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28 April, 2023
Signed On : <https://defence-honours-tribunal.gov.au>

Submission to Inquiry - Mr Mark Butler

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 *

Mark

Surname *

Butler

Post-nominals (if applicable)

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Postcode *

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[REDACTED] *

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Email Address: *

[REDACTED]

Primary [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Secondary Contact Number

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

Part 3 – Desired outcome

Provide a summary of your submission:

RCB 77/78 Additional information to add to earlier submission

Part 4 - Your submission and Supporting Documentation

File Attached: Submission-52a.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

Mark Butler

Date

28/04/2023

Mr Mark Butler

Signed by Mr Mark Butler

Signed on: 28 April, 2023

[Redacted]

LEGALLY SIGNED USING
WPsignature

[Redacted]



[Redacted]

[Redacted]
Mr Mark Butler

[Redacted]



Timestamp

[Redacted]

Audit

[Redacted]
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[Redacted]
[Redacted] now
closed.



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Thank you to the tribunal for allowing me to further add to my previous submission 052.

My name is Mark Butler, and I was a Section Commander on my Tour of Butterworth from late 1977 to early 1978 with B Company 1 RAR.

I believe much has already been covered in submissions and/or in evidence given already at the tribunal so I would only like to address a couple of items that came out of the recent hearings in Brisbane.

Condition of Weapon Readiness while on QRF

What is the QRF?

While I cannot find an ADF definition of QRF, the following definitions appear quite accurate - **Quick Reaction Force (QRF)** *in military science nomenclature, is an armed military unit capable of rapidly responding to developing situations, typically to assist allied units in need of such assistance. They are to have equipment ready to respond to any type of emergency, typically within ten minutes or less, but that is based on unit standard operating procedures (SOPs).* (Wikipedia)

And **A Quick Reaction Force (QRF)** *is any force that is poised to respond on very short notice, typically less than fifteen minutes.* (Global Security Org)

What isn't in doubt is that this is the title that was given to the on-duty section at Butterworth. During my tour and many other people's tours, this Section was further bolstered by the presence of an additional Section that provided a Roving Piquet and coverage in the event that the QRF was called out.

This meant that there was a reserve force that could provide assistance to the QRF if needed and also could man the Radio, phones and monitor the Ground Sensor System known as Tobias. During our tour 77/78, they also provided the Armscote member.

A QRF by definition, is armed and ready to respond quickly to any situation. There is no requirement for a QRF if the intended response is only going to be to catch some local villager stealing from you. We were well armed with 2 x front-line ammunition and well drilled in our responses to relevant Vital Points (VP).

What happened when the QRF was activated?

Immediately on being informed that the QRF was activated and advised of the nominated Vital Point or Key Point (depending on the tour/year), the QRF would respond.

Respond by truck

Often the soldiers are asleep so upon being woken up and told to go the truck driver and Section Commander would ensure they knew the location of the VP. Soldiers would grab their issued personal weapons and, with webbing on, head to the truck parked outside. Two soldiers would also grab the metal trunk containing a second level of First Line Ammunition and would place this on the rear of the truck.

For security reasons, this trunk was never left on the truck to expedite the response process. During my tour 77/78 we were at the Load Condition which meant a magazine on the weapon, but it was not cocked and therefore the chamber was empty and safety catch applied.

Once all on board, the driver of the truck would take the best route towards the relevant VP. This truck drove with headlights on, as we had no Night Viewing Devices then. We also travelled at speed. In the event of a real incident, this was a very vulnerable time as 10

personnel were all bunched together in the truck, and it was illuminated. Sometimes the Searchlight was ON to light up the area when we were in close proximity to the VP.

Upon arrival

Close to the Vital Point or area enemy are expected the truck is stopped, and the QRF dismount and adopt a formation from which they can assault towards the enemy or clear the VP. Dismounting the truck and shaking out into formation is when they are very exposed and vulnerable to small arms fire.

In most cases, this area had lawn height grass and almost zero cover from observation or small arms fire.

If the VP contained buildings, my standard approach was to place the Machine Gun out to a flank which would provide the best opportunity to be able to cover at least 2 sides of the building.

Once my section shook out we would go to the Action Condition which meant the weapons were cocked and a live round in the chamber. Safety catches would be applied and sights up. In the case of the M60 Machine Gun which fires from an open breech position the link was on, the bolt cocked and the safety catch applied.

Clear the Vital Point

Some VP's were very small and, upon arrival, could be cleared by observation alone. Others required the section to advance through the position, generally using dry fire and movement. That is, some members of the section moved while others remained on the ground, ready to fire if required. Commonly referred to as having one leg on the ground at all times.

Once the VP was cleared, we would re-org on the objective, which essentially meant taking up all round defence, ready to repel an attack if it occurred.

Had an Enemy been present during any of these stages involving the exchange of small arms fire, then depending on enemy numbers, the QRF would either try to hold them at bay until reinforcements arrived or assault to secure the VP.

Taped Magazines

At no time did I see taped magazines used within the Airbase for QRF duty. It didn't happen during my tour. We would issue the live rounds to the soldiers, and they would then load their magazines with them at the commencement of duty. Tape is very susceptible to failure during wet or damp conditions, which was pretty common in Malaysia. Also, the concept of having to remove taped magazines from a pouch and then rip off tape probably at night if you were fired upon is tactically unsound.

Every response my Section conducted as QRF, we did as mentioned in the Load and Action condition, and when the duty officer would debrief our response this was never questioned. Sean Arthur, who was on the same tour, also confirms this in his submissions, as do others from different tours. During the hearing, I was certainly surprised to hear about Taped Magazines and being in the Unloaded Condition with magazines still in basic pouches.

ROE - Shoot to Wound

While this has been well spoken on, I cannot recall ever briefing my section to only shoot to wound when we mounted QRF. It suggests minimum force, which would more than likely be if the roving piquet encountered someone who might be stealing from the base or just be in the wrong area.

The concept of having a heavily-armed and well-drilled response team ready to react at a moment's notice for the purpose of intercepting someone who you believed was of no real threat to the airbase lacks credibility. You don't use a sledgehammer to crack a nut.

Risk Assessment

On the last day of the hearing, the Brigadier, when defending the definition of peacetime service, suggested that a non-warlike definition could be used to define a major exercise due soon, and we are going to give every soldier that attends a medal.

The Chair then asked him what method the ADF used to determine the risk for the exercise, and the Brigadier responded that he did not know and that it was outside of his area of expertise.

I believe the DRMF would be that method.

The Australian Defence Risk Management Framework (DRMF)

The Australian Defence Risk Management Framework (DRMF) of 2002, which is approved for public release, outlines the methodology of determining risks for the ADF. A link is provided. [Body \(dtic.mil\)](http://Body.dtic.mil)



Australian Defence Risk Management Framework: A Comparative Study

Svetoslav Gaidow and Seng Boey

**Land Operations Division
Systems Sciences Laboratory**

DSTO-GD-0427

ABSTRACT

In early 2002, the Secretary of Defence and the Chief of Defence Force endorsed a top-down, organisation-wide and systematic approach to risk management in Defence. As a result, the Australian Defence Risk Management Framework (DRMF) was established. This study is a quest for the credibility of DRMF. It provides a review of the DRMF and a comparative analysis in light of other national and international, defence and non-defence risk management publications and practices. Through this study the appropriateness of the approach and the acceptability of the DRMF are confirmed. The application of risk management in force and capability options development and analysis is identified as an area of future research.

RELEASE LIMITATION

Approved for public release

Risk Assessment

While I don't plan to go into all the details of this more than 80-page document, of particular note is the Risk Assessment Tool which is found on Page 14.

This is a generic style of Risk Assessment Tool that uses AS/NZS 4360:1999 and is very similar to those used by many organisations throughout Australia and most likely the world. It is closely aligned to those used by Mining Companies that I am familiar with and that I have used on a regular basis. Though there are varying complexities of risk assessment that can be carried out, the one factor that remains consistent within an organization is the Risk Matrix to determine the Risk Level.

I consider I have sufficient competence and knowledge to use the Risk Matrix based on using similar on a number of Underground and Open Cut Mining Sites within Australia and Overseas over more than 15 years within my capacity as a Senior Trainer.

Definitions used in the DRMF Risk Assessment Tool.

Risk

The chance of something happening that will have an impact upon the objective

Risk identification

Is supposed to give answers to the following questions:

- What can happen?
- How and why can it happen?

The "What can happen?" Question aims at generating a comprehensive list of the sources of risk and the areas of risk impact. It is measured in terms of consequences and likelihood.

Consequence

The outcome of an event expressed qualitatively or quantitatively, being a loss, injury, disadvantage or gain. There may be a range of possible outcomes associated with an event.

It needs to be based on the most likely outcome as opposed to the very worst possible outcome. It can be determined by past known events or information obtained from people with knowledge and experience.

As an example, falling over is most likely to cause no injury or perhaps slight injury requiring no medical treatment in a young, healthy adult. Although people have died from falling over in extremely rare circumstances, you would not consider death a likely consequence.

Level	Descriptor	Detailed Description
1	Insignificant	No injuries, low financial loss
2	Minor	First aid treatment, on-site release immediately contained, medium financial loss
3	Moderate	Medical treatment required, on-site release contained with outside assistance, high financial loss
4	Major	Extensive injuries, loss of production capacity, off-site release with no detrimental effects, high financial loss
5	Catastrophic	Death, toxic release off-site with detrimental effect, huge financial loss

Likelihood

Risk Likelihood is used as a qualitative description of probability or frequency.

The below table, found on page 14 of the DRMF, outlines the likelihood levels and their definition.

Level	Descriptor	Detailed Description
A	Almost certain	Is expected to occur in most circumstances
B	Likely	Will probably occur in most circumstances
C	Possible	Might occur at some time
D	Unlikely	Could occur at some time
E	Rare	May occur only in exceptional circumstances

Risk Matrix

A tool used to determine the Risk Level taking into account the identified hazards or risks and the anticipated consequences.

Likelihood	Consequences				
	Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5
A (almost certain)	High	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
B (likely)	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
C (moderate)	Low	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
D (unlikely)	Low	Low	Medium	High	Extreme
E (rare)	Low	Low	Medium	High	High

Using the Risk Matrix

- First, determine what the risks/hazards are.
- Determine the likelihood of each risk/hazard occurring
- What is the consequence if it does occur
- Determine the Risk Level by following the likelihood and consequence lines to the intersection point – this will give the risk level

Determine the Risk

Threat to Air Base Butterworth by an attack from either the CPM or CTO was seen as **unlikely, though possible**, as outlined in the following document Threat Assessment 48 Likelihood of Attack para (d) but there was also risk from subversive groups at any time.

Earlier Intelligence reports show that the CT's had the capability to target ADF personnel, particularly if they obtained area weapons. Later after the fall of SVN, area weapons were obtained, which gave them the capability to target the Air Base from much further away and in fact, they did carry out attacks on air bases elsewhere in Malaysia with such weapons.

The Threat Assessment

48. Likelihood of Attack. We assess that, during the period under review:

- (a) It is unlikely that any threat to Air Base Butterworth will arise from an external overt military attack on Malaysia.
- (b) There is a potential threat to the Base from the CPM, the CTO, and related communist subversive organizations. The CPM/CTO have an estimated 150 terrorists armed with rifles, machine-guns and explosives in the Kulim and nearby forest areas about 40 kilometres from the Base.
- (c) CPM/CTO policy will be directed towards the consolidation of its infrastructure within Peninsular Malaysia, and this will not be advanced to the point at which a decision will be taken to launch armed struggle. It is therefore unlikely that the CPM/CTO will, as a deliberate act of policy, attempt an attack on Air Base Butterworth.
- (d) It is possible, but still unlikely, that the CPM/CTO could decide to attack the Base if there were large-scale civil disturbances or major industrial unrest.
- (e) There is a danger that the CTO may decide to attack the Base in order to achieve a psychological and propaganda victory over the Government in retaliation for a major success by the Security Forces. Such an attack may also be encouraged by any use of the Base by RMAF strike aircraft against the communist terrorists.
- (f) There is some risk that members of subversive groups could, regardless of CPM/CTO policy, or acting on their own initiative, attempt an isolated attack on or within the Base at any time.

(c) methods and strengths which could conceivably be employed, if it were decided to attack the Base, range through a number of possibilities:

- (i) direct frontal assault by a large group of CTs up to 60 strong using small arms fire or explosives;
 - (ii) covert penetration, probably at night, by one or more individual CTs or small groups totalling up to 20 with a view to surprise attack on Vital Points, especially the aircraft, by small arms fire and explosives;
 - (iii) mortar or other indirect weapon attack, if the CTs acquired this capability, using a small force of up to 10 men located in the surrounding ricefield/kampong areas, especially those to the east; and
 - (iv) sabotage by the planting of explosive devices or booby traps, designed to damage Vital Points and injure personnel, by one or more CTs, members of subversive groups or sympathetic or suborned LEC/contractor personnel;
- (d) of these methods, sabotage is by far the most likely, although covert penetration and surprise attack by a small group should not be discounted, and a mortar attack would be likely if the CTs acquired this capability; and
- (e) a sabotage attempt, if made by suborned LEC/contractor personnel or members of subversive groups, might well be directed against those Vital Points outside the

If we examine the risk associated with our primary reason RCB was in Butterworth and the reason for the QRF.

- An attack on the base where the CPM/CTO physically breach the perimeter is described in Threat Assessment 48 Likelihood of Attack (d) as “it is possible, but still unlikely.

The risk of this type of attack is **D - unlikely**.

The consequence of the QRF responding to such an event by an attack force of CT’s would, at the very least, be an expectation of someone receiving battlefield wounds. Extensive injuries to a soldier would be a consequence of **4 – major**.

By using the Risk Matrix, this would show the risk level to be **high**.

Likelihood	Consequences				
	Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5
A (almost certain)	High	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
B (likely)	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
C (moderate)	Low	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
D (unlikely)	Low	Low	Medium	High	Extreme
E (rare)	Low	Low	Medium	High	High

Threat Assessment 48 Likelihood of Attack (e) outlines that the CPM/CTO may be encouraged to attack the airbase if RMAF aircraft are used to target the CT’s. We know that the RMAF did use their strike aircraft against the CT’s.

Area Weapons

In the event of an area attack weapon being used against the airbase, it would be reasonable to expect that an attack may follow. If Butterworth was mortared/rocketed, the QRF would have responded to ensure that if the enemy did mount an attack, they would meet any opposition. Determining whether the CT had an identified intent to directly target the ADF at Butterworth is subjective, but difficult to imagine that an enemy could target Malaysian personnel only.

The above document para (d) described an attack by the CT’s by mortar to be likely if they gained that capability. We know that after the fall of Saigon they did obtain 81 mm mortars and rockets.

If we look at this more likely form of attack by the enemy at Butterworth Airbase

- A CT area weapon attack on the base (Mortar or Rocket)

If we consider the Likelihood to be higher than unlikely, we have **C – Moderate**

It is hard to anticipate the Consequence of such an attack because there was so many different targets that might be hit. The large quantities of high explosives in the form of bombs and rockets and other aircraft munitions and the massive storage of jet fuel for the squadrons of aircraft could result in significantly more casualties if struck than simply falling on other areas of the airbase.

It would be of far greater embarrassment to the Malaysian Government if an area weapon attack did significant damage to aircraft or infrastructure rather than just landing in an open area of no tactical importance.

We would have to expect extensive injuries as very foreseeable and probably death. Again either **4 – Extensive injuries Major** or **5 – Death Catastrophic**

In both cases, the Risk Level would be extreme.

Likelihood	Consequences				
	Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5
A (almost certain)	High	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
B (likely)	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
C (moderate)	Low	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
D (unlikely)	Low	Low	Medium	High	Extreme
E (rare)	Low	Low	Medium	High	High

Friendly Fire

- RCB was fired upon by the Malaysian troops who guarded the Air Base Perimeter and the main gate.

We know this occurred on more than one occasion, and all RCB personnel were well aware of this risk. In this case, the likelihood level would be higher than unlikely.

Line C Moderate

The consequence level though it did not occur during RCB deployments, could still reasonably be expect to have inflicted a casualty involving medical treatment, which is deemed moderate.

Using moderate likelihood and moderate consequence, the intersecting point shows this to be a high-level risk if we were to look at even more serious consequences like extensive injuries or death (major or catastrophic), than that risk level rises to extreme.

Likelihood	Consequences				
	Insignificant 1	Minor 2	Moderate 3	Major 4	Catastrophic 5
A (almost certain)	High	High	Extreme	Extreme	Extreme
B (likely)	Medium	High	High	Extreme	Extreme
C (moderate)	Low	Medium	High	Extreme	Extreme
D (unlikely)	Low	Low	Medium	High	Extreme
E (rare)	Low	Low	Medium	High	High

Other risks

- **Motor Transport (MT) Ambush by CT's when travelling away from Butterworth Air Base to conduct Range Practices or other off-base training activities**

Again we know and heard evidence that this did happen to Malaysian soldiers who were not far behind an RCB truck returning to Butterworth.

- **Accidental discharges of personal weapons or pyrotechnics by a member of the RCB**

There have been a number of accidental fatal casualties on deployments such as East Timor, Iraq and Somalia from the weapons carried by the soldiers. Again the risk matrix would show this to be a **high** level of risk using Unlikely for Likelihood and Major for Consequence

Risk Level

As shown above, even though the hazard/threat was either unlikely or moderate, it is the consequences that determine the Risk Level. Given that it is reasonable to expect some form of casualty, then the risk level will range from Moderate to High or Extreme. It would not be appropriate to use the 20/20 vision of hindsight to simply point out that because none of what we trained and prepared for did not occur to justify the risk level was low.

The likelihood is relevant, and as stated, it always remained unlikely or moderate depending on dates and enemy capability. The consequences should it have occurred are based on probable expectations.

Reducing the risk

There is no logic in being able to fairly accurately determine a risk level if nothing is done to reduce it to its lowest possible level. **The Australian Defence Risk Management Framework (DRMF)** uses the terminology “As Low as Reasonably Practical/Achievable,” as outlined on page 16.

The ADF, when deployed, are very much at the mercy of the enemy when it comes to where and when things happen, as opposed to most other industries. The Commander can only do so much to actually prevent the enemy from launching an attack. However, they can put in place a number of strategies that can reduce the effects of such an event if it occurs. Such things at Butterworth included:

- Advanced medical training of all soldiers (*battlefield casualty treatment*)
- Tactical training which may result in less casualties because the soldiers respond with speed, aggression and determination because it is something they have rehearsed so many times, it becomes instinctive. (*QRF Callouts x 2 every day/night minimum*)
- Increased number of medics to be able to better treat and stabilise battlefield casualties if they occur. (*3 per Company as opposed to 1 in Australia on exercise*)
- Fully equipped and manned medical installation to receive wounded (*RAAF Hospital*)
- Having a system in place for reinforcements to be able to quickly respond to assist those who may be in contact with the enemy. (*Loaded magazines stored in the armoury, a fully manned armoury 24/7, bolts left in weapons to expedite any response. During my tour, we also had an additional section of 10 on duty at the same time, and they would man the QRF room during their absence*)

I have no doubt that the Risk Management Tools and Matrices we have available today did not exist in practice during RCB tours but Commanders have always conducted appreciations of what the enemy might/can do and how best to be ready for it should it occur. Over time and with new intelligence updates, these appreciations or appraisals all contributed to an ongoing improvement in the defence of the airbase.

Use of the term “Enemy”

The Chair mentioned on the last day of the tribunal that he did not necessarily agree that the CT's were our enemy. Based on Australia was not at war with them or words to that effect.

If we look at the opposite of an enemy, the term would be an ally or friend. The CT's were definitely not our allies or friends. They were, however, the enemy of the Malaysian Defence

Force, who were launching attacks against them from the Butterworth Airbase. Both using attack aircraft and airborne assaults.

Malaysian Owned

Since the 31st of March 1970, Malaysia owned the Butterworth Airbase. The RAAF and RCB were on a Malaysian Airbase on Malaysian Soil at a time the Malaysian Government was at war with the CT's.

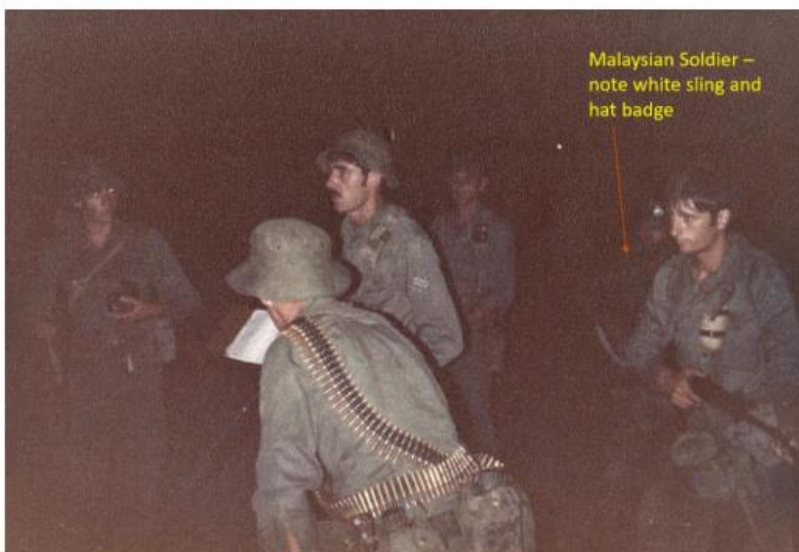
We were not there to train nor just to defend Australian Assets. We were responsible for the armed response to drive out any group which attacked the Malaysian Airbase, not as sentries but as a combat response force. The QRF would never have sat back just because Malaysian aircraft was being attacked on the ground. Our role required us to respond to any penetration or attempted penetration of the Airbase.

We were allies with the Malaysians, and we conjointly shared the defence of the airbase. Their enemy, by default, became ours. When you stand in someone's corner, you are taking their side, and there is no other way the CT's would or could interpret this and is supported by the intercept on the Clandestine China-based radio broadcast in May 72 where the CT's accurately described the Australian assets and the role of the RCB. Numerous documents already submitted clearly show the word enemy when talking about approaches etc.

Working with the Malaysian Military

In his submission, 001 Michael Connolly states: "The BAB RAAF Commanding Officer ordered the entire Rifle Company to be stood to for the period 5-8 August 1975, and to mount in addition to the 10-man QRF section 5 x 5 man Standing Patrols and a 10 man Section to mount a roving piquet on the RAAF flight line" He further adds: "Each standing patrol a Malay Soldier was attached as an interpreter and extra rifle" "The Standing Patrol I was involved in was conducted at the old Chinese Cemetery on the Eastern side of BAB airstrip". I have no doubt there are many more similar examples, but I am not privy to them.

In 1977 or early 1978, I was also tasked to take my section to the perimeter of the Airbase to cover a large hole cut in the wire. We had located the holes during a daytime patrol of the perimeter, and we were inserted back to cover it during the night. Like Mick Connolly in 1975, I also had a Malay soldier attached to me. We were at the Action condition (round in the chamber) throughout. This is further explained in my original submission, Number 52.



Malaysian Soldier –
note white sling and
hat badge

I am in the middle briefing my section prior to going out to the perimeter fence where we had found holes cut in the wire during a day time patrol. Note Malaysian Soldier with us.

It seems ironic that the only person in this photograph who saw Active Service in Butterworth is the Malaysian Soldier with us.

Expectation of Casualties

When applying a holistic approach to RCB service, it makes it difficult to try and determine the expectation of casualties. However, when you use the Risk Matrix shown on pages 4-8 of this submission when looking at the consequences of the risks already outlined above, you are automatically drawn to the fact that casualties must be expected.

There is nothing I have found that outlines there has to be a particular number of casualties for it to be warlike other than the expectation itself.

A casualty is described in its simplest form as a person killed or injured. There is nothing to suggest that the casualties must be fatal or only from the enemy. Casualties can also occur from illness or disease, which has zero influence from enemy forces.

Comparative Service RCB

If we compare RCB's role of defending the Butterworth Airbase from attack and providing a QRF based on the following points:

- Airbase Butterworth was owned by Malaysia and was in part defended by the ADF
- The RCB QRF was deployed during the Communist Insurgency in Malaysia
- Its primary role was to protect the air base at Butterworth from external threats.
- Their responsibilities included responding swiftly to any breach of the perimeter by hostile forces, engaging them with the aim of repelling or destroying them.
- Close proximity of known CT strongpoints
- Operational Sorties flown out of the Airbase against the CT's by our allies.
- CT's actively targeted Military and Police personnel nearby and inflicted severe casualties
- CT's conducted bombings and laid booby traps within a short distance of Butterworth
- CT's involved in regular skirmishes and ambushes with Malaysian Troops close to the Airbase.
- Had self-defence ROE

Diego Garcia

If we compare RCB with the Air Defence Guard based at Diego Garcia, which was re-classified as Active or Warlike Service upgraded from non-warlike.

- Deployed as part of Operation Slipper
- Provided Airbase Security for RAAF aircraft at the airbase on an Island in the Indian Ocean
- Iraq and Afghanistan were more than 1,800 kilometres away from Diego Garcia
- Enemy distance by sea was thousands of kilometres
- The enemy had no real military capability to use warships or attack aircraft to launch an assault.
- Possibly self-defence ROE?





COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

DECLARATION AND DETERMINATION UNDER THE AUSTRALIAN ACTIVE SERVICE MEDAL REGULATIONS

I, **QUENTIN ALICE LOUISE BRYCE**, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, pursuant to the Australian Active Service Medal Regulations contained in the Schedule to the Letters Patent dated 13 September 1988 ("the Regulations") on the recommendation of the Parliamentary Secretary for Defence, **hereby**:

- (a) **revoke** the Declaration and Determination made on 21 February 2011 under regulation 3 and regulation 4 respectively of the Regulations;
- (b) **declare**, under regulation 3 of the Regulations, the following warlike operations in which members of the Australian Defence Force are or were engaged, to be a *prescribed operation* for the purposes of the Regulations:
 - (i) Operation 'Slipper' – the Australian Defence Force contribution to the International Coalition Against Terrorism, that:
 - (A) for the period that commenced on 11 October 2001 and ended on 1 August 2002;

within the Diego Garcia land mass and territorial waters, plus airspace of Diego Garcia out to 250 nautical miles radius (from Reference Point 07 18.6S 072 24.6E) or declared Air Defence Identification Zone, whichever is greater;

Ubon – Thailand

If we compare RCB with the Air Defence Guard and Pilots based at Ubon Thailand, which was classified as Active or Warlike Service

- Deployed to protect an Airbase at which RAAF aircraft were located in Thailand.
- Thailand was not involved in a conflict.
- Aircraft flew sorties from Ubon to Viet Nam
- The enemy was not as close as the CT's were to Butterworth and were in another country.
- Patrolled out from the Airbase and had aircraft on standby, ready to respond to an attack on the Airbase
- Had self-defence ROE
- Had either Laos or Cambodia separating it from Vietnam





COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

DECLARATION AND DETERMINATION UNDER THE
AUSTRALIAN ACTIVE SERVICE MEDAL 1945-1975 REGULATIONS

I, **QUENTIN ALICE LOUISE BRYCE**, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, pursuant to the Australian Active Service Medal 1945-1975 Regulations contained in the Schedule to the Letters Patent dated 11 December 1997 ("the Regulations") on the recommendation of the Parliamentary Secretary for Defence, **hereby**:

- (a) **revoke** the Declaration and Determination made on 13 April 2011 under regulation 3 and subregulation 4(2) respectively of the Australian Active Service Medal 1945-1975 Regulations;
- (b) **declare**, under regulation 3 of the Regulations, the following warlike operations in which members of the Australian Defence Force were engaged in Thailand:
 - (i) Royal Australian Air Force activities in the defence of Thailand conducted from the Royal Thai Air Force Base at Ubon that commenced on 31 May 1962 and ended on 27 July 1962 and commenced on 25 June 1965 and ended on 31 August 1968; or
 - (ii) 2 Field Troop Royal Australian Engineers at Ban Kok Talat in Operation CROWN that commenced on 25 June 1965 and ended on 31 August 1968,

to be a *prescribed operation* for the purposes of the Regulations; and

- (c) **determine**, under subregulation 4(2) of the Regulations, that the conditions for award of the Australian Active Service Medal 1945-1975 with Clasp 'THAILAND' ("the Medal") for that *prescribed operation*

It is difficult for an RCB soldier to look at this comparative service in Diego Garcia or Ubon and see that they faced a higher level of threat by an enemy force and therefore experienced a much higher expectation of casualties. I must emphasise that in no way do I believe that their deployments did not meet/deserve Warlike Service. It did. However, on the balance of probability and looking at precedence, RCB service during 70-89 should not be viewed as being less deserving of Warlike.

No attack was ever launched against Butterworth, Ubon or Diego Garcia during the period of their deployment. Yet, it appears that the "well, nothing happened" approach seems to be singled out and used against RCB only.

Thank you.

Regards
Formerly 1204999 Corporal Mark Butler