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**PAR ONERI**

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### COVER

**This edition of PAR ONERI is  
dedicated to RAASC's service in SVN.  
The cover photograph is of 86 Tpt Pl  
RAASC departing from Vung Tau on  
the last operational convoy in SVN on  
28 February 1972.**

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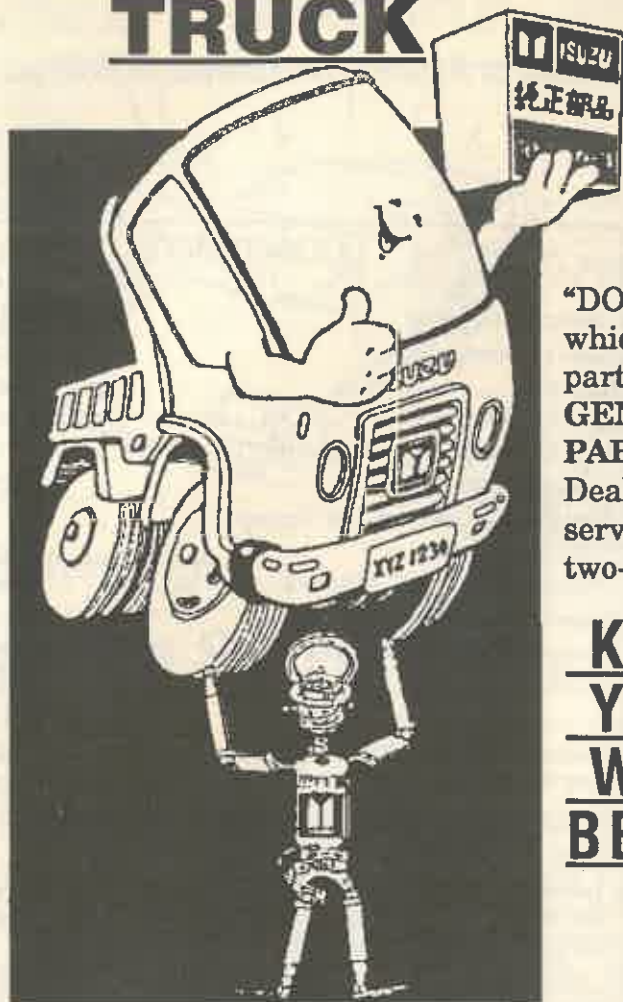
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## DIRECTORS MESSAGE

by  
Colonel G.C. Park

Much has occurred since the issue of the last Par Oneri particularly as the Force Structure Review and associated reviews linked under the FSR continue to move through various stages of implementation. One could spend a great deal of time looking at each review in turn and prophesy at its consequences. Suffice to say, the Army will; be quite different in its makeup by the year 2000 to what it is now. We at the Directorate are currently examining the RACT trade structures to ensure that they will enable capabilities to be met, as well of course, the expectations of a young soldier to progress through the ranks.

The Directorate staff are involved in many issues, as you can imagine. Two of note though, that I must mention, involve key trades. On a positive note, the movers, in my view, have a bright future. Formation of Movement Units will see these Logistic Command organisations move in a truly operational movements direction, not only for Army but soon, I hope, for

the ADF as they assume a more joint role in life. I am also reviewing 11 MC Group, and its functions to enhance a joint level of performance and ensure a closer link between these Land Command warriors, and their Logistic Command brothers. So movers watch this space.

On a less positive note, although we continue to 'Fight the Good Fight', we still remain uncertain as to the future of the amphibious world. An Army study is currently under way to determine just what Army, indeed the ADF requires, to perform amphibious tasks. Obviously its outcome will affect the number of watercraft we will maintain, the size and viability of associated trades (including RAEME I should add), the training requirement and so on. It is almost impossible for us to plan the way ahead at this stage, particularly for organisations like 10 Tml Regt, and the Maritime School. I sincerely trust that the outcome of this study, then, apart from being timely, is in line with all our thinking.

Moving on from these issues, let me pass on to you the warmest regards from our Colonel in Chief, HRH Princess Alice. I was fortunate enough to lunch with her in February this year during a whirlwind overseas tour, and present to her, on behalf of the RACT, a 'Waggoner' - the Corps plaque normally reserved for past Directors of the Corps, Corps RSM and officers of one star and above on their retirement. She was visibly moved, and most appreciative of the gesture, particularly as the plaque is quite unique. It was obvious to me that Princess Alice holds our Corps, indeed Australia, close to her heart, and this made my audience with her, at her ancestral home at Barnwell Manor, all the more memorable.

It was also of benefit to me to meet my counterparts in the UK, US, Canada and NZ, and to see RACT soldier equivalents in these countries. I returned home knowing full well that the calibre of our people, and the training they receive, is next to none. That too, was gratifying.

In conclusion, with the Directorate itself in the throes of reorganisation and relocation (probably to AST but more of this in the next issue of Par Oneri), I would note two points.

Firstly, the cover of this issue highlights 86 Tpt PI RAASC during its Vietnam Days. 3 Oct 92 sees the dedication of the Australian Vietnam Forces Memorial in Canberra. This occasion will be significant not only for Army, but also for those retired veterans who will be attending. Although RACT units themselves or indeed members of the Corps did not participate in this conflict, the Banner will be paraded in honour of those predecessor Corps and units that did. And secondly, let me welcome Colonel Brian McAuley, AM, MBE, ED, RL as our new Representative Colonel Commandant. I know he will serve in this position with the same dedication as Colonel Ken Duncan, RL, who remains as Colonel Commandant NSW.



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2Lt John Betts (RAE)

**Det 176 AD Pl**  
Lt Miles Johnston

**Det 1 Div Postal Unit**  
2 Lt David Gillett

I have no disagreement with the remainder of the early history except to say that we also had the responsibility of unloading the HMAS Jeparit each time she came from Australia.

It was when I turned the page and read 'The Vietnam Legacy' I really felt that the story of the unit motto 'SAIF' should be told as it actually happened.

The unit was moving by road from Ingleburn to the Shoalwater Bay training area (Aug. 66) to take part in Exercise 'Barra Winga'. We were travelling in convoy and at that stage I was travelling in my landrover at the head of the convoy with the CSM, WO2 Neary and my driver batman LCpl Bell and noticed a tortoise on his back in the middle of the road. I stopped the convoy and picked up the tortoise and had the idea that it should

become our unit mascot and emblem. It became a much travelled tortoise because it went to Rockhampton with us and returned to Ingleburn accompanied by several others from the training area. The moral of the story was the fable of the 'Tortoise and the Hare' as stated in the article. We then had to determine a motto and because we wanted to emphasise safety as well as getting the job done in a sure and steady manner SAIF (Stay Alive in Five) became our motto.

When we returned to Ingleburn from Exercise 'Barra Winga' we had badges made for issue to everyone in the unit, which every soldier wore with great pride. We also had stencils cut and when we left to go to SVN each member of the unit had the tortoise emblem SAIF stencilled on his kit bag (I still have mine to this day).

The unit advance party under command of Capt Barry Fegan left for SVN in early March 1967 and the main body by C130 out of Richmond (NSW) air base in April. Would you believe (surprise surprise) a couple of tortoises from Australia miraculously arrived in SVN as well. They were kept in a small compound (with pool) behind the 2 Tpt Pl Headquarters and were still there when I returned to Australia in December 1967 to take up an appointment at AHQ Canberra, having handed over to my successor Major Peter Douglas.

There is no doubt in my mind that the unit emblem (tortoise) and motto was a great morale booster for everyone in the unit. Much to the chagrin of the Comd 1 ALSG, 5 Coy members would turn up the brim of their bush hats to reveal the unit badge. The convoys and packets would line up outside the gates of 1 ALSG prior to setting off to Nui Dat or wherever and reverse the vehicle tac signs and guess what was stencilled on the back of them (no prize for the correct answer) - Correct - The unit emblem - the SAIF tortoise.

The badges were used for many things, on cigarette lighters, stick pins, tie clips etc. I still have my old Zippo lighter with badge and a tie clip I still wear with considerable pride and affection.

To have raised and commanded 5 Coy RAASC will always be remembered by me as the highlight of my military career. The figure five is of considerable significance to me. I served with 55 Coy RASC (AD) during the Malayan emergency in 1957 and 5 Coy RAASC (Div Tpt) in South Vietnam in 1967. I also have five children.

I shall always have fond memories of a great unit and a fine group of Officers and soldiers who did a first class job in the true traditions of our corps, it was my privilege to have served with them. I always think of 5 Coy later 5 Sqn as my unit and hope that if I am still around in 1996 someone may invite me to celebrate the 30th birthday with them.

Signed  
N.W.J. Mcvilly  
Col Comd RACT VICTORIA  
(The Father of Five)  
12 March '92

P.S. I really do believe that the caricature of the 'Admin Officer Conference Day' looks more like a tortoise than a turtle.

*Ed. A copy of this letter was sent to 5 Tpt Sqn.*

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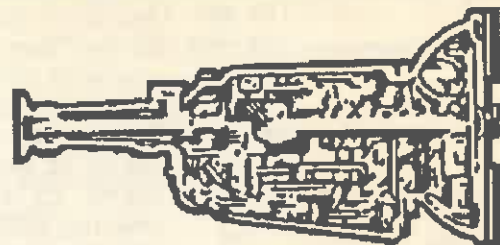
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## MAJOR GENERAL D.C.J. DEIGHTON, AO, MBE MEMORIAL FUND UPDATE

In Par Oneri No 19 (Pg 5) we asked for donations in lieu of the 1991 Corps subscriptions to help to dedicate the Positron Emission Tomography (PET) Centre at the Austin Hospital, to Major General Deighton. The Corps raised over \$3,000.00 for the cause. The following units (in addition to those mentioned in Par Oneri No 19) have kindly donated to the Fund:

5 Tpt Sqn	\$ 80.00
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We have recently received information that the Radiochemistry Laboratory in the Austin Hospital's PET Centre has been named after Major General Deighton. So on behalf of the Director, we would like to thank all those members who gave generously to this good cause.

## The Royal Australian Corps Of Transport CORPORATE PLAN

*Foreword By Colonel G.C. Park, DMOVT-A*

The RACT, a large and diverse organisation, could be compared with a very large civilian company, sharing common problems in the areas of personnel management and training, longrange planning, resource utilisation, ever-increasing customer expectations and a changing operating environment.

A major problem with the Corps' management is that the key managers - the Commanding Officers, independent Officers Commanding, Staff Officers in various Headquarters and the staff of the Directorate - are posted every two years in line with Army Policy. The result is that the Corps management occasionally becomes the uncoordinated decisions of well-intentioned people rather than a concerted and directed approach of achieving realistic goals.

The aim of the RACT Corporate Plan then (executive summary reproduced here) is to provide a base for the continuing management of the Corps. It seeks to identify the Corps' mission, goals and objectives, and the strategies to achieve these ends. The Corporate Plan will be a dynamic document, capable of being changed as goals and objectives are either achieved or changed. Complete transcripts of the Corporate Plan will be distributed to key Corps personnel, and will be available to all Corps members on request from the Directorate.

## RACT CORPORATE PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### INTRODUCTION

1. In recent years far-reaching changes have occurred in the structure and management of the ADF, Army and logistics. This environment of change presents an opportunity for RACT to assess and evaluate its aims, the methods of achieving those aims, and to promulgate that information in the form of the RACT Corporate Plan.

### THE RACT MISSION

2. The RACT mission is to provide the Army, and where appropriate the ADF, with aspects of strategic mobility, limited tactical mobility, and physical distribution support within an integrated logistic environment.

### RACT GOALS

3. The RACT Goals Are:

a. to become the Army's physical distribution manager;

b. to maximise awareness of the RACT's capabilities and potential as an essential part of the integrated logistic system;

c. to develop and promote the RACT's role and capability in providing aspects of strategic mobility;

d. to adopt a customer service orientation; and

e. to develop a flexible management structure capable of meeting the dual challenges provided by the Army's strategic guidance and the current environment of change.

### OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGIES

#### Objective 1 - Management

4. RACT must develop a management structure capable of providing a technical chain of command and the flexibility to adapt to a changing Defence environment.



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a. Strategy 1-1 Develop an RACT  
Management Plan.

### Objective 2 - Doctrine and Policy

5. RACT must develop doctrine  
and policy that complements the  
integrated logistic environment  
and provides the RACT with a  
flexible framework within the  
changing Defence environment.

a. Strategy 2-1 Identify and  
develop key areas of doctrine to  
reflect current strategic guidance  
and to provide relevance in the  
changed Defence management  
structure.

b. Strategy 2-2 Develop a policy-  
making framework to identify  
and coordinate movement,  
transport and technical policy.

c. Strategy 2-3 Develop common  
procedures, where applicable, for  
use in the AO and behind the  
AO.

### Objective 3 - Personnel

6. RACT must develop a per-  
sonnel management structure  
capable of meeting the changing  
needs of the RACT and the ADF.

a. Strategy 3-1 Develop an RACT  
Personnel Plan which provides  
an appropriate personnel  
management structure.

### Objective 4 - Training

7. RACT must develop its  
training to meet the changing  
needs of the Defence  
environment.

a. Strategy 4-1 Develop an RACT  
TRaining Plan to ensure the  
competency and currency of its  
personnel, and that they are  
appropriately qualified and  
experienced for their current  
and future postings.

### Objective 5 - Equipment and Facilities

8. RACT must plan and forecast  
equipment and facilities  
requirements to complement its  
changing structure.

a. Strategy 5-1 Develop an RACT  
Equipment and Facilities Plan.

### Objective 6 - Information Systems

9. RACT must develop an IS  
structure to meet its needs and  
those of its customers, to provide  
a coordinated approach to IS  
development, and to integrate  
RACT IS with the other IS being  
developed within Defence.

a. Strategy 6-1 Develop an RACT  
IS Plan.

### CONCLUSION

10. The RACT Corporate Plan  
provides the guidance for the  
future direction of the Corps.  
From this strategic assessment  
supporting plans can be  
formulated, and specific projects  
assigned. The RACT Corporate  
Plan represents a major step  
towards an RACT structure  
capable of coping with changing  
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## OBITUARY FOR 17440 CPL P.C. MITCHELL

CPL Peter Charles Mitchell 'Mitch', died in a vehicle accident in Darwin during Exercise 'Kangaroo 92'. Mitch and another member of 26 Transport Squadron, were struck by a civilian vehicle whilst walking along a road at night.

CPL Mitchell was born in Western Australia on the 25th of June 1961. He enlisted into the Army as an apprentice on the 12th of January 1977 and graduated as a fitter and turner four years later. In 1981 he became qualified as an armourer and was subsequently posted to the following workshops:

- Canungra Wksp Pl,
- Infantry centre TSSU,
- Canungra Wksp Pl,
- 102 Field Wksp, and
- 26 Tpt Sqn Wksp.

CPL Mitchell is probably best remembered for his shooting ability. His capability as a marksman saw him gain selection in the Australian Army team competing at Bisely in 1985 and Brunei in 1987. He also displayed proficiency at the AASAM meets winning a machine gun championship and placing highly in several of the other small arms competitions.

CPL Mitchell could always be relied upon to help coach and encourage potential shooters in the 26 Transport Squadron shooting team, which he led to many victories both in VIC and NSW.

CPL Mitchell is survived by his wife Irene and his two daughters Amanda (two and a half) and Vivian (twelve months). Our sincere condolences go to the Mitchell family, and his relatives and friends.

## HONOURS AND AWARDS Queen's Birthday Honours

The Director would like to publically congratulate the RACT personnel who received an award in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Lieutenant Colonel Brian Hollins received the Conspicuous Service Cross (CSC) for conspicuous service as the SO1 Log on HQ 1 Div.

Warrant Officer Class Two Peter Oblak received the Conspicuous Service Medal (CSM) for conspicuous service as the Logistic Plans WO and SM Puckapunyal Logistic Battalion.

## RESIGNATIONS/ RETIREMENTS

The following members have separated since October 91 after 20 yrs plus service with the Corps and the Army. We wish them well in their future endeavours:

BRIG G. Christopherson, AM  
 LTCOL B. Goodes  
 LTCOL D. McDonald  
 LTCOL A. Moore  
 LTCOL J. Noye  
 LTCOL M. Price

MAJ A. Rutledge  
 MAJ T. Vincent  
 MAJ A. Ward

CAPT R. Yallop

WO1 L. Hart  
 WO1 J. Kokscho

WO2 C. Farrer  
 WO2 D. Grace  
 WO2 T. Hunt  
 WO2 B. Ives  
 WO2 W. Loechel  
 WO2 K. Parry  
 WO2 R. Read  
 WO2 R. Ricardo  
 WO2 K. Stafford

SSGT G. Loone  
 SGT K. Braby  
 SGT W. Cheshire  
 SGT L. Roberts  
 SGT I. Robertson  
 SGT R. Smith  
 SGT K. Tucknott  
 SGT S. Watson

CPL T. Blair  
 CPL G. Brown  
 CPL M. Crawford  
 CPL D. Hayman  
 CPL R. Lynch  
 CPL K. Pacey  
 CPL R. Stace

LCPL S. Gurney  
 LCPL T. Irwin  
 LCPL M. Tanner

PTE K. Burgess  
 PTE D. Schults





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**New South Wales**  
108 Wigram Street, Harris Park 2150  
Ph. (02) 635 9733 & (088) 043 503  
(088) 043 503 (24 hours)

**Victoria (Melbourne)**  
26 Thompson Street, South Melbourne 3205  
Ph. (03) 680 5299 & (038) 011 046

**Victoria (Albury-Wodonga)**  
91 Hume Street, Wodonga 3680  
Ph. (090) 56 1341 (24 hours)

**South Australia**  
237 Glen Osmond Road, Frewville 5063  
Ph. (08) 379 9718 & (088) 011 046 (24 hours)

**Tasmania (Hobart)**  
2 Castray Esplanade, Battery Point 7004  
Ph. (002) 31 0488 & (008) 011 046 (24 hours)  
**Tasmania (Launceston)**  
29 Elphin Road, Launceston 7250  
Ph. (003) 31 7500 & (008) 011 046 (24 hours)

**Western Australia**  
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Ph. (09) 481 1955 & (008) 011 046 (24 hours)

**Queensland (Brisbane)**  
Tandem House, 303 Coronation Drive, Milton 4064  
Ph. (07) 369 8177 & (008) 011 046 (24 hours)  
**Queensland (Townsville)**  
Shop 17, Kingsvale Shopping Centre  
300 Ross River Road, Aitkenvale 4814  
Ph. (077) 75 5488 & (008) 019 332 (24 hours)

**Northern Territory**  
Shop 6, Cascom Centre, Bradshaw Terrace,  
Casuarina 0810  
Ph. (089) 27 9411 & (008) 011 046 (24 hours)

## RAASC IN VIETNAM

The following articles are from some old RAASC Digests, which I dug up out of our archives. I have republished these extracts to give you a bit of an insight of what 1, 5 and 26 Coys RAASC experienced during their tour of SVN. Some of the personalities mentioned in the articles should be familiar to many readers. *Ed.*

### 1 COY RAASC IN SOUTH VIETNAM

*By A Unit Member  
(From RAASC Digest  
dated March 1967)*

1 Coy RAASC (Div Tpt) has the distinction of being the first RAASC Tpt Coy to be deployed overseas since the Second World War. Of this the Company is very proud, and so we are prompted to give the readers of the Digest some idea of our work, disposition and general functions.

The unit is deployed in two areas. The main portion of the Company, which is commanded by Maj A.D.M (Duncan) Glendenning is on the peninsular known locally as VUNG-TAU. On larger scale maps it may be seen in the SE corner of SOUTH VIETNAM as "Cape St JACQUES". Nestling in not too pleasant sand hills about one mile from the town of Vung-Tau and under the command of HQ 1 ALSG. The Company consists of the HQ, 1 Tpt Pl Less 1 Sec, 87 Tpt Pl (tipper) less 1 Sec, 21 Sup Pl less one Sec, Det 1 Div S and T Wksp and Det 176 AD Coy RAASC. The missing two sections of transport and one section of supplies are at NUI DAT. NUI DAT is the base area for 1 ATF and in this area our small detachment of RAASC soldiers are responsible for the maintenance of the Task Force. The 1 ATF base area is about 30 "clicks" (Kilometres) from 1 ALSG and this route stretches along a narrow but reasonably good road. The topography of the country side through which it travels is extremely varied, as can be judged from the following description of the two areas and the road between them.

1 Coy RAASC main body is deployed in the sandhills about

one mile from the township and about 300 yards from the sea. During the wet season it is under water and during dry it is under sand. (One warning. If any wife or sweetheart asks an ex 1 Coy RAASC VIETNAM veteran to take her to the beach, we do not accept responsibility for the consequences.) The sand during all seasons is intolerable, except that at least everything remains clean, and only requires dusting. All food, water, clothing, vehicles, beds and bodies are perpetually covered with the powder-like sand.

(Most members are considering joining a surf club when returning home if only to be in the march past team.) One is glad in many ways to leave the ALSG area to go north on the resupply convoys. Upon leaving the main gate the convoy passes over a causeway type road through a swamp and then eventually past the VUNG-TAU Airfield where elements of the United States Army and Air Force are located. Then through villages, whose smell is reminiscent of O'Riordan St, SYDNEY. The countryside becomes flat and scrub covered and then the causeway type road reappears, this time to take the vehicles across the tidal area. Three bridges, which have doubtful capacities, are crossed en route. A transformation here takes place. The terrain becomes green and lush and immediately it can be seen that the soil is excellent for farming. Along both sides of the road padi fields are laid and are constantly being tended by the local inhabitants. Great, grey, healthy looking water buffalo wallow in the mud and appear to be completely disinterested in all about them.

BARIA, the main town in the PHUOC TUY Province, is a reasonably clean, neat place. However, as can be understood

after almost 30 years of war, signs of disrepair are evident. The main impression here, though, is that the people are friendly and smiling. Remembering the first convoys that weaved through the town when eyes of doubt were cast, it cannot but be thought that, here at least, the war is being won, not only the shooting war against the VC, but just as important, the war to win the hearts and minds of the people.

After BARIA, the convoy moves North along Inter Provincial Route 2, about a further four miles. This area is mainly rice padi interspersed with heavy green undergrowth. About half way between BARIA and NUI DAT the village of HOA LONG is passed. Once a hotbed of VC power, it is now undergoing pacification, although there are doubtless still VC sympathisers among the inhabitants.

On entering the Task Force area, one finds the Artillery deployed on either side of the road.

There in the middle of 1 ATF area on the side of a small feature are deployed the two sections of transport and the section of the supplies Platoon of 1 Coy. Lt P K (Peter) Roper has the task of commanding these troops and we believe he enjoys every minute of it. Amongst what is sticky red mud a foot deep in the wet, and heavy red dust in the dry, the men of 1 Coy carry out the important business of providing food, ammunition, water and POL for the Task Force.

A most significant thing about 1 Coy RAASC is that on no occasion throughout its seven months of operation, over 400,000 miles of travelling and its carrying of 20,000 tons of necessities for the 1 ATF, can it



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be said the job hasn't been well done.

What exactly do we do? The Company has the following tasks:

a. The maintenance of 1 ATF -

- (1) By road
- (2) By air

(An outline of the maintenance system is shown in Fig 2.)

- b. Provide internal transport requirements within 1 ATF.
- c. Providing internal transport requirements within 1 ALSG - mainly for haulage of items from US Depots.
- d. Water delivery.
- e. Collection, breaking bulk and issue in detail all POL, Rations and RAASC expense items for the Force.
- f. Collection, holding and issue in detail all ammunition for 1 ATF.
- g. The Administration and Quartermaster support of the smaller units of 1 ALSG including HQ 1 ALSG, Postal, Provost, Pay and Chaplains. As one might imagine the work never stops. Convoys to 1 ATF are one a day, seven days a week.

Imagine the worst possible driving conditions, many critical points, changing speeds, densities etc, temperatures in the vehicles of up to 110 degrees, and the potential danger of enemy action, and you will have a small idea of how the 1 Coy driver spends his day. 1 Tpt Pl have adopted a motto which sums up the situation admirably "You Call, We Haul".

The vehicles we have used in this "Hauling" are the 2 1/2 ton GS Mk3 International and the 2 1/2 ton GS AB 160 International Tipper. The Mk3 has done remarkably well and we are the envy of the US Transport operators because of the ability of this vehicle to be converted from a covered load carrier to a personnel carrier or a flat top in a matter of minutes. The US "Deuce and a half" is perhaps more rugged, but certainly no better than our Mk3. The 2 1/2

## RAASC IN VIETNAM

ton tipper or "tipping teaspoon", as it is named affectionately, has done a wide variety of tasks with a good deal of success. But it is a commercial vehicle primarily and a military vehicle secondarily. Bearing this in mind it, too, has done remarkable jobs. Capt J M (John) Neenen, the 87 Tpt Pl Platoon Commander, says that this is because of the brilliance of his drivers. This may be so, but none can honestly deny that all drivers, no matter what their age, experience or military affiliations, have done a magnificent job with the tools they have been given, and have carried everything from beer to bulldozers and Viet Cong suspects to Australian Infantrymen with equal care and ability.

The Supply Platoon has had peculiar problems which few other Supply Platoons in the history of the Corps could have possibly had. From trying to convince high ranking US Officers that "Marinated green bean salad and dill pickles" is not really Australian fare, to organizing the issue of fresh fruit for the Force in one day (which is a remarkable effort when considering that this fresh fruit on one occasion consisted entirely of lemons) Capt P J F (Peter) Tuckett and his Platoon have done a fine job. These hard-working soldiers have become widely known amongst their fellow RAASC soldiers as "Jack's Platoon" because of their almost magical ability to produce results not only in provision of rations for Australian soldiers, but in their obtaining by fair means or foul more and varied aids to comfortable living than most Australian Units. The Supply Platoon handles all the supplies and POL and the 1 ALSG end of the MSR and its detached section at 1 ATF handles all the supplies, POL and ammunition at that end. It is generally pressed for time to complete its task but has performed exceptionally well in most adverse circumstances. Of

their part in our function the Supply Platoon can speak with pride.

"Nil Loadum Caribou" is the motto of Det 176 AD Coy RAASC who have become widely known as "Ali Baba and the 41 Thieves." Capt D R (Don) Woolmer and his band have done everything it is possible to do in an LSG complex, short of technical tasks, except air supply. This has prompted the sub-unit to change its motto to "Nil Loadum any...Thing". But these soldiers have, in fact, done a fine job in assisting the RAAF as loadmasters in Caribou and have done a number of operational tasks in support of the 1 ATF using US as well as Australian aircraft as the transport media. A senior Air Force Officer has said of this unit "They have given us wonderful support. Here is an example of Inter-service co-operation at its best." The men of 176 have done well in their trade, no matter how little of it they have done.

Our workshop, which is the first of its kind ever to go overseas, has been largely responsible for the high rate of vehicle availability in the unit during our tour thus far. We are both pleased and grateful that these nineteen men of RAEME have given 1 Coy RAASC their individual support and loyalty, without which we would never have completed our task.

And so to the HQ of the Coy. In addition to the normal function of a Coy HQ, this harassed band of tented troglodytes has been given the task of administering and providing quartermaster support for HQ 1 ALSG and for all the other smaller units who, by virtue of their size, are unable to support themselves. It is easy for us to complain of the added encumbrance of these tasks but unfortunately there is none available to do them. Therefore, the unit HQ, as with all the sub-units under its command, find that, in the true tradition of the Corps the First Company is as always "Equal to the Task" and

## THE SAIF STORY CONTINUED

by Major P.M. Douglas  
(From RAASC Digest dated July 1969)

Unfortunately Part One (Published in 1968) of this article was unavailable. Part Two, however, details 5 Coy's experiences from December 1967 onwards. Ed.

5 Company RAASC was originally responsible for providing support both for 1 ALSG in the VUNG TAU area and 1 ATF at NUI DAT. However, with the arrival of 26 Coy RAASC into the theatre during December 1967 it became necessary for a regrouping of 5 Coy RAASC to take place. The final composition of the Coy at VUNG TAU was as follows:

HQ 5 Coy RAASC  
2 Tpt Pl  
86 Tpt Pl  
Sect 85 Tpt Pl  
Det 176 Air Dispatch  
25 Sup Pl  
Det 176 Air Dispatch  
25 Sup Pl  
Det 8 Pet Pl  
Det 1 Comm 2 Postal Unit  
Det 1 Div S & T Wksps  
Det 30 Terminal Sqn, RAE (Tn) (A local Command arrangement for functional reasons).

At this stage, by a working agreement with 26 Coy RAASC, it was decided that each company would supplement the other where and when required, in terms of manpower and equipment. This was done primarily to give additional backing to 26 Coy RAASC which was given the charter of running the Task Force Maintenance Area (TFMA) NUI DAT and also providing an element for a Forward TFMA should the Task Force redeploy elements, needing support away from its normal resupply sources. To this end, 26 Coy RAASC (Coy HQ, Tpt Pl, Det Sup Pl) retained the following additional elements at NUI DAT;

## RAASC IN VIETNAM

Elm Det 8 Pet Pl  
Elm Det 176 AD Coy  
Elm 1 Div S & T Wksps  
Ammunition members from 25 Sup Pl.

During this regrouping period replacement of personnel from the original 5 Coy was taking place. The bulk of the first replacement consisted of 9 Coy RAASC personnel; replacement and phasing into the company covered the period October 1967 to March 1968. By the end of March 1968 the company was again in full swing with fresh blood and plenty of work.

The new grouping was:  
OC Maj P.M. Douglas  
21C Capt R.G. Whitehead  
HQ Capt Capt D.L. Childs  
Admin Offr. 2Lt J.E. Heron  
CSM WO2 P.C. Delforce  
CQMS SSgt I. Wells  
Sgt Clerk Sgt F. Wolber

2 Tpt Pl  
OC Capt T.J. Byrne  
21C 2Lt G.J. Adler  
Sgt Clerk Sgt T.R. Berriman  
Sgt Tpt Sgt R.J. Brock

86 Tpt Pl  
OC Capt A.C. West  
21C 2Lt D. Castle  
Sgt Tpt Sgt D. Spence

Det 176 AD Coy  
OC Capt B.C. Irving  
WO Supervisor WO2 R. Harvey

25 Sup Pl  
OC Capt N.L. Francis  
\*21C Lt R.L. Denner  
SSgt Sups SSgt K. Luff

Det 8 Pet Pl  
OC Capt M.A. Ball  
21C WO2 E. Rousell

Det 1 Div S and T Wksps  
OC Capt G.L. Coat  
21C WO1 J. Maber

Det 30 Terminal Sqn  
OC 2Lt O. Martinson  
21C WO2 M. O'Leary

\* In July 1968 Lt Denner of 25 Sup Pl was cross posted with 2 Lt K. Laffer of 52 Sup Pl (26 Coy RAASC).

In the middle of changeover of personnel the TET offensive commenced throughout VIETNAM and whilst this is now old history to most, at the time it put the company to the test.

The Task Force deployed out of PHUOC TUY Province into BIEN HOA Province and was then outside its normal re-supply channels. This forced a re-deployment of the support facilities and a Fwd TFMA was established.

To support the Fwd TFMA, 1 ALSG decided to deploy a Fwd ALSG into the United States LONG BINH complex, its task being to draw material and supplies from the US Logistics system and transport them to the Task Force as required. This type of deployment continued from January to late July during a series of successive operations in 1968.

After operation COBURG, which took place in January and February, the Task Force was then employed clearing the LONG HAI hills some 10 miles south east of NUI DAT. During this operation support was direct from VUNG TAU (ALSG) by both road and air.

Operation TOAN THANG 1 took place between 24 April and 7 June. This commenced as a Task Force clearing operation, in force, into the BAT DICH hills to the west of NUI DAT and to the border of the PHUOC TUY Province. To support this operation the Fwd TFMA and Fwd ALSG were again redeployed.

The Fwd TFMA was sited at the US 9 Div base of BEARCAT on Route 15; it was decided that road running to BEARCAT was both uneconomical and risky and as most items required could be drawn from LONG BINH the Fwd ALSG would again be deployed there. This meant road resupply to BEARCAT on a 15



mile turn around, with air overfly to units of gun and mortar ammunition.

Water distribution to units posed a problem and as water was not available locally, it had to be flown in from BEARCAT. The technique of lowering plastic water bottles to forward areas by helicopter was successful but proved costly on water bottles, which in most cases were not recovered.

Resupply items of Australian origin were taken to BEARCAT by road convoy from VUNG TAU, usually on a 5 to 7 day basis. The convoys were protected by a section of APCs despatched from BEARCAT and marrying up with the convoy at BARIA. Additional protection was provided by helicopters, which flew over and to the flanks of the convoy to give early warning.

Generally this was a period of routine but steady work.

Word was then received on the possibility of a large scale attack on SAIGON from the north. 1ATF was given the task of blocking the northern approach to SAIGON and was redeployed into an area of operations known as SURFERS where FSPBs COOGEE and CORAL were opened; this was west of the DONG NAI river on Route 16 and posed considerable resupply problems.

The Fwd ALSG remained in LONG BINH while the Fwd TFMA deployed into FSPB CORAL. Road access to CORAL was only possible with heavily protected convoys and only two convoys were run during this period, the balance of resupply being by air. A total of 1463 tons were flown in as against 95 tons by road. Water again posed a serious problem and accounted for 369 tons during this time. Aerial delivery equipment was also a source of worry owing to the high usage rate. However, in spite of many trials and tribulations the operation concluded on 7 June, when all elements had been withdrawn to

## RAASC IN VIETNAM

either NUI DAT or VUNG TAU.

Operation TOAN THANG II took place between 12 June and 16 July. Again, the Task Force deployed into BIEN HOA Province in the area used for COBURG, its objective being to again prevent rocket attacks on LONG BINH and cut approach routes to SAIGON. On this occasion the Fwd TFMA moved into LONG BINH, separated from the Fwd ALSG by some three miles. This was a routine resupply by road operation, but again water posed a significant problem; out of a tonnage of 1258, water represented 560 tons.

The average daily tonnages of all commodities transported during the period of TOAN THANG I and II are worthy of note. They were:

Water and Ice	12.4 tons (Ice 1 ton)
Rations	4.3 tons
Ammunition	13.0 tons
POL	2.0 tons
Engr Stores	8.7 tons
Canteen Supplies	3 tons
Miscellaneous	.15 tons
	40.9 tons per day

The total of 40.9 tons per day was the average for a force of approximately 2,400 pers.

To meet each of these situations and operations, 5 Coy RAASC usually deployed a small Coy HQ control element, three sections of transport (including one section of dump trucks) a recovery crew and a repair team, 3 or 4 supplies personnel, a petroleum NCO and 6 to 8 air dispatchers.

In all our deployments and convoys over unfriendly terrain, our only casualty was the recovery vehicle (TUNZA GUTZ) of Det 1 Div S and T Wksps, which went forward to assist the cavalry troop to change the engine in an APC (M113). Whilst

the vehicle was in location at FSPB CORAL, the area was hit by a mortar barrage and shrapnel made several large holes in the hide of old "TUNZA GUTZ". With a new radiator installed, two new tyres fitted and the sump neatly glued and patched with Araldite, it came home with the next convoy.

A few brief notes on the sub-units which were not covered in SAIF story, chapter 1.

**HQ 5 Coy RAASC** - The routine story of a headquarters, providing command and administrative support to the company. The RAP is the busiest in ALSG Catering both for the company and HQ 1 ALSG; a total of some 550 personnel.

**2 Tpt Pl** has 33 x 5 ton task vehicles and an FIA water tanker. Its most unenviable job is water distribution within 1 ALSG where it distributes approximately 35,000 gallons a day. Three of the normal 33 cargo vehicles are fitted as permanent water carriers.

**86 Tpt Pl** is the orphan unit, equipped at present with 15 x 5 ton cargo, 13 x 5 ton dump trucks, three hired US semi-trailers (15 ton) and two 32 seater Bedford buses. Needless to say many mixed jobs!

**25 Sup Pl** has now got its new warehouse forklifts and has fiendish delight in stacking pallets three and four high. To offset the joys of new forklifts, the refrigerators have regularly blown every fuse they own; they have now been converted to electric power instead to be installed and operating by the time this article is printed.

**8 Pet Pl** now has its new installation in both VUNG TAU and NUI DAT and is still satisfying all hungry consumers.

**Det 1 Div S and T Wksps** was expanded in the Force buildup in January and now provides support for both transport companies RAASC. An element of the detachment is located with 26 Coy at NUI DAT and handles

all unit repairs, bigger jobs being back loaded to VUNG TAU. The service and repair of 100 vehicles each month is continuing smoothly and each unit has a serviceability average of approximately 78%.

**DET 176 AD Coy** has done it again with several firsts during the year. These were the unloading of vehicles from HMAS SYDNEY by CH54 Skycrane helicopter; the loading and unloading of the LSM, again by the CH54, the flying of a mobile kitchen unit of three pieces, the largest of which weighed 15,500 pounds; and to cap it all, between 1 January and 13 November a total of 10,000 tons of stores of all natures were packed and flown. This figure should reach 12,000 tons by 31 December 1968.

## OPERATIONS OF 26 COY RAASC (GT) - 1 ATF - NUI DAT DECEMBER 1967 - NOVEMBER 1968

by Major G.J. Christopherson  
(From RAASC Digest dated July 1969)

### Deployment to SOUTH VIETNAM

HQ 26 Coy RAASC (GT) and Det 52 Sup Pl RAASC received warning for movement to SOUTH VIETNAM in October 1967. This came at the end of nine months of training which had included three battalion group exercises in the SHOALWATER BAY Training Area. During each of the exercises, HQ 26 Coy had commanded the logistic support group and this task was carried out again at NUI DAT within the framework of the Task Force Maintenance Area (TFMA). An additional bonus gained from Exercise NOISY PITTA (SHOALWATER BAY) was that the Company became used to working with staff of HQ 6 Task Force, many of whom were subsequently posted to HQ 1 Australian Task Force.

## RAASC IN VIETNAM

During the Company's first months at NUI DAT a good deal of assistance was received from the AQ Staff at HQ 1 ATF. The working relationship established has remained a good one from the unit's point of view and has been of considerable value, particularly when occasions arose when the unit had to deploy a Forward TFMA to support Task Force operations away from PHUOC TUY Province.

HQ 26 Coy RAASC and Det 52 Sup Pl deployed to SOUTH VIETNAM in two phases. The advance party arrived in country by air on 18 December 1967 and comprised the advance element of the headquarters plus Det 52 Sup Pl. The main body arrived on 8 January 1968 and comprised the remainder of the headquarters group under the 2IC (Captain Dick Jacombs).

Both units were responsible for bringing their TWET stores and these also arrived in January 1968. Accommodation stores were drawn on arrival in theatre and the Company ultimately became responsible for all accommodation stores in the TFMA.

### Operations at NUI DAT

HQ 26 Coy RAASC has a dual role with 1 ATF. It commands 26 Coy RAASC and acts as the administrative headquarters for the TFMA units and detachments.

To touch on the Corps responsibility, first it is important to realise that, although by name a General Transport Company, the composition of 26 Coy RAASC (GT) is tailored to its role within 1 ATF. The company consists of the following units or detachments:

- HQ 26 Coy RAASC (GT)
- 85 Tpt Pl RAASC
- Det 52 Sup Pl RAASC

- Det 25 Sup Pl RAASC
- Det 8 Pet Pl RAASC
- Det 176 AD Coy RAASC

There is an additional RAASC unit within the TFMA which comes under command of HQ 26 Coy RAASC for administration only. This is Det 1 Comm Z Postal Unit (Aust FP04) - perhaps more commonly known at NUI DAT as "The Posties."

Each of the units and detachments mentioned above will be discussed briefly in future paragraphs.

The other role of HQ 26 Coy RAASC is to command for administration the TFMA. When the company arrived in NUI DAT this rather amorphous organisation was known as the Task Force Administrative Area (TFAA). It has now evolved into the Task Force Maintenance Area (TFMA) and, in addition to the 26 Coy units and Aust FP04, consists of:

- 1 Ordnance Field Park RAAOC (1OFP)
- Det AFV Cash Office
- Det 2 AFCU (ASCO)
- Det 11 Movement Control Group (11 MC Gp)
- Det 1 Div S & T Workshops.

Altogether the TFMA has a strength of 210 All Ranks at the time of writing (November 1968). Over a period of eleven months, the TFMA units and detachments have learnt to live together and to cooperate with each other. A major factor in achieving this position was the development of the TFMA messes in June 1968 and the introduction of a common TFMA duty officer, duty sergeant and picquet system which included all units.

As may be seen from the date of completion of the TFMA messes, accommodation has been a considerable problem to 26 Coy, particularly in the first six months of 1968. Priority for engineer work had been allocated to the larger units and the intensive operations during the period February-July 1968 caused heavy drain on engineer



resources. The original HQ working complex was tented and this was vacated for hutted accommodation just before the "Wet" started. Photograph No 1 shows the existing HQ and Det 52 Sup Pl buildings with the four HQ buildings on the right of the photograph.

Before dealing with more specific points on Company operations, mention should be made of the assistance which was always readily given by 5 Coy RAASC, particularly in providing additional personnel for Fwd TFMA deployments. With the restricted establishment of this headquarters and the size of the Company detachments this assistance was much appreciated. A Fwd TFMA detachment was deployed when the bulk of the Task Force operated at some distance from NUI DAT. The mechanics of the deployment will be discussed separately.

#### Notes on Unit and Detachment Operation a. HQ 26 Coy RAASC (GT).

The following senior ranks were on the posted strength of HQ 26 Coy RAASC when the headquarters deployed to SOUTH VIETNAM:

OC MAJ G. J. Christopherson  
21C Capt R. Jacombs  
Admin Offr  
2Lt A. Holmes  
CSM WO2 C.W. Farmer  
CQMS SSgt J. Farnham  
Veh NCO  
Sgt B.J. McNical  
Sgt Clerk (GD)  
Sgt D.J. Finning  
Sgt Cook  
Sgt J.P. Dempsey

The second Captain's posting was not filled until September 1968 when the establishment restriction was partly lifted. At this time Captain L.P. Miller was posted in from 1 Coy RAASC and commenced duty as the Company Operations Officer.

There were many initial problems associated with developing a system of administration to cater for the

## RAASC IN VIETNAM

diverse units and detachments in the TFMA. The final solution was:

1. HQ 26 Coy looked after local administration for all TFMA units including R & R and R & C leave vacancy allocations.

2. Those units with their own administrative facilities initiated specific unit administration which was then forwarded through HQ 26 Coy to HQ 1 ATF or HQ AFV as appropriate.

3. All matters relating to engineer work requirements were processed through HQ 26 Coy for coordination.

The operational side of the headquarters was responsible for two aspects:

1. Operations within 1 ATF Base.
2. Deployment and operations of Fwd TFMAs when required by HQ 1 ATF.

It was obvious very quickly that the unit required the second Captain to allow it to carry out both tasks simultaneously. This, in fact, was the requirement from January 1968 until mid-July 1968. With the lifting of this restriction and the posting in of the Operations Officer the Company can now produce a degree of continuity in the Operations section even when the Fwd TFMA is deployed.

#### b. 85 Tpt Pl RAASC.

This unit has operated as part of 26 Coy RAASC since January 1968. In addition to its five sections (two sections of 5 Ton Cargo, three sections of 5 Ton Dump vehicles) the platoon also operates the following vehicles:

- 1 x 5 Ton Garbage Truck
- 2 x 2 1/2 Ton Water Trucks
- 2 x 50 Ton Tank Transporters (American).

One of the 5 Ton Dump sections works under command of 5 Coy RAASC in the 1 ALSG area.

The unit is responsible for the following tasks:

1. Troop carrying.
2. Load carrying.
3. Water delivery.
4. Herbicide and pesticide spraying.
5. Bulk dry garbage collection.
6. Providing dump vehicles for Engineer work.

In carrying out these tasks the unit has been involved in all major operations mounted by 1 ATF. A transport section is deployed with the Fwd TFMA if road movement is possible.

During the time 85-Tpt Pl has been at NUI DAT the senior rank structure has been:

1. OC - Capt Ron Sherman who was succeeded by Capt Jack Humffray in February 1968.
2. 2IC - 2Lt O.M. Evans.
3. Veh Sgt - Sgt N.B. Fox - replaced by Sgt H.S. Smart on Sgt Fox's RTA in March 1968.
4. Admin Sgt - Sgt L. Little.

Sgts Fox, Smart and Little have now been promoted to WO2.

#### c. Detachment 52 Sup Pl RAASC.

Det 52 Sup Pl RAASC arrived in SOUTH VIETNAM on 18 December 1967. The detachment consists of one officer and eleven other ranks and was commanded initially by 2 Lt K.G. Laffer with SSgt R.F. Herring as the senior NCO. In July 1968 Lt R.L. Denner assumed command of the detachment and SSgt Herring was promoted to WO2 in May 1968.

The detachment is responsible for:

1. Making detailed issues of rations and expense supplies to 1 ATF units. This requires a ration break down to fourteen (14) units.
2. Holding operating and reserve stocks of combat rations and expense supplies.

3. Providing personnel for the supply cell in the Fwd TFMA.

In addition, the detachment's two forklifts have been employed by many of the 1 ATF units on an "as available" basis. The number of forklifts at NUI DAT is very limited and the demand on the equipments has been considerable, especially during periods when stocks arrive from the JEPARIT or when a major unit is leaving.

This is the second tour in SOUTH VIETNAM for a detachment from 25 Sup Pl. The first was from March to June 1967 when the detachment operated at VUNG TAU under its OC, Capt M. Keane.

#### d. Detachment 8 Petroleum Platoon.

The detachment of 8 Pet Pl based at NUI DAT comprises eleven other ranks commanded by WO2 E.J. Rowsell. It is responsible for:

1. Holding and issuing packaged POL products.
2. Operating a MOGAS and DIESEL refuelling point for 1 ATF vehicles and plant.
3. Providing bulk AVGAS for refuelling fixed and rotary wing aircraft.
4. Operating a JP4 (AVTUR) point for refuelling helicopters. This point can refuel up to ten aircrafts simultaneously and has a capacity for storing 50,000 gals (US) in fabric tanks with provision for expansion to 70,000 gas (US). It was designed and built by 8 Pet Pl with Engineer assistance in site preparation. The point can cope with all types of helicopters up to CH54A (Sky Crane).

An American UH-1C gunship caught fire while it was being refuelled at one of the JP4 points. The aircraft was fully armed and only prompt action on the part of the two petroleum operators on duty (Pte Ward and Pte Scales) prevented the fire from spreading to the storage areas. As a result of their actions both soldiers received a letter of commendation from the

## RAASC IN VIETNAM

Commander 1 ATF (Brig R.L. Hughes). Investigation of the incident indicated that the cause of the fire was not attributable to the operation of the refuelling point in any way.

#### e. Detachment 25 Supply Platoon RAASC.

This detachment is responsible for the operation of the 1 ATF Ammunition Point and the Helicopter Rearming Point on Kangaroo Helipad. It consists of three RAAOC personnel - an Ammunition Technician (SSgt) and two storemen.

The 1 ATF AP has storage facilities for ammunition and explosives excluding tank ammunition. In addition, a bay is allocated for the storage of unserviceable ammunition and captured enemy munitions prior to destruction or backloading to 1 ALSG. The AP is sited on the side of NUI DAT hill and the bays have been cut back into the hill with blast walls along the access road.

The Helicopter Rearming point holds 2.75 inch HE rockets and smaller calibre ammunition (7.62 and 40mm grenades) for aircraft operating from NUI DAT. There is a constant requirement for the 2.75 inch rockets and the detachment is responsible for the preparation, assembly and storage of them.

#### f. Detachment 176 Air Dispatch Company.

Detachment 176 AD Coy at NUI DAT fluctuates according to operational requirements but does not drop below one senior NCO and three Ptes. the detachment has been commanded by Sgt Bell since February, 1968.

The main role of the detachment is in providing AD assistance to 1 ATF units for the movement of stores by air. As an indication of the scope of air moves, AD assistance was given

during January 1968 to August 1968 on 945 sorties comprising CH47 (CHINOOK), CH54A (SKYCRANE), UH-1H-UHIB (IROQUOIS) and CVZB (CARIBOU) aircraft tasks. During this period stores lifted from and backloaded to NUI DAT totalled 2321 short tons including 33 gun battery moves.

The detachment has become used to rigging odd loads for helicopter lifts and has developed a sound reputation for competence. As much of the work has been done with the Field Regiment, it is necessary to go into a little more detail on this aspect.

When a Field Battery deploys by air the detachment provides an air dispatcher to assist in, and check the rigging of all guns and stores to be lifted. this air dispatcher moves with the battery to the Fire Support Patrol Base (FSPB) where he operates the LZ for resupply and backloading. At the conclusion of the operation the air dispatcher prepares the equipment for airlift and hooks up each load. He is normally the last man out of the FSPB.

During Fwd TFMA deployments the Air Dispatch element carries out the duties of an Air Supply Control Section to the extent of controlling the heavy lift LZ and preparing stores or artillery produce for back-loading.

#### g. Detachment 1 Comm Z Postal Unit (Aust FP04)

Australian Forces Post Office 4 is a component part of Det 1 Comm Z Postal Unit and serves 1 ATF.

The unit functions as a normal post office but with restricted telegram facilities. The postal services provided include daily outgoing and incoming airmail service to and from AUSTRALIA and surface mail service for the receipt and dispatch of second class mail. In addition, registered, certified and express mail service is provided. Australian Postal Orders are available for the transfer of



money to and from Australia and its territories.

A postal NCO is deployed as part of the Fwd TFMA detachment to make Aust FP04 facilities available to troops on operations.

At present the Aust FP04 staff consists of a WO2 (Clerk GD), Sgt (Clerk GD), 3 Cpl (Clerk GD), 2 Pte (Clerk GD) and 1 LCpl (Dvr/Postman). Currently the detachment is commanded by WO2 C.J. McShane.

#### The Fwd TFMA Concept

During the discussion of unit and detachment functions it will have been evident that 26 Coy was involved in two different types of support. One type of support was the normal maintenance of the Task Force at NUI DAT and the other the maintenance from a Fwd TFMA of units deployed forward on operation.

When 26 Coy arrived in SOUTH VIETNAM, the Fwd TFMA concept was being examined closely by 1 ATF and AFV. The requirement for an extension of the TFMA arises when the 1 ATF units are deployed far enough away from NUI DAT to make air resupply from that area uneconomical. As the infantry echelons rely on UH-1H aircraft for the primary air maintenance this meant that once the Task Force moved into an Area of Operations more than 20,000 metres from NUI DAT the requirement for a Fwd TFMA started to exist. If the operation was protracted or involved a large proportion of the Task Force, the Fwd TFMA deployed. In operations out of PHUOC TUY Province, eg, in the area of LONG BINH a Fwd TFMA would normally always be required.

The Fwd TFMA detachment is tailored to a particular operation but will usually consist of:

- A command group.
- Supplies Detachment (including water duties).
- POL Detachment.
- Air Dispatch Detachment.

## RAASC IN VIETNAM

- Engineer Storemen - for defence stores.
- Transport Section - based on one driver per vehicle.
- Postal NCO.
- Ordnance Detachment.
- Movement Control Detachment.

The whole detachment numbers 25-30 personnel and is responsible for:

- Receiving stores in bulk from the rear.
- Providing detailed issue of supplies, ordnance stores, defence stores and ammunition to unit echelons.
- Controlling the heavy lift LZ for air maintenance and backloading of personnel and stores.
- Holding reserves of all types as specified in 1 ATF SOPs.

Fwd TFMAs were deployed on the following operations:

Operation  
DUNTROON/AKRON 5  
January 1968

Operation COBURG  
January 1968-March 1968

Operation TOAN THANG  
April 1968-June 1968

Operation TOAN THANG 2  
July 1968-August 1968

Operation CAPITAL 1 and  
CAPITAL 2  
NOVEMBER 1968.

During Operation TOAN THANG the Fwd TFMA was located at FSPB CORAL and maintenance was made difficult by the very muddy ground conditions and by enemy attacks on the FSPB with the resultant material damage causing backloading requirements to escalate. However, the operation provided valuable experience and data on which succeeding Fwd TFMA deployment procedures and stock holding figures have been based. As an example of ammunition expenditure on that operation, 8500 rounds of 81mm HE mortar ammunition

was received and issued by the Fwd TFMA in the period 24 April to 6 June 1968.

It is not intended in this article to go into detail on forward maintenance procedures. They are based on a demand system using the following:

- MAINTDEM - a demand for routine maintenance. Normally met from Fwd TFMA stock. Replenishment takes about 36 hours.
- PRI MAINTDEM - A priority maintenance demand submitted by a unit echelon on the Fwd TFMA. This specifies a time after which the demand is no longer acceptable or to put it another way, a time by which the demand must be met.
- OPDEM - A demand for operationally urgent stores which are required as soon as possible.

One other aspect of Fwd TFMA deployment is that the OC of the TFMA is responsible for allocating areas to the unit echelons as well as siting the Fwd TFMA detachments. The layout of the FSPB is controlled by HQ 1 ATF in terms of area allocation. The area allocated to the Fwd TFMA includes areas to be occupied by unit echelons and it is up to the Fwd TFMA commander to decide how much area each echelon and the Fwd TFMA is to be given within the limits allowed by 1 ATF. This usually posed problems in relation to helicopter pads as the Fwd TFMA commander must be included in the 1 ATF recce party so a deployment plan can be made prior to occupation.

#### Conclusion

There are several points which have caused difficulties during operations. As they involve training it is considered that they are worth mentioning here.

#### a. Weapon Training.

The standard of training on certain weapons was found to be generally poor. This was noted on the GPMG M60, the M79 grenade launcher and the M16A1 5.56 mm rifle. Although

## RAASC IN VIETNAM

this is attributable to the scarcity of such weapons in AUSTRALIA for service units it is felt that any RAASC unit deployed to SOUTH VIETNAM must be trained on the M60 and the M79. For a unit coming to NUI DAT, M16 training is also necessary.

#### b. Voice Procedure.

All RAASC personnel posted to SVN in an operational posting must have a sound knowledge of voice procedure. Radio is far more widely used than in AUSTRALIA down to gun pit level and on convoy operations.

#### c. Field Defences and Construction of Obstacles.

A number of casualties on operation have been caused by lack of overhead cover or by personnel not sleeping below ground level. In Fwd TFMA deployments the construction of individual protection has first priority and every soldier must sleep below ground from Day 1 of the occupation onwards. Allied with this is the construction of underground command posts and bunding of explosives and POL area.

#### d. Climatic Conditions.

The climatic conditions have a deteriorating effect both on equipment and on personal efficiency. This is a problem which can only be minimised by close supervision by Officers and NCOs.

None of the points are new ones but their importance has been proved constantly during the time this unit has spent as part of 1 ATF. And 26 Coy has been proud to be able to say that it was part of 1 ATF in VIETNAM.

#### NOTICE

Any person who has an old RAASC Digest dated between 1948 and 1973 (and doesn't mind loaning it for copying) please contact the Editor on (06) 266 4522, DNATS 8664522.

## OBITUARY MAO267 CORPORAL ASHSHARQ ILA YATHOOQ (VERNON) 26 TRANSPORT SQUADRON MASCOT 3 JULY 1984 - 7 APRIL 1992



Corporal Ashsharq Ila Yathooq, 'Vernon' died on 7 April 92 as the result of a crippling disease contracted whilst participating in EX KANGAROO'92 in Darwin.

Affectionately known as 'Vernon', he enlisted in the Army in November 1985 and was allocated to RACT as a

Unit Mascot. Shortly after being posted to 26 Transport Squadron he married his long-time girlfriend, Penny, and occupied a married quarter adjacent to the 'Camel Club' in Tobruk Barracks, Puckapunyal.

CPL Vernon was an outstanding soldier with the ability to adapt to all situations. He was always a professional and carried out his tasks with a great deal of pride and enthusiasm. Vernon was a master in his trade (VIP Transport) and carried many high ranking military and

civilian personnel during parades and visits to 26 Transport Squadron. Significantly, the last VIP to ride CPL Vernon was no less than the Chief of Defence Force, General P.C. Gratton, AC, OBE during EX KANGAROO 92.

CPL Vernon's greatest attribute was his love of children. Both he and Penny have put smiles on the faces of many children in EX KANGAROO 92 he received more personal mail than anyone else in the Squadron.

CPL Vernon is survived by his 'wife' Penny, who has been grateful for the many messages of condolence from all around Australia. In particular, the personal letter from the CGS and the signal message from the CDF.

HE WILL BE SADLY MISSED.

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# RACT CENTRAL FUND AUDITED STATEMENT OF AFFAIRS AS AT 2 MAR 92

**RACT CENTRAL FUND  
DEFENCE CREDIT A/C 87440**

Balance as per bank statement S30  
S50

**PSE Community Credit Union Term Deposit**

Less unrepresented cheques

**Balance B/F**

**Plus**

Receipts

Investments

Interest

**Less**

Expenditure

FDT/FID/Cheque Book

**Major Items of Expenditure**

Repair/Valuation/Insurance of Corps property

Prizes/Awards/Condolences to RACT mbrs

Founding of 'Wagoner Plaques'

Purchase of soft/hardware for RACT  
Information Retrieval Cell

Unit Projects

Investments

**NB:**

We have invested into, two term deposits. One of which has matured and is reflected in the above receipts entry. The other matures in Dec 92 and is indicated in the above investment entry. This explains the high expenditure and receipt figures. Ed. Secretary/Treasurer RACT Central Fund.

# NOTICE CAN YOU HELP US?

This year is the 50th anniversary of 30 Terminal Squadron.

In celebration the unit is compiling a book on its history. This is quite a difficult task, as not a great deal of unit history has been recorded in the past.

The unit originally belonged to the Corps of Engineers and was known as a Dock Operating Company during 1942-43. The Army Engineer Museum has been very helpful in supplying us with limited information but we need more.

30 Terminal Squadron is calling out to anyone who was posted to, or involved with, the unit from 1942-90. Any information is valuable, including unit activities, types of equipment, info on personnel etc. If at all possible we would appreciate photographs which we will be only too pleased to return after use.

If you have any information which may be of value to us please send it to Lieutenant Warwick Hills at the address shown below. Your help will be greatly appreciated.

★ Send to:

30 Terminal Squadron  
Middle Head Road,  
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## 'EQUAL TO THE TASK' HISTORY OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARMY SERVICE CORPS

On 15 May 1992 the Corps launched the first volume of Colonel Neville Lindsay's book series, "Equal to the Task" in Canberra. The book depicts the beginnings of the Service Corps before Federation through to the eventual disbandment in 1973. The book is an absorbing, well researched, hardback chronicle with more than 400 pages of photographs, illustrations, maps and diagrams in colour. The book is deserving of a place in any library and I recommend it's reading. The following is the speech given by GOC Logistic Command, MAJGEN D. McLachlan, AM to all assembled for the official launch of the book, and it best describes the content of the book.

Director

COL NEVILLE LINDSAY,  
COL GREG PARK, LADIES AND  
GENTLEMEN.

OUR PURPOSE HERE THIS AFTERNOON IS TO HAIL THE ARRIVAL OF THE HISTORY OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARMY SERVICE CORPS. AN OCCASION THAT IS ALL THE MORE SIGNIFICANT IN THAT IT IS NEARLY 19 YEARS SINCE THE SERVICE CORPS OR 'GALLOPING GROCERS' AS THE CORPS WAS SOMETIMES KNOWN, WAS SUCCEEDED IN 1973 BY THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN CORPS OF TRANSPORT.

THIS MAGNIFICENTLY PRESENTED BOOK IS A TESTAMENT TO THE PERSEVERANCE OF ITS AUTHOR, NEVILLE LINDSAY, AND TO A CORPS THAT FROM ITS INFANCY TO ITS GRAVE PROVIDED THE MEANS FOR THE AUSTRALIAN FORCES TO PERFORM THEIR TASK.

NEVILLE HAS PROVIDED WHAT I BELIEVE IS A VALUABLE HISTORICAL REFERENCE NOT ONLY FOR

PEOPLE RESEARCHING THE SERVICE CORPS, BUT FOR THOSE RESEARCHING THE ARMY IN TOTAL, AS THE BOOK PROVIDES THE DEPTH AND BACKGROUND TO THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SERVICE CORPS IN IMMENSE DETAIL, BY REFERENCE TO UNITS, FORMATIONS, LOCATIONS, AND IN SOME CASES PERSONALITIES.

THE BOOK ADDRESSES THE ORIGINS OF THE CORPS FROM IT'S COLONIAL BEGINNINGS IN 1788, IT'S FORMATION AND TRANSITION DURING THE VARIOUS WARS, BOTH IN SIZE AND COMPLEXITY, AND THEN EXAMINES THE CORPS BY STATE, WAR, AND ORGANISATION AND FUNCTIONS.

THE STATE BY STATE DESCRIPTION OF THE ARMY SERVICE CORPS PROVIDES A UNIQUE INSIGHT INTO THE THINKING OF THE TIME AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF A CORPS, AS WELL AS AN ARMY AND TO SOME EXTENT, THE NATION.

THERE ARE INSTANCES OF AUSTRALIAN HUMOUR, WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BEEN INTENDED BY THE AUTHOR, FOR INSTANCE, THE REFERENCE TO, AND PHOTOGRAPH OF 1898, DEPICTING THE VICTORIAN ARMY SERVICE CORPS AND THE MEDICAL CORPS IN RICHMOND, MELBOURNE, BEING ALLOTTED NEXT TO THE CEMETERY.

PART FOUR OF THE BOOK WHICH DETAILS THE CORPS INFRASTRUCTURE AND COVERS THE ORGANISATION AND FUNCTIONS FROM 1890, (WHICH INCLUDE THE SUPPLIES AND TRANSPORT STAFFS, TRANSPORT, AIR DELIVERY, POSTAL SERVICE, SUPPLIES, ANCILLARY SERVICES, FORAGE AND POL, REMOUNT SERVICE, STAFF CLERKS, WORKSHOPS AND CATERING), UNIT LINEAGE, THE EVOLUTION OF THE

EQUIPMENTS USED, EQUIPMENT MARKINGS AND THE TRAINING AND DOCTRINE COMPLETE WITH EXCERPTS OF THE SYLLABI FROM 1902 ENSURES THAT WHAT DETAIL, IF ANY, WAS PRECLUDED FROM THE FIRST THREE PARTS IS NOW COVERED.

A HIGHLIGHT OF THE BOOK IS THE PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS, SOME OF WHICH GRACE THE WALLS HERE TODAY. THE BOOK PLACES MANY OF THE PHOTOGRAPHS WHICH HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED BEFORE IN THEIR CORRECT ASSOCIATION, THAT IS, WITH THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARMY SERVICE CORPS.

AFTER SEEING THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF THE DIGGERS ROLLING 44 GALLON DRUMS ACROSS THE SURF LINE AT LUTONG AND THE RAIL ENGINE THAT WAS A CONVERTED WILLY'S JEEP, PULLING THE 'MEMBUCKET SPECIAL' AT BEAUFORT IN JULY 1945 I WAS REMINDED OF WHAT MAKES A CORPS, AND THE INGENUITY OF ITS MEMBERS.

IT IS NOTABLE THAT THESE PHOTOGRAPHS, WHEN COMBINED WITH THE 20TH AND LAST CHAPTER, WHICH DEALS WITH THE ESPRIT DE CORPS OF THE SERVICE CORPS, REMIND YOU OF THE PEOPLE THAT COMBINED OVER THE YEARS, BOTH IN PEACE AND WAR, TO MAKE THE SERVICE CORPS WHAT IT WAS.

PERHAPS AN ADDITIONAL DIMENSION OF THE BOOK, IS THAT IT DOES NOT FULLY COVER THE PEOPLE AND PERSONALITIES OF THE CORPS, BUT AS ALLUDED TO BY THE AUTHOR, IT PROVIDES A SOUND HISTORICAL BASIS AND CHALLENGE FOR UNIT HISTORIANS AND OTHERS TO FILL THE GAPS AND DEVELOP MORE FULLY THEIR OWN UNIT HISTORIES.



AFTER READING 'EQUAL TO THE TASK', YOU ARE LEFT IN NO DOUBT AS TO THE ETHOS AND SENSE OF PURPOSE OF A CORPS, THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN SERVICE CORPS, THAT WAS, AND THE TRADITION THAT IS BEHIND THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN CORPS OF TRANSPORT PERHAPS A FEW WORDS OF THE AUTHOR, COL NEVILLE LINDSAY, IS A SON OF THE CORPS, AN RMC GRADUATE WHO SAW SERVICE IN VIETNAM AND IN SINGAPORE, AS WELL AS WIDELY AROUND AUSTRALIA. HE STUDIED OVERSEAS IN UK AND HAS BROUGHT TO THE AUTHORSHIP OF THIS BOOK THE CLEAR, FOCUSED MIND AND CARING ATTITUDES THAT MARKED HIS CAREER IN THE ARMY TOGETHER WITH HIS CONTINUING PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE. MANY OF HIS INITIATIVES OF THE PAST ARE OUR ACTIONS OF TODAY.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, AGAINST THAT BACKGROUND I FEEL HUMBLE AT HAVING BEEN ASKED BUT INDEED VERY PRIVILEGED TO LAUNCH THIS WORK - 'EQUAL TO THE TASK, THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ARMY SERVICE CORPS'.

NB. Those who wish to purchase 'Equal to the Task' should contact Colonel Neville Lindsay, RL at the following address.

35 Yarrowa Street,  
Kenmore Qld 4069  
Telephone (07) 3780667

The cost of the book is \$46 for the Public, \$41 to past and present members of the RAASC/RACT and \$36 for bulk orders of 10 or more. These prices do not include postage. Ed.

## THE RACT INFORMATION RETRIEVAL CELL

Need logistics information for a project or paper? Read on!!

AST is establishing an information retrieval cell. The cell will be tasked to store and provide on request, RACT, transport or logistic related written material, excluding training manuals, pamphlets and Corps training notes.

The cell is based on a computer driven database/text retrieval system and will have the capacity to provide printed copy of text or provide floppy disk copies (provided YOU supply the disk). The cell will be located in the AST library and controlled by the Doctrine and Training Team (DATT). All equipment is currently in place and ready to go!

A modem, allowing PC to PC transfer of information, may be purchased at a later date if there is sufficient usage of the system to justify the purchase.

There is one problem. The cell has no function without information. We NEED information. We ask that YOU provide it! What are we after? Any of the following:

- Service papers
- logistic project papers
- unit driven papers or briefs on topics related to RACT, transport or logistics in general.
- any document, not readily available from Defence libraries, that may have transport or logistic relevance, including civilian material.
- anything else that you feel may be useful.

The documents may include graphic information, although we will not store graphics unless they are of particular value or relevance to the document.

We will return your copy to

you if you wish.

We do not intend to hold any hard copy (printed) material if this can be avoided. Storage space is limited and cataloguing and maintaining hardcopy material is not feasible.

AST will form an editorial committee as required, to sift through any submissions and decide what should or should not be stored in line with any directions from the DMOVT-A or CO/CI AST. The committee will be tasked to develop keywords and abstracts from the material to allow logical storage and recall of the information.

How do you access this information? Ring or write to the librarian or DATT. Provide us with a clear summary of your requirements and when convenient, we will interrogate the system and pull any items matching your requirements. We will then contact you and provide you with a summary of the information available. You must then decide what you need and it will be printed and sent to you. If you prefer the information on disk, send us the disk and specify the text format required (i.e. ASCII, Word, the disk and specify the text format required (i.e. ASCII, Word, Wordperfect). If we can provide it in the format requested, we will. For example:

"Hello? DATT?"

"Yeah, Who dat? (he, he)"

"This is CAPT Shylock, from DMOVT-A!!"

"Well?"

"Oh..Er, well the Director's given me a project to do, a paper in fact, and I'm after some information...can you see if there's anything in the retrieval cell I can use?"

"Yep, what's the topic?"

"Its very interesting really!...It's 'Maintaining Technical Excellence - Relocating DMOVT-A Forward of the FEBA in Escalating Low-Level Off-

Shore Conflict"

"(silence...)"

"Hello...?"

"Right, well, what an interesting topic...the title gives us something to go on...forward of the FEBA...low-level conflict; anything more specific?"

"Ah...let's see...well, I'm after anything on off-shore LOTS operations (conversation continues)...."

"OK, got that...we're a bit pushed at the moment, might take a week or so to let you know what we've got.. etc, etc."

Note that requests for assistance from the cell do not take priority over normal DATT/AST tasking. We will do it when we can. Keep in mind that the system will take some time to develop to anywhere near it's full potential.

If you are visiting AST you are welcome to access the system. In the meantime, search out that information and send it to:

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B Troop, 5 Tpt Sqn

## 5TH TRANSPORT SQUADRON EXERCISE ON RED DIAMOND 91

Exercise Red Diamond 91 (6th Brigade Exercise) marked the culmination of 5 Transport Squadron's intensive year of training, during which the Squadron also celebrated its 25th Birthday on the 30 May 91. This years lead up to the Brigade exercise included the following major activities:

- a. Junior Officer/NCO training in Jan/Feb:
- b. rigorous 2 week Troop trade training in Feb:
- c. support to Ex Tasman Link:
- d. Ex Bullock Wagon 91 in March:
- e. outscaling of Bogan Gate Sup Coy;
- f. IMT training in Apr/May; and
- g. Ex Scorpion Sting (B SQN 3/4 CAV REGT and B COY 1 RAR in August).

Exercise Scorpion Sting (Ex S.S. 91) 3/4 Cav Regt's major exercise for the year, provided the Squadron with the best possible training leading up to the Brigade Exercise. EX S.S. 91 initially involved the insertion of 60 M113 variants plus 50 tonnes of stores from Townsville to Shoalwater Bay Training Area (SWBTA), then activities such as convoy moves with armoured and air escorts, live armoured DP's and Coy size troop lifts for B Coy 1 RAR. So, with the Squadrons skills honed, the unit eagerly awaited the commencement of

Exercise Red Diamond.

The Brigade exercise was unique as it was the last exercise 6 Bde conducted prior to the introduction of the Brigade Administrative Support Group (6 BASG). The exercise also marked the end of the association between 52 Combat Supply Platoon (52 CSP) and 5 Tpt Sqn, 52 CSP is now under the control of 6 Field Supply Company (6 FD SUP COY).

Exercise Red Diamond 91 (EX R.S. 91) was conducted over the period 25 Sep to 27 Oct 91. Prior to the unit actually deploying, tasking consisting of two shift teams from B Tp moved 42 M113's from Enoggera to DSU(R) Rockhampton and A Tp picked up and delivered 60 tonnes of stores and equipment to DSU (R). After pre deployment tasking the Squadron deployed to the 1 LSG Transit Area at DSU(R) (DSU (R) on 3 Oct 91, prior to deploying to (SWBTA)

On 4 Oct the majority of 6 Bde tactically deployed to the SWBTA. The first deployment site for the Squadron was in the vicinity of Williamson Airfield. This deployment was notable for the fire fighting skills displayed by members of the unit in defending A Ech 6 RAR's position from being overrun by fire. On the night of 4 Oct, Pte Trouchet an attachment from 26 Tpt Sqn (TTW driver) was bitten by a King Brown Snake, the quick reaction and recent first aid training B Tp members had received, resulted in Pte Trouchet spending only one night in hospital.

By 5 Oct the unit was heavily tasked, A Tp's tasks involved troop lifting in the main while B Tp received M113 tasks and refuelling tasks. When 6 FD SUP COY and 52 CSP moved as part of the five BAA redeployments, both Troops were required for their uplift.



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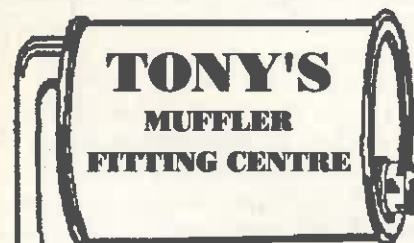
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The Plains area was the site for the second deployment. The position 5 Tpt Sqn occupied had recently been burnt out and was nicknamed "Moonbase" by some members of the Sqn. Tank familiarisation training with A Sqn 1 Armd Regt was co-ordinated by 5 Tpt Sqn Ops and all units within the BAA attended the training. It was on the way to the Plains that two old friends met up, Cpl Mitch Dimech (381 Cpl from B Tp) reacquainted himself with a wild pig he met on Ex S.S. 91, it knocked him off his bike in August and managed the same result on their second meeting in October. On 12 Oct the Squadron Military Skills Team were narrowly defeated (by one shot) in the Bde RSM's Falling Plate Competition, a team from 8/9 RAR won the competition. Another point to note about the Plains, the first Forward Support Group (FSG) deployed in support of 6 RAR.

The third deployment location was at Samuel Hill, the position the unit occupied was infested with Sand-flies, and insect repellent was in high demand. Victoria Cross recipient WO2 K. Payne V.C. (Retired) visited the unit and talked to the soldiers as they went about their daily routine. Whilst in this location FSG number 2 (from A Tp) went out in support of 8/9 RAR and B Tp completed some DZ clearance tasks.

The second last deployment was to Raspberry Creek, where the Squadron found ready made pits (well, attempts at pits) compliments of HQ 6 Bde who had occupied the position some days earlier. The fifth and final position the unit occupied was in the vicinity of the Polygon during which the unit once again practiced the hot insertion technique by deploying to a position that was still on fire.

During the exercise the Sqn was heavily tasked and at stages due to overtaking, the unit reached critical levels for driver sleep and vehicle maintenance. The unit travelled a total of



*Gunner - PTE Kothe No 2 - CFN Roots*



*5 Tpt Sqn refuelling point at Maryborough Staging Area.*

183,630 km using 61,340 litres of Dieso. A summary of the 176 second line tasks the Squadron carried out are as follows:

**a. Fuel Distribution. 35 tasks**  
involving delivery/distribution of:

1. 196,000 litres of Dieso,
2. 73,000 litres of Avtur,
3. 59,800 litres of MSP, and
4. 4,200 litres of Avgas,

**b. Troop lift 48 tasks - 1640 pax,**

**c. APC tasks 8 tasks 81 M113's**

**d. Bulk water distribution. 38 tasks broken up as follows:**

1. 182,000 litres for consumption, and
2. 80,000 litres for dust suppression,

**e. Movement of cargo on redeployment 6 tasks - 300 tonnes.**

**f. General cargo 41 tasks - 558 tonnes.**

Availability during the exercise averaged at 94%. This high average was achieved by

continual attention to driver maintenance and rapid repair action by the unit Workshop. Throughout the period non technical inspections, minor and major servicing were conducted.

As previously stated 6 BASG became the Squadron's Higher Headquarters, this introduction was not without its problems. Lessons were learnt and future problems should be minimal.

In summary Exercise Red Diamond 1991 was very successful for 5 Transport Squadron, the exercise involved some good worthwhile tasking, was productive in terms of training and proved the Squadron capable of fulfilling its role. The most pleasing aspect of the exercise was the professional "Can do" approach which now marks the Squadron within the Brigade.

S.A.I.F.





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### Introduction

After serving 12 months as a recruit instructor I feel compelled to pass on to other RACT personnel the rewarding experiences of service at the 1st Recruit Training Battalion. The following information may enlighten readers and assist those contemplating a posting as recruit instructor at IRTB.

The Corps motto being what it is, the words that follow are the result of a combination of personal observation and experience.

### RISC

The first obstacle NCO's need to negotiate is the Recruit Instructor Selection Course. The RISC Course is demanding, regardless of whether the soldier is from an arms or service corps. The course quite often selects only 50% of NCO's who attempt the course.

Preparation. I cannot emphasise enough that the preparation conducted for this course should be extensive, long term and monitored. Before consideration be given to perfecting instructional techniques, the potential "RISCY" should be brought up to par with all the knowledge and skills which are taught to the recruits. Some of these subjects include:

- a. First Aid
- b. Living in the Field
- c. Weapon Handling (SLR TOET)
- d. Physical Fitness
- e. Theory of Small Arms Fire
- f. Endurance Marching
- g. Shooting
- h. Personal Drill
- i. Patrolling and Navigation
- j. Dress and Bearing
- k. Defensive Locations
- l. Barracks Discipline

After revising these skills, emphasis should then be placed on instructional skills. Potential recruit instructors should attain a minimum of 70% to 80% in their Method of Instruction and be assessed preferably by previous instructors.

The potential instructor should also possess the following attributes:

- a. leadership qualities,
- b. professionalism,
- c. maturity
- d. a positive attitude to service at IRTB, and
- e. some command experience.

The RISC is now structured over a 4 week period as follows:

**Pre-week.** The first two or three days are taken up with testing in most of the subjects listed above. A pass in all the tests will put you in good stead for the remainder of the course and afford you more time to concentrate on the more important phases of the course

## POSTED TO 1 RTB

by Sgt P. Kelly

by avoiding retesting.

**Week 1.** The first week is devoted to a mutual instruction phase which is conducted by Staff Training Platoon (STP) who are ably assisted by Training and Assessment Cell. Those considered good instructors are identified here and released to platoon attachments.

**Week 2.** This week is set aside for retraining and extended mutual instruction phase for those who are not quite up to scratch. For those who are, it is life as an assistant instructor, usually in a platoon in the first stage of training.

**Week 3.** Those who pass their platoon phase in week 2, receive a further attachment as a helper regardless of the stage of training.

Those who have passed their extended MI phase receive a "one bite of the cherry" platoon attachment during which they must attain a 75% average assessment score and a recommendation from the platoon and company staff.

Those who fail the extended MI phase of the course may be returned to their units at this stage.

**Week 4.** Return to STP where you will present a formal

fieldcraft lesson and be required to give a soldiers' five on subjects such as the contents of a ration pack. These are again assessed. A mini "EX FINAL FLING" (two day field ex) is conducted, culminating in the course attempting the challenge.

To enable students to do well on this course, RACT units MUST afford them adequate time and assistance in their preparation. To do otherwise is detrimental to the soldier and to the reputation of the Corps as a whole.

### The Section Commander

Never have I seen so many work so hard, for so long, for so little material gain. The degree of dedication and professionalism I have seen in the section commanders here, I may never encounter again in any other posting.

The Section Commander, at times works in excess of 16 hours per day, but these periods of long hours are generally followed up with a good break.

### Leave

The long hours, arduous activities and mental strain involved in training recruits are recognised by all levels of command, from the platoon staff through to the Commandant. It is the intention therefore, to prevent burn-out of the training staff by affording them a break at every opportunity.

Depending on the throughput, training staff will receive a seven to 14 day rest at the end of each platoon. Rarely are platoons put through "back to back". In addition, during Week four and Week eight of training the Section Commanders are stood down while the recruits do Duties Week and go on recruit standown.

The first seven days at the end of platoon and Duties Week are classed as short leave. If you have





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any longer than a week between platoons, you may elect to use some BRL or return to work in preparation for the next platoon. Manpower problems exist here as well as any other unit and the taking of your full entitlement of BRL in one stint may well be impossible. You may apply to hold over your BRL until an opportunity arises or elect to take it in shorter lots. If your application to hold over is approved, arrangements can be made for you to receive extended short leave, should the need arise.

### Personal Development

As you would expect, the recruit instructor of any rank has the opportunity to advance their instructional and communication skills; their general military knowledge and skills; and their wider education of service life through working side by side with some of the most experienced and professional soldiers from the arms and service Corps.

Personnel administration is not only the responsibility of the Platoon Sergeant/Commander. Through the chain of command, the Section Commander is, in most cases, the first contact with recruits with personal, administrative or training problems.

The Section Commander is mainly responsible for taking up to 14 long haired, soft and undisciplined civilians and in the space of 13 weeks transforming them into highly motivated and highly disciplined basic soldiers. The section that he or she marches out will be little clones of themselves, therefore, the mould, through necessity, needs to be bordering on perfection.

### Career Advancement

Upon selection on the RISC, your results are retained from the lessons you gave. This is the start of your 1RTB Sub 1 (Sgt) course. On posting as a Section Commander you immediately commence 12 months OJT assessment covering these subjects, to name but a few:

- Writing Range Instructions
- Service Writing in general
- Conducting Range Practices
- Platoon Defence Activities

Assessment may be conducted during OJT by any of the following:

- Pl Sgt/Pl comd
- CSM
- Staff Training Platoon
- Training and Assessment Cell

On attaining successful OJT results and through the recommendations of the Company staff, you are then panelled for a two week Sub 1 (Sgt) which is conducted by STP. During this course you will pick up the remaining terminal objectives.

### Career and Personal Satisfaction

It is not easy to describe the feeling of marching out a platoon of recruits. For the Section Commander, who has so much more interaction with the recruits, these feelings can only be many fold.

It is a very nervous moment when the Reviewing Officer produces what seems like a very deliberate pause, and then states that "the standard of dress and bearing, discipline and drill on the March Out parade is on a par with any I have seen, inside or outside Kapooka, well done!" As a Section Commander, knowing that through your application and dedication you produced recruits to such a high standard gives a lot of satisfaction.

Recruit training is not limited to working in platoons. Towards the end of your posting here, you may be detached to any one of the other training cells within 1RTB. These include Small Arms training Section (SATS), Medical Training Section, Staff Training Platoon and Training and Assessment Cell.

1RTB is also in the process of producing a "Section Commander's Guide to 1RTB" which will be released shortly and is a very compact guide written by experienced instructors, for

instructors, designed to assist new staff by suggesting methods for conducting every day activities and duties.

### Platoon Sergeant/Commander

At SNCO/Officer level, the work here is a little less arduous, but certainly not less demanding. You still require all the qualities expected of the Section Commander and more. Your role here is to administer and discipline the platoon as well as being an instructor. The Platoon Sergeant delivers all the Platoon Drill lessons, including ceremonial drill when required, and the March Out procedure. He/She lectures on military law, communications, navigation and a variety of other subjects. He is also responsible for the remedial training of recruits, and proper counselling and training from all levels of instructor.

The list goes on.

You may also be appointed at any time to prosecute or defend a case before a Subordinate or Superior Summary Authority. These charges are many and varied. Corporals qualified Sub 1 (Sgt) may also be called upon to fill this role.

The Platoon Commander besides giving some classroom lessons and writing reports, is expected to participate in Platoon activities as well.

A SNCO/Officer at 1RTB can also expect to receive other duties and extra regimental appointments.

### Duties

There are many and varied rostered duties at 1RTB. Occasionally someone will "volunteer" to do more than their fair share of duties in a month, and subject to availability, you may miss a duty for a month or so.

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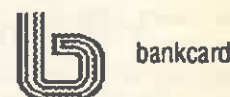
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### Corps Responsibility

RACT has a requirement to provide 2 SGT and 16 CPL to 1RTB at any one time as instructors. RACT instructors are held in high regard by peers and superiors alike at 1RTB.

It is imperative that suitable personnel are identified to fulfil the Corps manning obligation. They are out there and I believe it's up to SCMA and Unit Commanders to identify them, prepare them and encourage them.

### Conclusion

Instructors have a lot of influence over a recruits decision to join a particular Corp. It behoves us as "handbaggers, termites and truckies" etc, to channel the right personnel to our Corps.

By accepting the challenge that 1RTB offers, soldiers and officers can only become more experienced, better informed and more professional, which can not only benefit you, the Corps but the Army as a whole.

PAR ONERI.

## NEW MEMBERS OF THE CORPS

The Director would like to, on behalf of all members of the Corps, welcome the following recent graduates from the Royal Military College in to the Royal Australian Corps of Transport.

### December 1991 Graduation

LT Sonja Chipman  
LT Stephen Fomiatti  
LT Peter Glenister  
LT Adrian Johnston  
LT Peter Kearsley  
LT Ben Kerley  
LT Nicole McWilliams  
LT Darren Moore

### June 1992 Graduation

LT Glenn Daley  
LT Craig Donohue  
LT Matt Hemy  
LT Phil Hills  
LT Jason Kerr  
LT Matt Kitchin  
LT James Parkins  
LT Alastair Quarterman  
LT Martin Reinhold  
LT Brad Young

## LIKE FATHER LIKE SON

SGT PETER HOLMES of 26 Tpt Sqn welcomes his son GNR Peter Holmes, to the Army School of Transport (AST). GNR Holmes was attending a basic drivers course at AST and has since Corps transferred to RACT. He is currently serving at 1 Tpt Sqn.





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## TOWNSVILLE LOGISTIC COMPANY K92

The early part of 1992 proved to be very busy for the RACT elements of Townsville Logistic Company. The Corps Director, Colonel Park, visited during April whilst the unit was in the process of providing support to Ex K92.

The Director's visit allowed the RACT personnel to discuss the future of the Corps and pass on their views of possible changes to occur in the coming years.

During his visit Colonel Park was also asked to present a Defence Force Service Medal to SGT Kim Winter.

### MCO Townsville

During K92 MCO Townsville was faced with the challenge of continuing to provide administrative movements support to our region of responsibility as well as movement control to allow deployment of the 3rd Brigade to the exercise area.

Intensive activity surrounded the loading of equipment and

per-sonnel on to Naval resources at the Townsville personnel by air from RAAF Base Garbutt and Townsville airport also provided some interesting problems in logistics. Probably the most visible role however was the coordination of road movement from the various unit form up points along the section of L of C that was under our jurisdiction.

As Townsville Logistic Company was tasked to provide L of C support from Townsville to Richmond(QLD) (and the provision of the staging area there), it was only a natural progression that the MC Detachment there be provided from MCO Townsville. As we are only a small organisation it can be easily seen that our manpower was spread thinly over the Townsville area and the L of C, including the additional provision of an MC Detachment to Winton Staging Area to assist Brisbane Log Bn in the control of 'their' area of the L of C.



Vehicles waiting to refuel at Richmond



A visit to the local school proved very popular

A sigh of relief was allowed upon the completed departure of units and we set to toiling away at a slight backlog of ASA movement matters, knowing full well that the whole procedure would be repeated upon the conclusion of the exercise and the return of our units.

Challenging and difficult describes the task to get our 3rd Brigade moving, yet it is something the staff of MCO Townsville have proven equal to.

### Richmond Staging Area

As well as providing the operational movement support for the ODF, the unit was committed as part of the Logistic Command L of C operations.

This involved establishing a staging area at Richmond 500km west of Townsville. K92 was the first exercise Logistic Command had been tasked to establish and operate staging areas throughout Australia.

Townsville Logistic company established and operated Richmond from early February until the redeployment of the ODF in early April.

Most of the manpower for operating the staging area came from within the unit with additional support being provided by DSG (NQ) and 92 MP Pl.

Although not a large staging area in comparison with places like Mt Isa and Tennant Creek, Richmond was an important link for the movement of the force. Almost 1000 vehicles passed through the area during the exercise, which resulted in the use of 120,000 litres of diesel and the bedding down of approximately 2,000 troops.

The unit was also invited to visit the local primary school to display the equipments that were operating at Richmond. On the last night of operations a BBQ was held for the locals and resulted in a turn out of 210 people. Very good attendance when you consider only 30 were invited.



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**Army School of Transport  
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It was a glorious summer day that heralded the Army School of Transport's march through downtown Seymour on the 7th March 1992. The unit was exercising its right to Freedom of Entry to the Shire of Seymour, originally granted on the 2 December 1989. The scroll presented at that times reads in part:

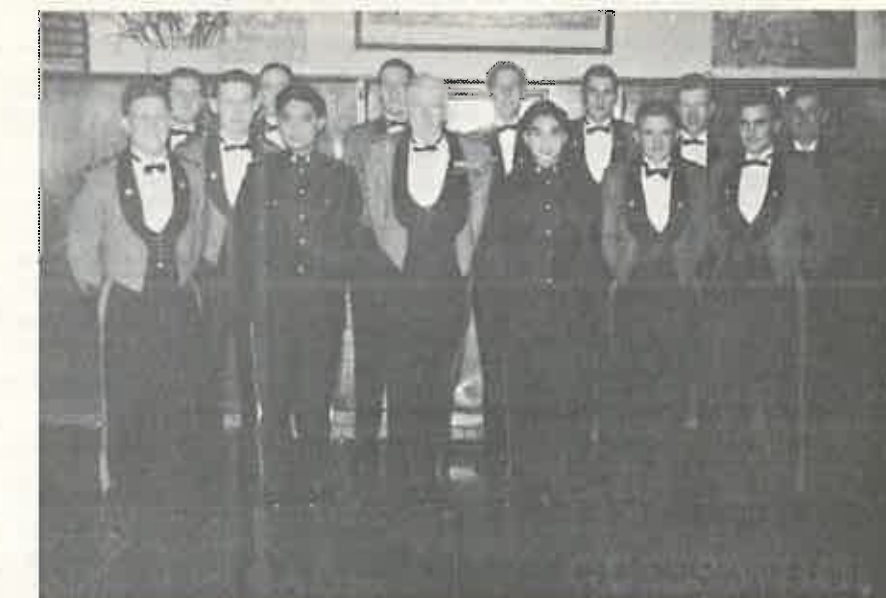
*"That in appreciation of the great record and glorious tradition over many years of devoted service to our beloved sovereign and country and the close and cordial association between the School of Transport and the Shire of Seymour it may parade through the Shire on all occasions with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, drums beating, band playing and Banner flying."*

The Corps Banner was marched on to the assembly area by Lt Steve Galjaardt escorted by Sgts "Kiwi" McGrath and "Snow" Bodman. The 100 man guard moved down Anzac Avenue, with a sharp eyes right at the War Memorial, and into Tallarook Street.

Halfway down the street the Guard was confronted by the Police Inspector Stephenson, flanked by two mounted policemen. The challenge was issued to the CO, LtCol D.I. Tyers who responded with AST's

credentials. On the passing line were the reviewing officer and Puckapunyal Area Commander, Col P.G. Monaghan, the RACT Colonel Commandant Victoria, Col N.W. McVilly and Councillor Bob Edwards.

Following the Guard was a mobile element representing the main range of general service vehicles in use in the Australian Army, including the recently acquired Yamaha XT600E motorcycle. Supporting AST on the parade was the Australian Army Band Melbourne.



**GUESS WHO?**

I put to you the challenge of naming all the persons in the photograph below. I'll give you a couple of hints. Fourth from the left and at the back is Colonel Lindsay Miller, RL and the photograph is of a Young Officers course at the old RAASC officers Mess, Puckapunyal.

Also in the photograph are some paintings which are said to have been brushed by an Italian POW during WWII. The Officers mess building was from the old School of Tactics and Administration at MOB Siding, Seymour, before being dragged by tanks to Puckapunyal. That particular building was said to be a POW barracks in WWII. When the Officers mess was demolished these paintings went missing. If any one can shed some light on the whereabouts of this historical artwork please contact me on

(06) 2664522,  
DNATS 8665422.  
Editor.

**GUESS WHO?**



## 8 TRANSPORT SQUADRON'S FREEDOM OF THE CITY CEREMONY Port Lincoln, South Australia (The Tuna Centre of the South)

On the day Australia commemorates the landing of Governor Phillip of Sydney Cove in 1788 a 200 year old Scottish custom was played out as part of the City of Port Lincoln's Australia Day celebrations.

On the 26th January this year 8 Transport Squadron exercised its right to the Freedom of the City of Port Lincoln for the first time.



The Squadron halted in the main street of Port Lincoln



The Squadron being inspected by Mayor Secker, MAJ Whinfield, OC 8 Tpt Sqn and LTCOL White, CO 9 Tpt Regt.

The right to freedom of the city was granted to the squadron which included its local subunit, 20 Transport Troop, by the City Council in November, 1987.

The right allows the squadron to march into the city with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, and bands playing music.

Its originated from Edinburgh in the late 1700s when the army marched through the streets with

bayonets fixed and bands playing to raise recruits.

Port Lincoln's first such ceremony was not aimed solely at recruiting soldiers but at recognising the squadron's freedom of entry to the city.

As the squadron marched along the main street of Port Lincoln, Police Chief Inspector Peter Cameron, with his sword drawn, challenged the squadron's right to enter the city with swords drawn and bayonets fixed. After stating its right to freedom of entry, the squadron was allowed to march past the Chief Inspector and into the city. Port Lincoln's Mayor Tom Secker, who took the salute from the Civic Centre, said it was an honour to host the ceremony. "The grant of Freedom of the City provides a very dignified and satisfactory means of enabling Council to honour our Army unit based in this city, thereby assisting in effecting a very desirable liaison between the Corporation (city council) and the armed services of the crown," Mr. Secker said.

The following day the Squadron was reviewed by Mayor Secker. At the ceremony the Squadron paraded Her Royal Highness, Princess Alice's Banner. Subsequently the Mayor presented a Reserve Force Medal to Sgt Phil Custance. As the parade concluded there was a flypast by C47 aircraft from the Aircraft Research and Development Unit based at Edinburgh.

Army personnel invited to the ceremony included Commander of 9 Brigade and senior active reserve officer in South Australia, Brigadier David Rowe, retired senior transport officer, Brigadier Ian Barr, Director of Movements and Transport, Colonel Greg Park, RACT Colonel Commandant of the 4 and 7th Military Districts, Colonel Brian McAuley, (now RACT Representative Colonel Commandant) and Commanding Officer of 9 Transport Regiment, Lieutenant Colonel Peter White.

## DIVISIONAL NON/INFANTRY MILITARY SKILLS CHAMPIONS

The four champion units from their respective Brigades came together recently to fight for the prestigious title of the 1st Division Non-Infantry Military Skills Champions. The Divisional championship held at Greenbank Range and Enoggera Barracks over the period 8-11 November 1991. The four units involved were from 1 Brigade - 101 Field Workshop; 3 Brigade - 9 Transport Squadron; 6 Brigade - 5 Transport Squadron; and Divisional Troops - 106 Field Workshop. (A RAEME vs RACT final)

The final was broken into three phases to test all aspects of the teams training.

### PHASE ONE

The first phase was held at Greenbank Range and involved many live range shoots with arduous marches carrying front line ammunition between each shoot, obstacle crossings to test the teamwork and leadership, a first aid test, radio telephone procedure, fire control orders, a kit check, construction of a sand bag wall and a navigation test. A very exhaustive and thorough test of Infantry Minor Tactics for

all involved.

### PHASE TWO

The second phase followed on from the first by testing the command and control aspects within the section in activities such as a section fighting patrol by day and night, motor transport ambush, night navigation, all aspects of field defences, night routine, booby traps, and a section attack. These activities were made more difficult when the section commander was removed immediately after giving patrol orders leaving the 2IC to command the section during the patrol.

### PHASE THREE

The final phase of the competition was held at Enoggera Barracks for a very demanding obstacle course, another range shoot and a final kit check to ensure nothing had been lost during the previous days.

At the completion of the activities the points from all the phases were collated and with only 130 points separating first and fourth places it is easily seen how close the competition was. However, winners are grinders and 5 Transport Squadron emerged as the best in the Division. Second place went to 9 Transport Squadron to prove the

dominance of the truckies.

The competition was designed to find the overall champion section in the Division and to promote leadership, teamwork, military skills, and stamina. The 'Jeffery' Trophy for Military Skills was presented to CPL Leievre by COL K.J. Gallagher AM, ADC at 1100hrs on Remembrance Day. MAJ R.A. Brooks, OC HQ Coy 1 Div did a terrific job organising the competition assisted by WO1 P. Rosemond, OAM.

Once again congratulations to the 5 Transport Squadron team of CPL Leievre, PTE Wakely, PTE Fisher, PTE Turrie, PTE Boag, PTE Woods, PTE Hemope, LCPL Brown, PTE Punter, CFN Skipper, the team coordinator WO2 Kenny, and the Officer Commanding, MAJ A.D. Overell.

"MORE THAN EQUAL TO THE TASK"

Footnote: In leadup competitions the Land Command Squadrons have performed exceptionally well achieving the following awards:

Champion Unit 3 Bde  
- 9 Tpt Sqn  
Champion Unit 6 Bde  
- 5 Tpt Sqn  
Champion Unit 1 LSF  
26 Tpt Sqn  
Divisional Champions  
- 5 Tpt Sqn



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## EXERCISE TRAINED TERMITE 1991



"Termite", Pte Barnes acts as "dogman" for a  
Tadano crane lift

### Background

What is a Termite? The answer is an operator terminal, ECN 171. Still a little vague? A Termite is a soldier trained and coded to operate cranes and forklifts onboard ships, at docks and on land. He can design and make the lifting equipment for use with the cranes. Their speciality is the loading and unloading of any form of cargo between any land or water based form of transport. The potential Termites arrive in to 30 Terminal Squadron with an ECN 109 qualification. Next they are sent to the Army Maritime School at Chowder Bay in Sydney for six weeks where they receive their ECN 171 qualification; covering operation of light industrial forklifts, the Pacific 2.5 tonne rough terrain forklift, ships crane and other trade skills.

On return to 30 Terminal Squadron the new Termite will gain codes for larger forklifts and the Squadron's 24 tonne P&H and 20 tonne Tadano mobile cranes. Once the soldier has

A few of the Squadron's W36 5t rough terrain forklifts used during  
the forklift conversion course.



spent a minimum of twelve months in the Squadron as a qualified ECN 171, he is eligible for postings to Distribution Centres or to the Ship's Army Detachment HMAS Tobruk. As the Army's major single user of medium and heavy forklifts and cranes, 30 Terminal Squadron performs a unique role. To code its large number of operator terminals the Squadron must conduct its own courses on a regular basis. Two combined forklift and crane courses were held during 1991, the second course for 1991 was called "Exercise Trained Termite 1991."

### Aim

The aim of Exercise Trained Termite 1991 was to train unit members in the operation of various B, C and D vehicles in preparation for Exercise Kangaroo 1992.

### Exercise Outline

The Exercise was conducted at Marrangaroo Logistic Company, near Lithgow in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney, from 02 Nov - 10 Dec 91. As well as driver/operator training, section level IMT training was also conducted. The following activities occurred as part of the Exercise:

- a. Crane Courses;
- b. Forklift Conversion Courses;
- c. Mack Conversion Course;
- d. Restricted B7/B8 Drivers

Course; and,  
e. IMT Training.

### Crane Courses

The crane courses were conducted from 01 Nov - 04 Dec. Two different mobile cranes were used, the P&H 24 tonne mobile crane and the Tadano 20 tonne rough terrain mobile crane. Three cranes of each type were used, with two students per crane, plus an accompanying instructor. All twelve students completed the course.

The crane courses covered operator servicing and maintenance, up to 1000 hour services. Road convoy driving was also conducted. Loads lifted ranged from bulldozers to LR 110s to 20 tonne ISO containers, by day and night. The students on completion of the course are fully able to deploy with their crane and co-operator on a task and plan and conduct any number of different lifting operations. Students of Merit for the P&H and Tadano were Privates Cockburn and Cahill respectively.

### Forklift Conversion Courses

The forklift conversion courses were conducted from 04 Nov - 26 Nov. The full course is of three weeks duration, whereas the conversion course is only five days. The conversion covers forklift safety, servicing and maintenance, and extensive



Course photo Exercise Trained  
Termite 1991.



operator training. A tough cross country driving circuit was included in the courses.

Two different forklifts were used, the Pacific 2.5 tonne and W36 5.0 tonne rough terrain forklifts. Seventeen students passed the conversion on these forklifts. Eleven students also passed a five day conversion course for the CAT 966C tow motor. The tow motor is used mainly to



A P&H crane student gains a visual appreciation of his crane's capabilities.



Pte Potts slings a load onto a Tadano crane whilst acting as "dogman".

manoeuvre trailers in terminal area. When connected to an Iso trailer for example, there are three points of articulation (the CAT is itself articulated) which

makes for an interesting push. Student of merit for the W36 and CAT were Privates Gilvear and Durrant respectively.

#### Mack Conversion Course

From 04 - 21 Nov a Mack conversion course was run by ECN 109 NCOs and SNCOs from the transport section of the unit's Terminal Support Troop. The aim of the course was to qualify unit drivers in Mack operation, with some students gaining a P2 code. As the Squadron has eight Mack variants, the requirement for Mack drivers is obvious.

Classroom instruction, servicing and SDA instruction was carried out within Marrangaroo Logistic Com-pany's considerable boundaries. The lead up to the road testing phase saw the course travelling the Blue Mountains, including a visit to Bathurst. Whilst in Bathurst the course were able to take their vehicles around the Mount Panarama Circuit. The course effectively ended with "Exercise Tyre Biter," a road trek to Canungra and back to Lithgow, which was the final testing phase of the course. Twelve students gained B9 codes from the course. Student of Merit was Cpl Russell from 35 Water Transport Squadron.

#### Restricted B7/B8 Drivers Course

After the Mack course a restricted drivers course was held from 25 Nov - 10 Dec. The aim of the course was to qualify unit administrative personnel to operate unit first line vehicles. A number of students - from 10 Terminal Regiment Headquarters and 11 MC Group also attended. Twelve students successfully completed the course. Private Humphreys was awarded Student of Merit for the course.

#### IMT Training

Those personnel not involved in course activities on any particular day promptly "volunteered" to undergo IMT training. The Marrangaroo Unit area includes a number of dams, wooded hills and valleys, as well as significant low, open flatlands. The SSM of 30 Terminal Squadron, WO2 Lester Mengel, very ably ran this

aspect of the Exercise, with such activities as:

- a. navigation by day and night;
- b. fieldcraft;
- c. obstacle crossings;
- d. contact drills;
- e. improvised water crossing;
- f. section formations; and,
- g. first aid.

One of the larger dams in the area provided an opportunity to practice most of the above skills. As the first soldiers reached an island in the centre of the dam they were contacted from the far side of the dam. The CO of 10 Terminal Regiment was present to observe the actions of soldiers from his unit's best Squadron.

#### Marrangaroo Logistic Company

With almost the entire strength of 30 Terminal Squadron deployed to Marrangaroo it could have been a strain on the far smaller host unit. To their credit Marrangaroo Logistic Company coped very well with our presence, providing an excellent standard of support at all levels.

#### Lithgow

A number of soldiers were treated to guided tours of the Lithgow Small Arms Factory, which included an opportunity to fire the Steyr. A family day on one weekend gave the soldiers families a chance not only to see their "soldier" in the field, but provided an opportunity to operate "dad's crane" or their "partners forklift." Many families used the occasion to stay over in the Blue Mountains and take in some of the tourist attractions of the region.

Spending six weeks only a few minutes from the city of Lithgow saw the soldiers develop a liking for some of the attractions of Lithgow. The locals extended a warm, friendly welcome to the members of 30 Terminal Squadron which many of our soldiers will not soon forget. Our soldiers are keen to re-visit Lithgow and return the welcome. During our stay we received an urgent request to provide assistance in fighting a bush fire which threatened a local colliery.

With our assistance they were able to control the fire some five and half hours after it started. Our assistance was described as invaluable by the Brigades.

#### Conclusion

As a result of Exercise Trained Termite 1991 the Squadron is at its highest level of driver/operator coding for some time. As well as achieving its aim, the Exercise was challenging and beneficial for all involved.

Lt J.L. Matsen  
OC72 Terminal Troop  
30 Terminal Squadron



Lift by Tadano crane with boom at full extension



Pte Watson at the wheel of a CAT 966C towmotor

## BLAST FROM THE PAST

*I hope to make this a regular column in which to republish some old articles or extracts of past Digests/Papers which may be of interest. The following article was first published in a RAASC Digest dated July 1969 and I thought perhaps someone would be interested in this information (eg 26 Tpt Sqn) . Ed.*

### DO YOU HAVE TROUBLE WITH TPP?

by Major R.T. Willing, MBE

If you are one of those people that invariably forgets the formulae for movement by road, think of the problems that some of the olds and bolds had to face (with apologies to those still serving.)

The following is an extract from RASC Training Vol IV, 1933:

#### "Method of Ascertaining the Number of Camels Required for a Convoy."

i. Take the total weight in lbs of the rations required for one camel, and its share of its driver's rations, during the period of the convoy.

ii. Subtract this from 350lb (the load of a heavy camel).

iii. Divide the result into the total weight to be delivered by the convoy.

iv. The result is the number of camels required for the convoy; add 20 to 30 per cent spare to this total for prolonged operations (these animals carry their own and their driver's rations).

Example - Assuming that a convoy is required to deliver 10 day's rations for a column of 1600 troops and 500 camels and their drivers at a distance of 7 days march; during the march,

the longest spell without water is 3 days.

#### Calculation.

i. Each camel requires 7 days rations =  $10 \times 7 = 70\text{lb}$ . and must carry a half share of his driver's rations =  $1 \times 7 = 7\text{lb}$

Also, half of 3 days water for his driver (whose allowance is 2 gallons) =  $(1 \times 10 \times 3)$  + 25 per cent, weight of fantasse =  $37 \frac{1}{2}\text{lb}$

Total say 114 1/2 lb, 115.

ii.  $(350-115) = 235\text{lb}$  = The useful load for each camel.

iii. Total weight to be delivered:

Rations for 1600 for 10 days =  $1600 \times 6 \times 10 = 96000\text{lb}$   
Rations for 500 camels and drivers for 10 days =  $500 \times 2 \times 10 = 10500\text{lb}$

Total 201000lb

iv. Number of camels required

$\frac{201,000}{235} = 855$  camels

Add 25 per cent 215

Total camels required 1,070

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## RACT PERSONNEL OVERSEAS 1992/93

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MAJ	P.M.	Tweedie	OC 69 Mov Sqn RCT, Germany
MAJ	L.A.	Smith	HADS, Washington
MAJ	J.	Pearson	Instr, Fort Eustis, Virginia
MAJ	L.J.	Ransome	Instr, Fort Lee, Virginia
MAJ	W.J.B.	Davie	LTS, US Staff College
MAJ	P.G.	Le Large	LTS, Thai Staff College Bangkok, Thailand
MAJ	R.K.	Hathaway	LTS, RMCS Shrivenham, England
MAJ	D.	Craig	LTS, Log Exec Dev Cse Fort Lee, Virginia
MAJ	P.R.	Newall	LTS, Log Mngt Dev Cse Fort Lee, Virginia
CAPT	B.N.	McManus	UN Observer, Middle-East
CAPT	A.	Anderson	UNTAC, Cambodia
CAPT	J.	McMillan	UNTAC, Cambodia
CAPT	C.	Lumley	UNTAC, Cambodia
CAPT	P.	Simon	Tpt Offr, 12 CE Works, PNG
CAPT	P.A.	Brierley	Instr, Trg Gp RCT, England
CAPT	A.L.	Jones	Instr, Fort Lee, Virginia
CAPT	J.S.	Hambridge	LTS, RMCS Shrivenham, England
CAPT	N.R.	Judd	LTS, Adv Tpt Cse, Trg Gp RCT, England

### Soldiers

WO1	R.	McGrice	UNTAC, Cambodia
WO1	R.	Jones	HADS, Singapore
WO2	L.	Cailes	UNTAC, Cambodia
WO2	B.	Davis	UNTAC, Cambodia
WO2	A.	Lawler	UNTAC, Cambodia
SSGT	R.	Winter	UNTAC, Cambodia
SGT	N.	Hansen	UNTAC, Cambodia
SGT	K.	Frogsatt	UNTAC, Cambodia
SGT	L.	Goodwin	UNTAC, Cambodia
SGT	P.	Miller	UNTAC, Cambodia
SGT	A.	Ogar	UNTAC, Cambodia
SGT	L.	Oxley	UNTAC, Cambodia
SGT	B.	Aberdeen	UNTAC, Cambodia
SGT	R.	Webb	MINURSO, Western Sahara
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CPL	R.	Hines	UNTAC, Cambodia
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## AUSTRALIAN TRUCKIES CORNER THE SOUK

by Major Tim Hanna

Three RACT officers reunited earlier this year a long way from home. Major Tim Hanna and Captain (now Major) Mark Mackay welcomed Captain Marc Baumbach to the Middle East during at our of the A-B Line on the Golan Heights. All three officers were members of the Australian Contingent of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO).

UNTSO was formed in 1948 to monitor the truces and treaties established with the creation of the state of Israel. Subsequent wars between Israel and its Arab neighbours saw an increase in UNTSO's responsibilities. Australia contributes 13 military observers to a combined military and civilian force of over 300 from about 30 different countries.

Major Hanna completed six months with Observer Group Lebanon before moving to Damascus to work on the Syrian side of the Golan Heights. Captain Mackay spent his first six

## RACT PERSONNEL OVERSEAS

months based in Tiberias, Israel followed by a move to Observer Group Golan - Damascus. On his arrival, Captain Baumbach was also posted to Syria. This meant that the only Australian observers posted to the world's oldest city at that time were officers of the Corps. In a part of the world more used to coups than Australia, this was one that largely went unnoticed!

The photograph shows the three RACT officers on OP 73, the most northern of the Golan observation posts. Part of Major Hanna's duties as a liaison officer to the Austrian Battalion of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force included the conduct of orientation and training tours. The three officers reunited during one of these tours.

L to R - MAJ (then CAPT) Mark MacKay, MAJ Tim Hanna, CAPT Marc "Possum" Baumbach.



## THE HIGHLANDS OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA A POSTING WITH A DIFFERENCE

By Captain Paul Simon

From the breath taking beauty to the unique lifestyle of the people - living in Papua New Guinea is an assault on the senses right from the word go. I arrived in the seemingly sleepy little town of Mendi in the Southern Highlands Province (SHP) of PNG in November of 1990 to a roaring crowd at the little airport. The National population were overpowering in their desire to see the new Army staff arriving.

After the initial culture shock appeared past, I soon discovered the small Unit I was to join, nestled in the middle of town. 12 Chief Engineer Works is a RAE Unit which has been in the SHP for 21 years and in country for some 29 years. it is stationed in Mendi for two main reasons: firstly to provide training for RAE personnel in construction activities at supervisory and professional level, and secondly, to provide assistance to the PNG Government by staffing the provincial branch of the Department of Works (DOW).

The 10 Members of the Unit staff the senior positions within the DOW - providing not only the management and technical know-how, but also instruction to the National staff of the Department who, it is intended, will one day replace us in our positions.

The Army personnel operate fully as a Unit, complete with Regimental appointments, Unit and adventure training and standard military responsibilities. In addition, we all perform a particular function within the civilian infrastructure of the DOW. The National staff are either Public Servants or Casuals - each with their own peculiar



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policies and regulations. The majority of permanent staff speak at least some English although there are many who speak Pidgin "tasco" (thats all). With over 700 dialects in the country - all quite unique, the various forms of Pidgin are often mixed and difficult to understand and patience is the greatest virtue one can have. Communication, after all, is one of the most important aspects of performing your job - no matter where you are.

From an Army perspective, life in the Unit is similar to that found at Australian based units. From a DOW perspective, things are very much different. The Department includes a headquarters and three sections. In command is the Provincial Works Manager (PWM) - a RAE major. The three sections are "Roads and Bridges" (or 'Civil') Section;

'Buildings' Section and 'Plant and Transport Branch' (PTB) - All three are commanded by a captain and a fourth captain completes design work for special projects.

DOW's main responsibility is to the infrastructure of the SHP and much effort is put into both road and building construction throughout the Province. Many projects are to be found beyond the local road network and require air support and the provision of local labour and resources. As the SHP was the last provincial area to be discovered (Government patrols into the area did not start until 1950), there remains much work to bring it into the 20th Century.

PTB Section differs to the other two in that it is essentially a separate organisation to the DOW with its own headquarters in Port Moresby. Each province has a fleet of government vehicles and plant which are operated under the management umbrella of PTB. The responsibility to look after all aspects including repair, maintenance and refuelling also rest with this Section.

It was to PTB that I came

## RACIAL PERSONNEL OVERSEAS

under the guise of Provincial Plant Manager (PPM) - a rather grandiose sounding term - but none-the-less, reasonably accurate. For the Mendi Branch is a fairly large organisation with widespread responsibilities. PTB holds some 340 odd vehicles and plant (the numbers vary). These are hired out to both National and Provincial Government Departments - mostly on a permanent five or seven day basis. There is also a vehicle pool which holds various vehicles for casual hire. A majority of the vehicles held are 4WD utilities - mostly Toyotas with a sprinkling of Nissans and Suzukis. Others include light, medium and heavy trucks, road construction and sealing plant, tractors, trailers, motorcycles, recovery trucks and a crane.

Financially, DOW is supported by both the National and Provincial Governments through budgetary grants. The PTB organisation - unlike DOW, is financially maintained through a National Government Trust Fund. The Section is required to provide a yearly contribution to the Finance Department and in addition must cover all operational expenses including the gradual replacement of all vehicles and plant.

To achieve this we are required to hire out our

equipment and sell our fuel (at a small markup). The difference between our income and our operational and maintenance expenses is (hopefully) the profit or contribution we provide to PTB Headquarters. This in turn is returned to the Trust Fund and the circle is complete. In effect, we operate much like a civilian rental car agency such as Hertz or Budget. On average, the total income and expenses (including vehicle depreciation and an administrative fee) average around \$7 million annually with a profit in the vicinity of \$800,000 annually.

It should be pointed out that not all provinces make a profit - in fact, only nine of the 19 provinces within PNG operate at a profit. PTB Mendi is the second highest income producing province in the country and yet is one of the smallest and least developed.

Our Provincial PTB asset are organised to cover most contingencies. The Mendi depot consists of a headquarters formed of an operation cell and an accounts/administrative section. Our refuelling facility is reasonably large and caters for all the government vehicles - including the Police, Ambulance and prisons. Predominantly, the workshops which are managed by a RAEME WO1 and a RAEME SGT, cover much of the depot area aside from storage space. The workshop facilities include a large light workshop, a heavy



Various PTB Plant



workshop, an engine rebuild workshop and panel/spray painting workshops. In effect we provide a complete service from hiring and refuelling to general maintenance, crash repairs and recovery.

As the Province is large, we also operate outstations in the western and eastern ends at Tari and Ialibu respectively. These facilities provide fuel, routine servicing, maintenance and limited breakdown repairs. Both stations are reasonably isolated - resupply and sometimes even communications are often difficult due to telephone and power failures, road washouts and constant tribal fighting between the various Highlands Village groups.

A further responsibility of PTB is the Static Plant Section. This is run by a RAEME SGT and has wide ranging responsibilities. Funding doesn't come from the PTB Trust Fund but from various departmental allocations both Nationally and Provincially. It therefore requires a different type of management. In essence it is responsible to maintain any static plant item which is



*view of the PTB Mendi complex from nearby foothills*



*CAPT Simon at his desk*

## RACT PERSONNEL OVERSEAS

registered by the Government. Generally speaking - this includes the water, power and sewerage systems in all the Provincial schools, hospitals, health centres and prisons.

There are over 800 registered items spread throughout the entire province - many in areas accessible only by air or a good long walk. They include mostly generators, water pumps, refrigeration units and solar powered items but range through hospital equipment, water/sewerage and power reticulation systems down to lawnmowers and egg incubators.

In all there are many difficulties and challenges involved as well as local barriers to overcome if success is to be achieved. For instance, government vehicles have strict usage guidelines. With between 250 and 300 vehicles on the roads throughout the Province, maintaining these guidelines and controlling vehicle usage is a constant requirement. Vehicle misuse is rife and requires much patience and understanding to control. Of the 135 staff at PTB - most are involved with the workshops or as drivers. Few staff are available to help out in this area and so it is not uncommon to drive to the police station, pick up a few heavily armed policemen and drive around the Province setting up road blocks - often with a good success rate of 'withdrawn vehicles.'

Politics are intrinsically involved in almost every aspect of life in PNG and are very hard to avoid. Living in such a small community as Mendi (it can be likened to a small country town without any facilities or amenities) it is hard not to rub shoulders not only with senior public servants and provincial ministers (yes, each province has their own Premier, Cabinet and Opposition party!) but also their own Premier, Cabinet and

Opposition Party!) but also with National Ministers from local electorate's. All have one thing in common - all want vehicles. Many are not entitled to a vehicle for various reasons, but it won't stop them from trying. Having to say 'no' is perhaps the hardest part of this job. For the most part however, these people are very relaxed, open and generally very friendly. Take for example the new Governor General of PNG, who is a Southern Highlander. On his first official visit to Mendi this year, he made a great point of visiting our Unit Mess (the Clive Steele Club as it is colloquially known) just so that he could play eight ball there. Of course I let him win the first match - protocol can't be completely ignored after all!

The Mendi community has only a small expatriate population of which the Army members and their families are the largest group. Nestled in the mountains at 5698 feet (only 1618 feet lower than Mt Kosciuszko), the township is generally serene and, barring the odd tribal/stone fight and a little bit of tear gas every now and then, is generally very easy to settle into. As with all small communities, it would be hard not to become involved. All Army families are in more than one way involved - albeit as members of the various town community and provincial committees, as members of organisations like the Scouts and Guides or with volunteer work at the schools, hospitals or education centres.

To make up for the lack of facilities and entertainment in town, Mess life tends to become quite hectic at times. This in tide with both our military responsibilities and our DOW occupations, makes for a fairly busy posting tenure. What is never missing is excitement and there is always something happening. There are dangers as well - tribal fighting and violence are not uncommon, but generally events occur well away from town.

For a Transport Officer there could be few more rewarding postings. To run such a large plant and vehicle fleet' operate what in civilian terms, amounts to a medium size business; to work with people from another country; converse in another language and to be financially accountable for such large sums of money (in my last posting I had a \$150 petty cash account), well - opportunities such as these are few and far between. I for one will watch with some dismay as the clock ticks away towards the end of my posting here this year.

## RACT PERSONNEL OVERSEAS

*Looking down the main Street of Mendi Town*



*A typical Kunai Hut - in which the majority of PNG Nationals live.*

*The famous Mendi Market - mostly vegetables and basic commodities.*



*PTB Front Yard and Fuel Bowsers.*



*Sergeant Lindsay Goodwin and Private Geoff Vaughan From the Sydney Based 11 Movement Control Unit enjoy a refreshing drink while unloading stores for the 40-strong Australian Army Communications contingent serving with the United Nations advance mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC). UNAMIC is the first stage of a United Nations Operation aimed at restoring peace to Cambodia and supervising free elections in that country.*



## HAKUNAMATATA

by Captain Lou Zamberlan

Exercise Kilimanjaro was a HQ 2MD sponsored adventurous training activity in East Africa. Three members of the Corps, Sergeant Lindsay Goodwin, Captain Lou Zamberlan and Major George Friend participated.

The aims of the activity were to climb Mt. Kenya and Loganot Volcano in Kenya and the highest mountain on the African continent, Mt. Kilimanjaro, in Tanzania.

Early in January 1991, thirty three expedition members travelled on various flights to Africa via India. Extended transit stops in New Delhi and Bombay gave expeditioners limited opportunities to explore these cities. First time visitors to the sub-continent, by now in acute culture shock, eagerly boarded the flight to Nairobi. Some three days after leaving Australia the group arrived in Nairobi and were met at the airport by the advance party and vehicles from BATLSK (British Army Training Liaison Staff Kenya). This organisation, our hosts whilst we were in the Nairobi area, is set up to provide transit facilities for British armed forces training in Kenya.

The initial phase of the exercise was spent acclimatising, purchasing rations and packing at the BATLSK lines within the Kenyan Army's Kahawa Barracks. At this point, the group was re-organised into two sub-groups with two teams per sub-group. This structure was deemed necessary due to the nature of the country and the poor transport facilities available to move larger groups of people and equipment.

It was decided that one group would head north and attempt

## RACT PERSONNEL OVERSEAS

Mt Kenya whilst the other would go south into Tanzania and attempt Kilimanjaro.

Travelling in East Africa is adventurous in itself due to grossly overcrowded public transport, poor mechanical condition of most if not all vehicles and a widespread death wish among drivers. Some 274 people were killed on Kenyan roads in the first ten days of January. A public outcry forced official action, no Radar units or speed cameras here, just Police armed with automatic weapons, road blocks and tyre slashing chain spikes spread across roads to discourage illegal driving.

Group A, which included the RACT members, attempted the climb up Kilimanjaro by the Umbwe and Marangu Routes. The greatest difficulty in climbing the highest mountain in Africa is not the terrain or altitude but the cost (between \$US 220-300 per person) and dealing with the local bureaucracy.

After a brief stay in Moshi, a small town at the base of Kilimanjaro and arguably the disease capital of the world, we began our climb. From the National Park HQ the first day's climb takes you up through the forest belt. Armed rangers stationed at regular intervals smiled and waved as we toiled past carrying loads of between 20 and 30 kilograms. There were no porters for us as it was deemed more adventurous to "hump you own Bluey."

The first night is spent at Mandara Huts (2750m) which are situated in a clearing on the edge of the forest. From here at sunrise the next day climbers were treated to panoramic views of the Serengeti Plains.

The trail continued across open alpine heathland reminiscent of the Australian Alps in

summer, however the looming mass of the Kilimanjaro crater and its attendant Mawenzi spire soon remove any thoughts of home. A very strenuous day of climbing brought us to Horombo Huts. It is usually at this altitude (3750m) that AMS (Acute Mountain or Altitude Sickness) begins to affect most climbers. We spent a rest day here to assist in our acclimatisation and to minimise any adverse effects of altitude.

Once Horombo Huts are left behind the terrain becomes an alpine desert with a moonscape of dust and shattered rock. Kibo Hut (4700m) was reached about midday. The teams were strung out with individuals stumbling in throughout the afternoon. Climbing at these altitudes is a very personal thing. Altitude and dehydration affects everyone differently irrespective of fitness or personal ambition. Some never make it to Kibo, others collapse at Kibo and go no further and a lucky few go on. At the onset of AMS the only option, however unpalatable, is to descend before the situation becomes life threatening and a burden on your team mates who usually have to carry you down.

Around midnight, after fruitless attempts to sleep, those of us still capable of continuing started the seemingly endless climb up the scree slopes of the crater towards Gilman's Point (5700m) on the crater rim. Team members began to drop out due to AMS and a rather depleted group arrived at Gilman's in time to see the sun rise behind Mawenzi. To have reached this point was adequate for some, but the true summit of Africa, Uhuru Peak (5896m) lay seemingly just up ahead, so, those of us still able, pushed on. Two hours later we stood on the summit.

Some of us found our arrival at the summit something of an anti-climax; there's a fair bit of litter, a plaque and a visitor's book to remind you that you are

far from unique in having conquered Kilimanjaro. The 3600 views of the caldera, ice fields and Mounts Meru and Mawenzi compensated for the fatigue and illness generally being felt.

After an hour or so on the summit we began our descent to Kibo Hut where we picked up our gear and headed down through the moonscape towards Horombo Huts. Buoyed by success and a relatively rapid decrease in altitude we reached Horombo some three hours later only to find the entire site filled with ascending climbers. There was no alternative but to press on. The next five hours passed as a blur as we stumbled down through the alpine heathland. It was just on dark when we finally reached Mandara Huts.

As one of our party was still suffering from AMS, a continued descent was essential. We set off through the forest belt by the light of headlamp torches. Anticipating warm showers and cold beers at Park HQ we gave little thought to the glowing eyes, noises and furry shapes hovering just out of reach of our torches. It was only at the Park HQ some three hours later that the implications of what we had done by descending through the forest at night finally became fully apparent.

A rather agitated ranger managed to calm down sufficiently to state with forced politeness:

"But...Sirs! They eat people, that is why we all carry rifles. You are not in your safe Australian forest now...Sirs!" Well, that at least explained the furry shapes!

A night of luxury at the Kilimanjaro Lodge soon washed away the rigors of the mountain and the following day we headed back to Moshi for a few days R&R at the YMCA.

From Moshi, we used local transport to reach Arusha, a tourist centre from where safaris to The Serengeti Plains and the Ngorongoro Crater depart. The

## RACT PERSONNEL OVERSEAS

next day we went on to the border crossing at Namanga where we hired a local taxi to take us to Kahawa Barracks in Nairobi. Here we met up with the teams who had just returned from Mt. Kenya.

The next few days were spent exchanging information and purchasing additional rations for the attempt on Mt. Kenya. Teams One and Two now state off for Chogoria, a small village at the base of Mt. Kenya and the start of the route we had chosen to use.

For this phase of the Exercise, I joined up with Lieutenant Jon Sparks (RAN) in Team Two as he and I had received permission from the Expedition Leader to attempt a technical rockclimb on the south-east face of the Nelion Spire of Mt Kenya. Our aim was to climb the first ascent route put up by Eric Shipton and Gwyn Davis in 1929.

Hire transport took us to the Forest Gate just outside Chogoria. The forest belt is between 2000 and 3000 metres, designated "State Forest" and logged extensively. The National Park begins above the tree line (3000m) consequently there are no problems about logging in a National Park - no trees!

At the Forest Gate we hired a four-wheel drive vehicle for the 22 km trip up to the Park Gate. As we had arrived at midday we were not permitted to begin the walk up to the Park as we would not have made it to the Park Gate in the one day and would have had to camp in the forest. This is forbidden due to the very real possibility of attack by leopards and, higher up in the Bamboo Forest, elephants.

On arrival at the Park Gate (3020m), we set up camp and spent a restless night listening to the crashing of elephants and the distinctive cough of a prowling leopard. The abundance of very

large feline paw prints in the dust near our tents convinced us it would be safer up higher in the alpine regions so, needing little encouragement, we set off for Kilifi Falls (3450m), our next camp site.

A short walk of only three hours took us to a pleasant campsite near the Falls. There is a temptation to continue on past here as it's such a short walk from the park Gate. Those who do go on soon discover the meaning of Mountain Sickness. The climb must be made slowly gaining only 300-400 vertical metres per day, thus allowing the body to acclimatise to the increase in altitude and avoid the onset of altitude sickness.

After a somewhat more restful night (there are felines up this high but they're not as large as the ones lower down) we set off up the ridge on the side of the spectacular Gorges Valley. A hard day's climb through alpine heathland got us to Minto's Hut (4297m), an untidy corrugated iron shed situated along side a small tarn and a large cleared claypan. The latter is used as an emergency LZ for rescue helicopters whenever the British Armed Forces use Mt Kenya for mountain warfare training.

The next day was physically the most demanding of the entire exercise. The track climbed steeply through boulders and giant cacti-like Groundsel plants until it reached the snowline. A cold windy crossing of several passes led us up onto a mist covered plateau where the stark rockfaces of Nelion and Batian, the summit spires of Mt Kenya, rose hundreds of metres above us.

Our trek across to Austrian Hut (4790m) on the other side of the plateau was accomplished in freezing winds, heavy snow and near zero visibility. Jon and I managed to find spare bed spaces in the hut whilst the rest of the team chose to put up tents rather than put up with the noise, fumes from fuel stoves and overcrowding common to all huts



on Mt. Kenya.

The next morning just before first light, Jon and I set off across the Lewis Glacier to the base of the Nelion and the start of the Shipton Route. As we sorted climbing gear and began our climb we could see the remainder of the Team ascending the opposite ridge to Point Lenana (4985m), the highest place non-climbers can reach on the mountain.

The climb took us ten hours of technical rockclimbing in blizzard conditions. As the lead climber, using the latest "high-tech" equipment, clothing and ropes, I gained some insight into just what an achievement it must have been in 1929 to have reached the summit with minimal and comparatively primitive equipment. We reached the summit (5188m) at 1730.

We chose to bivouac in the summit shelter hut (actually a large aluminium box). We were able to see, when the weather cleared, sweeping views of the Kenyan forest and the plains beyond.

Nine long and very exposed abseils coupled with numerous down climbing pitches took us to the base of Nelion at about midday on the next day, just in time for the daily blizzard. We crossed the glacier in white-out conditions. On reaching Austrian Hut we met up with my own Team who, delayed by medical problems, had just arrived.

The next day after the arriving Team climbed Point Lenana we all set off down the narrow Moru Route and off the mountain. A "highlight" of the descent was the crossing of the Vertical Bog, and unpleasant piece of real estate that lives up to its name. At the Naro Moru Gate we met up with local transport that took us to Naro Moru township where we spent the night and celebrated our climb and Australia Day.

From Naro Moru we drove across the Abedare Ranges to Loganot Volcano on the shore of Lake Naivasha in the Rift Valley,

## RACT PERSONNEL OVERSEAS

just out side Nairobi. In contrast to the previous two mountains we had been on, this one took only three hours to ascend and descend. The volcano has not been active for a hundred years or more, consequently the base of the caldera, some fifty or sixty metres below the crater rim is jungle covered. This "sunken" jungle looks like a "Lost World" as the only entry or exit would be by air or using ropes.

On return to Nairobi, we were all debriefed on the exercise and then stood down for several days prior to departure for home. Some members went on safari, others travelled to Lake Victoria. My own Team took the train to Mombasa where we spent our R&R on the beach and in the Old Quarter around the 400 year old Fort Jesus.

The return journey to Australia turned into quite an adventure with flights cancelled due to the Gulf War, overbooking and obstructive airline officials. After four carrier changes, all members travelling finally made it back home safely. (\*Swahili for "No worries mate")

## IN THE U.K. IT'S JUST ANOTHER POSTING

By Sergeant Tony Irwin

As the Qantas 747 took off and I settled in my seat I hoped that I hadn't forgotten anything. Preparations for an overseas posting are quite involved and the last couple of months had been busy to say the least. My three children and my wife claudia all looked happy, so I thought to myself, "don't worry and enjoy the next two years."

After a twenty eight hour flight with one two hour stop in Bangkok we arrived at London's Heathrow airport. After a rather

quick trip through baggage pick up and customs we finally walked out of the main terminal. A lot of Australians associate England with either pea soup fog, snow or rain, well what a surprise. It was 6.45am the sun was up and it turned out to be a pleasant early spring day.

My first three days were spent in a hotel in London which gave us some time to explore the city after recovering from the initial jet lag. My first military contact was my arrival briefing at Australia House on the third day. The main purpose of this briefing is to make sure financial matters are in hand and a welcome. It all only took a couple of hours then we were off, by train, to Southampton and my new unit, 17 Port and Maritime Regt, RCT.

After meeting my OC, SSM and CC it was off to the married quarters, which are located about two miles from the unit. The first thing we noticed about our MQ was the size. I guess in England, houses are small so there easy to heat, well this one was very easy to heat, but it was clean, neat and freshly painted, and we were issued sufficient furniture to tide us over.

The value of a handover period is not to be underestimated and as I didn't have one, simple things like getting the phone connected, buying a car and finding the best place to shop were made just a little bit more difficult, but we managed, and before long we had settled in well, and our normal routine could recommence.

My wife is not the type to stay at home with the vacuum cleaner or dishes, so within about two weeks she was working full time. The kids had settled into school and steady stream of their new found friends were visiting with questions about Kylie and Jason, and whether we had a swimming pool or a beach in our back yard in Australia.

As all was well in the home I thought it was about time to see

what the British Army did when they went away on trips, so I started to snoop around and find out when a chance to go on exercise might present itself. So far at work I had been doing what terminal operators are supposed to do and had unloaded and loaded a few ships, but just five weeks after arriving in the UK I was on a plane bound for exercise LION SUN 4 in Cyprus, along with the rest of the Regt.

This exercise was not trade related, it was a chance to do some infantry training and also some adventure training. For me it was a chance to meet members of the Regt, and get to know those special characters that you meet in the army. Anyway after five weeks in Cyprus I came back to the UK not only with a sun tan but I felt a lot more at home in the Regt.

After another three weeks of "normal" work back in Marchwood Port I was off again aboard the RFA Sir Tristram (of Falklands Fame) on my way back to Cyprus via Gibraltar. My wife was a little upset that I was going away again so soon, but after I told her it was only a five week trip and the freedom of the world depended upon it, she was her supporting self again.

The trip happens once a year and delivers stores to Gibraltar, Cyprus and brings return stores back to the UK. I had always wanted to see the Rock of Gibraltar so this was a highlight of the trip.

On my return my wife was glad to see me and she was a lot happier as summer had arrived and the weather wasn't bad at all, in fact I liked it because although it sometimes hit 30 ° during the day it cooled off at night and sleeping was easier. Back at work things were pretty much as usual. While on the trips to Cyprus I had seen only sunshine and I wondered when the Regt, might go somewhere

## RACT PERSONNEL OVERSEAS



Stonehenge



Trafalgar Square, London



Mountain Roads, Majorca



Captured Soviet made Iraqi Vehicles were unloaded at Marchwood UK

cold, I soon found out.

Each year the Regt. works with the Royal Marines in Norway. It sends what is known as a composite Port Sqn, made up of Port Operators and people from the Maritime trades, as well as a variety of MHE and watercraft.

My job on this exercise was as a detachment commander on the RFA Sir Galahad, so with eight Port Operators under my command, we boarded the ship and we departed for Plymouth, to pick up our load of equipment and about three hundred "Booties" (Royal Marines).

After Loading in Plymouth word came through that the Regt's manpower to the exercise would be cut, due to commitments to Op Granby both at Marchwood and eventually to the Persian Gulf. So out of about one hundred and twenty Port Operators only twenty eight or so remained to make the voyage to Norway.

As it turned out the exercise went well for me despite the cold conditions. I returned to Marchwood to find it a very busy place with many strange sandy coloured equipment being loaded onto a lot of ships. I told my wife that I was unlikely to be allowed to go to the Gulf, but within two weeks of returning from Norway I was in Cyprus for the third time waiting for ships to arrive to be unloaded. A week later myself and my section of twelve Port Op's were in the Port of Al Jubail in Saudi Arabia, the date was 16th October 1990. When we arrived the only other Regt personnel there were the OC, OPS OFFR and SSM of 52 Port Sqn. A couple of days later our advance party arrived on board RFA Sir Tristram, and I took great delight in reminding them just who had arrived first.

Christmas and New Year came and went and I arrived back at Marchwood on 17th February 1991, to my wife telling me that maybe I should think



## RACT PERSONNEL OVERSEAS

about staying home for more than four weeks at a time.

Well I couldn't disagree with that! The only trouble was that there weren't too many people in Marchwood at that time so I spent a lot of time at work unloading equipment returning from the Gulf, this was to continue right up until August.

My only respite came when I spent two weeks in Belize (Central America), preparing for and unloading the annual resupply ship. After that I was posted to Port Division, School of Transportation, as an instructor. The school is also located in Marchwood and this has been my base since then.

Shortly after my posting my "happy to have you home for good" wife, decided we all needed a holiday, and I wholeheartedly agreed. I had plenty of leave in the book and the leave period for the school was about to commence.

So after some careful planning we hired a camper van and accompanied by my mother (visiting from Australia), my three children and my wife, I set off into the yet as unknown European Continent.

Our holiday took us through Belgium, Holland, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Liechtenstein, Italy and France. We found we had enough time to look at all the "important" sights like what is left of the Berlin wall, the Eiffel Tower, the Vatican, the Colosseum and of course the leaning Tower of Pisa. This all took four and a half weeks and about three thousand miles. After

two days back home we flew to Jajorca for the last week of our holiday in the sun.

Now that I'm posted to the school, some sense of normality has returned to our lives. I come home every day and weekends are mostly free. The posting itself is busy as there are back to back courses all year which keep me and the other staff on our toes. At the moment our thoughts are of returning to Australia and preparations are under way, we will be home by mid July.

This posting is certainly one which my family and I won't forget in a hurry and it will be the source of fond memories in the future. When any person takes a posting they normally have a good idea what the job involves, and as far as the social side goes they take it as it comes. This was our attitude when coming to the UK, after all it's just another posting.

## THE CORPS MUSEUM - REFLECTIONS FOR OUR HERITAGE

By *Leut Frazer Stephenson, RAN*

### Introduction

The RACT Museum was officially opened eleven years ago and strategically based at the Army School of Transport (AST). In this time successive committees have striven to create a showpiece for both the Corps and the Army despite limited resources. The Museum now boasts a varied display that is interesting, unique and endeavours to cover all aspects of Corps service.

The Corps Museum maintains a wide array of memorabilia on display, including a number of vehicles which are restored or intended to be restored to full operational condition.

### The Museum Charter

The RACT Museum is dedicated to the preservation and conservation of our Australian Military Heritage, with an emphasis first and foremost on the history of the RACT and its predecessor Corps.

### Incorporation

The Museum is currently undergoing application for recognition by the Attorney-General as an incorporated

institution through the Corporate Affairs Office - Victoria. This has far reaching implications for the future operation of the Museum in terms of liability and acquisition of funding under commonwealth legislation.

### Management

Currently the Museum management committee is organized on a regimental appointment basis, assisted by voluntary services of the public and 'Friends of the Museum' members. Two permanent positions currently exist, those of vehicle restorer and curator, and these are filled from within School resources.

### Funding

The Museum was officially recognised in 1990 by the Army Historical Committee as an authorized military museum. This allows for maintenance of the buildings and provision of some ancillary services. Currently the Museum holds approximately \$80,000 in trust, being monies raised with the assistance of the patron, and can utilise a portion of interest earned annually on

necessary expenditure items. Other sources of income include:

a. **Entrance Fees** A nominal charge is made for children, adults or family admittance to the Museum and a concessional rate is available for organized tours;

b. **Souvenirs/Refreshments** Several items are available for sale from the Museum Shop including Banner Parade posters, tea spoons, booklets which describe the vehicles on display, Banner envelopes, drinks, sweets and other small mementos of a visit to the Museum;

c. **Donations** Whilst these may generally rate as a small scale avenue of fundraising, individuals continue to regularly donate money either by mail or directly into the Donation Box at the Museum.

### Acquisition Items

The Museum continually receives items of interest and of historical heritage on an almost daily basis. Whilst the collection continues to grow, many areas of Corps history remain bereft of items. In particular, artifacts from Vietnam and Korea are needed for display. All members of the Corps, both past and presently serving, are encouraged to assist the Museum to preserve and maintain the Corps heritage by donating relevant artifacts.

The Museum is also interested in acquiring personal papers, diaries, letters or any material of an official nature that individuals may have retained. One off items, odd issues of newspapers and the like are of little benefit unless their provenance can be directly associated with someone of major significance or with an important event. Our address for all items delivered by post is:

The Curator  
RACT Museum,  
Tobruk Barracks,  
PUCKAPUNYAL VIC 3662.

If you or your unit are interested in donating material, please get in touch with us. We would prefer that you write, describing the material you are

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Mr. Lindsay Fox of the LINFOX Group holds appointment as Patron of the Museum. The current committee comprises:

LTCOL Doug Tyers	-	CO/CI AST;
MAJ Randall McClelland	-	President;
LEUT Frazer Stephenson, RAN	-	Secretary;
WO1 Peter Evans	-	Treasurer;
LT Paul Minon	-	Public Relations;
LT Peter Fleming	-	Property Member;
CAPT Trevor Burvill	-	ASC Rep;
CAPT Ron Anderson	-	Member;
CPL Charlie Candy	-	Curator;
CPL Des O'Connor	-	Restorer; and
PTE Dave Carr	-	PLB Rep.



interested in donating - what it is, what period it covers, to whom it relates and how much there is. Please clearly print your full name, postal address and contact telephone number (s) in your letter.

#### Community Support

The Museum has been instrumental in providing static and mobile displays within the wider civilian community this year. These have included:

- ★ The Australian War Memorial 50th Anniversary
- ★ Puckapunyal District Neighbourhood Centre
- ★ Seymour Rafting Festival
- ★ ANZAC Day Celebrations

Future plans indicate that the Museum will be involved in the Axedale Community Fair and a swapmeet organized under the auspices of the Victorian Military Vehicle Club.

#### Advertising

The importance of publicity to the Museum cannot be emphasized too greatly. The Public Relations Officer has been instrumental in organizing a number of initiatives designed to assist in publicizing the Museum. These have included upgrading of signposts, production and distribution of brochures, attendance at local community gatherings and inclusion of

advertisements with Civic Guides, local newspapers and tourism authorities.

#### Friends of the Museum

All Corps members are encouraged to follow the lead of the Corps Director and become a member of the 'Friends of the Museum' (FOTM) Society for an annual fee of \$10. FOTM members regularly receive a newsletter detailing forthcoming events and news, as well as being most welcome to assist in restoration projects, cataloguing, maintenance of displays, research and archival work. FOTM members enjoy the satisfaction of doing something worthwhile to preserve their heritage whilst learning or refining skills, or passing on their expertise that future Corps members may benefit. The FOTM subscription is tax deductible and entitles the holder and family to free admission on presentation of their society membership card. A membership application form is included within this edition of 'Par Oneri'.

#### Opening Times

The Corps Museum is open daily from 10 am until 4 pm except Mondays, when time is allocated for administrative and restorative work. Timings for group bookings can be arranged as required.

#### The Display

The RACT Museum currently consists of internal and external display areas. The internal display houses Corps and related military memorabilia, whilst the external display houses the vehicle fleet and ASC display area. Presently this area is subjected to weather and ultimately will ideally be replaced with a large 'hangar' or 'warehouse' to house the complete collection of vehicles with under-cover protection.

The Museum currently holds over forty restored vehicles on show with many others awaiting restoration. The current committee continues to uphold the principle that all vehicles must have had a military connection; and that all must be restored to original operational condition.

Recent acquisitions include an Austin Weston Crane, A Diamond Reo, an F2 Dump and a Harley Davidson motor cycle.

#### Conclusion

Whether making an enquiry about membership of FOTM or taking a glimpse into our transportation past, the Museum reflects the attitude, history and aspirations of the RACT past, present and future and provides a window through which all others may judge the Corps as being 'Equal to the Task'.

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