Tribunal was directed to inquire into and report on unit recognition for Australian Defence Force service in Somalia in the Terms of Reference released on 25 June 2021 and set out below:

INQUIRY INTO UNIT RECOGNITION FOR AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE SERVICE IN SOMALIA

Terms of Reference

The Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal (the Tribunal) is directed to inquire into and report on recognition for Australian Defence Force units that served in Somalia between 1992 and 1995.

In particular, the Tribunal is to examine relevant evidence and consider whether it is appropriate that any Australian units that served in Somalia between 1992 and 1995 be awarded a Meritorious Unit Citation, or another form of further recognition for service. In doing so, the Tribunal is to have regard to the eligibility criteria for the Meritorious Unit Citation, as set out in the Unit Citations Regulations, or other relevant Regulations.

The Tribunal is to determine its own procedures, in accordance with the general principles of procedural fairness, when conducting its inquiry as set out in these Terms of Reference. In this regard the Tribunal may conduct its own research, interview such persons as it considers appropriate and consider material provided to it that is relevant to these Terms of Reference.

¹⁴ Letter, Chief of Army to Lieutenant General Caligari AO, 23 April 2020.

¹⁵ Telephone conversation, Mr Jay Kopplemann, Executive Officer of the Tribunal and Mr Masters, 5 April 2021.

¹⁶ Letter, The Hon. Darren Chester to Mr Masters, dated 25 February 2021.

The Tribunal is to report, in writing, to the Minister for Defence Personnel on the findings and recommendations that arise from the inquiry.

In making its findings and formulating its recommendations the Tribunal is to have regard to the integrity of the Australian honours system and identify any consequential impact any finding or recommendation may have on that system.

13. The Chair of the Tribunal appointed the following members to conduct the Inquiry:

- Ms Anne Trengove (Presiding Member);
- Major General Simone Wilkie AO (Retd);
- Rear Admiral Allan du Toit AM RAN (Retd); and
- Mr David Ashley AM

14. No conflicts of interest were declared. While Major General Wilkie, Rear Admiral du Toit, and Mr Ashley disclosed that they had subsequently and/or previously served with some personnel who served in Somalia, including some of the submitters and Mr Ashley also disclosed his prior service with 1 RAR between 1979 and 1984 (some eight years before Operation SOLACE). None of this was considered to constitute a conflict of interest and no objection was raised by anyone or any organisation during the course of the inquiry.¹⁷

Conduct of the Inquiry

15. **Outline.** The inquiry commenced on 25 June 2021 with a media release by the then Minister seeking public submissions to the inquiry. This was supported by advertisements in major national newspapers giving notice of the inquiry and calling for submissions by 31 August 2021. However, the Tribunal continued to receive submissions until well after the completion of public hearings.

16. **Submissions.** The Tribunal received 42 written submissions from a total of 33 individuals and groups. A list of submitters is at [Appendix 1](#). Submitters included ex-service organisations and veterans from the 1 RAR Battalion Group, the ASCs attached to UNOSOM, HMA Ships *Tobruk* and *Jervis Bay*, and a loadmaster from 33 Squadron. Submissions were also received from Defence.

17. **Hearings.** The Tribunal held extensive public hearings on 22, 23 and 24 February 2022 and 28 and 29 March 2022 in Canberra. Submitters gave evidence in person, via audio-visual link or via telephone. 32 submitters gave evidence. Three submitters gave evidence *in camera* due to national security considerations.

¹⁷ No objection was raised by Defence Representatives or any of the submitters.

18. **Tribunal Research.** In addition to material provided in submissions, the Tribunal and its Secretariat carried out extensive additional research. Submissions made by individuals to the previous 2010 Inquiry were also examined.¹⁸ The Tribunal was assisted by Professor Bob Breen, historian, who in his own research had taken wide ranging accounts from Australian Defence Force personnel and provided a good deal of this material to the Tribunal. A bibliography is at [Appendix 6](#).

Analysis of the Terms of Reference

19. The Tribunal notes that the specific requirement of the Terms of Reference was to *'report on recognition'* for Australian Defence Force units that served in Somalia and in particular to *'consider whether it is appropriate that any Australian units that served in Somalia between 1992 and 1995 be awarded a Meritorious Unit Citation, or another form of further recognition for service'*.

20. The Tribunal determined that it should first consider whether the performance of the Australian Defence Force units in Somalia met the conditions for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation and if not, then go on to consider whether any other recognition for service was appropriate. It was therefore necessary for the Tribunal to develop an understanding of ADF service in Somalia, which is discussed in the following Chapter.

Chapter 2 – THE ADF IN SOMALIA 1992-95¹⁹

21. The Australian Defence Force contributed to the United Nations intervention in the Republic of Somalia civil war from 1992 to 1995. Civil war began in 1991 with various clan-based militias vying for control of the country. By mid-1992, however, a combination of the civil war and a prolonged drought had led to widespread famine. Armed clan groups fought for control of territory and food production. Distribution systems ceased. An estimated two million Somalis fleeing their homes into remote areas of Somalia and the nearby countries of Kenya, Ethiopia and Djibouti, led the United Nations to intervene. Somalis also swarmed in huge numbers to urban areas and townships where non-governmental organisations struggled to provide food and other humanitarian assistance.

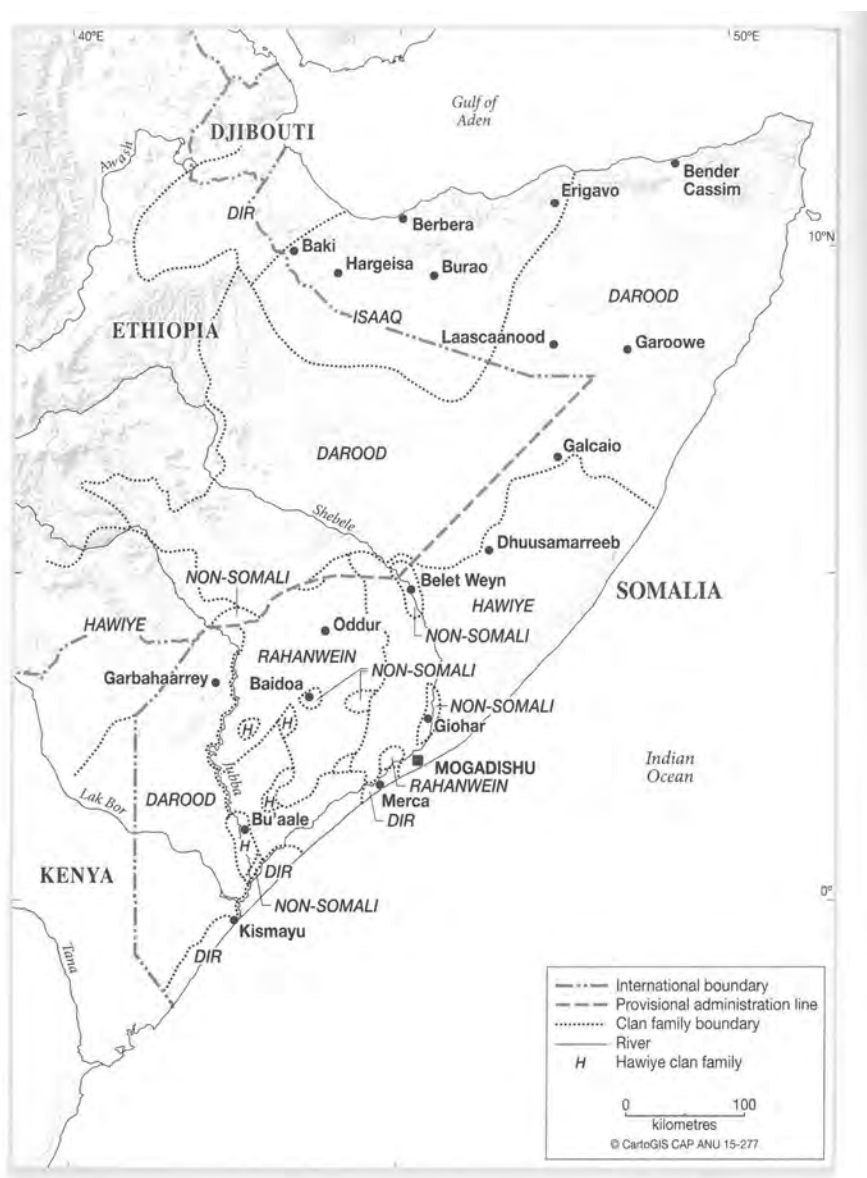


Figure 1 Map of Somalia and surrounding countries 1992-1995

¹⁹ The description of the ADF's service in Somalia which follows is derived from several sources, official and unofficial, which are listed in the bibliography, notably the historical account by Professor Robert Breen. The intent is to provide an overarching description of ADF service in Somalia rather than a detailed history.

UNOSOM I

22. On 24 April 1992, the United Nations Security Council authorised the first United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) mission. A small force of United Nations observers arrived in Somalia in July 1992 to monitor a short-lived ceasefire that had been agreed by 15 warring factions. The mission for UNOSOM I was to monitor the cease-fire and to protect United Nations personnel during their humanitarian operations.

23. The Official History of Australian Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Post-Cold War Operations observes:

“By July 1992, the survival of more than four million Somalis depended on the provision of food, clean water and medical services by the United Nations and aid organisations.

*The task facing the United Nations was to intervene in Somalia successfully, restore the flow of humanitarian aid to those most in need, restore law and order, and facilitate political reconciliation to achieve long-lasting peace.”*²⁰

Operation IGUANA

24. On 27 October 1992, following earlier reconnaissance by a two-man party, the Australian Government deployed a small advance party to UNOSOM I, which would later grow to a Movement Control Unit of around 30 personnel. This became the first Australian contingent in a rotation of four under Operation IGUANA. The Movement Control Unit was deployed to provide support for the United Nations mission to initially manage its incoming forces. The four contingents served the United Nations as well as providing support to civilian assets such as Mogadishu airfield and port. In total, 211 Australians were deployed to Somalia as part of Operation IGUANA.²¹

Unified Task Force (UNITAF) and Operation SOLACE

25. After the situation in Somalia had further deteriorated and UNOSOM I was unable to achieve its aims, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 794 on 3 December 1992, sanctioning the United States to lead a Unified Task Force (UNITAF) to establish a secure environment for the distribution of humanitarian aid.²² UNITAF did not replace UNOSOM I; the missions operated in parallel. UNITAF worked in coordination with UNOSOM I, which remained in Mogadishu and was fully responsible for the political aspects and for humanitarian assistance in Somalia, to secure major population centres and ensure that humanitarian assistance was delivered and distributed. UNITAF comprised the forces of the donor nations assigned under United States command for its mission called Operation RESTORE HOPE. At its peak the UNITAF consisted of 37,000 personnel, over half of them

²⁰ Bou, J, Breen, B, Horner, D, Pratten, G, & De Vogel, M, *The Limits of Peacekeeping: Australian Missions in Africa and the Americas, 1992–2005*, Volume IV: The Official History of Australian Peacekeeping, Humanitarian and Post-Cold War Operations, Cambridge University Press, Melbourne, 2019, p. 38.

²¹ Department of Veterans' Affairs, *Australians in the UN missions to Somalia 1992 to 1995*, DVA Anzac Portal, accessed 24 October 2022, <https://anzacportal.dva.gov.au/wars-and-missions/peacekeeping/operation-summaries/somalia-1992-1995>.

²² *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p. 47.

from the United States. Twenty other countries, including Australia, contributed troops on the ground in Somalia and at sea as part of the Multi-National Force. The Australian Defence Force contribution to the UNITAF was named Operation SOLACE.

26. **Australian Force Somalia.** Along with a national headquarters of (initially) 10 personnel, based in Mogadishu, Australian Force Somalia primarily consisted of the 1 RAR Battalion Group drawn from the units of the 3rd Brigade based at the rural township of Baidoa in the Bai Region in south-central Somalia, 150 kilometres inland from Mogadishu. Baidoa had been labelled the 'city of death' and the 'epicentre of famine'. The group was responsible for a 17,000 square kilometre area of operations around the town. Its mission was to undertake peace operations and secure the area allowing food aid to be distributed.²³ The 1 RAR Battalion Group consisted of:

- a. an infantry battalion of 650 personnel (1 RAR);
- b. a battalion support group of 100 personnel from the 3rd Brigade Administrative Support Battalion;
- c. two troops, a headquarters, administrative and technical elements and two mortar armoured personnel carriers from B Squadron, 3rd/4th Cavalry Regiment, from Royal Australian Armoured Corps, making a total of 36 Armoured Personnel Carriers and 90 personnel;
- d. a Civil–Military Operations Team of 22 personnel from 107 Field Battery, 4th Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery;
- e. a field engineer troop of 35 personnel from 17 Field Troop, 3 Combat Engineer Regiment; and
- f. a troop of 15 personnel from 103 Signals Squadron, Royal Australian Signals Corps.²⁴

27. During Operation SOLACE, 1 RAR Battalion Group took part in seven major operations. Approximately 1,100 foot patrols were undertaken and almost 1,000 weapons were seized from Somali forces. There were 12 reported exchanges of fire with Somali gunmen. One Australian soldier was accidentally killed and four were injured or wounded.

28. During the deployment, humanitarian aid was successfully distributed and rebuilding efforts in Baidoa began.

29. On 21 May 1993, 1 RAR Battalion Group and the national command element withdrew after 17 weeks. This constituted the Australian Defence Force's largest land operation since its involvement in the Vietnam War.

30. **HMA Ships *Jervis Bay* and *Tobruk*.** HMA Ships *Jervis Bay* and *Tobruk* provided military sea lift support when the 1 RAR Battalion Group deployed from Townsville into and

²³ *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p.57. See also Nominal rolls at <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/C2702910>. File ref AWM388 7/7/8

²⁴ *Ibid.*

out of Somalia. This constituted the Australian Defence Force's largest military sealift operation since Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War.

31. HMAS *Jervis Bay* deployed from 19 December 1992 to 21 January 1993 and again from 20 April 1993 to 21 June 1993. She spent a total of eight days in the area of operations during this period.

32. HMAS *Tobruk* deployed from 26 December 1992 and returned almost six months later on 21 June 1993. She remained on station for the duration of Operation SOLACE, spending a total of 89 days in the area of operations. She operated out of the port of Mogadishu and offshore as part of the Multi National Force by providing continuing maritime and logistic support to both the deployed Australian Force Somalia and the wider UNITAF mission. In addition, she conducted five operational visits to Mombasa in Kenya during this period, moving a total of 1,450 tonnes of cargo for the Australian Forces Somalia and UNITAF.

33. HMAS *Tobruk*'s crew numbered between 180 and 190 personnel including:

- a the Ship's Army Detachment of 14 regular army personnel;
- b a 16 person detachment from 817 Squadron for the Sea King Helicopter; and
- c. personnel from Clearance Diving Team One.

34. **33, 34, 36 and 37 Squadrons (RAAF).** Logistic support to Operation IGUANA and Operation SOLACE was provided by personnel drawn from 33, 34, 36 and 37 Squadrons to assist with deploying the advance party into Somalia, ad hoc supply missions, as well as the airlift home from 7 to 23 May 1993.²⁵ The Squadrons utilised airfields at Mogadishu and Baidoa, but were not based in Somalia.

Transition to UNOSOM II

35. By early 1993 the famine had largely abated and mortality improved. This is because non-government organisations had largely been able to deliver food aid to vulnerable populations without interference due to the intervention by UNITAF. The security threat to personnel of the United Nations and its agencies was, however, still high in Mogadishu and other places in Somalia. By this time, planning was well underway for the transition from the operations of UNITAF to a new mission, UNOSOM II, which would replace UNOSOM I.

36. On 26 March 1993 the United Nations Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, authorised the UNOSOM II mission to continue the task begun by UNOSOM I and complete, through disarmament and reconciliation, the task of UNITAF. To this end, on 4 May 1993,²⁶ UNITAF handed over to UNOSOM II. Its mission was an ambitious one of nation building and went beyond the limits of traditional peacekeeping. This included disarming various factions, restoring law and order, helping set up a Somali representative government and restoring infrastructure.

37. The rules of engagement of UNOSOM II, like UNITAF, allowed the 'use of all necessary means', whereas UNOSOM I, which had sustained six military fatalities, had

²⁶ Operation SOLACE's seventeen-week duration in Somalia overlapped into the transition between the US-led UNITAF operation and UNOSOM II.

operated under rules of engagement that only allowed for the 'use of minimum force'. This had implications for the status of UNOSOM II being considered a 'warlike' operation and UNOSOM I and service on Operation IGUANA up to 30 April 1993 being considered a 'non-warlike' operation by Defence.

38. Within a few weeks of the departure of UNITAF combat units, the situation facing UNOSOM II became increasingly dangerous. By early July 1993, five weeks after the last UNITAF units had left, 35 United Nations troops had been killed and there had been over 130 injured in clashes with Somali gunmen and premeditated armed attacks against the personnel of UNOSOM II. There were violent demonstrations against the continued presence of foreign troops and attacks on United Nations facilities. The end of the United States involvement in Somalia came after 18 of its servicemen were killed in a battle from 3 to 4 October 1993 and their mutilated bodies dragged through the streets. This became known as the 'Battle for Mogadishu' and is the subject of the book and film *Black Hawk Down*. For a United Nations peacekeeping mission, there were heavy casualties.

Operation IGUANA continues

39. **Australian tri-service contingents to UNOSOM II.** The Australian Defence Force, through the ongoing Operation IGUANA, contributed to UNOSOM II and deployed more contingents - ASC II, ASC III and ASC IV. Approximately 200 Australian Defence Force personnel from all three services served in the four contingents that deployed to Somalia as part of Operation IGUANA between 17 October 1992 and 23 November 1994. This included the initial Movement Control Group, which later became part of ASC I. Each new contingent was deployed progressively as its predecessor reached the end of its tour, allowing for small advance parties to arrive first. They deployed in the main as follows:

- a. Movement Control Unit / ASC I personnel served over seven to eight months from 27 October 1992 to 31 May 1993, (UNOSOM I and UNOSOM II) ²⁷
- b. ASC II personnel served over seven months, from 1 May 1993 to 3 December 1993 (UNOSOM II).²⁸
- c. ASC III personnel served for some seven months from 28 October 1993 to 25 May 1994 (UNOSOM II).²⁹
- d. ASC IV personnel served for some five to six months from 21 May 1994 to 23 November 1994 (UNOSOM II).³⁰

40. In the main, personnel from Australian contingents I - IV lived and served in and around the hostile environment of Mogadishu, including targeted areas such as the airfield and the port. Mogadishu was routinely described as the "Wild West" and as being at the time one of the world's most dangerous conflict zones. They performed a variety of important functions, namely movement control, logistics, medical, air traffic control, security and support to the UNOSOM headquarters. The Air Traffic Control unit kept Mogadishu air field running

²⁷ Submission 28 Lieutenant General Caligari obo 1 RAR Association.

²⁸ *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p.157.

²⁹ Ibid, p.180.

³⁰ Ibid, p.183.

uninterrupted. There were also security operations by Special Forces personnel. The ASCs had to closely work with United Nations and coalition forces.

UNOSOM II and Operation IGUANA conclude

41. By 1994 Somalia was no closer to resolving its civil conflict. With little prospect of improvement on the horizon, the United Nations decided to bring the peacekeeping operation to an end. Despite the commitment and resolve of Australian and partner forces, nation building had not been achievable and the mission of UNOSOM II had largely failed.

42. After 23 November 1994, the only Australian presence remaining in Somalia was provided by the Australian Federal Police in Mogadishu. The sole remaining police officer, Australia's last peacekeeper, departed the country in February 1995, and the withdrawal of UNOSOM II was finally completed in early March 1995.

CURRENT RECOGNITION

43. **Medallic Recognition.** Over time, there have been various declarations of and upgrades to medallic recognition to Australian Defence Force personnel serving in Somalia. The following summarises the units whose members have been recognised with one or more awards:

- Australian Active Service Medal with Clasp 'SOMALIA'
 - Service in the 1 RAR Battalion Group in Operation SOLACE (10 January to 21 May 1993) (1 day service required).³¹
 - Service in HMA Ships *Tobruk* and *Jervis Bay* in Operation SOLACE (10 January to 21 May 1993) (1 day service required).³²
 - Service in the land and air components of UNOSOM II (1 May 1993 to 28 March 1995) (1 day service or 1 sortie required).³³
 - Military members of the Land Headquarters Study Team.
 - Two Army members serving with the United States Army in Somalia.
- Australian Service Medal with Clasp 'SOMALIA'
 - Service in the land and air components of UNOSOM I³⁴ (17 October 1992 to 30 April 1993).³⁵

³¹ Given 1RAR was under 'hostile fire', medallic recognition was declared 'warlike service' for the purpose of the Australian Active Service Medal on 7 April 1993.

³² On 7 April 1993, the Australian Service Medal with Clasp 'SOMALIA' (ASM) was awarded to ADF personnel, including those on HMAS *Tobruk* and *Jervis Bay* serving more than 30 days in the area of operations. *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette S108 dated 13 April 1993*. This was subsequently upgraded to the AASM for one day's service, *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette S86, 20 May 2011*.

³³ On 23 January 1997, service with UNOSOM II was included as eligible service for the AASM with CLASP SOMALIA. *Commonwealth of Australia Gazette S27 dated 23 January 1997*.

³⁴ UNOSOM I Members with service to 30 May 1993 are entitled to both the ASM with Clasp 'SOMALIA' and AASM with Clasp 'SOMALIA'.

³⁵ Revised Somalia award determinations approved by the Governor-General 25 May 1994.

- United Nations Operations in Somalia Medal with Ribbon UNOSOM (Service with UNOSOM I & II).³⁶

44. **Individual Decorations.** Nine Australian Army personnel were awarded with Distinguished Service Decorations, which included two awards of the Distinguished Service Cross, one award of the Distinguished Service Medal and five Commendations for Distinguished Service. Seven Conspicuous Service Decorations were also awarded, including four awards of the Conspicuous Service Cross and four-awards of the Conspicuous Service Medal. Two honours in the Military Division of the Order of Australia were also conferred. A full list of these decorations is at Appendix 3.

45. **Chief of General Staff Commendation – 1 RAR Battalion Group.**³⁷ On 23 November 1993, the Chief of General Staff³⁸ awarded a Commendation to members of the 1 RAR Battalion Group, as set out below.

“With responsibility for the Humanitarian Relief Sector of Baidoa, the Battalion Group’s mission was to provide a secure environment for the distribution of humanitarian relief aid. The Battalion Group not only achieved this mission but sought to re-establish the basis of the civil infrastructure. The Battalion Group’s method of operation and activities were acclaimed by Headquarters Unified Task Force, the local population, and non-government agencies. Aspects of its activities were used as models for other contingents in Somalia. This clearly highlighted the Group’s ability to appreciate the intent of the operation and thus reconcile immediate military demands with longer-term requirements. The praise which the Battalion Group rightly earned is testament to its collective skill and to the resourcefulness and professionalism of its members.

*I commend the Battalion Group for its success in this operation. The Battalion Group’s accomplishment of its mission was of the highest order and in keeping with the finest traditions of the Australian Army.”*³⁹

³⁶ Submission 29, Department of Defence.

³⁷ The Defence Commendation Scheme now formally recognises outstanding/exceptional achievement, or specific acts of bravery for which awards from within the Australian Honours System are not an appropriate medium of recognition. Defence Commendations are a part of the Defence system of recognition and are of lower precedence than awards within the Australian Honours System. Group Commendations may be awarded to groups, units or teams only by the Secretary, CDF or a Principal Awarding Authority. Group Commendations consist of a certificate only; no badge is issued and individual certificates are not normally provided, although members may be given a copy of the original certificate by local authorities.

³⁸ The title of Chief of General Staff was changed to Chief of Army on 19 February 1997.

³⁹ Commendation by Chief of General Staff, 23 November 1993.

CHAPTER 3 - SUBMISSIONS TO THE INQUIRY

46. **General.** Almost all written submissions received by the Tribunal presented strong arguments for further unit recognition for service in Somalia. Those submissions primarily sought the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation, on the basis that their units provided sustained outstanding service in warlike operations. This was reaffirmed to us in person during public hearings.

Submissions by veterans and organisations.

47. As noted above, 45 written submissions were received from 33 individuals (chiefly veterans) and groups. Many were duplications of other submissions or direct reiterations of chapters of books on the history of peacekeeping operations in Somalia, mainly by Professor Breen. Rather than repeat the submissions, relevant themes can be summarised as follows:

- a. **Australian Defence Force personnel were operationally inexperienced.** Australian Defence Force personnel were generally inexperienced in warlike and other operational service. This was because Australia had generally enjoyed a substantial period of peace since the end of the Vietnam War in the early 1970's. This drained the Australian Defence Force of much operational experience. The result was that there were few operationally experienced 'old hands' to guide, mentor and support. While Australians had been deployed as peacekeepers around the globe since 1947, this was the largest operation of its kind to date.
- b. **Difficult living and working conditions.** Primitive living and working conditions provided a challenge to mission success. This was particularly so for the 1 RAR Battalion Group deployed to Baidoa, but also for the ASCs in Mogadishu and to a lesser extent those serving in HMAS *Tobruk* and HMAS *Jervis Bay*. Long hours were worked and rest was hard to come by for all.
- c. **Dangerous conditions.** Danger was ever present in all regions of Somalia. However, with time and effort Baidoa became less dangerous for the 1 RAR Battalion Group. Mogadishu remained at all times a largely dangerous area for the ASCs and other personnel who lived and worked there. Those working at the Mogadishu port and the airfield areas unloading and moving stores and conducting air traffic control were often subject to attack. The waters off Somalia presented less risk to HMAS *Tobruk* and HMAS *Jervis Bay*.
- d. **Logistical difficulties.** Logistical difficulties were apparent, particularly in the resupply of essential equipment for the 1 RAR Battalion Group. This led to innovation and adaption initiatives. It was submitted that as a result of lessons learned in Somalia, the Australian Defence Force today is operationally experienced and better prepared in equipping and supporting deployed forces. That support was generally not available, or even possible, during operations in Somalia.

- e. **Outstanding senior and junior leadership.** The Tribunal heard many accounts of conspicuous and prominent leadership throughout all Australian elements of the Somalia missions. It was submitted that the Commanding Officer of the 1 RAR Battalion Group was held in such respect that he was known among local Somalis as “the Governor of Baidoa”. The ASCs as well as HMAS *Tobruk*, were also very well led. Junior non-commissioned officers across the board were said to have generally excelled and acted above their normal duties and rank.
- f. **Additional humanitarian duties.** Personnel carried out additional duties to try and assist the local Somalis with building works, clean-ups, and the establishment of orphanages, judiciary and UNICEF runs by HMAS *Tobruk*.
- g. **Reputation.** 1 RAR Battalion Group personnel were generally held in high regard by the Somali people and the United Nations and United States forces. Likewise, the ASCs and HMAS *Tobruk* were held in high regard by United Nations and Coalition forces. Despite the high regard for Australian Defence Force personnel, few individual or group commendations were awarded.
- h. **‘More than just 1 RAR Battalion Group’.** Many of the non-1 RAR Battalion Group submitters felt that the wider Australian Defence Force viewed Australia’s commitment in Somalia as essentially an Army activity. The Chief of General Staff Commendation awarded to 1 RAR Battalion Group fed into this view. By doing so, those serving with the tri-service ASCs and in HMAS *Tobruk* particularly, felt they had been denied due respect and an opportunity for appropriate recognition. Those serving under Operation IGUANA felt overlooked by Operation SOLACE. (There were around 1,000 personnel who served in 1 RAR Battalion Group, a total of almost 200 personnel in the four ASCs, and 180 to 190 of HMAS *Tobruk*’s company).
- i. **Status of UNOSOM I/Operation IGUANA** Submitters could not understand why service on Operation IGUANA as part of UNOSOM I up to 30 April 1993 was declared a ‘non-warlike’ operation, when arguably the conditions faced by Australian Defence Force personnel were as or even more dangerous than those serving on Operation IGUANA as part of UNOSOM II, which had been declared a ‘warlike’ operation. Submissions also highlighted the incongruence of two concurrent and co-located operations being afforded different status, particularly as the 1 RAR Battalion Group headquarters staff, who lived and worked in Mogadishu prior to 1 May 1993, had received medallic recognition for warlike service while the ASC who lived and worked in Mogadishu prior to 1 May 1993 had only been recognised for non-warlike service.
- j. **‘Just peacekeeping’.** Some personnel reported that, upon their return home, their experiences were ‘written off’ as ‘just peacekeeping’. In reality, many had seen first-hand the horrors of third world starvation and a truly dangerous environment in which

they had felt largely powerless as peacekeepers to intervene.⁴⁰ Some went on to have long-standing mental health issues as a direct result.

- k. **‘More difficult than subsequent deployments’.** Many of the submitters who had gone on to deploy on other operations reported that their service in Somalia was as difficult and dangerous, if not more so, than subsequent operations, some of which had been duly recognised with Meritorious Unit Citations.

Defence submissions

48. The Tribunal noted at the outset that Defence was generally ‘supportive’ of the Tribunal’s inquiry for further consideration of unit recognition for service in Somalia.⁴¹

49. **1 RAR Battalion Group.** Defence’s submission reiterated that the Chief of General Staff Commendation remained an appropriate acknowledgement in respect of 1 RAR Battalion Group. However, there was a concession that the Group had provided ‘sustained outstanding service’ in warlike operations.⁴² Further, there was no active opposition by the Chief of Army for 1 RAR Battalion Group being awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation. Defence submitted that, should the Tribunal recommend a Meritorious Unit Citation, it would give consideration to rescinding the Chief of the General Staff Commendation for 1 RAR Battalion Group, to avoid the perception of recognising a unit twice for the same action.

50. **HMA Ships *Tobruk* and *Jervis Bay*.** The Defence submission considered the ships’ company of HMA Ships *Tobruk* and *Jervis Bay*. Given the short deployments of HMAS *Jervis Bay* in the area of operations it was submitted that there had not been ‘extended’ or ‘sustained outstanding service’. Her contribution was necessary and valuable but not for an extended period. At a total of eight days it could not be considered sustained. It was of normal deployment duration and the ship was operating at its normal capacity.⁴³

51. By contrast, HMAS *Tobruk* served for 89 days in the area of operations, sustained over the period 19 January 1993 to 20 May 1993. No opposition was put to the Tribunal potentially finding that her ships’ company had provided ‘sustained outstanding service’ in warlike operations. It was conceded that such a finding would acknowledge her service.

52. **ASCs attached to Operation IGUANA UNOSOM.** Defence conceded that the ASCs attached to UNOSOM II had likely provided ‘sustained outstanding service’ in warlike operations. But the ASC serving up to 30 April 1993 could not be awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation as its service had not been declared ‘warlike’. Defence conceded that, apart from that distinction, ASC I under UNOSOM I had otherwise performed ‘sustained outstanding service’.

⁴⁰ Oral Submission, Mr Sean Robinson 23 February 2022.

⁴¹ Submission 29, Department of Defence.

⁴² The oral submissions, made by representatives of the Army, went further than the Defence written submissions of 1 October 2021 which said that 1 RAR’s performance ‘could now be re-assessed and described as sustained’ but did not address the newly Amended Regulations of 2020 of ‘sustained outstanding service’ as defined.

⁴³ Submission 29B, Department of Defence.

53. **RAAF.** Defence submitted that as the RAAF force elements (outside of personnel attached to ASCs) participated in ‘normal operations’ they were not eligible for the Meritorious Unit Citation.⁴⁴

Other Recognition

54. Submitters were overwhelmingly in favour of the Meritorious Unit Citation as opposed to any other form of unit recognition. There were no Defence submissions on other forms of recognition. In particular, while Defence appeared to support further recognition for other units, it did not propose any new form of further recognition for HMAS *Jervis Bay*. While possibly outside the terms of reference for this inquiry, a very small number of submitters sought a new campaign medal or a ‘General African Operational Medal’, which could recognise the many Australian Defence Force operations in Africa.

⁴⁴ Submission 29B Department of Defence.

CHAPTER 4 - TRIBUNAL CONSIDERATION

Australian Unit Citations

55. **Purpose.** The Australian Unit Citations were established for the purpose of ‘officially recognising occasions when a unit as a whole and each member individually performs to an outstanding degree either in a single action or operation or over time’.⁴⁵ The Unit Citation for Gallantry and the Meritorious Unit Citation were introduced into the Australian honours system in 1991. Unlike awards for individuals, recognition of group endeavour has little history in honours systems around the world.⁴⁶

56. The Australian Unit Citation for Gallantry and the Meritorious Unit Citation were established by Letters Patent on 15 January 1991 for the purpose of:

*recognising gallantry in action or outstanding service in warlike operations by units of the Defence Force and by units of defence forces of other countries.*⁴⁷

57. **Regulations.** The citations are governed by Regulations which provide, in relation to the Meritorious Unit Citation:

3. (2) *The Meritorious Unit Citation shall be awarded to a unit only for sustained outstanding service in warlike operations.*

58. A warlike operation is a prescribed operation declared by the Governor-General on the recommendation from the Minister for Defence.⁴⁸ Otherwise operations can be declared ‘non-warlike’⁴⁹ or are regarded as being ‘peacetime’. All service on UNITAF and UNOSOM II has been declared warlike by the Governor-General and as a result is recognised by way of the Active Australian Service Medal.⁵⁰ In contrast, service up to 30 April 1993 has been declared a ‘non-warlike’ operation by the Governor-General with such service being awarded an Australian Service Medal (ASM).⁵¹

59. On 13 July 2020, the Sovereign approved amendments to the Unit Citations Regulations that, defined ‘**sustained outstanding service**’ to mean:

3. *Service or support of a unit which is substantially above the unit’s normal capacity and which is for an extended period.*⁵²

⁴⁵ Department of Defence DM 87/38684 to PM&C Honours and Awards Interdepartmental Committee dated 13 October 1987.

⁴⁶ The relatively recent tradition of unit citations was introduced by the United States in 1942 and has subsequently prompted broader recognition of collective endeavour.

⁴⁷ *Unit Citation Regulations and Letters Patent*, Commonwealth of Australia Gazette S25 dated 4 February 1991.

⁴⁸ *Australian Active Service Medal Regulations, Letters Patent*, Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No. S335 dated 2 November 1988.

⁴⁹ *Australian Service Medal Regulations*, Commonwealth of Australia Gazette S336 dated 2 November 1988.

⁵⁰ *Australian Active Service Medal Regulations Amendment*, Commonwealth of Australia Gazette S86 dated 20 May 2011.

⁵¹ *Australian Service Medal Regulations Amendment*, Commonwealth of Australia Gazette S85 dated 20 May 2011.

⁵² *Unit Citations Regulations Amendment* Commonwealth of Australia Gazette #G00629 dated 4 August 2020.

60. A **unit** is defined as either of the following:

- (a) *A force element of the Defence Force assigned for operational tasking*
- (b) *An allied foreign defence force unit in direct contribution to a Defence Force operation.*

61. **2020 Regulation changes.** Defence explained that the genesis for the 2020 amendment to define ‘sustained outstanding service’ and to include the phrase ‘extended period’, came out of a departmental review in 2018. According to Defence, the term ‘extended period’ is deliberately undefined and is to have its ordinary meaning. The intent was to modernise the Regulations and make them easier to understand.⁵³

62. **Defence submissions regarding the eligibility criteria.** Defence broadly submitted at hearing that whilst a timeframe may be considered as one of the contributing factors when considering a unit’s actions, particularly in respect of whether the service was ‘sustained’, the primary focus should be on determining what the unit achieved and the manner in which it was conducted. Defence argued that the award recognises a unit’s accomplishments rather than being solely defined by the time spent in an operational area. As such, it was submitted there is a ‘principles based approach’ to provide flexibility and context. Rigid application of the eligibility criteria is to be avoided. Each unit or force element is to be considered on its merits and on the actions and the individual and unique circumstances of the mission at the time.⁵⁴

63. When asked by the Tribunal if Defence accepted the Tribunal’s approach to interpretation of the eligibility criteria in the 2017 Inquiry into Unit Recognition for the Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam, Defence responded that it did not take issue with that approach, subject to the amended Regulation, which slightly changed the eligibility criterion.

64. **‘Unit’.** Noting that a ‘unit’ includes ‘a force element of the Defence Force assigned for operational tasking’, Defence agreed this definition could have broad application to smaller elements within operational taskings. Indeed, a Meritorious Unit Citation could be awarded to a force element within an extended period of an operational deployment, as opposed to the larger parent unit for the whole duration of an operation. This, it said, reflects the changing nature of how the Australian Defence Force deploys.⁵⁵

65. **‘Extended period’.** In relation to the phrase ‘extended period’, it was submitted that Defence did not seek to define or measure an extended period. It was said that this may set an expectation that once a date period is set, any unit may be considered for a Meritorious Unit Citation, but Defence submitted that would undesirably preclude a one-off activity. Further, it was submitted that ‘contemporary thinking’ around Meritorious Unit Citations is not necessarily confined to the full duration of the deployment of a unit but rather specific parameters around a unit’s actions within a deployment. Consideration could be for a period during any given deployment when a unit was operating above and beyond what they were deployed to do with respect to a mission.⁵⁶

⁵³ Department of Defence, Ms Lisa Phelps, oral submission on 22 February 2022.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Submission 29B Department of Defence p.5.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p.12.

66. **‘Substantially above normal capacity’.** Normal capacity was not defined. Defence agreed that it would not relate to a unit’s normal capacity at home, but what its normal capacity might be once deployed on operations. This would require an assessment of the planning stage for an operation, a consideration of the mission, resources, equipment requirements and organisational structure. Training and planning should provide for the capability ‘footprint’ to meet the requirements of the mission, but it recognised that this will not always be the case.⁵⁷ Depending upon the circumstances, a unit’s output may be pushed outside normal operational requirements, expectations and their training for the operation. Defence submitted that mission success is only one factor in assessing whether a unit has performed substantially above normal capacity.⁵⁸

67. **‘Sustained outstanding service’.** The Tribunal was referred by Defence to the Macquarie Dictionary which defines ‘outstanding’ as ‘prominent; conspicuous; striking’.⁵⁹ Defence submitted that an assessment of a unit’s performance in the context of an operation might also be compared by command against the performance of other units in the operation.⁶⁰

Guidance for the Award of the Meritorious Unit Citation.

68. Beyond what is set out in the Regulations, some guidance on the nomination process and eligibility for unit citations can be found in the Honours and Awards Manual and *CJOPS Directive 05/1 - Chief of Joint Operations Directive Honours and Awards* dated 16 February 2017. It emphasises that consideration needs to be objective and merit-based so that nominations accurately reflect the service warranting recognition with tangible and specific supporting evidence.⁶¹

69. The Chief of Army Directive 03/2006, *Army Procedure for the Award of a Meritorious Unit Citation*, (a now retired policy) suggested consideration of a unit’s operational performance focussed on mission achievement, equipment and personnel availability and force preservation; strategic significance including strategic impact and international engagement; personnel performance; administration and security; and other qualities including innovation, adaptability, reconstitution and family support. During the 2017 *Inquiry into Unit Recognition for the Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam*, the Tribunal considered this policy in detail in assessing the Meritorious Unit Citation. Notwithstanding retirement of the policy, the Tribunal considers assessment of the above issues to be of some ongoing assistance in applying the eligibility criteria.

70. **Past examples of ‘Sustained Outstanding Service in Warlike Operations’ by a Unit.** Since 1991, 30 Meritorious Unit Citations have been awarded.⁶² They vary between units for a single deployment, to a unit for multiple deployments on multiple operations. More

⁵⁷ Submission 29D Department of Defence p. 2.

⁵⁸ Ibid, p. 4.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p.2.

⁶⁰ Ibid, p.3.

⁶¹ The Tribunal in the RANHFV Inquiry at paragraphs 140 to 145 observed previous Defence guidance to be largely unhelpful. Previous Inquiries had commented on the lack of policy guidance and the potential damage this may have upon consistency and the integrity of the assessment process.

⁶² Submission 29, Department of Defence, p.12.

recently, Meritorious Unit Citations have recognised smaller force elements for a discrete period of time in a warlike operation.

71. Of particular relevance to this inquiry, the Meritorious Unit Citation has recently been awarded to recognise certain Australian Defence Force peacekeeping service in Cambodia (1992-1993) and Rwanda (1994-1996). These awards were made in 2014 and 2019 respectively, see Appendices 4 and 5.

72. The reasons set out by Defence for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation for service in Cambodia do not seem to follow any obvious application of the eligibility criteria, although, in this regard it should be noted that this Citation was awarded prior to the insertion of the ‘enhanced’ eligibility criteria set out in the 2020 Regulation changes. The Tribunal distils that the basis for the Citation seems centred on the hostile security environment in which the unit⁶³ worked long periods without relief. It was assessed there was outstanding service beyond initial tasks. It was recognised that installation of the communications network was in difficult and hazardous circumstances. It was this network management that enabled UNTAC headquarters to conduct a successful national election.

73. In relation to the Rwanda Meritorious Unit Citation, the Tribunal distils the following four factors:

- a) **Sustained outstanding performance.** In the face of intimidation and threats, including challenging and distressing circumstances. This included sustained high rates of surgical procedures.
- b) **Dangerous conditions.** Via mines, booby traps, under fire and threat of attack. Further, the potential for disease and infection, as well as, psychologically distressing conditions.
- c) **Exceptional leadership and skills.** Particularly in saving lives and restricting the extent of the massacre at Kibeho.
- d) **Warlike service.** Reclassified as a warlike operation in 2006.

To which groups might a Meritorious Unit Citation apply?

74. **Were Australian Defence Force personnel serving in ‘units’?** The first step in the Tribunal’s deliberations was to consider what Australian Defence Force ‘units’ were deployed to Somalia. Having regard to the definitions set out in the Regulations and submissions made by Defence, the Tribunal applied a broad meaning and considered that ‘units’ could include units, sub-units or smaller force elements. In this regard, we observed that personnel serving in ASCs were not deployed individually but were assigned to one of the four contingents attached to UNOSOM.

⁶³ The Force Communications Unit deployed as Australia’s main contribution to the United Nations Transition Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC).

75. Defence confirmed that the following listed groups, could be considered ‘units’ as defined, for the purposes of the Unit Citation Regulations:

- a) HMAS *Tobruk*
- b) HMAS *Jervis Bay*
- c) the 1 RAR Battalion Group⁶⁴
- d) force elements from 33, 34, 36 and 37 Squadrons
- e) ASCs I, II, III and IV, which included the initial Movement Control Unit within ASC I⁶⁵

Applying the eligibility criteria

76. Having careful regard to the submissions and evidence listed above, the Tribunal considered the eligibility criteria for a Meritorious Unit Citation include the following considerations:

- a) **Warlike service.** This is evidenced by service as declared by the Governor-General to be a ‘warlike’ operation. We observe that this generally applies to time spent in the area of operations, as opposed to port-to-port time, for instance.
- b) **Extended period.** The Tribunal was hesitant to put a timeframe upon an ‘extended period’ but observed that a period of time without some substantive duration might also fail the requirement for ‘sustained’ nature of the operations, as set out below.
- c) **Sustained.** The Tribunal considered that the unit would need to demonstrate that it had maintained its performance continuously and without break. Whilst individuals may have been rested, the unit would need to be continuously engaged in the operation. Removal of the entire unit to a rest area would tend to negate continuous engagement.
- d) **Substantially above the unit’s normal capacity.** To ascertain this, it was necessary to try to determine the unit’s normal capacity. That is, what was the capacity for which the unit had trained operationally, as opposed to the unit’s normal capacity in barracks, ashore and at air bases or on routine domestic operations and exercises? In the opinion of the Tribunal, it was over and above what might be expected of a unit of its collective members. If the unit evidenced high levels of equipment, personnel availability and working hours throughout the operation, this might be considered substantially above its capacity. Alternatively or additionally, a unit might be given or seek additional roles and duties adding pressure to a unit already operating above its normal operational capacity. A relevant question to be asked was, did the unit create an effect and achieve results which were clearly beyond what was expected when the unit deployed?
- e) **Outstanding.** This should be a subjective and discretionary test with the governing consideration focussed on whether a unit could be seen to have performed with distinction or been conspicuous. This could include an assessment as to whether the leadership of the unit, at junior and senior levels was outstanding. The unit would likely have successfully completed its mission in warlike operations or if not achieved

⁶⁴ Defence’s submission included Headquarters Australian Force Somalia and the 1 RAR Battalion Group as an integrated unit for the purposes of these considerations.

⁶⁵ Oral submission, Department of Defence, 22 February 2022.

significant accomplishments. (It is acknowledged that not all mandated missions will be successful). The real crux is whether the role performed by Australian personnel during the mission was successful. Most significantly, a unit would need to demonstrate that its performance set it apart from other similar units or units engaged on the operation. This could be evidenced by the unit's reputation held by other services, nations or multi-national forces involved, as well as, potentially any indigenous populations it was sent to protect.

77. In summary, the Tribunal decided that to be eligible for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation, a unit must meet *all* of the following conditions, namely that:

- a) it was engaged in 'warlike operations';
- b) its operations were 'for an extended period';
- c) its operations were 'sustained';
- d) its performance was 'substantially above its normal capacity'; and
- e) its performance was 'outstanding'.

Assessment of the units and force elements

78. The Tribunal having established the criteria for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation turned to an assessment of the relevant Australian Defence Force units and force elements against them.

ASCs I, II, III and IV (UNOSOM I and II).

79. The Tribunal first considered the service of ASCs I – IV as chronologically they were the first Australian Defence Force units to deploy to Somalia.

80. Initially, the Australian Defence Force deployed a small Movement Control Unit which was later subsumed into ASC I. There were four ASCs consisting of around 200 RAN, Army and RAAF personnel over a two year period.

81. The first ASC was attached to UNOSOM I/Operation IGUANA from 17 October 1992 to 4 May 1993. Subsequent ASCs served under UNOSOM II from 4 May 1993 to 24 November 1994.

Were the ASCs serving in warlike operations?

82. **ASC I (UNOSOM I/Operation IGUANA).** The first Australians were first deployed in support of UNOSOM I on 17 October 1992. However, this service is considered to be non-warlike service up to 30 April 1993, which roughly coincides with the dissolution of UNITAF and the commencement of UNOSOM II. As service on a warlike operation is an essential element of the eligibility criteria for the Meritorious Unit Citation, the citation cannot currently be recommended for ASC I to recognise its service up to and including 30 April 1993.

83. The Tribunal received some conflicting submissions regarding the nature of this service from the Department of Defence. Notwithstanding the fact that service up to 30 April 1993 is recognised with the Australian Service Medal (awarded in recognition of non-warlike service)

at hearing, Defence informed the Tribunal that service prior to 30 April 1993 was determined to be qualifying service under the *Veterans Entitlements Act 1986*, and on that basis, equivalent to warlike service.⁶⁶ However, in a somewhat contradictory later submission, Defence stated that medallic regulations and those governing repatriation benefits are entirely separate.⁶⁷ In an addendum to that submission, Defence advised the Tribunal that the current declaration under the Australian Service Medal Regulations which declares service on UNOSOM I to be non-warlike does not mean that this service cannot be recognised by a Meritorious Unit Citation, noting service on UNOSOM I is qualifying service under the VEA. In recognising the incongruence of such an arrangement, Defence advised the Tribunal that it may wish to consider separately making recommendations regarding recognition of service from 17 October 1992 to 30 April 1993 with the Australian Active Service Medal.⁶⁸

84. We are of the view that, as the Governor-General has not yet declared the operation warlike, for the purposes of the Australian Active Service Medal, service on ASC I does not currently meet the eligibility criteria for service prior to 1 May 1993.

FINDING: ASC I (which includes the initial Movement Control Unit) which served between 17 October 1992 and 30 April 1993 operating under UNOSOM I does not meet the eligibility criteria for the award of a Meritorious Unit Citation for its involvement in Operation IGUANA.

Should service prior to 1 May 1993 be recognised as warlike?

85. As noted above, in its fourth submission Defence suggested that, as UNOSOM I was qualifying service under the VEA, this was sufficient for the purposes of meeting the criteria for a unit citation. This is clearly incorrect. Such service is qualifying service under the VEA under section 7A(1)(a)(iii) of that Act because Schedule 2 to the Act lists at Item 14 “the area comprising Somalia” for the period “from and including 20 October 1992 to and including 30 November 1994”. It is not qualifying service under section 7A(1)(iv) because the Minister has not made a declaration under the VEA declaring it to be warlike service.

86. The question is thus whether the categorisation as non-warlike is correct. Cabinet, in 1993, adopted definitions for determining warlike and non-warlike classifications of service⁶⁹ which were then updated in 2018 by the Minister of Defence to be:

“Peacetime

A peacetime classification acknowledges that an element of hazard and risk is inherent to ADF service and that personnel are appropriately trained and compensated for their

⁶⁶ Oral submission, Department of Defence, 22 February 2022.

⁶⁷ Submission 29D, Department of Defence.

⁶⁸ Ibid, Addendum 29D1 email Mr Ian Heldon to Mr Jay Kopplemann, 1 June 2022.

⁶⁹ Cabinet Decision 1691/1993, NAA: A14217, 1021.

specific military occupation. Service on peacetime operations is not the same as serving overseas on a posting or short-term duty.

A peacetime operation is an Australian Government authorised military operation or activity that does not expose ADF personnel to a Defence-assessed threat from hostile forces. Therefore, there is no expectation of casualties as a result of engagement with hostile forces. There may be an increased risk of harm from environmental factors consistent with the expectation that ADF personnel will from time to time perform hazardous duties.

Non-warlike

Non-warlike service exposes ADF personnel to an indirect risk of harm from hostile forces.

A non-warlike operation is an Australian Government authorised military operation which exposes ADF personnel to the risk of harm from designated forces or groups that have been assessed by Defence as having the capability to employ violence to achieve their objectives, but there is no specific threat or assessed intent to target ADF personnel. The use of force by ADF personnel is limited to self-defence and there is no expectation of ADF casualties as a result of engagement of those designated forces or groups.

Warlike

Warlike service exposes ADF personnel to a direct risk of harm from hostile forces.

A warlike operation is an Australian Government authorised military operation where ADF personnel are exposed to the risk of harm from hostile forces that have been assessed by Defence as having the capability and an identified intent to directly target ADF personnel. ADF personnel are authorised to use force to pursue specific military objectives and there is an expectation of ADF casualties as a result.

88. The wording of these definitions makes clear that, in the view of the Government:
 - a) non-warlike operations are short of the risk involved in warlike operations; and
 - b) casualties are expected in warlike operations but, while ‘possible’, are not expected in non-warlike operations.
89. In adopting the definitions, Cabinet decided that, once a deployment was declared as warlike or non-warlike, specified conditions of service would be assumed to be approved.
90. Cabinet further agreed that:
 - a) the VEA should be reviewed ‘to incorporate the definitions of warlike and non-warlike service’; and
 - b) ‘the recommendation for the award of medals would be aligned to the definitions of warlike and non-warlike service’.

91. Cabinet thus intended that the definitions of ‘warlike’ and ‘non-warlike’ would apply equally to:

- a) the conditions of service, such as allowances and leave, referred to in the Cabinet decision and associated Cabinet Submission;
- b) veteran’s entitlements arising from such service; and
- c) the administration of defence medals that used the terms ‘warlike’ and ‘non-warlike’.

92. It is thus appropriate to compare the risk and likelihood of casualties associated with service up to 30 April 1993 with that associated with Somalia service from 1 May 1993. On the evidence available to the Tribunal, there was no material difference between these two periods of service by reference to those factors. Indeed, the Tribunal heard repeated submissions from a broad range of credible eyewitness submitters that service in Somalia, be it in Mogadishu or Baidoa, prior to 1 May 1993 was equally dangerous, if not more so, than service after that date. This is partially acknowledged by the award of the AASM to those serving on Operation SOLACE in Mogadishu prior to that date.

93. Accordingly the Tribunal believes that UNOSOM I service in the period to 30 April 1993 should be declared to be a “warlike operation” under the AASM Regulations. This would mean that:

- a) such service would thereby become eligible for award of the MUC; and
- b) those ADF members who had been awarded the ASM would thereby become eligible for the AASM (upon surrender of their ASM).⁷⁰

94. In light of these circumstances, notwithstanding that ASC I between October 1992 and 30 April 1993 cannot currently qualify for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation, the Tribunal continued to consider if ASC I between those dates met the other eligibility criteria, as well as the ASC I from 30 April 1993.

95. **Was ASC I (1 May 1993 to 31 May 1993) and ASC II, ASC III and ASC IV (UNOSOM II) serving in ‘warlike operations’?** Yes. As the respective service of those contingents was after 30 April 1993 their service was ‘warlike’ as declared.

96. **Were the operations of ASC I (October 1992 to 30 April 1993), ASC I (1 to 31 May 1993), ASC II, ASC III and ASC IV for an extended period?** Yes. All ASCs served for extended periods. ASC I personnel served for seven to eight months from 17 October 1992 to 31 May 1993. This was 32 weeks prior to 1 May 1993 and four weeks after that date. Having regard to the length of time and the arduous nature of the service in question, we consider that the service of ASC I between 1 and 31 May 1993 to be an extended period as well as ASC I prior to 30 April 1993.

97. ASC II personnel served over seven months, from 1 May 1993 to 25 November 1993. ASC III served for some seven months from 28 October 1993 to 25 May 1994. ASC IV served for some six months from 21 May 1994 to 23 November 1994.

⁷⁰ We note that it would not be necessary to additionally make a declaration of warlike service under the VEA in order to meet the intention of Cabinet that service conditions, VEA entitlements and medallic recognition should align. This is because, as noted, UNOSOM I service is already qualifying service and no better VEA entitlement would accrue if it were also declared under the VEA to be ‘warlike service’.

98. The Tribunal went on to consider the service of ASCs I-IV against the other elements of the eligibility criteria together. Although there were some differences in the service of each contingent, we consider that they were sufficiently similar in their role, manning, operations, rate of effort and performance for us to do so. Further, they all faced broadly similar dangers and challenges living and working in Mogadishu, notwithstanding the current classification of non-warlike service prior to 1 May 1993. This has been acknowledged by Defence in its classification of service on Operation SOLACE in Mogadishu during the period.

99. **Were the operations of ASC I (October 1992 to 30 April 1993), ASC I (1 to 31 May 1993), ASC II, ASC III and ASC IV ‘sustained’?** Yes. All ASC operations were sustained and uninterrupted. The four contingents were extremely busy and worked long hours in difficult conditions. The 24/7 nature of their roles and operational tempo required personnel to work on average a 6.5 to seven day working week. Additional hours were spent volunteering to support wider contingent needs or humanitarian activities and a number of examples were given of contingent members carrying out building works in whatever downtime they had.⁷¹ Air traffic control continued to operate notwithstanding the hostile environment at the airfield. Movements at the airfield and/or port could be hundreds a day. ASC IV alone rotated and repatriated more than 13,000 troops and their equipment to 14 different countries.⁷²

100. Opportunities for rest were limited. For a time, movement control staff were able to be rotated through Nairobi which provided some relief from the prevailing tensions of Mogadishu.⁷³ For all the respective contingents housed in Mogadishu, the threat of lethal incident was ever present and there was nowhere to retire safely out of range, including accommodation areas.⁷⁴

101. Defence did not dispute that the operations performed by ASCs I to IV, which included the initial Movement Control Unit, were sustained; and the Tribunal had little difficulty in finding so.

102. **Did the ASCs perform ‘substantially above their normal capacity’?** Yes. To assess whether the ASCs performed above their normal capacity, we first tried to determine the normal capacity of a contingent or Movement Control Unit as indicated in the following paragraphs. At the outset it was difficult for the Tribunal to assess their ‘normal capacity’ as the respective contingents had never served or trained together.

103. **Makeup of the ASCs.** Army had been the only service to maintain a movements’ trade for officers, predominantly from the Transport Corps. But as part of the joint effort, the Movement Control Unit and subsequent contingents were required to also draw upon Navy and Air Force personnel, who were generally logisticians. The contingents had non-commissioned officers, warrant officers and commissioned officers with good experience. Some would go on to work at UNOSOM headquarters. There were also medical, signals and intelligence personnel

⁷¹ Submission 32, Dr Anthony Robbins, e.g. ASC IV building the Mass Casualty area

⁷² Report, Lt Col S.J. Ellis ‘United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) Australian Contingent (ASC IV) Post “Operation Iguana” Report’, 11 November 1994, NAA A6721, A96/2002 pt. 1. *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p.195...

⁷³ Submission 45 to DHAT Inquiry, Colonel Trevor Jones CSC (Retd) p.7.

⁷⁴ Submission 32, Dr Anthony Robbins p.7.

in due course Special Forces.⁷⁵ The initial Movement Control Unit was aptly described as ‘liquorice allsorts from the three services’⁷⁶ and this was true of all the ASCs.

104. **Experience of ASCs.** The contingents contained a mix of very experienced personnel and some less experienced personnel. Few had operational service or peacekeeping experience, which was true of all Australian Defence Force units serving in Somalia.⁷⁷ The importance of previous operational experience to guide, support and mentor those without such experience was highlighted to the Tribunal by Group Captain Peter Noake. He served as a member of ASC III and said that ‘the four old hands’ with previous operational experience in Cambodia were very valuable to the force. This, however, was very much the exception.

105. Being primarily logicians and movement staff, some had essentially desk jobs and were untrained for the urban combat that Mogadishu presented. Some members were not trained for escort taskings⁷⁸ or very proficient on the F88 Austeyr rifle, some having only fired or handled the weapon during recruit training, prior to truncated pre-deployment training. This resulted in a number of unauthorised discharges.⁷⁹ The Commander of ASC II, Colonel Trevor Jones, stated that, from what he observed, 70 per cent of his contingent were substandard in weapons handling skills. He found this ‘quite frankly, frightening’.⁸⁰

106. Some individuals deployed in small teams were better prepared for the deployment, such as the air-traffic controllers⁸¹ (ASC III and IV), airfield management team (ASC IV) and Special Forces (ASC IV). An air traffic controller, Group Captain Robert Graham, said that as they trained as a combat support service it could be said to that extent that they were operating at normal capacity. But he went on to say that the security situation, particularly in 1994, was ‘abysmal’.⁸² To him, air traffic control substantially operated above its normal capacity.

107. **Pre-deployment training.** Members of the ASCs had never trained as a contingent until their training at Randwick Barracks, which was of two weeks’ duration but was increased for ASC IV. ASCs II – IV had the benefit of a handover in location. The initial Movement Control Unit received the least training. Major Jackson (ASC I) spoke of the ‘total confusion’ that existed during the planning and initial deployment.⁸³ There was little intelligence going into Somalia, with the information flow from Mogadishu to Australia being poor.⁸⁴ Most knowledge was gleaned from the media. Training had included an extract from the travel publication, “Lonely Planet Guide”.⁸⁵ When the Movement Control Unit arrived in Somalia personnel found that their role was very much broader than had originally been identified by the United Nations, which was to support the military organisations. The Movement Control Unit had to provide support to the entire UNOSOM operation, which included civilian

⁷⁵ Submission 23 Colonel Trevor Jones

⁷⁶ Submission 31 Lieutenant Colonel Paul Angelatos

⁷⁷ Submission 23 Colonel Trevor Jones

⁷⁸ Oral submission, Lieutenant Colonel Paul Angelatos (Retd)

⁷⁹ *The Limits of Peacekeeping* p.191.

⁸⁰ Submission 23 Colonel Trevor Jones, CSC (Retd) ASC II written submission p 22 of 27.

⁸¹ According to Colonel Trevor Jones, ASC II, “Pitch Black Exercises” had assisted in their training.

⁸² Group Captain Robert Graham oral submission, 29 March 2022.

⁸³ Major Greg Jackson Post Activity Report Operation Iguana dated 24 May 1994 AWM 330 PKI-106-19.

⁸⁴ Submission 31 Lieutenant Colonel Paul Angelatos (Retd), oral submission.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

administration and humanitarian and political organisations.⁸⁶ ASC II submitters were critical of the training they had received. They said they were inadequately prepared and under resourced, being told they were deploying on a mundane peacekeeping mission, but following UNITAF's departure, what they experienced was something very different.^{87 88}

108. The ASCs were not self-sufficient but reliant partly on other UNOSOM contingents and civilian contractors. They were also required to work with other military forces, including those from non-Western countries, such as Pakistan and Egypt which required the careful negotiation of cultural and language barriers. Further, we heard they had to endure the bureaucracy of the United Nations. They had no familiarity of this as part of their experience or training, except during limited handovers for ASCs II- IV.

109. The Tribunal assessed that there were substantial challenges in preparing personnel for the ASCs, both individually and training as a group. It was not straightforward for the Tribunal to assess if they had substantially performed above their normal capacity as there was no baseline 'normal' with which to compare. However, based on the evidence, the Tribunal considered they performed above what could reasonably be expected of them. **For this reason, and the additional reasons expanded upon below, the Tribunal finds that all ASCs served substantially above their normal capacity.**

110. **Dangers of Mogadishu.** The Tribunal heard much evidence about the constant threat and risk of lethal attack in Mogadishu and the local surrounds. Although the threat level fluctuated from time to time, the Mogadishu port, airfield and urban areas were consistently dangerous. The route between the air field and the township was not secure and escorts were needed for port visits. Submitters who had gone on to deploy on other operations reported that their time in Mogadishu was as difficult and dangerous, if not more so, than operations such as East Timor and Afghanistan.^{89 90}

111. Mogadishu was particularly dangerous when the first Movement Control Unit arrived in October 1992. The first three to four months were said to be more dangerous and hostile than subsequent ASC deployments.⁹¹ Lieutenant Commander Andrew Naughton who visited Mogadishu from December 1992 reported that 'Mogadishu is paralysed in a state of anarchy, there is no infrastructure other than the tribal dynamics of survival or the law of the gun'.⁹²

the period from October through till December/January, when UNITAF arrived, it was just bedlam. Yes, I would regularly have to make trips out to an airstrip on the perimeter of Mogadishu - it was called West Mogadishu. Yes, as you'd drive there it wasn't just rocks being thrown. You literally would be shot at every time you went out there. I've documented here the day I actually went down and met Bill Neville when he arrived in - as part of the UNITAF advance party. I travelled down in a little minibus

⁸⁶ Major Greg Jackson Post Activity Report Operation Iguana dated 24 May 1994 AWM 330 PKI-106-19.

⁸⁷ Submission 4 Mr Michael Apperley.

⁸⁸ Submission 23 Colonel Trevor Jones, CSC (Retd).

⁸⁹ Oral submission, Major General Brian Dawson AM CSC (Retd),

⁹⁰ Oral submission, private submitter.

⁹¹ Submission 31 Lieutenant Colonel Paul Angelatos (Retd).

⁹² Operation SOLACE National Liaison Team, Lieutenant Commander McNaughton's Report, *Visit to Mogadishu December 1992*.

*to meet him and a couple of the other staff officers, and on the way back from the airport, to take them to the force headquarters, we were shot at.*⁹³

112. It was said that although the security situation in Baidoa improved with the arrival of 1 RAR Battalion Group in early 1993, in Mogadishu the attitudes of most Somalis towards UNITAF and UNOSOM personnel seemed to vary from outright hostility to ambivalence.⁹⁴

113. To the Tribunal, this evidence further supports our recommendation that the period of service prior to 1 May 1993 should now be considered warlike.

114. By mid-1993, ASC II had been under attack on almost a daily basis⁹⁵ and was constantly at risk operating tactically throughout Mogadishu.

115. The ‘Black Hawk Down Battle’ between 3 and 4 October 1993 occurred during the time of ASC III. Then at the start of ASC IV, the remaining US forces began moving out. These factors changed the dynamics and dramatically changed the security situation. In recognition of the inherent dangers of working in Mogadishu, force protection was finally provided to ASC IV by a 10-man Special Air Service Regiment team from J Troop. They also provided elite response and VIP protection. The small team were involved in a number of actions and skirmishes before they returned in November 1994 with the last of the Australian personnel. Captain P, a Special Forces member of the ASC IV security force, who went on to deploy in 12 subsequent operations, stated at an *in camera* hearing:

*“I think the single biggest comparison was the number of guns and firearms that were in the hands of Somalis that were being carried around at all times. After the deployment I likened it to being in the Wild West where essentially all adult Somali males carried a firearm; predominantly that was a long gun, so a rifle, and in most cases an assault gun such as an AK variant. The UN was powerless to attempt to disarm them because of the fact that they were prevalent throughout all of Mogadishu and other parts of Somalia. But it was also there for the security of the Somali himself and it was almost impossible to determine in a lot of cases who was a regular Somali carrying a firearm for his own safety and who was a militia member or a man with criminal intent. But certainly, that was something I didn’t experience in any other deployments where the citizens of the region we were operating in were all armed.”*⁹⁶

116. **Living conditions.** Mogadishu was home to displaced Somalis living in squalid living conditions in ‘humpys’. Moving around Mogadishu to live and work was very difficult and dangerous. Fresh food and water were rationed at times. ASC I initially established an excellent tented camp next to the airfield but this had to be abandoned. ASC II moved to a villa in Warlord Aideed’s part of the city, which proved too dangerous. Then, together with the New Zealand Contingent, ASCs II, III and IV occupied a derelict vehicle garage in the United States Embassy enclave. This would eventually become known as “ANZAC House”. Major General Brian Dawson CSC (ASC III) recalled that at least on one occasion a bomb landed within the compound and on other occasions there was machine-gun fire overhead.⁹⁷

⁹³ Oral Submission, Lieutenant Colonel Paul Angelatos (Retd) 22 February 2022.

⁹⁴ Brigadier Peter Abigail report on visit to Somalia in March 1993.

⁹⁵ Submission 1 Mr David Vinen

⁹⁶ Oral submission, private hearing.

⁹⁷ Oral submission, Major Brian Dawson CSC (Retd).

117. **Versatility, adaptability and resilience.** Initially when the Movement Control Unit arrived it was chaotic and movement services were overstaffed. They were not allocated vehicles for their own transport. The airfield had no functioning lighting. They assisted aircraft to land with novel lighting solutions, such as, torches, lanterns and vehicle lights.

118. But it was not long before the Australians became known as the ‘go to’ for movements at the port and airfield. High volumes of stores were able to be moved. Dr Anthony Robbins, who deployed as the Australian Defence Force Regimental Medical Officer, (ASC IV), became a qualified forklift driver to assist in major logistical jobs.⁹⁸ The Tribunal also heard of members of ASCs III and IV using and maintaining ‘acquired’ armoured personnel carriers, without formal qualifications, ‘to get the job done’.

119. **Air Traffic Control Unit.** When Air Force air traffic controllers arrived as part of ASC III, they operated from a makeshift control tower on top of four shipping containers, constructed ‘lego-block’ style. Occasionally, the tower came under casual Somali sniper fire and had to be evacuated.⁹⁹ Fortunately, aircraft rather than the control tower were the target of choice of Somali militia.

120. Former Special Forces soldier, Mr David Vinen, recounted the threats to ASC III’s air traffic controllers. He stated:

“a couple of times the actual air traffic control tower was targeted and personnel inside the control tower, they just basically dived under their desks whilst the perimeter defences at the airfield again returned fire against the Militia until such time as the Militia were either killed or withdrew, and then our personnel then got back up again and carried on with their work.”¹⁰⁰

121. The air traffic controllers worked a very hectic airfield with 12 hour shifts, one runway and the only safe take off and approach being over the sea. They were operating in a non-radar environment, sometimes having to negotiate language barriers in communications with aircrews. The air traffic controllers were credited by other forces for their sustained and diligent efforts. They managed to keep the busy airfield operational for the entire mission. At their peak in November 1993 the controllers were handling 500 aircraft movements a day.¹⁰¹ By ASC IV, the air traffic controllers became the largest single unit within the contingent, with 12 personnel who were an integral part of the operations of UNOSOM II.

122. **Summary.** The Tribunal noted the inherent dangers faced by ASC personnel living and working in Mogadishu and the challenges presented to personnel in movements, security, at the headquarters and particularly in the air traffic control unit. It also assessed their versatility, adaptability and resilience in response to those challenges. There were multiple examples of individuals working well beyond their capacity and experience, and also whilst working independently and as force elements.¹⁰² We came to the conclusion that all the ASCs operated

⁹⁸ Submission 32 Dr Anthony Robbins.

⁹⁹ Submission 23 Colonel Trevor Jones CSC (Retd)

¹⁰⁰ Oral submission, Mr David Vinen, 24 February 2022.

¹⁰¹ *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p. 181- Report, Lieutenant Colonel Stuart Ellis, ‘United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) Australian Contingent (ASC IV) Post “Operation Iguana” Report’, 11 November 1994, Defence: NAA A6721, A96/2002 part 1.

¹⁰² Oral submission, Major General Brian Dawson, AM, CSC (Retd), 29 March 2022.

substantially above their normal capacity or, perhaps more accurately, their expected capacity in all the circumstances.

123. **Were the performances of the respective ASCs ‘outstanding’?** Yes. The Tribunal considered that all four ASCs excelled in their roles under extreme pressures. The Tribunal put this down to the senior leadership of the contingents and work ethos of the teams. To the Tribunal their outstanding performance set them apart from other units. Regrettably, media coverage at the time largely concentrated on the efforts of Operation SOLACE, with limited coverage of the efforts of the ASCs who perceived that their efforts were not properly recognised or acknowledged.¹⁰³ Further, the Australians were seen as scrupulously fair in their dealings with Somalis in and around Mogadishu.¹⁰⁴

124. **Leadership.** Senior leaders of the four ASCs were spoken of highly in terms of their professionalism in ensuring members were safe in such an environment. It was acknowledged that they shouldered a huge responsibility. Major Jackson was cited in one submission for his leadership of the initial Movement Control Unit, who were an untried team in a hostile environment, while battling his own dengue fever.¹⁰⁵

125. Junior leaders were also regarded highly working with responsibility and autonomy above their rank. The mainly independent actions of two junior leaders, Corporals Lawrence Stein and David Vinen were singled out in that regard by Land Commander, Major General Murray Blake, Land Commander, Australia, who later recalled that both ‘accepted responsibility far in excess of their rank and have grown great skill and initiative.’¹⁰⁶ Their performance and actions were credited with mission success.¹⁰⁷

126. **UN Mission success.** The mission of UNOSOM I was to ‘monitor the cease-fire that was in effect at the time and to protect United Nations personnel during their humanitarian operations’. ASC I assisted to protect United Nations personnel by providing escorts and movement control and strategic planning. ASC I and its members accomplished much. Whilst it could not be said that the United Nations mission was completely successful, the role performed by the ASC I during the mission was successful.¹⁰⁸

127. The Mission of UNOSOM II was an ambitious one of nation building and went beyond the limits of traditional peacekeeping. The ASCs provided humanitarian support and by the rotation of Contingent IV donations from Australians were being sent to support various orphanages which Australian Force Somalia had supported.¹⁰⁹ As a mission it was not ultimately successful with the United Nations withdrawing with no real inroads into nation-building. Mogadishu, in particular, remained an insecure and dangerous place.

128. As was the case with ASC I, notwithstanding that the United Nations missions were not ultimately successful, this did not mean that the ASCs II to IV, as units, had not performed

¹⁰³ Major Greg Jackson Post Activity Report Operation Iguana dated 24 May 1994 AWM 330 PKI-106-19.

¹⁰⁴ Submission 23 Colonel Trevor Jones CSC (Retd).

¹⁰⁵ Submission 31 Lieutenant Colonel Paul Angelatos (Retd).

¹⁰⁶ *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p.163.

¹⁰⁷ Submission 23 Colonel Trevor Jones CSC (Retd).

¹⁰⁸ Major Greg Jackson Post Activity Report Operation Iguana dated 24 May 1994 AWM 330 PKI-106-19.

¹⁰⁹ ASC IV Humanitarian Support Report, Lieutenant Colonel Stuart Ellis, CPMASC Enclosure 3 to Commander’s War Diary dated 6 October 1994 –AWM330 PKI-106-129.

their tasks well and with accomplishment. Over two years the respective contingents had provided the United Nations and Somalia with air transport support, movement control, strategic planning and security. Further, they had helped in the rehabilitation of the country's airfield operations and supported orphans at Mogadishu and Baidoa.¹¹⁰ ASC IV assisted the successful withdrawal of UNITAF forces without further loss and its air traffic controllers had trained Somali air traffic controllers to take over from them.

129. **Did the performance of the ASCs set them apart from other similar units?** Yes. We found that it was widely accepted that the ASCs performed a critical role and they were highly regarded by United Nations and Coalition forces. Lieutenant Colonel Brian Millen (ASC III) stated that the air traffic control unit had performed flawlessly in a high stress environment.¹¹¹ The United States relied upon Australians to pull their weight and they did.¹¹² As Lieutenant Colonel Paul Angelatos from the Movement Control Unit stated:

*The Americans loved us. They loved the fact that we never said no, probably to our detriment. We always took a task on. We always delivered. Yes, some of the tasks that we did in those early stages were, I've got to say, were pretty menial, pretty mundane, but we were there in theatre. We had a job to do, so we never said no, didn't matter what it was. We provided support to anyone and everyone.*¹¹³

130. It was submitted that the United States could rely upon few other contingents in theatre.¹¹⁴ UNITAF's successful and consistent reliance on Australia led to increased demands which included the request to provide air traffic controllers. It was widely regarded that the dedication of the controllers at the airfield and the movers of equipment and personnel were critical to the ongoing operation of UNOSOM II. General Aboo Samah Bin Aboo Bakar from Malaysia, Forces Command UNOSOM thanked Australia for its valuable contribution to the Mission and sought to extend the role of AFS at the airfield for as long as possible.¹¹⁵

131. **Individual recognition.** The Australian Service Contingents received the highest number of individual awards for service in Somalia, with two decorations in the Order of Australia, five awards of the Conspicuous Service Cross, two awards of the Conspicuous Service Medal and one Commendation for Distinguished Service (see Appendix 3).

132. **Contemporaneous Meritorious Unit Citation examples.** In reaching its conclusion, the Tribunal considered the nearest contemporaneous examples of Meritorious Unit Citations to ASCs, which were also land based operations in the early to mid-1990s. These were ASCs 1 and 2 to Operation TAMAR in Rwanda and the Force Communication Unit attached to Operation GEMINI in Cambodia. We observed that the performance of the ASCs deployed to Operation TAMAR was described with the words: 'sustained', 'outstanding', 'discipline', 'courage', 'commitment', 'resilience' and 'bravery'. The Tribunal considers that the

¹¹⁰ *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p.190.

¹¹¹ Ibid, p.178 – *Report by Lieutenant Colonel B Millen, 'Brief on additional manpower requirements by COMASC UNOSOM II, 9 February 1994.*

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Submission 31 Lieutenant Paul Angelatos (Retd) p73.

¹¹⁴ Submission 23 Colonel Trevor Jones CSC (Retd) p 7.

¹¹⁵ Kenyan request to UN to extend Australia's involvement in Somalia Oct 1994-AWM260 3-19.

performance and achievements of all four ASCs in support of UNOSOM I and UNOSOM II could also be described in the above terms.

FINDING: ASC I (30 April 1993 to 31 May 1993), ASC II, ASC III and ASC IV meet the eligibility criteria for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation for their service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION: ASC I (30 April 1993 to 31 May 1993), ASC II, ASC III and ASC IV be awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation to recognise their service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION:

- a) **The Minister for Defence recommend to the Governor-General that service with the First and Second United Nations Operations in Somalia from 17 October 1992 to 30 April 1993 be declared a warlike operation for the purposes of the Australian Active Service Medal; and**
- b) **the Meritorious Unit Citation then be awarded to ASC I for service from 17 October 1992 to 30 April 1993.**

1 RAR Battalion Group/Australian Force Somalia

133. Our assessment of the service of 1 RAR Battalion Group (the Battalion Group) deployed to Somalia on Operation SOLACE against the eligibility criteria is as follows. In making this assessment, and in light of Defence's submission¹¹⁶ we have also considered the service of the national command element, Headquarters, Australian Forces Somalia.

134. **Was the Battalion Group serving in 'warlike operations'?** Yes. Operation SOLACE was declared a 'warlike' operation from 9 December 1992 to 4 May 1993. This covered the entire period of operational deployment of the Battalion Group.

¹¹⁶ Submission 29B, Department of Defence, p.4.

135. **Were the operations of the Battalion Group for an extended period?** Yes. It served for 17 weeks without interruption.

136. **Was the service of the Battalion Group ‘sustained’?** Yes. Defence in its submission accepted that:

*“1 RAR Battalion Group were deployed on Operation SOLACE (UNITAF) in Somalia for nearly five months and so the Battalion Group’s performance, based on the precedent set by the Meritorious Unit Citation awarded for Operation TAMAR in Rwanda, could now be re-assessed and described as ‘sustained’.”*¹¹⁷

137. The Tribunal agrees with the Defence position. We further considered that the arduous and difficult living and working conditions, exacerbated by the inhumane environment contributed to the ‘sustained’ nature of the operation. All submitters spoke of the sustained and intense rate of effort with a 24 hour, seven day work cycle. Primitive living conditions made rest and recuperation difficult. A submitter from 3rd/4th Cavalry Regiment, stated that ‘rest’ periods were often spent repairing vehicles, often with poor supplies.¹¹⁸

138. **Did the Battalion Group perform ‘substantially above its normal capacity’?** Yes. In arriving at this conclusion, we first assessed its normal capacity to deploy on operations. At the end of 1992 Australia had only two high readiness battalions. 1 RAR Battalion Group was operationally ready.

139. **Experience level.** As with the ASCs, we heard that the Battalion Group had few operationally experienced members. Lieutenant General John Caligari (Retd), the then 1 RAR Battalion Group Operations Officer stated that *No one in my company would be lucky to swing a 15-year service medal amongst them, and certainly no Vietnam experience left over.*¹¹⁹

140. **Exercises in 1992.** We then looked at the training regime of the Battalion Group to determine its preparedness for peacekeeping. In March 1992 1 RAR took part in Exercise KANGAROO 92, (as did HMA Ship’s *Tobruk* and *Jervis Bay*), which involved an amphibious tactical lodgement and major clearing operations on Melville and Bathurst Islands. These islands off Northern Australia had a similar warm climate to Somalia, which was said to have been of benefit to the troops in Somalia.

141. In the second half of 1992, Exercise SWIFT EAGLE took place, which was a week-long Battalion exercise. 1 RAR engaged in ‘Service Protected Evacuation’ (SPE) exercises as opposed to usual close combat jungle training. It was tasked to apply the Rules of Engagement (ROE) that set the protocols for use of lethal force to be used. It was submitted that SPE proved invaluable training for Somalia as soldiers practiced controlling population movement and

¹¹⁷ Submission 29 Department of Defence.

¹¹⁸ Submission 16 Warrant Officer 1 Dennis Barlow and oral submission 24 February 2022.

¹¹⁹ Oral submission, Lieutenant General John Caligari, AO DSC (Retd), 23 February 2022.

interacting with civilians within an area of operations. It would also prove handy training for crowd control at food distribution centres in Baidoa.¹²⁰

142. Whilst senior leaders, such as Lieutenant General Caligari, believed this training was timely, we note it was only for a week and not in an urban setting like Baidoa. It is accepted by the senior leaders that the Battalion Group had very little experience with military operations in urban terrain. At that time there was no urban terrain training facility.¹²¹ It was identified after Operation SOLACE that additional training in urban patrolling and building search techniques should be included.¹²²

143. **Pre-deployment training.** In the early hours of 15 December 1992, 1 RAR Battalion Group was put on short notice to deploy for Operation SOLACE. This did not provide much time to tailor training for the peacekeeping operation. Submitters stated that they were not given detailed briefings of what to expect in the Baidoa region. The Land Commander, Major General Murray Blake, later recalled that it was frustrating not to have a clear intelligence picture of the likely threat prior to deploying.¹²³ While the Battalion Group's advance party had the benefit of some brief handover training from US Marines stationed in Baidoa, preparation even resorted to looking at Ampol maps of the region for familiarisation.

144. **Training - combat versus peacekeeping.** It is worth reflecting that in the 1990s Army Regiments routinely trained for combat operations rather than peacekeeping. Many infantrymen likely hoped for an opportunity to test their combat skills against Somali gunmen seen on the nightly media reports.¹²⁴ However, there were strict ROE and orders around opening fire. These were to 'respond in a proportionate manner to a hostile act when there is clear evidence of hostile intent'. While this could involve the use of deadly force, the infantry would find themselves essentially operating as a heavily armed police force, deterring hostile groups from interfering with United Nations and non-government organisation humanitarian activities.

145. **Diverging views - readiness for Somalia.** Senior leaders submitted that Battalion Group personnel, both individually and collectively, had been satisfactorily trained for Somalia. Lieutenant General Caligari submitted that the Battalion Group was "90 percent ready and 10 percent would have to be learnt in location".¹²⁵ By contrast, junior ranked submitters were united in their view that their training did not adequately prepare them. Although the training of 1992 was duly acknowledged, submitters said nothing could prepare them for their role as peacekeepers in a third world country with a starving population.¹²⁶ Few had been to

¹²⁰ LTCOL Hurley was of the view that their SPE training the previous year was time well spent. Letter Hurley to Brigadier Abigail 21 February 1993. *Still the Same – Reflections on Active Service from Bardia to Baidoa* – Army Doctrine Centre 1996.

¹²¹ *Still the Same*, p233.

¹²² Land Headquarters Minute – Operation Solace key issues/ lessons learned summary, Major General Murray Blake, LCAUST 8 June 1993, p 8.

¹²³ *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p.86.

¹²⁴ Breen, Associate Professor Bob, *Australian Military Force Projection 1980s and 1990s*, ANU Thesis for Doctor of Philosophy, May 2006 p.61.

¹²⁵ Oral submission, Lieutenant General John Caligari, AO, DSC (Retd), 23 February 2022.

¹²⁶ Oral submission, Mr Sean Robinson, 23 February 2022.

Africa. To them this was the difficult 10 percent for which they could not prepare, which put them well and truly out of their comfort zone. Meeting this challenge put their service above their normal operating capacity.

146. This was graphically illustrated by Mr Sean Robinson, then a Section Commander in 1 RAR, who stated:

*“the thing that always comes to mind about Somalia is the humidity, the wind, the heat and the stench. I’m haunted by the memories of children so malnourished they were skin and bone, without the strength to hold their own head up. People begging for the slightest bit of food and water and so desperate they would fight or kill to have some. It was not uncommon to come across a body or shallow grave, so shallow some of their body parts are exposed. And the stench; I will never forget that stench.”*¹²⁷

147. The Tribunal found that in regard to the ‘normal’ capacity of junior leadership and the rank and file, the conditions and the environment confronted in Somalia could not be reasonably, or fully, replicated in training in Australia prior to deployment.

148. **Assessing the difficulties faced by the Battalion Group in operating at normal capacity.** The Tribunal heard much evidence about unexpected operational dynamics which junior leadership and their soldiers were able to overcome which helped achieve mission success, which we discuss below.

149. **Dangers.** When the Battalion Group first arrived in Baidoa it was entering a highly unstable environment. Submitters spoke about the constant threat and risk of lethal attack. The main difficulty was that the indigenous nature of hostile elements made them difficult to discern from the local civilian populations. As Lieutenant General Caligari stated,

*“we all went across thinking it was the bandits we were fighting because the bandits were the ones who were attacking the non-government organisations but we pretty quickly realised that the people who were civilians by day being used by the NGOs by night as guards that were the people who were then fighting us in the evenings.”*¹²⁸

150. This issue contributed in a real way to the high level of constant threat and risk faced by Australian troops. One submitter described Baidoa as the ‘Wild West’ given the prevalence of armed Somalia males with uncertain loyalties who were, at times, high on the drug ‘kwaat’.

151. As an illustration of mission success, by the time the Battalion Group left, the environment of the Bai Region had stabilised. By this time the main threats to Australian personnel were bandits who maintained a low profile in most circumstances.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ Ibid.

¹²⁸ Submission 28 Lieutenant General John Caligari AO DSC (Retd).

¹²⁹ Brigadier Abigail reported from his visit in March 1993¹²⁹, the AFS were held in high regard by the majority of the population of Baidoa.

152. As with the submitters from ASCs, those from the Battalion Group who had gone on to deploy on other operations reported that their service in Somalia was as difficult and dangerous, if not more so, than operations such as East Timor and Afghanistan.¹³⁰

153. **Difficult living and working conditions.** Soldiers faced truly difficult conditions. Soldiers lived in rudimentary canvas shelters which gave little relief from the heat and dust. They slept on stretchers. At times there was no electricity. Water was scarce. Rest and recreation were limited.

154. Streets were littered with animal and human faeces and shallow buried bodies were at times visible. One submitter spoke of an ‘arm poking out of the ground’. Others spoke of the constant stench.

155. The culture and climate at times sapped the patience, tolerance and energy of western trained forces, including the Australians but notwithstanding the extreme challenges, high operational tempo was maintained. The Group patrolled 24 hours a day, seven days a week looking for bandits. Patrols were described as ‘marathons’. Warrant Officer Dennis Barlow described:

*Dressed in flak jacket and helmet, the soldiers had to walk one kilometre before they left the perimeter of the air field, then cover 12 – 15 kilometres in temperatures of 40C. To sleep after the patrol was near impossible. A company of men (more than 100) were crammed into a roofless building in sweltering conditions.*¹³¹

156. Conditions at the national command headquarters were also primitive. They were based in a damaged and abandoned library adjacent to HQ UNITAF located in the US diplomatic compound in Mogadishu. Until his staff arrived with communications equipment and other supplies, Colonel Mellor did not have a functioning headquarters and had to request local American support staff to assist him and his staff to refurbish the derelict and rat-infested library. Even after the remainder of his staff and stores arrived, little could be done to improve the cramped and unhygienic living and working conditions.¹³²

156. **Maintaining high availability of personnel and equipment.** With the short notice to deploy, the Australian Army’s logistics and movement systems were put under severe pressure. After two weeks of driving on rough roads and tracks in a hot dusty environment with camel bush thorns, vehicle spare parts were being used at unprecedented rates. Frequent puncturing of tyres and damage to inner tubes had a significant impact on operations. Soldiers at repair points felt exposed to attack.

157. Logistical difficulties with supplies became urgent. The Australian Army resupply system was unresponsive and exposed a number of weaknesses which could not be fixed during

¹³⁰ Mr Graeme Hunter’s oral evidence 23 February 2022, – he went onto deploy six times since – said Somalia ‘had the most challenges’, little external support, constantly on edge.

¹³¹ Submission 16 Mr Dennis Barlow para 17

¹³² Official History *The Limits of Peacekeeping: Australian Missions in Africa and the Americas, 1992–2005* p.71.

the operation. This meant that Armoured Personnel Carrier drivers and maintainers were having to operate above their normal capacity. Despite this, the Battalion Group maintained high levels of equipment availability. Further, individual availability was extremely high throughout the deployment and only a small number were replaced for medical or compassionate reasons, despite very short notice for the operation.¹³³

159. **Innovation and adaption.** Many examples of innovation and adaption were described as a means of meeting the challenges created by the environment and logistic shortages. These included operating Armoured Personnel Carriers with worn track links. Lack of track link replacement meant the Transport Platoon worked tirelessly.¹³⁴ “Make and mend” was the order of the day.

160. The Tribunal assesses that today a very experienced and more deployable Australian Defence Force would have less need for such innovation and adaption. However, for the largely inexperienced members of the Battalion group it was necessary for mission success and the safety and welfare of those deployed. Warrant Officer Barlow, then a section commander in B Squadron, 3rd/4th Cavalry Regiment, told the Tribunal:

*“We had to adapt procedures, improvise, adapt new methods and share our knowledge of what worked among ourselves. I must say that all personnel in the group contributed to the success of the mission; we gave our all, including admin and maintenance staff who took part in patrols to augment the infantry sections. There was no great battalion manoeuvre operations. In fact, after the first few weeks even company operations fell by the wayside. This operation hinged on platoons and on the sections defending them.”*¹³⁵

161. Two noteworthy examples of the use of innovation and adaption by other ranks are described by Professor Robert Breen in his book, *A Little Bit of Hope – Australian Force Somalia*:

*“The next day the convoy sent to Mogadishu to pick up the stores from the C130 arrived back at 7.30 p.m. The stores had to be unloaded from the trucks by hand. The Australian warehouse fork lift had broken down within days of the Australian arrival at Baidoa in January and needed a small seal replaced. Harnwell wrote: Unfortunately the fork lift seal is still to be received. The seal, no bigger than a bottle top, had now been outstanding for eight weeks. The fork lift operator could not understand why the Army re-supply system could not provide a simple, small seal that was easily purchased in Australia for a few dollars. He wrote to a friend in Australia who purchased the seal and sent it to him through the international mail system later. Similarly, Warrant Officer Michael Robinson, Artificer Sergeant Major of B Squadron, had spare parts for a generator sent through the international mail system by a friend after they failed to arrive through the re-supply system”.*¹³⁶

¹³³ Submission 28 Lieutenant General John Caligari AO, DSC, (Retd) on behalf of I RAR Association p 7

¹³⁴ Major David McKaskill, CO B Squadron 3rd/4th Cavalry Regiment team in Somalia was awarded a CDF Commendation for distinguished performance of his duties.

¹³⁵ Mr Dennis Barlow oral evidence 24 February 2022.

¹³⁶ Bob Breen *A Little Bit of Hope – Australian Force Somalia* Allen and Unwin 1998, page 263.

162. The accuracy of these statements was confirmed by witnesses during hearing, with Lieutenant General Caligari testifying:

“One of the best (examples of innovation and adaption) is our postal warrant officer who was required to pick up our post from Mombasa. Africa is rife with graft and corruption, so he was paying out of his own pocket to get our mail released to him in Mombasa and bring it back with him to the battalion group. We discovered afterwards that we wouldn’t have had mail. And, in fact, I think at one stage sometime after Somalia, someone tried to charge him.”¹³⁷

163. **Peacekeeping prowess.** By the end of their deployment, the vast majority of ordinary Somali citizens became used to Australian patrols and warmed to their ‘firm, fair and friendly’ manner.¹³⁸ This was said to have been a contrast to those from some other countries who reportedly had more of a ‘storm trooper’ approach. Soldiers used interpreters to gain valuable intelligence, and Australian tactics of friendliness helped explain why Somalis came forward to pass information through interpreters to counter-intelligence teams and commanders on operations. Human intelligence was considered key to the success of the mission.

165. Many were eager for combat but were restrained in their actions notwithstanding the provocative actions of some Somalis who might spit, and throw stones and fire at the airfield. This did mean that their patience was sorely tested for some Somalis, whom they held in contempt. But the Commanding Officer emphasised the importance of using minimum force and warned that any member found guilty of abusing Somali citizens would be punished and sent back home in disgrace. None were sent home.¹³⁹ ¹⁴⁰ The Battalion Group showed restraint. The Group defused potentially hostile situations, whether on patrols or guarding non-government organisation compounds at food distribution centres. As a solution, at food distribution areas, soldiers would carry the heavy grain packs for Somali women when Somali men would not help.

166. By the end of its deployment, the Battalion Group had taken part in seven major operations, had undertaken about 1,100 foot patrols, ensured the safe delivery over 8,000 tons of humanitarian relief and seized some 935 weapons. They had some contacts with Somali gunmen, which was mainly at night, and a small number had been killed and wounded with 70 detained and turned over to the Auxiliary Security Forces.

167. **Summary.** The Tribunal found that the Battalion Group, including Headquarters Australian Forces Somalia, performed substantially above its normal capacity for operations. The dangers faced, the living and working conditions experienced, and the challenges of supply, were met head on. For a Group which had no training or experience in humanitarian relief, including working with non-government organisations, it performed substantially above its expected capacity.

¹³⁷ Lieutenant General John Caligari, AO DSC (Retd), Oral Submission, 23 February 2022.

¹³⁸ Army leadership motto ‘firm, fair and friendly, but not familiar’

¹³⁹ Still the Same – Reflections on Active Service from Bardia to Baidoa – Army Doctrine Centre 1996

¹⁴⁰ Still the Same – Reflections on Active Service from Bardia to Baidoa – Army Doctrine Centre 1996

168. **Was the Battalion Group's performance 'outstanding'?** Yes. The Tribunal found that 1 RAR Battalion Group's performance was outstanding for the following reasons.

169. **Junior leadership.** The Tribunal assessed that the success at Baidoa was enabled by strong and effective junior leadership and the performance of soldiers in small teams. As with the ASCs, the Tribunal heard many accounts of the independence and autonomy of junior leaders because of the nature of the mission. The Tribunal heard ample evidence of conspicuous and prominent junior leadership. In this regard then Lieutenant Colonel Hurley stated:

*"I think the whole operation put a lot of emphasis on junior leaders, section commanders and platoon commanders in particular. I'd often give a platoon commander with a section of APCs, his platoon and an area 25 to 30 kilometres square and that was his area to look after. Not only might he have a convoy for a day that he was looking after, but for a week he could own a piece of turf with his own platoon, have sufficient assets to do the job there, and get on with it"*¹⁴¹

170. An example of effective junior leadership in regard to keeping his team ready for the mission's challenges, Mr Sean Robinson, a Section Commander, C Coy, 9 Platoon, 1RAR stated:

*"but if we came back from an activity and I had to do a patrol debrief, instead of taking all my men up to headquarters for that debrief, I would take the essential people I needed and send the rest off to go and take a break. If I could reduce the amount of blokes doing a particular activity to gain more rest for the blokes I would. But there was a number of other activities that we could be called up at short notice, like quick reaction forces and so on as well. So it was very hard but you managed where you could".*¹⁴²

171. **Mission success.** The primary United Nations mission was to establish a secure environment for urgent humanitarian assistance. This was achieved through three key tasks: securing Baidoa airfield and key installations, securing food storage and distribution points, and mobile security for relief convoys in and out of the area. These tasks were all achieved by extensive patrolling, establishing check points and extensive liaison with the Somali people.

172. As set out in the Chief of General Staff Commendation, the Battalion Group had the ability to appreciate the intent of the operation and thus reconcile immediate military demands with longer-term requirements. Productive 'bridge building' with the local population made the Battalion Group highly effective in what became a secondary objective – nation building. To that end the Group had undertaken clean up days, supported the reopening of schools and set up orphanages. (These orphanages enjoyed continued humanitarian support by the ASCs

¹⁴¹ Still the Same – Reflections on Active Service from Bardia to Baidoa – Army Doctrine Centre 1996 p237

¹⁴² Oral submission, Mr Sean Robinson, 23 February 2022.

after the Group left). Stabilisation and the secure environment by the end was evidenced in 'Australia-Somalia' soccer match attended by more than 3,000 locals.

173. Professor Bob Breen submitted to the Tribunal that a unit could be assessed for its performance under pressure; whether it was exceptional performance; and the comparative performance of that unit. To Professor Breen, 1 RAR Battalion Group's performance had undoubtedly been under pressure. It had achieved mission success against the odds. To that end the problems presented in the logistic system were studied at the Australian Command and Staff College for years to come.¹⁴³ It had been exceptional. Aside from mission achievement, the troops were generally very well behaved and there was minimal disciplinary action. Comparatively, there was no other land based Australian unit in Somalia from which to make comparison other than the ASCs. The Tribunal found that the performance of 1 RAR Battalion Group compared favourably to that of the ASCs, which we considered met the criteria for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation.

174. **'Mission stretch'.** Lieutenant Colonel Hurley referred to 'mission stretch' when he reflected upon his time in Somalia.¹⁴⁴ He said that in some instances it was by default and others were deliberate decisions to widen the scope of the operation. Mission stretch included the clean-ups, rebuilding, the planting of a crop and orphanages referred to above¹⁴⁵. One of the first things that the local leaders wanted was the reintroduce law and order. This meant assisting with re-establishing a police force, judicial and penal system. To him this was also critical so he assigned many soldiers to essentially policing jobs. Australians who had been novices in nation-building and civic action were commended for their mission achievement. The Citation for the CGS Commendation reads *...the Battalion Group not only achieved this mission but sought to re-establish the basis of the civil infrastructure... I commend the Battalion Group for its success in this operation.*

175. **Senior leadership.** Unlike some previous peacekeeping missions which were largely commanded and sustained by United Nations forces, the Battalion Group was commanded and sustained in a self-reliant manner. Submitters to the Tribunal spoke with warmth and respect for then Lieutenant Colonel Hurley, who set the tenor of the operation right from the start. The quality of command¹⁴⁶ is undoubtedly a large factor behind the mission's success and the overall outstanding performance of the Battalion.

176. During the mission, Lieutenant Colonel Hurley became increasingly drawn into local politics and became the "Chief Elder" of the region. He became the *de facto* military governor and attended meetings with elders and political faction leaders. As such, he held a unique position in Australian military history. As he later recalled,

¹⁴³ Breen, Associate Professor Bob, *A Little Bit of Hope – Australian Force Somalia*, Allen & Unwin, St Leonards, NSW 1998

¹⁴⁴ In 1994.

¹⁴⁵ Which the ASCs had attempted to support after their return.

¹⁴⁶ Citation for the Distinguished Service Cross, CO 1 RAR.

*I was very much a novice as governor. It's not something which rested very comfortably with me because there were quite a number of responsibilities that I was given and I had very little preparation, and certainly no training to be able to achieve – particularly in my relationship with emerging political organisations and with eldership in the area which was a very important and powerful community organisation.*¹⁴⁷

178. Concerning the service of HQ AFS, Lieutenant Colonel Hurley stated:

*HQAFS played a very important role as the national command element for the Australian force. Their main jobs were to look after the prudent use of our force, secondly, to ensure that the logistic support was maintained and we were receiving what we required on a timely basis. Colonel Mellor and his staff were very much the bridge for me back to Australia and the means by which my force's particular needs could be expressed to in-country American headquarters.*¹⁴⁸

179. **International reputation.** The efforts of the Battalion Group were publicly acknowledged more than the “quiet efforts” of the ASCs. Special Representative of the Secretary-General, United Nations, US Admiral Jonathan Howe, congratulated the Group on behalf of UNOSOM. He said that the Group had ‘gotten rave reviews from NGOs to elders’ and that the Group had ‘set some very high standards for [its] successors’.¹⁴⁹

180. American Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston, Commanding Officer UNITAF, was very complimentary of the Battalion Group’s operations and the high level of interoperability between the United States and Australian forces. He wanted them to remain in Somalia.¹⁵⁰ It is acknowledged that the 1RAR Battalion Group did a better job of securing the humanitarian relief area than some other forces¹⁵¹ who were assigned to UNITAF. Admiral Howe had formally requested the Group stay in Somalia until the end of June. He praised the Battalion as ‘the most competent unit in Somalia being well trained, well-motivated, highly organised, clear in its mission from the outset and requiring very little political guidance’.¹⁵² The Chief of General Staff Commendation sets out that: *The Battalion Group’s method of operation and activities were acclaimed by the HQ Headquarters Unified Task Force.*

181. Commander AFS, Colonel Mellor, said in his post operation report, stated:

¹⁴⁷ *Still the Same*, Interview with Lieutenant Colonel DJ Hurley 28 July 1993

¹⁴⁸ *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p.107.

¹⁴⁹ Letter to COL Hurley 18 April 1993 Various thank you letters from Non-Government Organisations in Somalia located on AWM388 7/9/2.

¹⁵⁰ Review of Service Recognition RAAF Ubon (1965-1968) Brigadier Peter Abigail, March 2008.

¹⁵¹ A number of issues with the Canadian military contribution were noted in the extensive ‘Report of the Canadian Commission of Inquiry’ into Somalia, conducted in 1997. 160 recommendations were made. There were said to be serious issues with leadership, particularly at senior levels, discipline, training and planning. The Inquiry predicted that the ‘Somali debacle’ would be a painful and sensitive one for the Canadian military for years to come. – doc 116. In contrast to Australia’s ‘lessons learned’ post deployment, the primary issue was that the logistic system failed to adequately respond to the needs of a deployed force on active service.

¹⁵² *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p.152.

*“From my perspective, the performance of the assets deployed on Operation SOLACE has been commendable. The operation has re-affirmed that the quality of our personnel, procedures and equipment is comparable, if not superior to other major nations who participated in Operation RESTORE HOPE. Our ability to operate with US forces has been successfully confirmed.”*¹⁵³

182. **Local reputation.** The Chief of the General Staff Commendation also sets out that *the Battalion Group’s method of operation and activities were acclaimed by, the local population, and non-government agencies. Aspects of its activities were used as models for other contingents in Somalia.* After the departure of the Battalion Group it was replaced by French forces. Locals of the Bai region lobbied hard to keep Australians in the region but to no avail.¹⁵⁴

183. The Australian Force Somalia was the only army to receive a letter of commendation from the non-government organisation community in Baidoa.¹⁵⁵ The National Director of the NGO, Care Australia, Mr Ian Harris, spoke of the legacy of the AFS:

*Today Somalis living in and around Baidoa are no longer hungry, the children are healthy and the people have enduring memories of the good work done by the Australian Army in their city.*¹⁵⁶

There were also numerous letters of appreciation from government and non-government organisations, and several United States officials.¹⁵⁷

184. **One death and minimal injuries.** On 2 April 1992 Lance Corporal McAliney died from an accidental discharge. His was the only Australian loss of life in theatre.

185. **Summary.** The Tribunal determined that for the purpose of eligibility for the Meritorious Unit Citation, the performance of the 1 RAR Battalion Group meets the criteria of ‘outstanding’ performance. The Group received deserved national and international praise. Its performance set it apart from others.

186. **Awards.** A relatively small number of individual awards were awarded to the Battalion Group, including Headquarters Australian Force Somalia. These included two awards of the Distinguished Service Cross, one award of the Distinguished Service Medal and six Commendations for Distinguished Service.

187. **Contemporaneous Meritorious Unit Citation examples.** The Tribunal considered the nearest contemporaneous examples of a Meritorious Unit Citation to the Battalion Group and found, as with the assessments of the ASCs, that relevant comparisons could be drawn with the Citations awarded to Contingents 1 and 2 for service on Operation TAMAR in Rwanda, and the Force Communication Unit for its service on United Nations duties in Cambodia. To the

¹⁵³ Colonel Mellor, Commander AFS said in his post operation report, part 2 para 120.

¹⁵⁴ Submission 28 Lieutenant General John Caligari AO, DSC, (Retd) on behalf of I RAR Association p 6.

¹⁵⁵ *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p 142.

¹⁵⁶ Submission 16 Warrant Officer Dennis Barlow, para 25.

¹⁵⁷ Various thank you letters from Non-Government Organisations in Somalia located on AWM388 7/9/2.

Tribunal, the meritorious service of 1 RAR Battalion Group was at least as worthy as these units.

FINDING: The 1 RAR Battalion Group meets the eligibility criteria for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation for its service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION: The 1 RAR Battalion Group be awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation for its service in Somalia.

HMAS *Tobruk*

188. Our assessment of the service of HMAS *Tobruk* for its service on Operation SOLACE, against the eligibility criteria for the Meritorious Unit Citation is as follows.

189. HMAS *Tobruk*, together with HMAS *Jervis Bay*, conducted Australia's largest military sea-lift operation since the end of the Vietnam War. HMAS *Tobruk* was a 'heavy lift' ship, designed to transport vehicles, equipment, personnel, ammunition and stores. She was designed for joint Navy and Army amphibious operations.

190. **Was HMAS *Tobruk* serving in 'warlike operations'?** Yes. Service in the naval component of Operation SOLACE was declared 'warlike' from 10 January 1993 to 21 May 1993. This covered the entire period of *Tobruk*'s operational deployment within the Operation SOLACE area of operations in direct support of Commander Australian Forces Somalia and UNITAF elements conducting operations both on land and offshore.

191. **Were HMAS *Tobruk*'s operations for an extended period?** Yes. HMAS *Tobruk* served for a cumulative period of 89 days, some 12 weeks, in the Operation SOLACE area of operations from 19 January 1993 to 20 May 1993,¹⁵⁸ with little time for respite and maintenance. This did not include considerable time spent travelling to and from the area of operations.

192. **Were HMAS *Tobruk*'s operations 'sustained'?** Yes. The demands on the ship and her ship's company were constant and sustained both in terms of direct support provided to the Commander Australian Forces Somalia and UNITAF elements. From the ship's Reports of Proceedings, the Maritime Commander's Post Operation Report, written submissions and evidence given, we found that HMAS *Tobruk* consistently sustained her high level of operational tasking throughout the extended period set out above. HMAS *Tobruk*'s crew

¹⁵⁸ Submission 29B Defence HMAS *Tobruk* Report of Proceedings, June 1993, Annex A p 61-62.

remained at a high operational readiness state. The crew had limited time for rest and recreation during the 89 days in the area of operations, with a trip to the Seychelles being the only purely recreational visit prior to returning to the area of operations to extract the 1 RAR Battalion Group's stores and equipment. The six-month deployment came on top of a demanding year in 1992 with limited reprieve between deployments and considerable work to get the ship to a ready state to deploy.

193. In addition, HMAS *Tobruk* conducted five operational visits to Mombasa in Kenya during this period, moving a total of 1,450 tonnes of cargo to sustain the Australian Forces Somalia, UNITAF, the United Nations and to support UNICEF.

194. HMAS *Tobruk* had not been in a state of operational readiness when the ship was given short notice to deploy. It was in pieces in the dockyard, having suffered a major engineering defect to her main port engine. It is a credit to her crew that she was able to sustain 89 days in the area of operations and the six-month deployment without interruption. It is also worth remembering, when considering sustainability, that when HMAS *Tobruk* embarked it was unclear whether she would return to Australia or remain in theatre for the duration of the operation.

195. Any nervousness about HMAS *Tobruk*'s equipment unserviceability proved to be unwarranted. She arrived in the area of operations as scheduled and achieved her mission on station.

196. **Did HMAS *Tobruk* perform 'substantially above its normal capacity'?** Yes. The Tribunal first assessed what was the ship's normal capacity for operations, to determine if she performed substantially above it.

197. **Ship's normal capacity.** HMAS *Tobruk* was essentially a multi-purpose troop and roll-on/roll-off, heavy vehicle carrier with bow and stern door facilities. Accommodation was available for an embarked military force of 520 troops, their weapons and battle order. The ship could carry 1,300 tons of military cargo. Her normal complement numbered between 180 and 190 personnel. HMAS *Tobruk* had a permanent small Ship's Army Detachment consisting of 14 regular army personnel whose role was to embark troops and stores. She had two decks for operating helicopters but no hangar. In her normal capacity, HMAS *Tobruk* was capable of transporting, landing and recovering an embarked force, and supporting them ashore for a limited period.

198. **Ship's additional capabilities and personnel.** In addition to the ship's normal capacity, HMAS *Tobruk* embarked a Sea King helicopter and a 16 person detachment from 817 Squadron at HMAS *Albatross*. This included aircrew and maintenance personnel. The Sea King was chosen as it was a proven medium lift maritime helicopter capable of being deployed and supported from HMAS *Tobruk*. In addition, there were personnel from Clearance Diving Team One. The ship's medical staff was also augmented to provide an enhanced 'Level Two' capability together with a dental team. As these force elements were under the command of the Commanding Officer of HMAS *Tobruk*, they are considered part of the ship's company.

199. **Training of ship's crew.** HMAS *Tobruk* trained extensively throughout 1992. This included Exercise KANGAROO 92, Exercise TASMAN LINK and Exercise SWIFT EAGLE. During Exercise KANGAROO 92, HMAS *Tobruk* and HMAS *Jervis Bay* had rehearsed sea-lift and logistics over the shore operations with the Army, which was said to have stood them in good stead for Somalia. This included the Ship's Army Detachment, which was said to be well trained and briefed with 'high level of command and working effectiveness after several amphibious exercises during 1992'.¹⁵⁹

200. **Crew's experience.** When HMAS *Tobruk* departed from Townsville enroute to Somalia, 45 per cent of its ship's company were brand new,¹⁶⁰ including the Commanding Officer, Commander Kevin Taylor, RAN. The impact of this was that the newcomers to the crew had to adjust to the ship, their roles, and to teams within a short space of time. HMAS *Tobruk* made good use of her long passage to Somalia, with her changed crew, to conduct extensive training. This included additional small arms training for the ship's defence teams, intelligence briefs and mariner drills.

201. Consistent with other Australian Defence Force personnel in Somalia, only a very few of her crew had any prior operational experience or peacekeeping experience.

202. **Living and working conditions.** The Reports of Proceedings also indicated that crew morale remained high throughout the deployment, despite relentless activity and longer hours in trying conditions, including water rationing.¹⁶¹ 'Whole ship' evolutions involved manual work that routinely took place in hot, uncomfortable and at times, dangerous conditions particularly when unloading at Mogadishu port where the security situation was fluid. The teamwork and ethos¹⁶² exhibited by all during those evolutions was commendable. On average, members of the ship's company had only nine full days off during the six month deployment.¹⁶³ There were very few discipline issues.¹⁶⁴

203. Water was a precious commodity and at times the ship was required to provide water at short notice for coalition forces. This meant that the ship's company was placed on further restrictions to cater for the extra demand. While water restrictions are not uncommon in warships, restrictions were in force throughout the six-month deployment.

204. **Operations.** HMAS *Tobruk* conducted tasks within the logistic arena, provided surveillance support as well as communications relaying and monitoring which were an extension above her basic tasks and contributed to the overall operations. HMAS *Tobruk's* command also ensured that Operational Level of Capability was also sustained throughout the deployment by routinely operating in company with coalition ships, conducting underway replenishments, seamanship, and gunnery serials off the coast of Somalia.

¹⁵⁹ Mr Peter Macdonald, written responses to Tribunal questions 30 March 2022.

¹⁶⁰ Submission 19 Commander Kevin Taylor RFD, CSC, RAN (Retd).

¹⁶¹ Captain Nick Bramwell RAN (Retd) Oral evidence 29 March 2022.

¹⁶² Submission 7 Mr Duncan Perryman, and oral submission, 23 February 2022.

¹⁶³ Doolan, Ken *HMAS Tobruk, A Warship for every crisis*, Grinkle Press Pty Ltd, Queanbeyan, NSW p.100

¹⁶⁴ Oral submission, Mr Duncan Perryman, 23 February 2022.

205. **Dangers at Mogadishu port.** A similar level of insecurity applied to the port area as to the airfield (discussed in the context of the service of the four ASCs). The port was patrolled by United States Marines to prevent attack. Incursions were not infrequent. Threats were present when HMAS *Tobruk* was alongside to load and unload and also applied to her personnel proceeding ashore for duty. This included the ship's helicopter and its crew as it traversed across land, particularly over Mogadishu and on missions to and from Baidoa.¹⁶⁵ It carried a light machine gun in the cabin, but there were no reports of it being used during the deployment.

206. The Tribunal heard that HMAS *Tobruk* entered Mogadishu harbour at a heightened state of readiness approximately eight times during her deployment.¹⁶⁶ There were also threats operating in the vicinity of the Somali coast where there were pirates and bandits.

207. In her written submission to the Tribunal, Lieutenant Commander Buckingham, then serving in HMAS *Tobruk* as a Leading Seaman in the Supply Branch, observed that:

*having served in the RAN for an extended period of time and (having) been deployed to operations throughout the world (Somalia, Bougainville, East Timor, MEAO (HMAS MANOORA & JTF633 AMAB), I can honestly say looking back Somalia was the most dangerous deployment I have ever been involved in.*¹⁶⁷

208. **Ship's Army Detachment.** We heard that the Detachment, although operationally ready, could not train for 'the madness of Mogadishu' as they mixed with the myriad of Coalition forces and half-hostile Somalis. In short, their basic role of stevedoring was the same, but they had to perform to a much higher level. The individual responsibility on the member was much higher. In his written submission to the Tribunal, the Detachment's Ship's Sergeant Major, Warrant Officer Class Two Peter Macdonald, said there were numerous examples of a junior non-commissioned officers or private soldiers in charge of 20-man 'cut-throat' Somali or Kenyan work gangs during loading/unloading operations. He stated that they 'struck the right note with (their) charges and had them joking and laughing and still working hard underneath an overhead ship's crane'.¹⁶⁸

209. The Detachment also had a close working relationship with the United States forces who were working in and around ships at Mogadishu port. In addition to an ad hoc arrangement with the Marines, an in-theatre local exchange of Detachment personnel and soldiers of the United States Army 24th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) was instituted. This proved very successful.

210. **Sea King helicopter – logistical support.** HMAS *Tobruk*'s helicopter was utilised for cross decking purposes, logistic transfers at sea, vertical replenishments, support to the 1 RAR

¹⁶⁵ Such was the risk that ADFHQ directed in mid-April 1993 that the helicopter cease supporting 1 RAR as the risk outweighed the benefit.

¹⁶⁶ Submission 19 Commander Kevin Taylor RFD, CSC, RAN (Retd).

¹⁶⁷ Submission 6 Lieutenant Commander Dianne Buckingham RAN.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

Battalion Group in Baidoa, and transporting personnel between the ship and AFS headquarters ashore in Mogadishu. It also undertook surface search and surveillance. The helicopter's availability throughout the deployment was impressive due to the commendable effort by the HS 817 Squadron detachment maintenance personnel who had to improvise and adapt to the unique circumstances.¹⁶⁹ As HMAS *Tobruk* did not have a hangar, the helicopter was constantly exposed to the prevailing environmental conditions, including extreme heat, excessive sand, dust, and constant saltwater residue.¹⁷⁰

211. **Logistical Support to Coalition forces.** The movement of stores from Mombasa to Mogadishu in support of Coalition forces provided a valuable offset for coalition logistic support to the AFS. HMAS *Tobruk* conducted five operational visits to Mombasa in Kenya during this period, moving a total of 1,450 tonnes of cargo to sustain the AFS, UNITAF and the United Nations and to support UNICEF. The support of UNICEF came about because then Commander Taylor was proactive in getting the necessary permissions to do so. These were above the ship's crew's normal duties and her initial role and added greatly to the humanitarian effort.

212. As the only Australian ship within the area of operations for an extended period, HMAS *Tobruk* was instrumental in building multinational relationships across the coalition nations. We heard from Commander Taylor that the US Forces Commander in Somalia, General Johnson, 'was effusive in his praise of HMAS *Tobruk*'s efforts'.¹⁷¹ There were occasions when this logistic support extended beyond her core amphibious and sea transport role. This included the resupply of the Canadian replenishment ship HMCS *Preserver* with a large quantity of frozen food (69 pallets) by heavyweight jackstay underway at sea.¹⁷² HMAS *Tobruk*'s presence at sea in the area of operation commanded respect from the United States, Canadian, Italian, Indian and Pakistani Naval forces.¹⁷³

213. **Sea King – multinational operation.** The Sea King helicopter was involved in Multi-National Force surface search operations for the small merchant ship MV *Maria*, which had sailed from Europe with a load of weapons for a Somali warlord. While the Sea King and its aircrew had the operational capacity to assist in the conduct of such operations, normal operations for HMAS *Tobruk* and any embarked aircraft did not involve surface, sub-surface, search coordination operations. The Sea King conducted several probing sorties, covering more than 40,000 square miles of ocean conducting searches between Mogadishu and Mombasa.¹⁷⁴

213. **Extra duties above normal capacity.** The following are examples of flexibility above normal capacity.

214. **Support to AFS and the 1 RAR Battalion Group.** HMAS *Tobruk* provided backup communications in support of 1 RAR in Baidoa and Commander AFS in Mogadishu. She

¹⁶⁹ Submission 07 Mr Duncan Perryman.

¹⁷⁰ Oral submission, Captain Nick Bramwell RAN (Retd).

¹⁷¹ Oral submission, Commander Kevin Taylor RFD, CSC, RAN (Retd).

¹⁷² Submission 6 Lieutenant Commander Dianne Buckingham RAN.

¹⁷³ Oral submission, Captain Nick Bramwell RAN (Retd), 29 March 2022.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

assumed primary communications guard duty for the AFS headquarters during the period 4 to 23 March 1992 when the AFS communications system could not sustain the operation, and again during the redeployment phase. While the provision of these services was within the “capacity” of HMAS *Tobruk*’s communication suite, it involved innovation, re-configuration, and routing of circuits to provide a dedicated 24 hour service to the headquarters. It also provided a considerable workload constraint on the ship’s small communications branch.

215. HMAS *Tobruk* also provided overnight respite for the AFS headquarters, 1 RAR Battalion Group personnel, as well as Coalition personnel to enable them to manage fatigue, contact loved ones, launder field clothing and kit, shower, eat and sleep before resuming their arduous duties ashore.¹⁷⁵ Her entire medical team, including first aiders, rotated through, and worked at the Swedish Field hospital in Mogadishu and provided medical and dental support to the 1 RAR Battalion Group and others.

216. **Coalition operation.** HMAS *Tobruk* was assigned to the USS *Wasp* Amphibious Ready Group tasked to conduct an amphibious assault at the volatile Somali port of Kismayo on 26 March 1993. Although she was involved in training for the assault, she did not in the end receive national approval to participate in the assault. COMNAVFOR and the Commander of the Amphibious Task Force applauded HMAS *Tobruk* for her enthusiasm, adaptability, competence, and willingness to participate in all supporting activities.¹⁷⁶

217. **Coalition exercises.** HMAS *Tobruk*’s Command Team took the initiative and planned and executed a comprehensive exercise program with coalition ships designed specifically to improve interoperability and to maintain operational readiness.¹⁷⁷ Ships from the United States and Canada agreed to participate in the first series of exercises in February 1993 with ships from Italy and India joining in from early March 1993. This included exercising with United States Navy SEALs. These exercises generated valuable training opportunities for the various ships’ companies. The goodwill generated by HMAS *Tobruk*’s initiative was impressive.

218. **Summary.** The Tribunal therefore concluded that HMAS *Tobruk* provided a varied role in valuable support of Operation SOLACE. The ship’s company was repeatedly required to remain flexible and adapt to changing circumstances to meet mission objectives. In many instances they performed duties that were unique to the deployment with a strong ‘can do attitude’. This directly related to the ability, commitment, collective professionalism, and the very high morale of its entire crew. The Tribunal therefore finds that a large number of the ship’s functions, efforts and initiatives were not only above the ship’s normal capacity, but substantially so.

219. **HMAS *Tobruk*’s performance on station within the Operation SOLACE area of operation was outstanding.** HMAS *Tobruk*’s 93 per cent availability throughout her six month deployment was remarkable, given her materiel history, as well as the condition of the ship at the beginning of the deployment. The Tribunal heard that this positive outcome was

¹⁷⁵ Oral submission, Mr Duncan Perryman, 23 February 2022.

¹⁷⁶ Submission 9, Lieutenant Commander Gerrard Hctor, OAM RAN.

¹⁷⁷ Oral submission, Captain Nick Bramwell RAN (Retd), 29 March 2022.

only possible through the commitment and dedication of the entire ship's company and a strong and cohesive command team.

220. **Ship's Army Detachment Commendation.** Further evidence of the ship's company's commendable commitment to the mission and HMAS *Tobruk's* unique contribution to the success of the operation was the appreciation expressed by the Commander Joint Task Force Support Group for the United States Army, Brigadier General B.K. Solomon.¹⁷⁸ In addition, to a United States Army 24th Transportation Battalion commendation for the Detachment for their support, WO2 Peter Macdonald, received an individual certificate of achievement from the 24th Transportation Battalion on 27 March 1993 recognising his efforts, professionalism and leadership.

221. **Royal Australian Navy Awards.** HMAS *Tobruk's* crew's superior performance set it apart from other naval units. This was recognised in the 1993 Australian Fleet awards with the award of the coveted Duke of Gloucester Cup for the unit displaying the highest level of proficiency in the Fleet. In addition to being recognised as the most efficient and effective ship that year, she was also awarded the Commodore Wardle Cup for communications excellence and the Silver Platter award for food services.

222. The Naval Historical Review at the time observed that:

*"Tobruk has just returned from a Somalian mission and as a consequence, was at her peak of readiness. It was no surprise the ship was awarded the Duke of Gloucester Cup for proficiency. CMDR Taylor and his team clearly did an outstanding job."*¹⁷⁹

223. **Individual award.** Only one individual was recognised under the Australian Defence Honours and Awards system for meritorious service. This was the Commanding Officer, Commander Taylor, who was recognised with a Conspicuous Service Cross. No other officer, senior sailor; junior sailor or member of the Ship's Army Detachment received any individual honours or awards in recognition of their efforts, or any group award for meritorious service. The Tribunal did not find that this meant that the ship, as a unit, was not worthy of the award of a Meritorious Unit Citation.

224. **Contemporaneous examples of Meritorious Unit Citations.** The Tribunal considered the nearest contemporaneous examples of awards of Meritorious Unit Citations to naval units, including those awarded to HMA ships *Brisbane* and *Sydney* and *Clearance Diving Team Three* recognising their service during the First Gulf War in 1991; and in particular the award to Task Group 645.1.1, the Royal Australian Navy Landing Craft Heavy. The smaller Landing Craft Heavy, which perform similar amphibious functions to HMAS *Tobruk*, were operationally deployed in warlike operations in support of the International Force East Timor during Operation STABILISE during the period 18 September 1999 to 23 February 2000. It

¹⁷⁸ Submission 7, Mr Duncan Perryman.

¹⁷⁹ Submission 9, Lieutenant Commander Gerrard Hocter, OAM, RAN.

should be noted that HMAS *Tobruk* was in the area of operations for longer than the Landing Craft Heavy which spent an average of 70 days in the area of operations.

225. There were no other Australian naval units with similar or the same in-theatre tasking in support of Operation SOLACE. Direct comparison to ascertain whether HMAS *Tobruk*'s service set it apart from other naval units could not be ascertained. On balance however, the Tribunal found that HMAS *Tobruk*'s performance on station within the Operation SOLACE area of operation was outstanding and exceeded what could have reasonably been expected of it prior to deployment.

226. The Maritime Commander's Post Operations Report stated that both the maritime deployment and redeployment of the AFS by HMA Ships *Tobruk* and *Jervis Bay* were completed successfully, and on schedule. And specifically, in respect of HMAS *Tobruk*, he went on to state that:

*TOBRUK's capabilities proved most useful and provided valuable support to both AFS and UNITAF elements. The ship earned a healthy reputation for efficiency and flexibility among all land forces she supported, as well as with the MNF units with which she exercised.*¹⁸⁰

227. **Conclusion.** Finally, the Tribunal considered and ultimately agreed with the stated position in the Defence submission that 'for the duration of her involvement, HMAS *Tobruk* made a continuous and enduring contribution to the operation through logistical and communication support of the AFS and UNITAF', arguing that 'should HMAS *Tobruk*'s contribution not have been to the high level that it was, its absence would have had a negative impact on the operation'.¹⁸¹ It was a successful amphibious operation deserving of the Meritorious Unit Citation.

FINDING: HMAS *Tobruk* meets the eligibility criteria for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation for her service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION: HMAS *Tobruk* be awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation for her service in Somalia.

¹⁸⁰ *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p.57 – Report Land Headquarters Post Operation Report Operation SOLACE, 1 July 1993 NAA A6721 94/2559/1.

¹⁸¹ Defence submission 29B.

HMAS *Jervis Bay*

228. Our assessment of the service of HMAS *Jervis Bay* for its service on Operation SOLACE, against the eligibility criteria for the Meritorious Unit Citation follows.

229. **Was HMAS *Jervis Bay* serving in ‘warlike operations’?** Yes. Operation SOLACE was declared ‘warlike’ from 9 December 1992 to 4 May 1993. This covered HMAS *Jervis Bay*’s two voyages to the area of operations for the deployment and redeployment of Australian Forces Somalia.

230. **Were HMAS *Jervis Bay*’s operations for an extended period?** No. HMAS *Jervis Bay* made two voyages to Somalia each of which we considered to be of normal deployment duration. The total time that she spent in the area of operations was only eight days. This consisted of two separate four day periods at the commencement and at end of the operation.

231. Her first voyage was 33 days, from 19 December 1992 to 21 January 1993. Upon her arrival off the coast of Mogadishu she was assigned an anchorage some five and a half miles from the port due to the large amount of allied shipping in the area. She was allowed into the port two days later to disembark her troops and equipment. She deployed for 62 days in her second voyage from 20 April 1993 to 21 June 1993 to support the redeployment of Australian forces. She entered the area of operations on 17 May 1993 to load equipment and embark personnel and departed on 20 May 1993.¹⁸²

232. **Were HMAS *Jervis Bay*’s operations ‘sustained’?** No. While *Jervis Bay* made two voyages totalling 95 days conducting sealift in support of Operation SOLACE, she spent a total of only eight days in the area of operations.

233. **Did HMAS *Jervis Bay* perform ‘substantially above its normal operational capacity’?** No. *Jervis Bay*’s primary role was to train junior officers in seamanship and navigation. Her secondary role was to support Australian Defence Force operations by sealift. This role had been fully practiced during Exercise KANGAROO 92 and was akin to her role in Operation SOLACE.

234. **Was HMAS *Jervis Bay*’s performance ‘outstanding’?** No. While the commendable contribution of HMAS *Jervis Bay* was undoubtedly essential to the mission, we agree with the Defence submission that, while her mission was conducted extremely efficiently, her contribution did not have an enduring and conspicuous impact on the Operation SOLACE.

235. **Summary.** HMAS *Jervis Bay*’s operations were not extended nor sustained. Nor did she provide support substantially above her normal operational capacity. As a result, HMAS *Jervis Bay* does not meet the criteria for the award of a Meritorious Unit Citation for her involvement in Operation SOLACE.

¹⁸² *The Limits of Peacekeeping*, p.155.

FINDING: HMAS *Jervis Bay* does meet the eligibility criteria for the award of a Meritorious Unit Citation for her service on Operation SOLACE.

RECOMMENDATION: No action be taken to award HMAS *Jervis Bay* the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation for her service on Operation SOLACE.

Force elements deploying from 33, 34, 36 and 37 SQNs.

236. The Tribunal carefully examined the eligibility criteria for the Meritorious Unit Citation and made the following findings with respect to the force elements from the above squadrons.

237. **Were force elements from the above squadrons serving in ‘warlike operations’?** Under the current arrangements, any force elements that served as part of UNOSOM II were serving in ‘warlike’ operations from 1 May 1993. Any force elements serving prior to 1 May 1993 were not serving in warlike operations. This likely included flying the advance party to Somalia and any ad hoc supply runs prior to this date.

238. **Did force elements from the relevant Squadrons serve for an extended period?** No. Aircrew and loadmasters did various sorties mainly towards the conclusion of Operation SOLACE for the airlift of 1 RAR Battalion Group during the period 7 to 23 May 1993. The airlift involved two Boeing 707 and three C130 Hercules aircraft, their crews, maintenance personnel and operations officers. These sorties were usually of short duration. These included sorties from Mogadishu to Townsville, with the respective bases being Diego Garcia and Perth. There were also feeder shuttles between Baidoa and Mogadishu based out of Mombasa.

239. The Tribunal found that force elements from the Squadrons did not serve for extended periods in the area of operation. Nor could such sorties be considered sustained. Whilst the Tribunal accepts their important contribution to the deployment of the Australian forces home, and that take-off and landing at Mogadishu airfield was not without some danger, because their service was not sustained, they do not meet the eligibility criteria for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation.

FINDING: Force elements of 33, 34, 36 and 37 Squadrons do not meet the eligibility criteria for the award of a Meritorious Unit Citation for their service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION: No action be taken to award Force elements of 33, 34, 36 and 37 Squadrons the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation for their service in Somalia.

Maintenance of the integrity of the Australian Honours System

240. In making our findings and formulating our recommendations we have had due regard to the integrity of the Australian honours system. In recommending a MUC for HMAS *Tobruk*, ASCs I – IV and the 1 RAR Battalion Group, we did not identify any negative impact upon the honours system. In fact, we find such recommendations, if adopted, would enhance the Australian honours system by recognising the service of those units. This is particularly so, because HMAS *Tobruk* and ASCs I – IV have not been previously recognised by a commendation.

241. Defence submitted the CGS Commendation for 1 RAR Battalion Group would be withdrawn should the Tribunal make a recommendation in favour of the higher honour of the MUC to the Group. We do not consider any proposed withdrawal of the Commendation to adversely impact upon the integrity of Australian honours system or 1 RAR Battalion Group's achievements.

242. As previously noted, Defence was 'supportive' of the Tribunal's new Inquiry for consideration of new and further unit recognition, and in its own submissions, in part, led us to some of the findings and recommendations we have made for such recognition.

Other recognition

243. **Is any other form of further recognition appropriate for HMAS *Jervis Bay* and the airlift squadrons?** The Tribunal did not find that any other form of unit recognition was appropriate for HMAS *Jervis Bay* or force elements of 33, 34, 36 and 37 Squadrons. The Tribunal notes that this service is recognised with the award of the Australian Active Service Medal with Clasp 'SOMALIA' which we consider to be appropriate recognition for their valuable service.

Final reflection

243. The Tribunal concludes with the following passage from the submission of Warrant Officer 1 Dennis Barlow, 1 RAR Battalion Group. The Tribunal reflected that his submission likely summed up the positive impact of the Australian Defence Force in Somalia and highlighted the meritorious performance of Australian personnel in Somalia:

"In 2007 I was catching a cab in Melbourne. On entering the vehicle, it became apparent the driver was a Somali immigrant. During the journey I asked him where in Somalia he was from. He answered from a small village outside Baidoa. And I asked him why he immigrated to Australia. He responded that when he was young and the Australian soldiers came, he and the other boys were able to sleep in their homes and they felt safe. Before that they went into the bush at dusk to hide. When he was in a refugee camp after the UN left, he was asked where he wanted to go. Most said to the

US, but he said Australia because the soldiers made him feel safe and treated him and others like friends and he wanted that for the rest of his life. We arrived at the destination and he asked how I knew he was from Somalia. I responded, "I was one of those soldiers". He said, "thank you, you saved my life".

RECOMMENDATIONS

RECOMMENDATION 1: ASC I (1 to 31 May 1993), ASC II, ASC III and ASC IV to Operation IGUANA be awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation to recognise their service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The 1 RAR Battalion Group be awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation for its service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION 3: HMAS *Tobruk* be awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation for her service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION 4:

- a) The Minister for Defence recommend to the Governor-General that service with the First and Second United Nations Operations in Somalia from 17 October 1992 to 30 April 1993 be declared a warlike operation for the purposes of the Australian Active Service Medal; and
- b) the Meritorious Unit Citation then be awarded to ASC I for service from 17 October 1992 to 30 April 1993.

RECOMMENDATION 5: No action be taken to award HMAS *Jervis Bay* the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation or any other form of further recognition for her service in Somalia.

RECOMMENDATION 6: No action be taken to award Force elements of 33, 34, 36 and 37 Squadrons the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation or any other form of further recognition for their service in Somalia.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Individuals and organisations who provided submissions and evidence to the Inquiry

Angelatos, Lieutenant Colonel Paul (Retd)

Apperley, Mr Michael, OAM

Barlow, Warrant Officer Class 1 Dennis

Bear, Mr James obo the Hon Paul Kirby, Minister for Veterans' Affairs Northern Territory Government

Breen, Professor Robert John, OAM

Brown, Mr Shannon and Mr Paul von Kurtz

Buckingham, Lieutenant Commander Dianne RAN

Caligari, Lieutenant General John AO, DSC (Retd) on behalf of 1RAR Association

Copeland, Mr Paul OAM

Defence

Engeler, Ms Fiona, on behalf of the Returned & Services League of Australia

Gosling, Mr Luke, OAM, MP, Federal Member for Solomon House of Representatives

Hector, Lieutenant Commander Gerrard, OAM, RAN

Hunter, Mr Graeme

Jenyns, Ms Margaret, on behalf of Returned and Services League of Queensland

Jones, Colonel Trevor, CSC (Retd)

Keaney, Squadron Leader Michael

Maher, Captain Norman, OAM (Retd)

McMahon, Mr Patrick

Mathias, Mr Christopher, President Millicent Sub Branch

Martin, Mr Michael, OAM

Murtagh, Mr James

Perryman, Mr Duncan (John), CSM

Piera, Ms Kim

Raftery, Warrant Officer Class 2 Geoffrey

Robertson, Mr Andrew

Robins, Dr Anthony, RAN

Robinson, Mr Sean

Steer, Lieutenant Colonel Graeme, (Retd)

Taylor, Commander Kevin RAN

Vinen, Mr David

Wilson, Mr Dean

Worswick, Dr Robert, CSM

Appendix 2 - Tribunal Hearings

The Tribunal conducted public hearings and heard oral submissions from the listed submitters on the below dates

Tuesday 22 February 2022

Defence

- Ms Lisa Phelps, First Assistant People Service and Defence Honours and Awards
- Brigadier Matthew Patching, Director-General Army People Capability
- Captain Paul Fothergill RAN, Director Navy Honours and Awards
- Wing Commander Simon Braun, support to biannual Chief Joint Operations Honours Board

Professor Robert Breen OAM
Lieutenant Colonel Paul Angelatos (Retd)

Wednesday 23 February 2022

Lieutenant General John Caligari AO, DSC (Retd) on behalf of the 1 RAR Association (via videoconference)
Major James Masters OAM (Retd) on behalf of the 1 RAR Association (via videoconference)
Mr Graeme Hunter (via videoconference)
Mr Sean Robinson (via videoconference)
Warrant Officer Gregory Hooper CSC (via videoconference)
Commander Kevin Taylor RFD, CSC, RANR (Retd) (via videoconference)
Mr Duncan (John) Perryman CSM (Retd)
Mr Dean Wilson (via videoconference)

Thursday 24 February 2022

Colonel Trevor Jones CSC (Retd) (via telephone)
Mr Patrick McMahon (via videoconference)
Mr David Vinen (via videoconference)
Mr Michael Apperley
Brigadier David McKaskill AM DSM (Retd) (via videoconference)
Mr Luke Gosling OAM MP, Federal Member for Solomon (via telephone)
Warrant Officer Dennis Barlow (via video conference)
Ms Fiona Engeler on behalf of the Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL) Australia
Mr Michael Martin (via telephone)
Mr Paul Copeland OAM (via video conference)
Mr Ian Lindgren National Vice President of the Australian Peacemaker and Peacekeeper Veterans' Association (via videoconference)

Monday 28 March 2022

Squadron Leader Michael Keaney (via video conference)
Mr Norman Maher (via video conference)
Dr Anthony Robbins (via video conference)
Private Submitter (via video conference)

Private Submitter (via video conference)

Private Submitter (via video conference)

Tuesday 29 March 2022

Captain Nick Bramwell RAN (Retd) (via video conference)

Major General Brian Dawson AM CSC (Retd)

Group Captain Robert Graham

Mr Garry Conquest (via video conference)

Chaplain Andrew Lewis

Group Captain Peter Noake

Appendix 3 - Honours and Awards for Service in Somalia

Name	Served as	Awarded
Lieutenant Colonel SJ Ellis	Commander UN Operations Somalia	Member of the Military Division of the Order of Australia
Major MJ Kelly	Legal Officer Operations Somalia	Member of the Military Division of the Order of Australia
Colonel WJA Mellor, AM	Commander of Australian Force Somalia (CMDR AFS)	Distinguished Service Cross Colonel Mellor was also awarded the US Legion of Merit
Lieutenant Colonel DJ Hurley	Commanding Officer 1RAR Battalion Group	Distinguished Service Cross
Commander KB Taylor RAN	Captain HMAS <i>Tobruk</i>	Conspicuous Service Cross
Lieutenant Colonel RJ Jones	Commander ASC II UN operations Somalia	Conspicuous Service Cross
Lieutenant Colonel BR Dawson	Senior Staff Office Force HQ Somalia	Conspicuous Service Cross
Major GW Jackson	Commander of the Australian Contingent (Movement Control Unit) to the United Nations operations in Somalia	Conspicuous Service Cross
Captain RP O'Brien	Movement Officer UN Operations Somalia	Conspicuous Service Cross
Corporal TA Aitken	Section CO C Coy 1RAR Somalia	Distinguished Service Medal
Flight Sergeant BR Stringfellow	RAAF Air Movements Staff UN operations Somalia	Conspicuous Service Medal
Sergeant LA D'Monte	Intelligence Analysis Force HQ Somalia	Conspicuous Service Medal
Sergeant GJ Kingston	Commander security group ASC Somalia	Conspicuous Service Medal
Major MJ Moon	Commanding Officer C Coy 1RAR Somalia	Commendation for Distinguished Service
Major DJ McKaskill	Commanding Officer B SQN 3rd/4th Cavalry Regiment Somalia	Commendation for Distinguished Service
Major RH Stanhope	Officer Commanding Civil Military Operations Team Somalia	Commendation for Distinguished Service
Captain SJ Dodds	Officer Commanding Mortar Platoon 1RAR Somalia	Commendation for Distinguished Service
Corporal PJ Martin	Section CO D Coy 1RAR Somalia	Commendation for Distinguished Service

Private CJ Day	Patrol Signaller 1RAR	Commendation for Distinguished Service
Major JG Caligari	Operations Officer 1RAR Somalia	Chief of the Defence Force Commendation
Lieutenant CJ McDonald	Transport Platoon Commander 1RAR Somalia	Chief of the Defence Force Commendation
Warrant Officer Class One WF Bowser, DFSM	Commanding Officer /Sergeant Major Counter Intelligence Somalia	Chief of the Defence Force Commendation
Sergeant PH Von Kurtz	Company Sergeant Major & Platoon Commander 3 Platoon A Coy 1RAR Somalia	Chief of the Defence Force Commendation
Sergeant PJ Watson	Snr Non-Commissioned Officer Military Police Detachment Somalia	Chief of the Defence Force Commendation
Major MJ Kelly	Legal Officer operations Somalia	Chief of the Defence Force Commendation
Lieutenant WR Bowyer	Officer Commanding 17 Field Troop Engineers	Chief of the General Staff Commendation
Lieutenant Colonel GT Woolnough	Chief of Staff Australian Force Somalia	Chief of the General Staff Commendation
Warrant Officer Class 2 WE Robinson	Commanding Officer B SQN 3rd/4th Cavalry Regiment APCs Somalia	Chief of the General Staff Commendation
Warrant Officer Class One JD Collins	Postal Detach 1RAR Somalia	Chief of the General Staff Commendation
Sergeant DB Callaghan	Battery Commander Assistant 107 th Field Battery-Civilian & NGOs Somalia	Chief of the General Staff Commendation
Sergeant DL Vinen	As Corporal, Duty Intelligence Officer to Force Commander Somalia	Chief of the General Staff Commendation
Sergeant GW Wilkes	Transport Troop Commander 1RAR Somalia	Chief of the General Staff Commendation
Corporal L Stein	Corporal of Peace & Disarmament Section Force Command Somalia	Chief of the General Staff Commendation
1 RAR Battalion Group		Chief of the General Staff Commendation

Appendix 4 – Citation for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation to the Force Communications Unit, United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia

For sustained outstanding service in warlike operations through the provision of communications support to the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia from 15 March 1992 to 7 October 1993.

The Force Communications Unit was instrumental in setting up and maintaining a communications network throughout Cambodia despite hostile and hazardous circumstances. The efforts of the members of the Force Communications Unit allowed the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia to conduct a successful election leading to a democratically elected government.

Appendix 5 – Citation for the award of the Meritorious Unit Citation for Operation TAMAR (Rwanda)

For sustained outstanding service in warlike operations as part of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda II on Operation TAMAR, over the period July 1994 to March 1996.

Australian Services (sic) Contingents 1 and 2 provided medical support and security to civilians during one of the worst humanitarian disasters of the twentieth century. Under challenging and distressing circumstances, the Contingents displayed exceptional determination and compassion as they delivered medical treatment for wounded and ill civilians and coordinated disease prevention. The discipline and courage demonstrated during, and in the aftermath of the Kibeho Massacre, saved hundreds of civilian lives and enhanced Australia's reputation throughout the international community. The tireless efforts, commitment and resolve of Australian Services Contingents 1 and 2 were in the finest tradition of the Australian Defence Forces

Appendix 6 - Biography of Research Material Examined by the Tribunal

Tribunal Reports

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Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal, Report of the *Inquiry into Unit Recognition for the Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam* dated 3 April 2018.

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Bou, Jean; Hurley, David; Breen, Bob; Pratten, Garth; De Vogel, Miesje, *The Limits of Peacekeeping, Vol 4 of The Official History of Peace Keeping, Humanitarian and Post War Operations, Australian Mission in Africa and the Americas 1992-2005*, AWM and Cambridge Publishing 2018.

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Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No S297 Unit Citation Regulations, dated 4 November 1991, Determination by Governor General, dated 31 October 1991.

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Chief of the General Staff Minute CGS 739/93, 'Operational Awards - Operation SOLACE', 12 August 1993

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Maritime HQ LCDR Andrew Naughton RAN, National Liaison Team Report on visit Mogadishu Dec 1992 File DOD 93/00154.

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