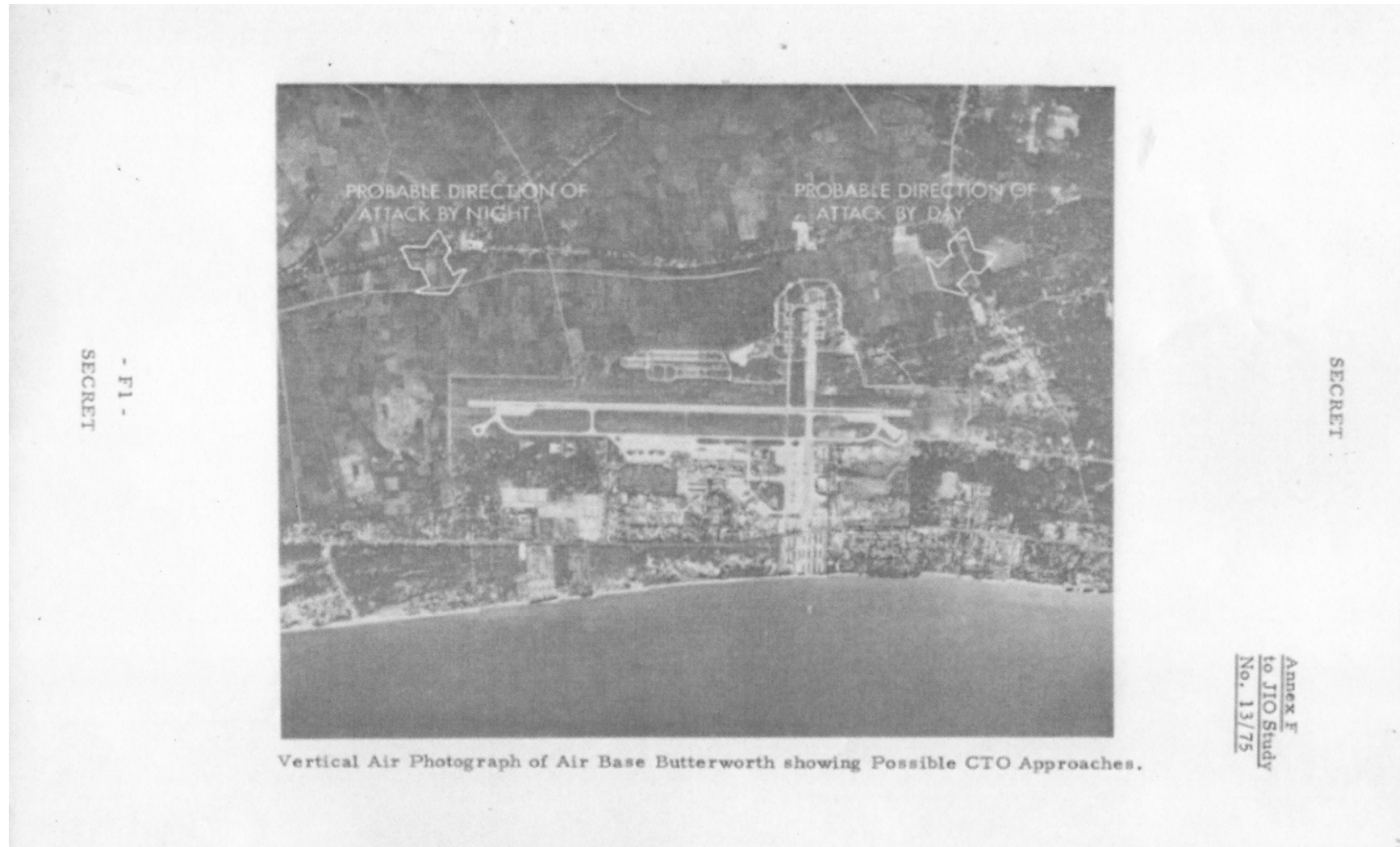


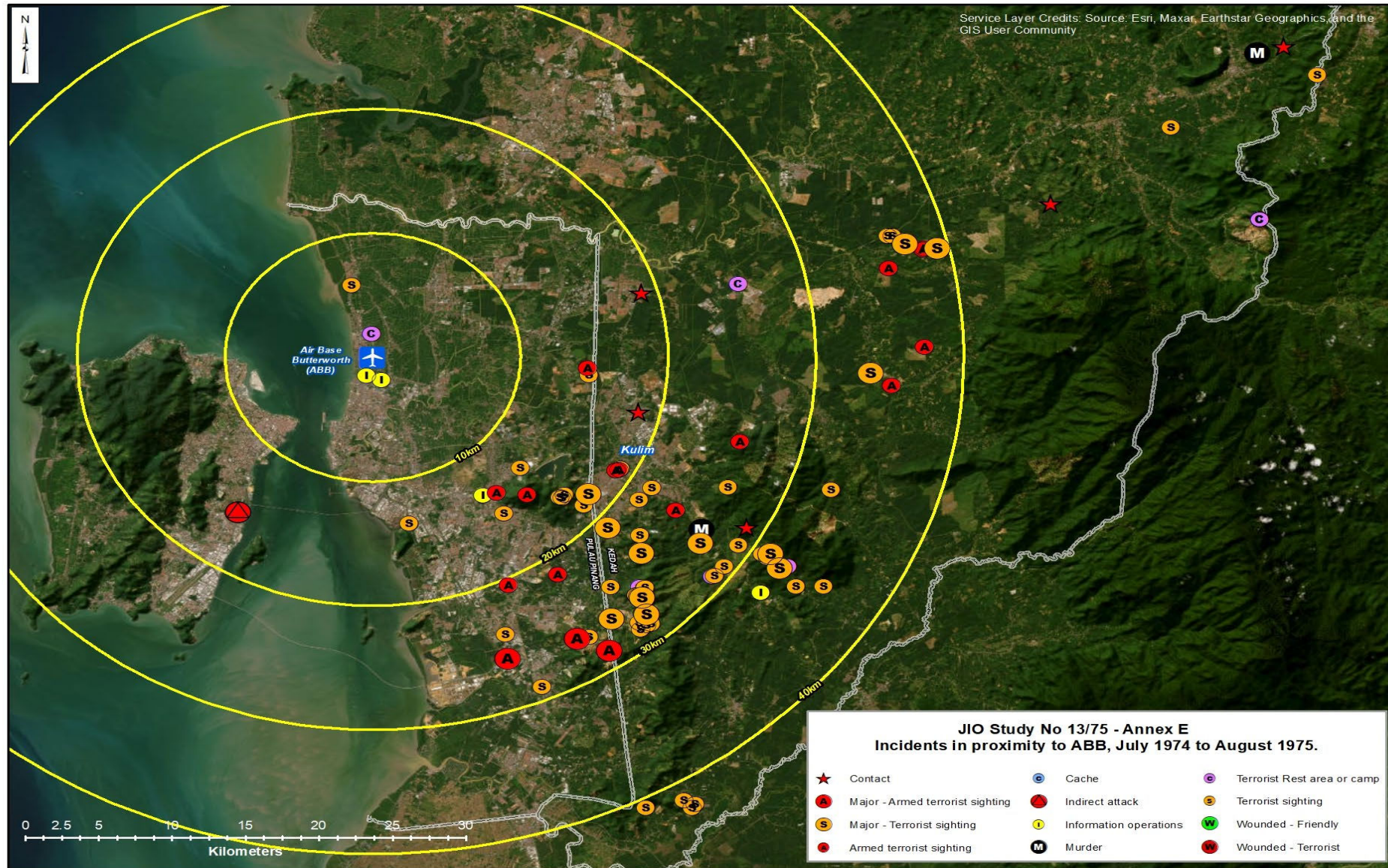
# **RIFLE COMPANY BUTTERWORTH REVIEW GROUP**

## **THREAT , ROE & EXPECTATION OF CASUALTIES**

# THE THREAT OF CT ATTACK ON AIRBASE BUTTERWORTH AS ASSESSED BY JIO



# CT INCIDENTS IN PROXIMITY TO ABB





# OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE THREAT TO THE SECURITY OF AIRBASE BUTTERWORTH

- **Air Cdre I S Parker, OC RAAF Base Butterworth 1971:** *“The Malaysian lack of capacity to effectively provide for their role in the security of Air Base Butterworth is a cause of serious concern”*
- **Aust High Commission KL:** Malaysian Deputy Director of Military Intelligence  
*“..assessed Airbase Butterworth as “a probable target”*
- **Sir Arthur Tange: 2 March 1972** *“..various examinations that have been made of the security problem at Butterworth”*
- **1973 Army CGS Briefing Note:** *“...increased concerns about possible threats to base security”*
- **JIO Study No. 13/75 dated Oct 75 – The Security of Air Base Butterworth:**
  - *“There is a potential threat to the Base from the CTO and related communist subversive organisations”* – sub para 56 (b) refers.
  - *“....it is unlikely that the CTO would try to discriminate between RAAF and RMAF targets, and Australian personnel and equipment would be endangered.”* – para 45 refers.

# OFFICIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF THE THREAT TO THE SECURITY OF AIRBASE BUTTERWORTH

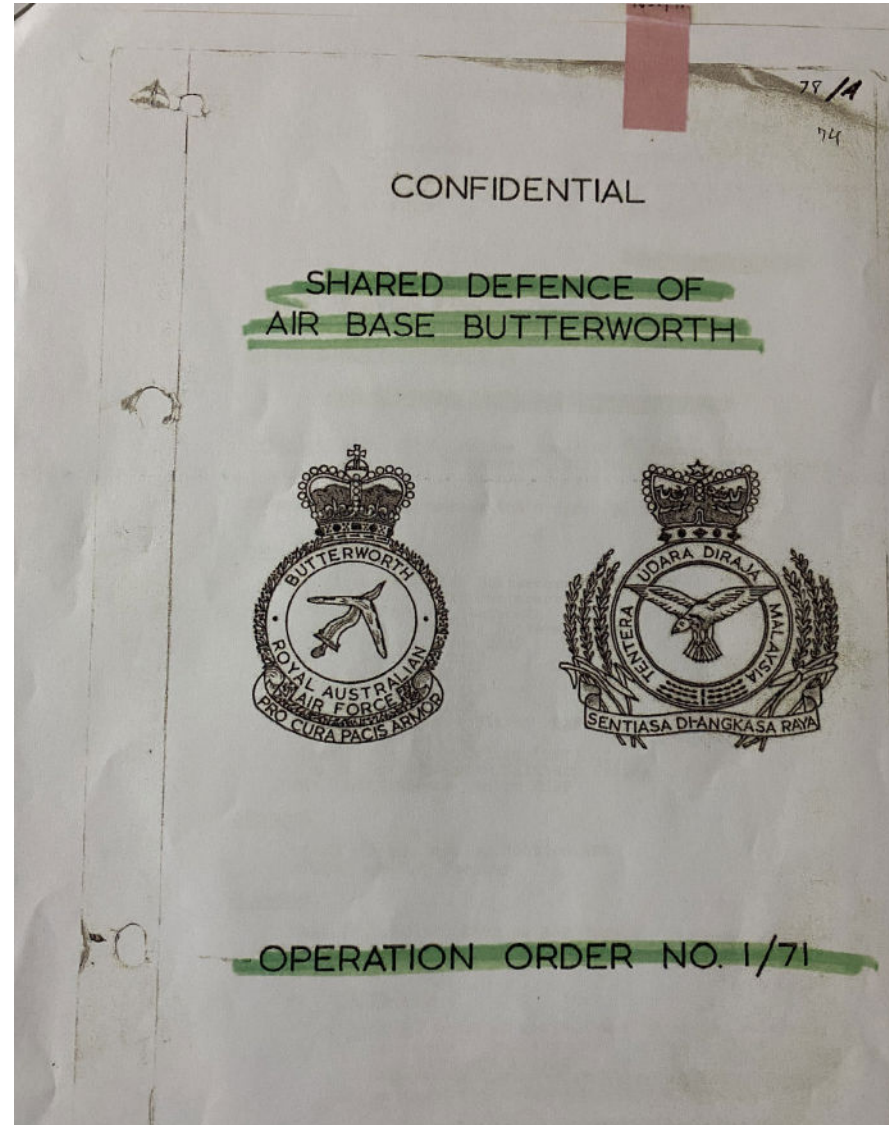
- **CAS Air Marshal JA Rowland 1975**

*“..a worsening security situation..” & “..the heightened possibility of CTO attacks on RAAF assets...” may need to reinforce Butterworth”*

- **CAS Air Marshal JA Rowland Minute to MINDEF dated 7 Oct 75 RCB:**

- *“...possible CT intentions to launch rocket attacks on bases in Malaysia increases our concern regarding the security of area around the base. Intelligence sources consider CTs have or able to obtain 81/82mm mortars to supplement their known supplies of 3.5 inch rockets” – para 2 refers.*
- *“RAAF and ARA (sic: RCB) personnel are used off-base to protect dependents in times of civil unrest” – para 4 refers.*
- *“there is an increased likelihood of attack on Air Base Butterworth – probably by use of 3.5 inch rockets” – Annex A para 16 refers.*

# SHARED PLAN FOR THE DEFENCE OF ABB



# TASKS ALLOCATED TO RCB BY OC RAAF BASE BUTTERWORTH

- Command: *"You are under my operational command in all matters concerning security duties for the protection of Australian assets, property and personnel at Airbase Butterworth".*
- Tasks: *"Your company is to be capable of conducting the following tasks in relation to security duties at Airbase Butterworth and training in these tasks is to be completed to my satisfaction before the company participates in other exercises:*
  - *cordon and search;*
  - *internal base patrolling;*
  - *protection of RAAF Service Police/SSP at established road blocks;*
  - *protection of Key Points;*
  - *crowd dispersal;*
  - *providing a quick reaction force (QRF) of section strength (on immediate standby on a 24 hour a day basis);*
  - *providing a reserve force to be activated on deployment of the QRF;*
  - *operating mobile tactical lights on likely penetration points;*
  - *manning of listening posts and standing patrols by night, including the use of image intensifiers; and*
  - *operating Tobias Intruder Detection Equipment".*

# ROE PROVIDED BY OC RAAF BASE BUTTERWORTH TO OC RCB

*“The Australian Service Authorities may take such measures within their installations as they deem necessary to ensure the security of the installations and the equipment, property, records and official information of the Australian Force”.*

**Exchange of Notes: Australia and Malaysia 1971 No.21. – Status of Forces: Section 2 (1) – Security, refers.**

**5. Orders for Opening Fire.** “You may open fire at a person or persons only in the following circumstances:

5.a. “If you are ordered to guard any building, vehicle, aircraft....., you may open fire at any person who is in the act of destroying or damaging by fire or explosives the building, vehicle, vehicle, aircraft .....

PROVIDED THAT THERE IS NO OTHER MEANS OF PREVENTING THE PERSON FROM CARRYING OUT THE ACT OR DESTRUCTION OR DAMAGE”

5. b. “If you or any other person is illegally attacked in such a way at to give you reason to fear that death or grave bodily injury will result, you may open fire on the person carrying out the attack.....

PROVIDED THAT THERE IS NO OTHER MEANS OF PREVENTING THE PERSON FROM CARRYING OUT THE ATTACK”.

**Directive by OC RAAF Butterworth to OC Australian Rifle Company Butterworth dated 4 Apr 78 – Annex A, sub paras 5 a. and b. refer.**



# RULES OF ENGAGEMENT PROVIDED BY HQ FIELD FORCE COMMAND TO OC RCB

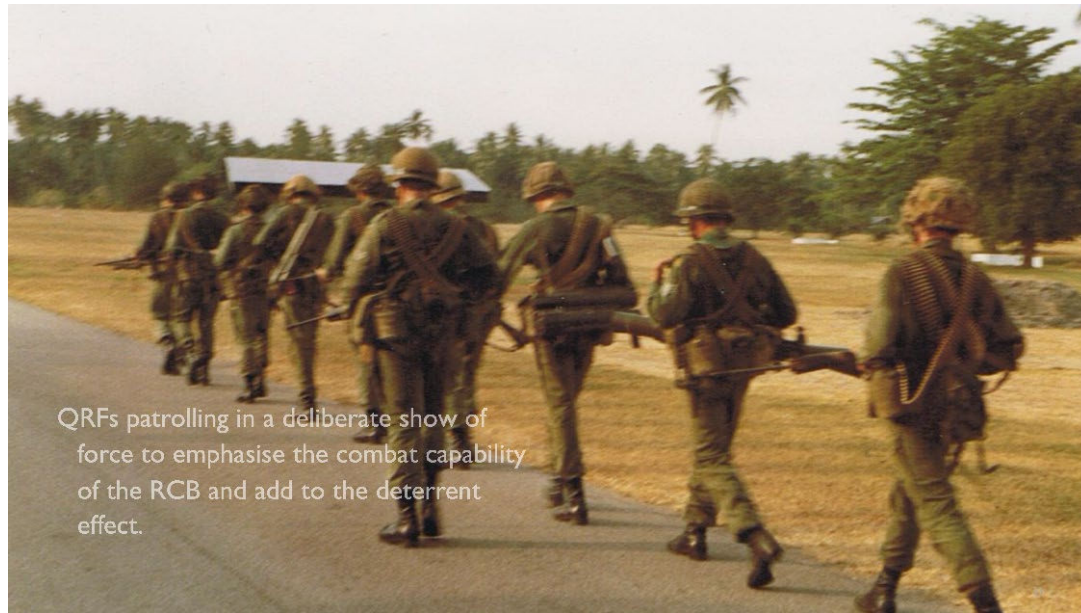
## Legal Basis.

3. “The entire area within the boundary fence of the Air Base, including the area enclosing the Transmitting Station, Hospital, Messes, and Married Quarters to the west of the main Butterworth – Alor Star road, has been declared a ‘Protected Place’ under the Protected Places and Protected Areas Ordinance 1959. This gives the right to control access (sentries, passes, etc) and the apprehension of any suspicious persons, if necessary by the use of force, including fire arms.”

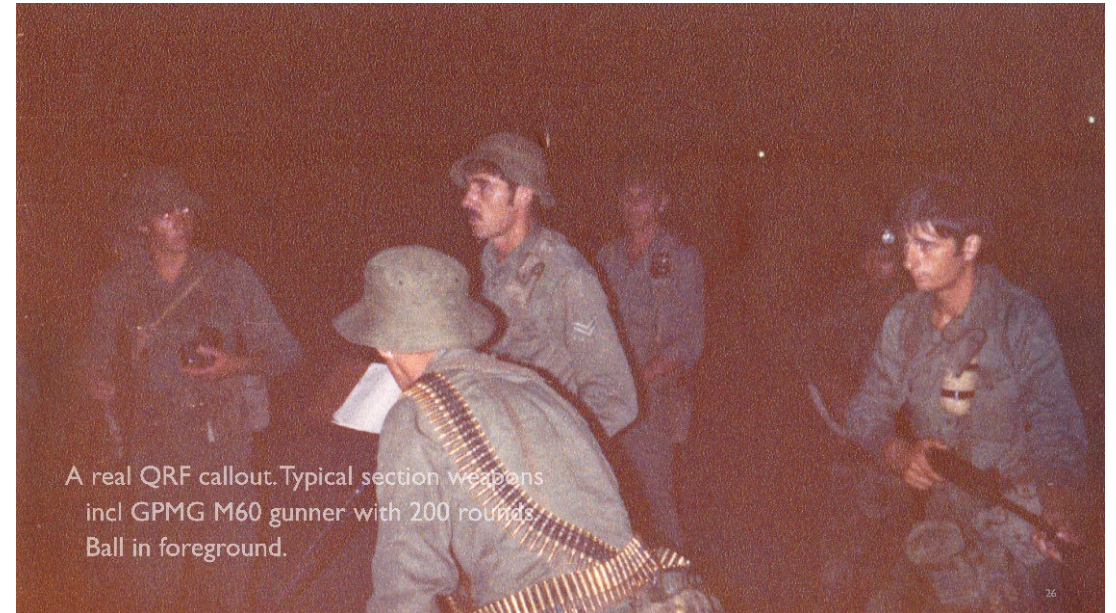
**HQ Field Force Command Staff Instruction 2/79 dated 6 Jul 79: Annex A refers.**

# MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

## QRF PERIMETER PATROLLING BY DAY



## QRF CALL-OUT TO A VITAL POINT



# MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

## RCB OBSERVATION POST – RIFLES AT THE LOADED CONDITION



## RCB MACHINE GUN AT THE LOADED CONDITION WITH 7.62MM LINK BALL GUARDING THE FLIGHT LINE





# MEASURES TO MITIGATE RISKS

**RCB AND MAF PERSONNEL MANNING  
A VEHICLE CHECKPOINT**



**7.62MM LINK BALL WITH TRACER ROUNDS  
BEING ISSUED TO RCB PERSONNEL**



# EXPECTATION OF CASUALTIES

“CO No 4 RAAF Hospital, will prepare in advance a broad medical plan to meet shared defence situations”



Extensive casevac training was carried out with the RAAF SAR helos in view of the expectation of casualties on the base.



# EXPECTATION OF CASUALTIES

- **JIO Study No. 13/75 dated Oct 75 – The Security of Air Base Butterworth:**
  1. *“There is a potential threat to the Base from the CTO and related communist subversive organisations” – sub para 56 (b) refers.*
  2. *“....it is unlikely that the CTO would try to discriminate between RAAF and RMAF targets, and Australian personnel and equipment would be endangered.” – para 45 refers.*
- **SIP DIV Review of Butterworth Deployment dated 22 Oct 76:** Acknowledges the possibility of acts of terrorism in the Butterworth and Penang areas and that *“Australian personnel – including dependents and equipment would be endangered”* – para 21 refers.

# EXPECTATION OF CASUALTIES ASSESSMENT

**Background:** During the period 1970 to 1989 ADF doctrine did not provide for the number of expected casualties to be assessed as part of tactical planning.

## **RCBRG Assessment:**

1. To meet the Tribunal request the RCBRG used extant defence doctrine (ADFP 5.0.1 ed.2) the Joint Military Appreciation Process that provides for the Operational Risk Management Process, to assess:
  - The likelihood of the risk of a CT attack on ABB.
  - The consequences of a CT attack in terms of casualties.
  - The overall level of risk of casualties.
2. The assessment was informed by primary source documents addressing the CT threat, including, the JIO Study No. 13/75 dated Oct 75.
3. In summary the outcomes of the assessment were:
  - The likelihood of the risk of a CT attack on ABB: **Probable**.
  - The consequences of a CT attack in terms of casualties: **Catastrophic**.
  - Identification of the overall level of risk of casualties: **Very High**.

# EXPECTATION OF CASUALTIES ASSESSMENT

4. The methodology and outcomes of the assessment were reviewed by a nationally accredited risk management consultant who had been a serving Regular Army officer.

5. The consultant concluded:

- *“The rationale and reasons stated for the RCBRG approach to assessing the likelihood of casualties are logical and appropriate”.*
- *“The JMAP Operational Risk Management process has been used correctly and conforms to the Australian/New Zealand Standard AS/NZS 31000:2018 Risk Management – Guidelines”.*
- *“The outcomes of the RCBRG risk assessment are credible and consider threat-related intelligence that informed the employment of RCB personnel at Air Base Butterworth in the defence of the airbase”.*

# 2018 DEFINITION OF WARLIKE SERVICE

*“A warlike operation is an Australian Government authorised military operation where Australian Defence Force 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 Australian Defence Force personnel. Australian Defence Force personnel are authorised to use force to pursue specific military objectives and there is an expectation of Australian Defence Force casualties as a result ”.*

# CONCLUSIONS

- The decision to deploy RCB was authorised by the Whitlam Government based on the recommendations of the Defence Committee.
- JIO threat assessments and other contemporaneous intelligence assessed that ABB was a potential target for attack by the CTs and the CTs, as hostile forces, had the capability (personnel, weapons and training) to cause harm to RAAF and RCB personnel.
- RCB and RAAF personnel were authorised to use **lethal force** IAW the ROE issued by OC RAAF Base Butterworth.
- RAAF and RCB personnel had a clear mission to defend ABB. This was a military objective, which OC RAAF Base Butterworth communicated in the plan for the Shared Defence of ABB. This military objective is confirmed by contemporaneous evidence, including documents initiated at the strategic level.



# CONCLUSIONS

- RCB personnel were tasked to undertake patrols by day and night and to provide a QRF to respond to CT attacks and incursions.
- As a consequence, RAAF and RCB personnel were exposed to the risk of physical and psychological harm. The concerns of Government and Defence officials about the risk to the safety of ADF personnel at ABB are acknowledged in contemporaneous documents, that show the Prime Minister, Ministers, the Secretaries of the Departments of Foreign Affairs, Air and Defence, the Service Chiefs and other senior officers and officials had been briefed on the CT threat to ABB, they were aware of the consequent risks to the safety of Australian defence personnel and families and they concurred with and/or directed the implementation of measures at ABB to mitigate the risk of harm.

# CONCLUSIONS

- Contemporaneous evidence also reflects that in the event of an attack there was an expectation of casualties to MAF, RCB and RAAF personnel, and potentially RAAF families. The measures implemented for the defence of ABB, coupled with the medical arrangements to support the Shared Plan for the defence of the airbase are clear evidence of this.
- The existence of the threat to ABB and the risk of casualties is also apparent from submissions to the Tribunal made by RCB and RAAF veterans with first-hand knowledge and experience of being deployed to defend the airbase at Butterworth.
- That the airbase was not attacked is immaterial in that the arrangements implemented to defend the airbase, including the deployment of RCB, were intended to deter an attack and to ensure there were sufficient forces to react to an attack if one occurred.

# THE RELEVANCE OF THIS INFORMATION TO THE TRIBUNAL INQUIRY

*“One very significant principle established by MAJGEN Mohr during his deliberations on service in South East Asia, was that if ADF personnel are placed in circumstances where they may be used to react to an assessed threat made by Australian Government intelligence agencies, it has to be considered operational service. This is regardless of whether the threat is realized or not”. (CDF Minute 777/2000: ADF Medals Policy – Where We Have Been and Where We are Going, para 19 refers.)*

- RCB personnel were armed, trained and equipped to defend the airbase, and had orders to use lethal force in the defence of the airbase from the threat of CT attack.
- The RCB deployment to the Butterworth Airbase was not for training purposes.

# C COMPANY 2/4 RAR RCB DEPLOYMENT FEB TO MAY 1979



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