

Document ID: cae521f2044b583ee291cad93559c6cd64f9efbd

5 January, 2023

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

## Submission to Inquiry - Mr Brett Heyman

### Part 1 – Name of Inquiry

**Name of Inquiry \***

Medallic recognition for service with Rifle Company Butterworth

### Part 2 – About the Submitter

**Title or Rank \***

Mr

**Given Names \***

Brett

**Surname \***

Heyman

**Post-nominals (if applicable)**

**Street Number and Name \***

████████████████████

**Suburb \***

██████████

**Postcode \***

██████

**State \***

██████████

**Email Address: \***

████████████████████

**Primary Contact Number \***

██████████

**Secondary Contact Number**

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

No

### Part 3 – Desired outcome

**Provide a summary of your submission:**

Recognition of Warlike Service for all Australian Service personnel deployed to or stationed at Air Base Butterworth 1970-1989

## Part 4 - Your submission and Supporting Documentation

File Attached: Brett-Heyman.docx

## Part 5 – Consent and declaration

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

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

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

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

1. persons or organisations required to assist with the inquiry; and
2. persons or organisations with an interest in the inquiry.

✓ I declare that the information I have provided is correct.

**Name**

Brett Heyman

**Date**

05/01/2023

*Mr Brett Heyman*

Signed by Mr Brett Heyman

Signed on: 5 January, 2023



[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]



[Redacted text block]

[Redacted]  
*Mr Brett  
Heyman*

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]



[Redacted text block]

[Redacted text block]



[Redacted text block]

I was 227442 LCPL Brett Heyman. I served with B Coy 6RAR as a Section 2IC during my deployment to Butterworth Air Base, Malaysia. We deployed as a fully armed Infantry Rifle Company 28<sup>th</sup> August to the 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1986.

During the deployment we carried normal section weapons, SLR's, M16's, M203 and GPMG M60 machine guns.

Prior to departing Australia, we were made DP1 completed wills and received a series of briefings about our role and responsibilities whilst at ABB. These briefings included the ROE that we would be operating under, and we were practiced in the Malay language the challenge we had to issue before opening fire. We were told our enemy were known as CT's (Communist Party Terrorists) part of the briefings included the current enemy CT situation in Malaysia and around Butterworth. Various training activities were conducted that were expected to be encountered at BAB including battlefield first aid.

An incident I would like to bring to the Tribunals attention that occurred during my deployment was a "Friendly Fire" unpleasant incident that occurred at BAB. My section, as part of the platoon was conducting a night counterattack on a mock CT incursion near the runway. We were using blank ammunition at the time of the simulated attack. I was in command of the Gun Group within my section and during the fire and movement we came under live fire, the rounds hitting the ground in close enough for me to see the grass and soil thrown up from the impacts of the rounds. I also heard the familiar "crack, thump" that is heard when live round and fired in your direction. I remember 3 rounds that were fired in close proximity to my location. We were immediately ordered to cease fire and to go ground and not move. We laid prone for at least 30 minutes, during this time I assumed that my superiors were sorting out the situation between the Malaysian security forces that maintained the security at the entrance gate to the base. It was from this direction the incoming fire originated. After 30 minutes or so we were ordered to unload our weapons and we were able to return to our barracks.

I consider myself and my fellow soldiers extremely lucky that we were not shot during the incident, and thankful for the poor marksmanship of the Malaysian guards who fired at us and the poor light situation that saved us from casualties.

As a LCPL, I am not aware of any of the reporting of the incident that occurred at Company or higher levels. There were no formal explanations conveyed to soldiers involved in the incident. That could be interpreted as, well fellas you know we're here and there's a conflict on and things like this are going to happen, its not like you're back in Australia safe'n'sound. After all we were told before leaving Australia we were going on war service.

Some time later word filtered down that the Malaysian guards thought that the base was under attack by hostile forces. Apparently, someone failed to inform them that an Australian Platoon was going to conduct a mock attack that night.

Which leads to a question of why are practicing repelling a supposed CT incursion within the airbase, if there was no threat of this occurring as some within Defence are suggesting, and yet the Malaysian's were so willing to open fire on us. They would have honestly believed that there was an immediate threat and took in their view appropriate action.

Now whether this incident is recorded or covered up is of no concern to me. I know it happened and my fellow soldiers within my section and platoon know.

In summary I would like to point out that in a war zone the threat of incurring casualties does not come simply from enemy forces alone, but also your friendly forces.

Thankyou for taking the time to read my submission.