



8th / 7th Battalion
The Royal Victoria Regiment



Ranger Journal
2023 - 2024

Serving the Nation



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Address by the Commanding Officer

LTCOL Derek Sonogan

Reflections on Command: Leading the 8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment (2022-2024)

Taking command of the 8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment (8/7 RVR) from 2022 to 2024 was both a privilege and a period of significant transformation for the unit. Over the past three years, the Battalion has evolved in capability, readiness, and personnel strength, achieving milestones that have set a new standard for reserve units within the Australian Army. This article reflects on my journey as Commanding Officer and highlights the key achievements that defined my tenure.

Introduction of the Protected Mobility Vehicle - Medium (PMV-M)

One of the most impactful changes during my command was the introduction of the PMV-M (Bushmaster) into the unit. This vehicle significantly enhances the mobility, protection, and firepower of our infantry companies. The Bushmaster's introduction meant that the Battalion could operate with greater flexibility in both conventional and domestic operational environments. Its role was particularly important in preparing the unit for future operational commitments, ensuring that our soldiers have the necessary protection and tactical mobility to meet modern battlefield demands.

With the introduction of PMV-M, we were able to further integrate motorised operations into our training cycles. This included running comprehensive vehicle commander and driver training courses, allowing the Battalion to build a core group of highly skilled soldiers capable of leading and operating these vehicles in



complex environments. The PMV-M has quickly become a cornerstone of our operational readiness, increasing our capability to support domestic operations and exercises.

First Reconnaissance Course

In 2023, the Battalion ran its first-ever Basic Reconnaissance Course (BRC). This was a pivotal moment in expanding our tactical capacity, as the reconnaissance role is critical to modern military operations, allowing for intelligence gathering, enemy tracking, and route planning in both offensive and defensive operations. The success of this course laid the groundwork for developing a skilled cadre of reconnaissance soldiers within the Battalion, a capability that will continue to evolve and provide valuable tactical advantages for future operations.

Establishing the First SERCAT 5 Sniper Capability

Another significant milestone was the creation of the first SERCAT 5 Sniper capability within the 2nd (AS) Division. This was a ground-breaking achievement for the battalion and the Division as a whole. The sniper capability adds precision lethality to the battalion's arsenal, enhancing our ability to conduct long-range engagements and provide support to larger manoeuvre elements. Establishing this capability required dedicated training and the development of specialised skills among a select group of soldiers. The snipers are now an integral part of our tactical planning and have increased the operational versatility of the battalion.

Expansion of the Battalion's Establishment

Under my command, the 8/7 RVR saw a significant increase in its establishment, growing from 378 to 471 positions. This expansion added 93 new roles to the Battalion, providing additional operational capability and depth to our force structure. These new positions enabled us to distribute the workload more effectively across all ranks and sections, ensuring a more resilient and capable unit. The growth in personnel was accompanied by an increase in training tempo and operational readiness, which saw our baseline readiness levels consistently exceed 80% throughout my tenure.

Task Unit Hawk – Supporting Army Leadership and Land Forces

In 2024, 8/7 RVR was called upon to support Task Unit Hawk, a key element of the Chief of Army's Symposium and the broader Land Forces activities. This tasking provided the Battalion with an opportunity to demonstrate its operational effectiveness in support of high-profile international military events. It was a challenging but rewarding experience, as the unit successfully supported a range of activities, showcasing the professionalism and adaptability of our soldiers. Our participation in Task Unit Hawk reinforced the importance of 8/7 RVR's role within the Australian Army,

particularly in supporting strategic-level events and engagements.

Strengthening Relationships with NORFORCE and OP RESOLUTE

Building on our longstanding relationship with NORFORCE, 8/7 RVR contributed to Operation RESOLUTE by deploying signallers and watchkeepers to reinforce surveillance and reconnaissance activities. This deployment was a key element of our collaboration with NORFORCE, further strengthening ties between the two units. Our contribution to Operation RESOLUTE exemplified the Battalion's commitment to supporting national defence efforts, particularly in safeguarding Australia's maritime borders.

Commanding the 4th Brigade Contingency Force

As Commanding Officer, I also had the privilege of leading the 4th Brigade Contingency Force elements. This responsibility further underscored the role as a key contributor to broader brigade-level operations. Our ability to provide contingency force elements highlighted the battalion's readiness and the professionalism of our soldiers, who consistently demonstrated their ability to operate effectively in complex and demanding environments.

Conclusion

My tenure as Commanding Officer of the 8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment has been defined by growth, innovation, and operational success. From the introduction of the PMV-M to the creation of new tactical capabilities such as the Recon and Sniper elements, the battalion has made significant strides in its ability to meet the challenges of modern military operations. The expansion of our establishment, our contributions to national operations like OP RESOLUTE, and our support to strategic Army events are testament to the dedication and hard work of the soldiers and officers of 8/7 RVR. It has been an honour to lead such a capable and committed unit, and I am confident that the battalion will continue to excel in the years ahead.

Regimental Sergeant Major

Warrant Officer Class One Matthew Vermey

It had been 10 years since I last served in the Royal Victoria Regiment albeit in 5/6 RVR at that time. So it was with much excitement and anticipation that I looked forward to returning to the Regiment this time as the Regimental Sergeant Major of 8/7 RVR. It has been great being back and what a couple of years we have had! Firstly, with the numerous changes under the Land Capability Review and the re-introduction of the Reconnaissance and Sniper Capabilities into the Battalion. Secondly, the Defence Strategic Review which has completely restructured and refocused the 2nd Division. It definitely is an exciting time to be a soldier!

The list of activities over the last few years has been long and at times exhaustive. As you read through this Ranger Journal, you will see how high the tempo has been, as the Battalion completes traditional training blocks whilst modernising and re-structuring at the same time. Our training cell deserves a mention here. With the Mod 2 RAINF training returning to the Battalion, our training cell developed and trialled several methods of delivery which has resulted in a successful model being adopted across the Brigade and is starting to see soldiers successfully progress through the training.

Without a doubt, the most challenging focus of the Battalion has been the transition to motorisation. In this space, the Battalion has lead the Division in innovative training opportunities and the development of soldiers and officers alike. In fact, I believe we are so well advanced in our thinking, direction and training intent, that we were hindered in our



progression while our direction is discussed and debated at higher levels. I strongly believe our approach to motorisation will be successful and will become a test model for other Battalions going forward.

One area that I am continuously amazed by is the amount of diverse opportunities there are for our soldiers. At any one time, the battalion could have members on deployments, military courses, training support requests, training in foreign countries, ceremonial activities, sporting events, and the list goes on. Soldiers are only limited by their availability.

However, the commitment and contribution of many of our soldiers need to be acknowledged.



I want to thank you all for the efforts you have put in in the last few years. This extends to your family who have also been affected by the Battalion's training commitments. We cannot do what we do without the support of our family. I can assure you that your efforts do not go unrecognised and are greatly appreciated.

To all the Old's and Bolds and Associations, thank you for your support and encouragement you have given to the unit throughout recent years. Our continued connection with you enables the new generation of soldiers understand the proud history of the Battalion and what it means to be "Country Victoria's Own".





Unfortunately, none of us can stay in the Battalion forever. As I leave the Regiment for the last time, I look back and reminisce on what makes the Regiment such an enjoyable destination. My answer is simply the people, both serving and retired. The people are very humble, honest, hardworking members of society who understand the importance of service, courage, respect, integrity and excellence. They are very proud to wear the uniform and are always unpretentious of their service.

For those posting at the end of year, I wish you all the best in your new units. I hope you have

enjoyed your time in the Battalion, and hope to hear of your return in the near future. For those leaving Army, I wish you all the best in the next stage of your life. Please stay connected and don't be strangers. Lastly, for all those soldiers remaining in the Battalion, enjoy your Christmas break, refresh, and be ready for another great year of soldiering. The future is very bright and a great time to be a soldier in 8/7 RVR.

Good Soldering

RSM



BHQ - S3 Operations

MAJ Adam Runciman, Operations Officer

To the members of the 8/7 RVR community, the Battalion has once again punched above its weight in 2024 and only looking back on the year do we realise the tempo that was achieved along multiple lines of effort. I was fortunate enough to be posted into a well-run unit with all members of the command group and Operations teams into their second or third year at the unit. The direction of the unit under LTCOL Sonogan was clear and his resolve for building warfighting capability including leading the Battalion through the transition of a light infantry battalion to a motorised infantry battalion and working through the stages of certification as a motorised unit.

Members of the unit were recalled from leave on 08 January 2024, as we responded to a request from emergency services in Bendigo to support a local flooding event. 11 local Army Reserve members deployed to assist in preparing positions (sandbagging etc.) to protect critical infrastructure. This deployment demonstrated the range of tasks that members could be asked to do, whilst training for warfighting. All the members that deployed were local and well known inside their community. It demonstrated the power of local Reserve members and it was obvious that the community appreciated the ADF being present and walked a little taller. The last task saw a 100-year-old historic homestead mansion at Prairie Park, Mitiamo saved due to preventative sandbagging by the ADF crew.

The weekend activities for 2024 were planned and executed superbly by the Company OCs; this allowed the Operations teams to focus on business as usual activities. The focus of

all weekends were tasks within the foundation war fighter spectrum. These training events built the skills of our soldiers which were tested during the RVR War Fighter, a 9-day exercise at Puckapunyal in November 2024.

During 2024, the Operations Cell deployed twice as part of the Battalion Headquarters to participate in a training activity as well as in support of Land Forces 2024. Firstly, the Operations Cell deployed to the Brigade led Exercise ARRAS Sprint in May 2024. This exercise had the Operations Cell being tasked by the JTG629.2 HQ (4BDE) and executing tasks with 3 x OCs inside the Army Battle Simulation Labs. This activity enabled the Battalion Headquarter staff to execute tasks whilst improving Standard Operating Procedures and information flow. The plans and tasks were executed through simulation allowing for post H Hour assessment of said plans and assess the ability to move information to Command and key stakeholders in a timely manner. The Army Battle Simulation Lab located at Puckapunyal is a resource that Reserve Units have access to but rarely use. As 8/7 RVR is tasked to take a Battle Group from 4BDE to Talisman Sabre in 2025 further training using the Battle Lab would be highly beneficial.

The second task for 2024 which required the Operations Cell to deploy in its entirety was supporting the Land Force and Chief of Army Symposium at Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre in September 2024. A Task Unit (Hawk) was created with support from the 2nd Division reserve units across Victoria led by LTCOL Sonogan and his staff from

8/7RVR. The Task Unit was assigned to Chief of Staff Australian Army and executed from Army International Engagement plans. The task involved supporting Chief of Army equivalents from 28 nations plus their entourages which could be up to 20 people. The conference displayed future army technology plus enabled bi-lateral meetings between Senior Officers. There were four x 4 Star American Generals including Chief of Staff US Army and the Commander Indo-Pacific. Other Nations include Jordan, Syria, Iraq, India, Pakistan, South Korea, Japan, Malaysia and all our Pacific Island partners. This real time task was high tempo and evolving given the threat posed by the protestors to this activity. The unit gain by exposure to such a strategic event with coalition partners. The event was successful and all members who participated should be proud given the kudos from the Chief of Army to 8/7 RVR for executing the task.

Overall, the Battalion delivered 2 x initial employment training courses, 4 x Drivers, 2 x 9 day Warfighter, 1 x Platoon of Enemy to support 13 BDE (Ex Austral Shield in WA), 2 x Enhanced Combat Shooting Courses plus BCCC and SCCC courses. We also sent soldiers on Basic Recon and Sniper courses. From January to end October 2024, the unit had 1059 pers complete and pass courses which totalled 7601 working days! These statistics are 50% higher than the last two years and do not include attendance on Collective Training Events thus the early comments regarding tempo of the Battalion. The 2 x Enhanced Combat Shooting Courses were delivered with passion from our outstanding Operations Warrant Officer (OPSWO) WO2 Geoff Short who not only was the Course Manager for the courses whilst managing the OPSWO duties, but he was also able to integrate with 1SECFOR (RAAF) which allowed for each student to fire 500 rounds of 9mm each thus improving the lethality of the Battalion. Without WO2 Short's personal relationships/passion for training this outcome would not have been achieved. Bravo Zulu Geoff!

As I now leave 8/7 RVR and back to our sister Battalion 5/6 RVR I wish to say thank you to members of this Battalion. It has been an honour to work with you all and be part of a Battalion with such a magnificent history and esprit de corps. I thank you all and in particular my Operations team of WO2 Geoff Short, SGT David Logan and CPL Shaun Brown for their support and hard work. Their work is often unseen, thankless but they keep the unit moving in the right direction with the Battalion in great hands for 2025. I would also like to thank the Command Team lead by the CO LTCOL Derek Sonogan, the RSM WO1 Matthew Vermey, the Bn 2IC MAJ Matt Ford, the ADJT LT Jimmy Clarke and the Orderly Room. I would also like to make a special mention to WO2 Dale Hannaford and CPL Peng 'Penguin' Wang whose tenacity in the orderly room ensured the administration of the unit and especially members pay was in great hands.

The OPS Team wishes you all a safe, happy and well deserved break over Christmas and with MAJ Leigh Brown as the new OPSO and Geoff, Dave and Shaun backing it up for next year.

BHQ – Padre

CAPT Mohit Sampson (Chaplain)

Reflections of a Chaplain on AUSTRAHIND 24: Embracing Brotherhood Beyond Borders

The third edition of the AustraHind joint military exercise, hosted this year in the vibrant state of Maharashtra, City of Pune, has been a true testament to the deepening ties between the Indian and Australian armed forces. The exercise, running from 8 – 21 November 2024, has brought together 140 personnel from the Indian Army's esteemed 9th Dogra Regiment and Indian Air Force, along with 120 soldiers from Australia's 13th Brigade led by the 10th Light Horse Regiment. Working as a chaplain and translator during this exercise has been a profoundly enriching experience, filled with insights, cultural exchanges, and spiritual opportunities. Through combat drills, tactical coordination, sports, and shared stories, we have built a bridge of camaraderie that transcends military objectives.

1. A Foundation of Faith and Friendship

Serving as a chaplain, I've observed how faith and spirituality create common ground in surprising ways. Chaplaincy itself is something of a novel concept for the Indian Army, and explaining my role was part of the initial cultural exchange. The Indian soldiers were intrigued by the idea of spiritual support as part of their daily lives in the field. For me, offering a listening ear, prayer, or reflection has been a beautiful way to serve these men and women.

The Indian soldiers, predominantly from Hindu, Sikh, and Muslim backgrounds, bring their own diverse spiritual practices into our conversations. Together, we've discussed the



many paths that bring people closer to inner peace and resilience. I shared how Jesus said, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends" (John 15:13). This resonates deeply in a military setting, where camaraderie and self-sacrifice are central values. In the face of life-threatening situations, this verse speaks to the universal calling of a soldier's duty — to serve and protect, even at great personal risk.

2. Training Together, Growing Together

The first part of the exercise focused on combat conditioning, tactical training, and response to crisis scenarios, simulating terrorist actions and joint counter-terrorism missions. The shared drill sessions have demanded high levels of physical fitness and mental resilience, yet the collective spirit made these demanding

days more manageable. As soldiers, physical endurance is our shared language, and we pushed each other beyond limits, learning each other's methods for resilience and strength.

Setting up the Joint Operations Centre was a complex operation, requiring seamless communication and trust. The Indian and Australian troops have worked side by side, sharing tactical knowledge and discussing new methods to secure perimeters and conduct raids. As a chaplain, witnessing the mutual respect that developed between the soldiers was deeply encouraging. This kind of integration showcases the embodiment of Proverbs 27:17: "As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another."

3. Sporting Encounters: Cricket, AFL, and Cross-Cultural Camaraderie

The moments of downtime have been just as valuable as the combat drills. We've shared afternoons under the warm sun of Maharashtra, with Indian and Australian soldiers bonding over sports and laughter. Cricket, naturally, was a source of great pride and joy for the Indian soldiers, and they displayed impressive skills on their home turf. Despite my best efforts on the field, the Australian team, including myself, found ourselves "outplayed." We couldn't help but marvel at the seamless way the Indian players handled the game.

In return, we introduced the Indians to Australian Rules Football (AFL), which led to some hilariously awkward yet enjoyable learning moments. Teaching the game's basics

provided a glimpse into our unique Australian sports culture, and seeing the Indian soldiers approach it with enthusiasm and curiosity, created a new shared interest.

4. Excursions and Cultural Enrichment: Discovering India Together

One of the highlights of our time here was a visit to the historic Sinhagad Fort, where Indian soldiers served as our guides, sharing stories of valiant battles and historical pride. This tour turned into an immersive history lesson, unveiling the significance of the forts in protecting the region centuries ago. The sense of pride they have in their heritage was contagious, and it reminded us of the importance of cultural preservation and identity.

We have also enjoyed incredible meals that have given us a taste of India's culinary diversity — spicy curries, aromatic biryanis, and delicious sweets like Gulab Jamun. Our hosts went out of their way to ensure we were well-fed and looked after, demonstrating their warm hospitality. Food has been more than sustenance; it's been a means to bond and understand the cultural roots of the Indian soldiers. I often reflected on Psalm 133:1: "How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity."

5. Sharing Values and Growing in Faith

Beyond the drills, sports, and cultural tours, I've found myself in meaningful conversations with Indian soldiers about the nature of duty, faith, and resilience. For many of them, spirituality is not confined to a time or place; it's an integrated part of their lives, expressed



in ritual, prayer, or moments of quiet reflection. Some have asked about Christian beliefs, particularly about hope in hardship, and I've shared that our strength comes from trusting in a higher purpose.

In one conversation, an Indian soldier shared a moving story of his own family's faith in God during tough times, and I was reminded of the verse, "The Lord is close to the broken hearted and saves those who are crushed in spirit" (Psalm 34:18). This exercise has given us the chance to see each other's humanity, not just as soldiers but as people of faith, strength, and hope.

Conclusion: A Lasting Brotherhood

Exercise AustraHind 24 has not only achieved its objective of enhancing military cooperation and interoperability, but it has also fostered a deep sense of brotherhood. We came together as representatives of different nations, with different languages, cultures, and spiritual practices, yet we part ways as friends. Each soldier here carries memories of the field exercises, the laughter over cricket matches, the taste of thali, and the stories shared around a campfire under the Indian stars.

As we leave this chapter of AustraHind behind, I feel hopeful that these bonds will carry forward. Just as Paul wrote in Philippians 1:3, "I thank my God every time I remember you." This experience has reminded us that even as soldiers on different continents, we are united by a shared purpose — to protect, serve, and build peace. We go forward not only as allies but as friends who will stand by each other in times of need, united by the values that define us and strengthened by the friendships we have forged.

BHQ - S1 Personnel

LCPL Mischelle Star



Streamlining S1 Clerk Training within 4 BDE

As new era of efficiency and readiness in today's fast-paced military environment is upon us, the ability to adapt and respond effectively to evolving challenges is paramount. In recognising this need, the 8/7 RVR's Chief Clerk WO2 Dale Hannaford and his dedicated team have spearheaded a transformative approach to S1 Clerk training within the 4th Brigade (4 BDE).

This initiative has focused on creating a comprehensive and streamlined training that equips clerks with the essential skills needed for both data administration and field operations. The Chief Clerk has emphasised the importance of a well-rounded training mindset that encompasses both theoretical knowledge and practical application. The training integrates critical components of data administration, tracking, and hands-on experience in the field.

Lead by 8/7 RVR, Clerks across 4 BDE are being taught how to be more proficient in

managing Command Post tents, controlling radio communications, and utilising advanced battle tracking systems during movements on training weekends and exercises. The training has been designed to ensure that every clerk in 4 BDE has the opportunity and understands their role in the broader operational context. This includes not only the administrative tasks that keep units running smoothly but also the critical field operations that are essential during deployments and exercises.

Development of the Readiness Dashboard by 8/7 RVR has been one of the standout innovations from this initiative and is the development of a centralised readiness dashboard for all units to create for themselves. This tool provides a real-time summary of each unit's status, allowing for improved situational awareness and coordination across the brigade. The dashboard serves as a vital resource for tracking readiness levels and ensuring that all clerks are on the same page when it comes to operational requirements.

The implementation of standardised trackers means that every unit within 4 BDE has the opportunity in utilising the same processes for attendance tracking and readiness assessments. This uniformity not only enhances communication but also fosters a culture of accountability and preparedness.

The integration of these tools has proven invaluable, especially during 4 BDE run Exercises and Operations, such as those conducted at the Division level, where collaboration is crucial in response to emergencies like OP FLOOD ASSIST, OP COVID-19 and OP Bushfire Assist.

The culmination of this training and preparation was evident during the recent Chief of Army Symposium, a significant event that required the clerical team to operate around the clock. The clerks rose to the occasion, demonstrating their newfound skills and dedication. Their ability to meet the demanding requirements of the symposium showcased the effectiveness of the training program and the readiness of 8/7 RVR clerks to handle any task presented to them. As the team worked tirelessly behind the scenes with Operations Cell to ensure the success of the event, it became clear that the investment in training and development within the unit is crucial.

The clerks not only met the immediate demands of the symposium but also laid the groundwork for fellow clerks and future operational readiness. Their seamless coordination, attention to detail, and capability to adapt to changing scenarios were testaments to the quality of training they receive.



The journey does not end with the successful execution of significant events. The Chief Clerk and his team are committed to fostering a culture of continuous improvement within 4 BDE.

Feedback from clerks is actively sought after and incorporated into training programs, ensuring that the curriculum evolves based on real-world experiences and challenges faced in the field. Regular meetings, simulations within training weekend exercises are scheduled to reinforce skills and introduce new technologies and methodologies. This approach not only enhances individual competencies but also strengthens the overall effectiveness of the brigade.

As we look to the future, the ongoing training initiatives for S1 Clerks in 8/7 RVR and 4 BDE are poised to adapt to emerging challenges. The military landscape is constantly changing, and so too must the strategies for preparing clerks for their vital roles. With the foundation laid by the Chief Clerk and his team 8/7 RVR is well-positioned to respond to any operational requirement with confidence and skill.

In summary, the comprehensive training program for S1 Clerks, marked by its focus on data administration, field operations, and the development of innovative tools like the readiness dashboard, is setting a new standard. As we continue to build on this success, the clerks of 8/7 RVR are not just prepared for today's challenges but are also equipped to tackle the uncertainties of tomorrow, ensuring that they remain an invaluable asset to the Army.



Alpha Company

MAJ Francis Dignam



The theme for Alpha Company (A Coy) in 2024 was 'readiness at all ranks'. We have achieved this and more.

A Coy welcomed the establishment of the Army Initial Foundation Training Continuum which saw soldiers march into the company directly from Kapooka and under the direction of A Coy newly established training platoon. Training platoon has allowed for JNCOs to lead and mentor new soldiers during the formative months of their part-time career, setting them up for success on their respective courses. The cessation of the Regional Induction Company and shift to this new approach of inducting new soldiers has seen a dramatic increase in esprit de corps within each of the respective Platoons, with the immediate development of identity and connection for those joining the A Coy. A special mention goes to CPL Gallagher and LCPL Convey in developing the foundations for the training platoon and later to LT Durso for scaling the model across the three A Coy locations.

To support an increased focus towards recruitment, A Coy re-established the Coy Headquarters at Newlands Barracks, Geelong. This shift not only increased the standing of the Coy within the Geelong community, it also provided the opportunity to co-locate the newly raised Support Company with 2 Platoon at RAAF Williams Laverton.

To support the recruitment efforts of A Coy, A Coy hosted what has become an annual community engagement day at Newlands Barracks, opening the gates to friends, families and the Greater Geelong community. With the support of 4CSSB and Defence Force Recruiting, we hosted an interactive event that captured the 'day in the life of an infantry soldier and supporting elements'. The opportunity to interact with different vehicle platforms and equipment was engaging for all, and provided an opportunity for soldiers to share their unique experiences with friends and loved ones.



Other community engagement activities that A Coy participated in include; leading the annual Geelong ANZAC Day march and respective catafalque parties, to engagement with the RSL formal dinners and during the 'Thank You For Your Service' Day. Our support to Task Unit HAWK and the Defence Symposium was another opportunity for positive community engagement and support to wider ADF.

Within the Battalion, A Coy focused training towards conventional war fighting in a field environment, enabled A Coy to further prepare in the setting of 'uncertainty' across the globe, in environmental, political and social domains. Our involvement in Ex ARRAS SPRINT provided the opportunity for the Coy HQ to work within a simulated Combat Team environment, and for A Coy soldiers to consolidate foundation war fighting skills within a Combat Team. Further consolidation of skills occurred on the annual Battalion WARFIGHTER, as a large contingent of A COY completed tactical exercises mounted in PMVs, fully integrated with flanking units.

A Coy led the Enemy Party contingent to Ex AUSTRAL SHIELD 24 and provided soldiers with an understanding of airfield defence and vital asset protection through the lens of an opposing force. Wearing the 'red hat' provided junior leaders the opportunity to test and target blue force training, tactics and procedures. The lessons learnt have been brought back to the respective platoons and informed standard operating procedures development, adding immense value in A Coy understanding of how an opposing force could operate in such an environment.



SGT Groth provided countless sessions of Army Combative Program training across the three Coy locations, and soldiers have improved their skills and techniques in unarmed combat. The 'Less Than Lethal' range at Warrnambool Depot is an ideal location for this, with the further capability to support Blue Bolt training system.

A Coy had a number of people support operations and deployments, from Transit Security Element to Rifle Company Butterworth. This provided an opportunity for secondments within A Coy and a special mention to SGT Krupa who undertook that Company Sergeant Major position for a large part of the year. A number of A Coy soldiers were recognised for their ongoing service and contributions, including LCPL Balshaw being presented his Defence Long Service medal by the Brigade Commander, as well as CPL Champion who received a Commander's Coin in recognition for his leadership within A Coy. The issue of National Emergency Medals recognising service in Queensland floods and Victorian Bushfires were also awarded.

Alpha Company finishes the year in a strong position; we have all continued to develop and consolidate our professional mastery, we have maintained readiness, and established and maintained connection with each other. My time as OC comes to an end this year, and it has been a privilege to command Alpha Company, I would like to thank the command team for their support to myself over the past two years, and to the soldiers of A Coy for continuing to uphold the values and traditions of the Australian Army.

Bravo Company

CAPT Henry Vong

A Year in Reflection: Bravo Company, 8/7 RVR

As 2IC of Bravo Company, 8/7 Royal Victoria Regiment, I look back on this past year with a mix of pride, respect, and anticipation for what lies ahead. It's been a year marked by change and transition, as we've seen some of our most senior and experienced soldiers move on to new roles within Support Company or receive promotions that recognize their exceptional service. This shift has left a noticeable gap in experience within our ranks, but it has also brought about an exciting opportunity for Bravo Company to rebuild with a fresh perspective and renewed energy.

Bravo Company's seasoned NCOs and leaders have always been the backbone, their dedication and skill setting an example for everyone in our unit. Their moves to Support Company or to higher ranks are well-deserved steps that allow them to bring their experience to the broader Regiment and wider Brigade, but their absence has been felt deeply among the team. Their leadership has been crucial in shaping Bravo Company's operational success, culture, and commitment to excellence.

Bravo Company has welcomed a new cohort of young, motivated soldiers ready to carry the torch forward. This next generation is bringing fresh ideas, a strong work ethic, and a fierce dedication to learning and improving. They have embraced the mentorship and guidance of remaining senior members, absorbing every lesson and training opportunity with enthusiasm and determination.

Rebuilding a team isn't a simple task, but these soldiers have taken it on with an impressive sense of duty and optimism. Their eagerness to establish themselves as the new leaders and to carry forward the Bravo Company legacy. This year, we have focused on upskilling, team building, and fostering an environment where this new generation can thrive and build strong, lasting bonds.

Reflecting on this year, I'm filled with gratitude for the efforts of every soldier in Bravo Company, both past and present. It's been a year of change and growth, and while we've had to say goodbye to some exceptional soldiers, the future they've helped build—and the one the next generation will continue. Together, they are shaping a new chapter for Bravo Company, one that honours the past and sets the stage for an even more successful future.

Charlie Company

MAJ Robert Powell

As we reflect on the past year, we see the significant effort from all of the soldiers of Charlie Company. With the significant change of focus for the battalion our soldiers have demonstrated remarkable adaptability in meeting new demands.

Throughout this period, we've achieved substantial training milestones, collective training has progressed through the year and will lead to Exercise Talisman Sabre in 2025, building the capability for the Unit and the Division. This year has also seen members of the Company successfully completing the training to be posted to the newly raised Support Platoon, although these soldiers will be missed by the Company the capability they provide the unit will vital to our future. Soldiers at each of the depots have continued to work closely with these soldiers and gained skills and knowledge they have picked up on their various courses. Charlie Company has seen significant effort placed in our motorisation with soldiers completing both the PMC Driver and Crew Commander courses.

After 4 years away from the battalion I was relieved to see that the commitment of the Charlie Company soldiers has not waived, with impressive attendance at both Austral Shield and the annual Warfighter exercise. A key focus of the barracks and field training has been cultivating a culture of readiness. I am proud of the culture that the soldiers have developed across all depots in western Victoria to be ready for current and future challenges. By emphasising continuous improvement and preparedness, we are equipping our personnel to meet the demands of their roles effectively.



As we reflect on the recent accomplishments of C Company, 8/7 RVR it's important to highlight the dedication and resilience of our soldiers.

2024 has also seen a significant amount of effort in visibility and recruiting in the western Victoria region. Each of the 6 Charlie Company depot locations has hosted multiple community engagement activities including "A Night In The Army Reserves" and Reserve experience day supported by both Defence Force Recruiting and the Defence Work Experience Program. The program has seen hundreds of potential recruits gain knowledge about life in the Army Reserves and wider Australian Defence Force. Engaging with the community has also been seen at a more local level, with soldiers participating in Park Run, running in AMCU or using the Park Run as Battle PT, this simple activity has helped to highlight that our soldiers



are part of the community and has seen interest from civilians increasing throughout the year.

Towards the end of 2024 Charlie Company received two fresh Lieutenants to the ranks, this influx of new officers means that the Company has a full cohort of Officers for the first time in living memory. Along with the Junior NCO's completing sergeants courses the Company has established strong foundations for future growth and performance.

Looking ahead to 2025, I am excited about the opportunities that await us. The major activity of 2025 will be deploying on Exercise Talisman Sabre, this major collective training opportunity will be a fantastic opportunity for the soldiers to push themselves and demonstrate the skills that have been developing through individual and collective training.



Support Company

MAJ Anton Glushko



As the year draws to a close, it's time to reflect on the remarkable progress made by our members of the newly established Support Company.

This year has been a period of firsts, unprecedented growth, capability advancements and operational contributions. From establishing a new home in RAAF Base Williams – Laverton, to reaching new training milestones and supporting operations, we have strengthened our specialist capabilities and built a foundation for the future. The significant investment which was made in capability development by completing specialist training courses went a long way in furthering careers and bringing back invaluable knowledge that will continue to benefit our entire organisation.

Building a Stronger Foundation: Raising of Support Company

Symbolic of our unit's strategic importance within the broader Defence landscape, one of

the most significant structural milestones of the year has been the successful establishment of Support Company. The culmination of planning, collaboration and teamwork from Battalion Headquarters down to individual soldiers resulted in the creation of a symbol representative of our unit's growing capabilities and strategic importance within the 2nd Australian Division and for Army's Land Combat Capability Review (LCCR) implementation.

As a direct result of several years of ongoing commitment to upskill members across the Battalion in contemporary and specialist capabilities, the establishment of Support Company saw the Battalion structurally align closer to the Royal Australian Regiment (RAR). The establishment of Support Company brought together some of the more senior members of the Battalion with specialist skills ranging across Reconnaissance, Sniper and Signals capabilities under a single and separate Company structure.

Directly assisted by Alpha Company with the handover, the facility has continued to be disproportionately effective in supporting operations and activities such as being the mounting location for the Land Forces 24 Task Unit and serving as a training ground for developing specialist capabilities.

Capability Development: Force Generation and Training Milestones

This year, our commitment to specialist capability development was demonstrated by an array of Army firsts through individual accomplishments and collective performance

seeing significant growth in reconnaissance, sniper and signals capabilities.

Our training this year focused on several key areas that allowed our personnel to practice their skills under challenging, real-world conditions. These operations and activities helped sharpen our team's ability to perform under pressure and to seamlessly integrate with other units, ensuring that we are ready for any situation, whether in a training support role or deployed in an operational environment.

Fresh from being certified as operationally capable in 2023, our reconnaissance capability



saw ongoing development and maturation of Patrolmen and Patrol Commanders through the completion of numerous arduous courses and training activities throughout the year. Thanks to tireless efforts from our Reconnaissance members we find ourselves as ahead of schedule to meet ongoing LCCR implementation requirements and postured for further certifications.

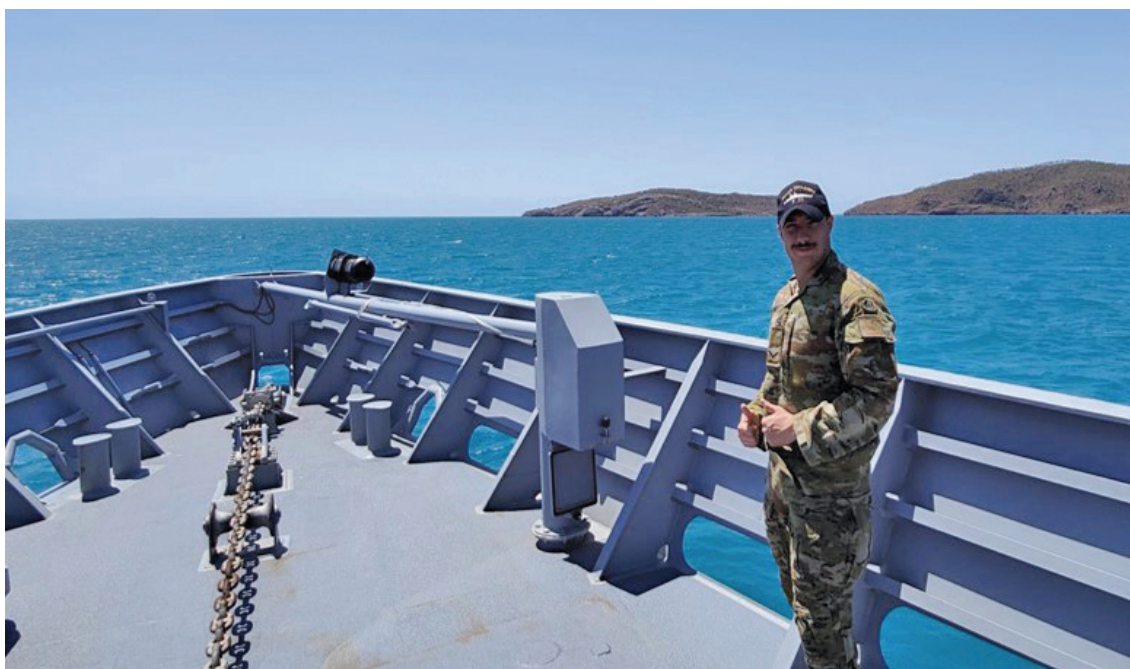
Following on from unprecedented success in the attainment of the Australian Regular Army (ARA) sniper qualification in 2023, the remarkable form has continued seeing a second home grown Sniper and the first home grown Sniper Team Leader qualify this year. This progress was a direct representation of the potential our members have to breaking the glass ceiling within the 2nd Australian Division for capability development.

Keeping true to form as the Signals capability leaders within the 2nd Australian Division, our skills and depth of experience has continued to improve in 2024. The year saw our team supporting the full suite of training requirements through running an array of advanced communication courses for local and regional units, whilst seamlessly supporting every tactical activity and operation of the Battalion.

Operational Focus: Rising to Every Challenge

There is no better test for the seemingly endless training and capability development we undertake than to do it for real. The ultimate purpose of why our team dedicate and sacrifice their time and energy is to be ready to support, augment and provide specialist capabilities with disproportionately impactful contributions. Based on a year of noteworthy individual and collective capability development, 2024 has seen the delivery of exemplary contributions to Army no-fail tasks and to broader Defence operational requirements through supporting notable operations and activities like Operation Resolute, Land Forces 24 and the Exercise Arras series.

This year demonstrated that the diverse operations and activities we supported provided invaluable learning experiences and developed our members through exposure to live operations and managing operational risk. Benefiting from ongoing and contemporary exposure to operational planning, execution and risk management not routinely available during routine training, we find ourselves increasingly prepared for contingencies that may arise in the future.





During these operations and activities, our members consistently demonstrated the highest levels of discipline, professionalism and dedication. The skills and knowledge gained from these events have further enhanced our unit's overall capabilities and have prepared us for even greater challenges in the future. Through exemplary levels of readiness, our ability to support a wide ranging suite of tasks and deploy efficiently emerged as one of our key strengths.

Looking to the Future: Continued Growth and Optimism

As we reflect on all that we've achieved this year, there is a deep sense of pride in how far we've come. From raising a new Company, establishing a new home, developing individual and collective capabilities and successfully supporting operations and activities, we have built a foundation that will continue to support our growth and success in the years to come.

Looking ahead, there are numerous opportunities on the horizon. We will seek to champion continued investment in equipment and modernise our processes to better remain aligned to our RAR peers. Our commitment to



training and capability development will remain strong, ensuring that our personnel have the skills they need to thrive in an increasingly complex operational and training environment.

In closing, this year has been one of significant achievement, growth and progress. Our Company is stronger than ever, and we are poised for even greater success in the future. We look forward to continuing our task, supporting others with disproportionately impactful specialist effects, and through discipline helping to ensure the success of every task we are a part of.

Sig Platoon

CAPT Tyler Pederson-Hor, Regimental Signals



Signals Platoon – The Year in Review

No comms, no bombs. 8/7 RVR Signals Platoon continues to tirelessly work to provide the support, training and operational expertise to enable the battalion's training and exercises, as well as support the needs within the wider brigade. This year saw a high tempo of exercises, courses and support requirements as 8/7 RVR moves further along the path to motorisation, of which communications remains a crucial effect to achieve effective command and control. We found a new home within the newly established Support Company, enabling us to deepen our relationship and

cross training with the other specialist functions in the battalion such as reconnaissance and snipers, as well as directly support 2nd Division capability through the implementation of directives related to the LCCR (Land Combat Capability Review). We also welcomed new members into the platoon as a direct result of training and recruitment initiatives, and are well positioned to grow to support the expanding needs of the battalion.

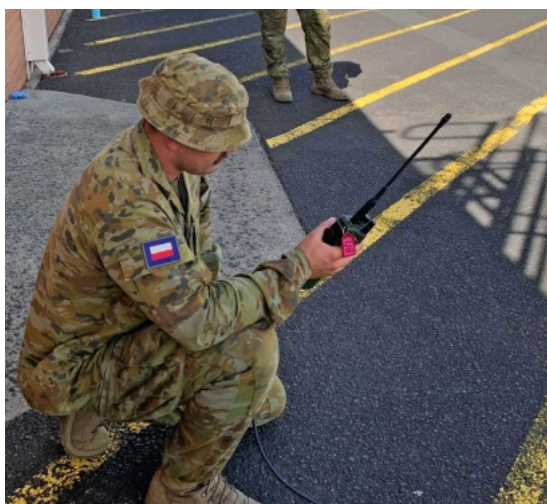
Throughout the year, we have provided support to enable the safe and effective training that occurs during the weekend exercises

conducted by the companies within 8/7 RVR. We have also conducted wider training within the battalion and brigade, running basic and specialist combat communications courses which enable the continued growth of the regimental signals function which is required more than ever now. We have supported 8/7 RVR motorisation and PMV courses, as well as Infantry Initial Employment Training, ensuring that the battalion produces riflemen across the brigade and continues to produce a highly trained force. We have also additionally provided support to the basic reconnaissance course, as well as sending signallers on exchange to NORFORCE on OP RESOLUTE, achieving higher level divisional effects and providing direct support to Australian operations.

In addition, the many engagements that 4 Brigade held this year was ably supported by 8/7 RVR Signals Platoon. Communications support was provided directly to the conduct of the Land Forces and Chief of Army Symposium, including watch keeping and battle tracking on a stage that was achieving strategic objectives for international and industry engagement which is critical to maintaining Australia's defence posture. EX ABEL DIEMEN, the main brigade exercise this year, was also supported through enabling of opposing force role-players, support to exercise control as well as staff planning support directly to Brigade through

the establishment of an S6 cell. Multiple scenarios were planned and exercised in the context of the new role of the 2nd Division of homeland security, as well as the potential requirement for DACC (Defence Aid to the Civil Community), in a number of contingent security and disaster environments that presented complex challenges for maintaining secure communications, given the evolving cyber and electronic warfare landscape. All of this training ensures that 8/7 RVR Signals Platoon is well prepared to operate in complex, dynamic theatres and remains one of the premier regimental signals elements within the brigade.

A sincere thanks to the Regimental Signals Sergeant, CPL Ammar Hujdurovic, Platoon Sergeant CPL Lawrence Gatt, and all NCOs and signallers that make up the platoon. Your dedication, drive and professionalism continue to amaze me every day we work together, and the platoon would not be in the good position it is now without the hard work you have put in. Also my thanks go to CAPT Henry Vong and MAJ Steve Frimston from the Signal Sqn for establishing strong foundations and a culture of excellence as the previous Regimental Signals Officers, your guidance has been invaluable. I finally congratulate LCPL Angelo Rodriguez who was recently promoted this year for his exemplary performance. Looking forward to the years ahead and excited to see what the platoon achieves.





8th/7th Battalion The Royal Victoria Regiment Training Continuum

High Explosive Training at Puckapunyal Range 14-16 June 2024

CAPT Charles Wright

In the waiting bays of the DFSW Range of Puckapunyal Military Area, amidst biting cold and relentless winds, soldiers from across the Battalion gathered for the annual high explosive range practice. The day's objectives were to qualify soldiers on critical skills of high explosive weapons systems including 84mm Karl Gustov, 66mm M72A6 Light Anti-Armour Weapon, 40mm Grenade Launcher and M18A1 Claymore Shock Tube.

The high explosive ranges, led by Bravo Company, saw 50 soldiers achieve qualification in the handling and deployment of 84mm, 30 soldiers successfully completed training on 40mm grenade launcher usage and 13 soldiers qualifying in 66mm LAW. Additionally, 15 soldiers attained proficiency in the employment of claymore with shock tube, with an astounding 13 of the 15 soldiers firing the claymore live.

As temperatures plummeted, the camaraderie amongst soldiers remained warm, as the sounds of explosions echoed in across the range. Despite the daunting cold that blanketed Puckapunyal Range, the qualifications were executed safely and efficiently. The high number of qualifications achieved and quality of training underscored the commitment of our soldiers to continual development in infantry weapons systems and operational readiness.

Concurrent to the high explosive training Charlie Company delivered soldier development training in Section Attacks, Tactical First Aid and platoon level tactical planning.

Section-level attacks were simulated under the watchful eyes of section commanders and the CSM Charlie Company. This training saw junior NCO's led soldiers through a rolling practice of patrolling, covering fire techniques, and manoeuvring sections in the field.

Throughout Sunday soldiers shifted concurrent training focus to first aid training, an integral component of the modern soldiers required skills. From basic wound management to advanced trauma care and the use of a defibrillator, every soldier revised stabilising and treating casualties swiftly and effectively. The training honed the soldiers' technical proficiency and reinforced the process of recording and reporting casualties. Throughout Sunday the training included tactical planning and quick decision-making exercises for Corporals, Sergeants and Lieutenants. Focused on Platoon operations in the field, the soldiers were challenged to analyse realistic scenarios, formulate rapid response strategies, and deliver a concept of operations for motorized platoon operations. These simulations fostered critical thinking and leadership skills, preparing the Junior Non-Commissioned Officers and Junior Officers to lead with confidence in unpredictable situations.

The high explosive and soldier development training has strengthened individual soldier

capabilities and helped build the Battalion's operational effectiveness. The training conducted was more than just honing skills; it has continued to cultivate a mindset of readiness and adaptability within the Battalion. Each exercise and simulation served to reinforce the core principles of military proficiency: discipline, teamwork, and resilience.



Rifle Company Butterworth

SGT Glen Reid



During another busy training year 8/7 RVR once again had members deploy to Butterworth Malaysia as part of Rifle Company Butterworth 142 (RCB 142).

Rifle Company Butterworth is an outstanding opportunity for the current serving members of the Battalion to deploy overseas as part of an Infantry Rifle Company and enjoy a unique but challenging and rewarding experience to build on individual section Platoon and Company War fighting foundations skills required to be an effective efficient Infantryman within today's and future operational possibilities as an Australian Soldier.

RCB 142 Deployed to Malaysia over the period of late November 2023 to early March 2024, This deployment gave the 8/7 RVR members a very diverse training experience individually and collectively due to the manning requirements of members available and there fantastic commitment over the deployment duration being away from loved ones and family over the Christmas period. RCB 142 was very unique in the fact that the Rifle Company was made up of members from across 2 Div and 4 Bde from thirty different sub units form across



Australia with a great mixture of SERCAT 7 - SERCAT 5 arms corps members in the Platoons with varied employment knowledge experience within Army predominately Infantry but also Artillery, Cavalry and Engineers.

The Deployment started with the coming together of the Company under the direction of the mounting Unit being 13 Bde in WA, this is where the pre-deployment and RSO&I was conducted at Irwin Barracks in Perth. During this period we conducted Class room lectures deployment briefs medicals, equipment issues confirmed Platoon and Company manning positions started networking and getting to know each other as a deployment force.

Training also conducted in preparation for deployment included AIRN completion if required daily PT for acclimatisation due to an average of 30 – 40 degree day's individual weapon training WTSS shooting before attending Bindoon training area for a week of live fire activities. At Bindoon training area RCB 142 conducted Rifle, pistol and machine gun combat shooting activities, sneaker ranges a section defence range and night shooting activities. On return to Irwin Barracks great

training continued with Tactical Care of Combat Casualty been conducted for all to re-qualify or refresh on skills as required. In the last weeks before departure training focussed on section and Platoon SOP's for the jungle environment this was conducted around the Barracks and with the help of CTC Jungle Training Wing Tully providing Instructors guidance and lessons to set us up for success which culminated with Section and Platoon level quick and deliberate blank fire attacks. During the pre-deployment training the Company had a great opportunity after hours and weekends when not training to explore the City and surrounds of Perth to unwind and relax at numerous establishments and fantastic beaches to cool off to have some relief from the weather. 13 Bde hosted a family and employer invitational attended function enjoyed by all prior to departure for Malaysia.

On arrival at Royal Malaysian Air Force Base Butterworth courtesy of RAAF C17 RCB 142 we hit the ground running and continued to maintain tempo with a chance for a HOTO and listen to past lived experiences from outgoing RCB 141 members from 5 RAR. The Barracks accommodation was occupied and has recently gone through significant upgrades which was well appreciated from all, cultural immersion training was conducted with lectures and language training and a Platoon day trip to Penang Island to visit local cultural and historical sites.

Jungle Training Wing provided four mentors in support of RCB 142's Ex Jungle Genesis series from 04-21 December 2023. This Jungle Operational training saw members of RCB 142 train from individual to Section/Platoon level, and ultimately Company-level over three weeks in the dense secondary Jungle of Sik National Park, Malaysia. Jungle Training Wing provides a strong emphasis on coaching junior leaders at the Section / Platoon level. This enables junior leaders to train their own teams building a culture of continual Leadership learning conducting foundational war fighting tactics.



CT Deliberate Attack

EX Jungle Genesis culminated in a Combat Team Deliberate Attack. On receiving their Warning Orders the CT began their battle prep, as well as, recon of SBF and FUP locations. CT orders confirmed the dawn attack, 1PL and 2PL forming a two up assaulting force, supported to the left flank by 3PL's SBF gun line.

RCB 142 enter the Urban Operations space. An Urban Operations package was delivered by a Mobile Training Team deployed from the ADF which focussed on how to fight effectively inside built up and semi-rural areas. RCB 142 soldiers were trained with the most current Urban Operations Tactics, Techniques and Procedures that can be implemented when tasked to dominate an urban threat.



Individual skills were honed and then two-person teams conducted room-entry drills where they had to make snap decisions to identify a potential threat or a non-combatant.

The Urban Operations training package started from basics including everything from how to configure personal webbing for urban warfare, combat breathing and individual skills; through to field signals and room-entry drills in pairs and fire teams. Later, Urban Operations training design evolved and RCB 142 progressed into reality based training using Airsoft weapons and simunition during a rapid-decision making phase.

RCB 142 conducted a Live Fire Exercise at Kem Hobart, Gurun field training area building on a week of courses achieving Live Fire

qualification for 9mm pistol MK3, SL40, 66mm LDFSW and M18 Claymore Shock Tube. RCB 142 also worked on Combat shooting skills building up to pairs manoeuvre Battle Lanes.

RCB 142 built on the skills developed at ranges conducted at Bindoon Training Area (WA) prior to departing Australia. WO2 Jason O'Regan guided the PLs through individual skills; Combat Shooting standards and firing from alternative positions culminating in pairs Battle Lanes laying the foundation for Live Fire attacks during Pulada LFX.

In addition to Combat Shooting with EF88 rifle and SLP, soldiers gained experience on the F89 LSW. RCB 142 is fortunate to have a number of ex-SERCAT 7 members from RAR



Battalions with DFSW backgrounds providing invaluable experience.

A vital component for all RCB rotations is the International Engagement with our Five Power Defence Agreement Allies. RCB 142 coordinated a unique training opportunity with the conduct of combined Australian Army and Royal Malaysian Army Dry Fire and then Blank Fire Assaults up to Section-level.

Significantly, RCB 142 Section Attacks were structured with mixed Sections comprising 1 x Fire Team from RCB 142 and 1 x Fire Team from the Royal Malaysian Army each into two Sections. This provided a unique opportunity for an exposure into International Light Infantry and tactical interoperability training.

Rarely does a Rifle Company get the opportunity to spend a week of firing everything in their arsenal from 84mm down to pistols and then to step off the mound and use those weapons in the fray during live fire attacks and ambushes. It is the stuff that brings soldiers to Pulada, in the far south of Malaysia.

Pulada is hallowed ground for RCB 142, forever etched in our memories. Each day the Rifle Platoons rotated through live fire ranges, firing a suite of infantry weapons before switching to 'blue bolt' at the Zhukov where they got instant feedback on any ineffective firing positions.

'Zhukov'

The test of objectives came on the final day at Pulada when RCB 142 was reinforced with a

Rifle Platoon from the Royal Malaysian Army. The combined force reconnoitred the area, established support by fire and then crept through the jungle before unleashing violence on the enemy who were defending an urban compound known as the 'Zhukov'

As a culminating activity for the week at Pulada, RCB-142 conducted EX TIGER STRIKE with the Royal Malaysia Army. The FE struck at the heart of the enemy who were operating deep in a jungle compound known as the 'Zhukov' Urban Operations Trg Facility.

The combined exercise commenced with an O'Group in Bahasa Malaysia and English languages, reconnaissance by CPL Noskoff's 8 Sect who secured the FUP, whilst the remainder of 3PL provided overhead

supporting fires. The break-in was achieved by LT Zaal's 1PL who conducted a FPoL before pushing out to the left side of the compound whilst LT Dutton and 2 PL completely dominated the enemy on the right flank.

On 1st Feb 24 RCB-142 commenced training in Singapore's Murai Urban Training Facility (MUTF) during EX Crescent Star.

This 10 day training package honed the skills required to live and operate within a built up threat environment.

The training began back at section level enabling section commanders to consolidate the skills and lessons learnt in the expansive and complex terrain presented by Murai.



Following Platoon level training, the company consolidated for a deliberate Combat Team clearance of one sector of the town with an emphasises on deliberate planning, ROC drills, control measures and communications to ensure smooth coordinated movement of multiple calls signs through a built up environment under fire.

For its last tactical action RCB 142 cleared the dense jungle clad ridges of Kulim National Park in Malaysia as a dismounted Combat Team. Working out of a high vantage point in the jungle, reconnaissance patrols combed the terrain to seek out the enemy and support the commanders tactical planning.

As dawn broke on 20th of February 24, COMD 1 Div MAJGEN Ash Collingburn AM, DSM

arrived in the company harbour to be briefed on the impending violence from the OC MAJ Marco De Freitas. Then, in the early morning mist all 3 Platoons quietly stepped off on task. 1 PI under the charge of LT Zaal conducted an ambush, 2 PI commanded by LT Dutton patrolled north to clear a suspected enemy camp whilst 3 PI, led by LT Bosveld conducted a deliberate attack on a known enemy position.

As the dust settled and the enemy casualties counted, MAJGEN Collingburn COMD 1 (AS) Div confirmed RCB-142 certified to ATL/5B, and highlighted the importance of Reservists committing to the RCB rotations and spoke of the positive impact that RCB has for Australia in the South East Asian region.





RCB 142 was fortunate enough to have the opportunity to walk the ground at some key battles fought by the Allies against the Japanese in WW2. This took us from the top of Malaysia at Jitra, near the border of Thailand all the way to Singapore in the south.

The key lesson learnt was how speed and aggression were the key drivers of the Japanese war machine.

We followed in the footsteps of ghosts through the sombre silence of the Penang War Museum. This fortress was built by the Allies but later used to house, torture and execute those same men once it had been seized by the enemy.

Retired WO2 Paul Knapp, who guided the tours and reminded us of some of the gallant

deeds of those that stood in the face of overwhelming odds. To remember those who fought for King and Country at places like Gemencheh, where Australia made its first real strike on the enemy.

Under CAPT Duffy of 2nd/30th Bn, the Australian's laid a very large and successful ambush on the advancing enemy on this bridge which was blown apart during the violence. Despite its success the ambush merely slowed the Japanese war machine as it hurtled toward the apparently impregnable fortress of Singapore.

WO2 Knapp guided RCB 142 to some to a confronting scenes at Parit Salong where 163 wounded Australians were massacred in buildings that still stand. The only reason



this is recorded in the annals of history is because a survivor, LT Ben Hackney managed to escape and later testified against those responsible. Another legend we learned of was LTCOL Charles Anderson who found himself commanding an entire Brigade after all of his superiors had been killed. LTCOL ANDERSON was awarded a VC and MC for his leadership during the fighting near Malacca.

We also walked some significant points of the Singapore defences where many myths were dispelled. It was plainly apparent that the fall of Singapore was a failure of the preparedness of the higher command rather than intestinal fortitude of the men at the front at the Kranji War Cemetery are the names of 28,461 who paid the supreme sacrifice in and around Singapore during World War 2.

RCB 142 was a very rewarding and enjoyable experience had by all and I would recommend the Deployment to all members to take part in its a fantastic opportunity for junior soldiers, NCO's and Officers to build excellent Infantry war fighting foundational skills in demanding complex environment.

Motorisation Training Continuum

CAPT Samuel Holloway-Roden

Motorising 8/7 RVR “MOTROC” A modular Motorised training progression.

In a rapidly changing global defence landscape, modern militaries are increasingly prioritizing mobility, protection, and versatility in combat. For the Australian Army, the decision to Motorise the 2nd Division’s infantry units with the Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicle (PMV) represents a major step forward in enhancing operational effectiveness. The Bushmaster’s combination of mobility, protection, and adaptability is transforming how the Australian Army engages in both conventional and unconventional warfare.

The motorisation of infantry forces is not a new concept, but it has taken on greater significance in the context of modern warfare. The 2nd Division, which is primarily responsible for the Army’s Reserve infantry forces, has long been focused on providing essential ground combat capabilities across Australia’s vast and often challenging terrain. As modern combat evolves, however, so too must the ability of the Army to rapidly deploy and respond to a wide range of threats.

The introduction of the Bushmaster PMV to the 2nd Division in recent years provides a crucial tool in this transformation. Designed to be highly mobile yet well-armoured, the Bushmaster allows infantry units to move quickly while remaining protected from small arms fire, shrapnel, and landmines. This blend of mobility and protection is essential in environments where rapid response and the ability to sustain operations are paramount.

As one of the key combat elements of the Australian Army, the 2nd Division’s transformation into a motorised force is not just about upgrading equipment—it’s about redefining operational capabilities. The 2nd Division consists of a number of infantry brigades, most of which are Reserve units. Traditionally, Reserve soldiers were often seen as less mobile than their Regular counterparts, but the motorisation of the 2nd Division has changed this perception.

With the addition of the Bushmaster PMV to its inventory, the 2nd Division now has the ability to deploy quickly and move efficiently in both urban and rural environments. The vehicles provide infantry units with rapid mobility, enhanced situational awareness, and improved combat effectiveness. In addition to the Bushmaster, other motorised assets such as logistics vehicles and armoured reconnaissance vehicles have been integrated into the Division’s ranks, further enhancing its ability to perform both defensive and offensive operations.

Motorising the 2nd Division’s infantry, while offering clear tactical advantages, presents a significant challenge in terms of upskilling soldiers and officers. Operating the Bushmaster PMV requires more than just a basic understanding of infantry tactics—it demands specialised training that integrates vehicle operation, maintenance, and enhanced coordination with other motorised units.

For soldiers transitioning from traditional foot infantry to a motorised role, the learning curve is steep. Beyond mastering vehicle

control, troops must adapt to new methods of movement, communication, and engagement. They must learn how to operate in close formation with other motorised units, navigate challenging terrains, and effectively coordinate with armoured and artillery units. This involves a deeper understanding of combined arms operations and a shift in mindset, as infantrymen must now think in terms of mobility and vehicle integration, not just foot-based tactics.

Moreover, there is the challenge of equipment proficiency. Soldiers must become adept not only at driving and manoeuvring the Bushmaster but also at operating its on-board systems—such as weapons, communication, and sensor technology—in combat conditions. This requires rigorous training programs, which must be both extensive and ongoing, to ensure that units can seamlessly integrate their motorised vehicles into larger tactical operations. Furthermore, ongoing maintenance skills are crucial for soldiers to keep the vehicles operational, especially in austere conditions where technical support might be limited.

A Modular Training Pathway to Motorise 8/7 RVR

To successfully Motorise the Battalion, 8/7 RVR has developed a modular training pathway that ensures soldiers and officers gain the

necessary skills and knowledge to operate in a motorised environment. Termed “MOTROC” and built upon the premise of the RAINF Mechanised Regimental Officer Continuum, this pathway is designed to be progressive, introducing specialised vehicle operation and coordination with other motorised units. The initial phase focuses on understanding the basic principles of motorised operations, including vehicle safety, driving, navigation, and situational awareness within a motorised context. As students advance, they engage in more complex modules that cover vehicle systems operation, weapons integration, and advanced tactics for combined arms operations as a platoon within a Combat Team environment.

A key component of the training pathway is the emphasis on teamwork and communication, ensuring that infantrymen can operate seamlessly with other units, including armour, artillery, and logistics. Additionally, ongoing assessments and practical exercises ensure that soldiers and officers can adapt to real-world conditions, learning to manage vehicle maintenance, troubleshooting, and the nuances of operating in diverse environments. This modular approach allows soldiers and officers to build their skills progressively while ensuring that each level of training is adaptable to their specific role within the Mechanised force.



8/7 RVR Transport Cell

CPL Marie Yorston

8/7 RVR Transport Cell

2023/2024 has seen a year of rapid growth in the number of drivers after qualified as we transition to being a motorised unit. A target had been set to raise a motorised infantry unit with the Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicle (PMV-M). Due to minimal resources (including vehicles and personnel) resulted in much creativity and innovation in order to achieve the CO's directed outcomes.

It became clear that it could not be done alone so we reached out to other units within 4 BDE for assistance, this resulted in a mutually supportive relationship in that a collective approach was implemented to achieve our task. The first step was qualifying Driver Instructors and Driving Assessors.

Next we needed to start working with the Bushmasters. The demand for Bushmasters is very high across the ADF which meant that we could only obtain, through short term loan, a small number of platforms. Again this required a "different to normal" method in the delivery of training adaptive in order to train members. A concept was developed around a "micro" PMV Course. Taking the traditional 19-day course and making it 11-days. This produced positive outcomes as it meant we could train with minimal instructors and vehicles whilst also allowing a more "personalised" training for students via a 1:1 instructor to student training ratio. This benefited both student and instructor by providing balance for family, work and Army, due to the reduced time away.

The Bushmaster course includes a diverse range of experiences not just driving but also

how to operate the SOTAS (communication system), how the mechanics of the vehicles works, how to manoeuvre in a tactical formation and operate the weapon mounts. Driving over difficult terrain, using the skid pan and driving under BNVD was some of the most enjoyable experiences for students because in their civilian life they would never have the opportunity to drive a medium rigid vehicle in those conditions.

Being one of the first infantry units to start implementation of motorised training also meant a lot of other 2 Division units were looking in and watching, as they too have limited resources and a target to achieve. Continuing to move forward and working with others, in 2023 8/7 RVR went from having a handful of PMV drivers to having over 30 qualified drivers.

2024 presented an immediate issue, a rebalance of PMVs across Army meant we lost what PMVs we had on loan. This meant that we refocused our training to what vehicle platforms were available – G Wagons. The G Wagon (SRV) variant is for Recon and Sigs within 8/7 RVR. Running multiple G-wagon courses for not just our own members but for all of 4BDE resulted in an increase of driver capability across the BDE. 8/7 RVR was fortunate to be chosen to conduct the trial of the (now) approved 10-day G-wagon course.

By the end of 2024, with Army's rebalance of vehicles (still ongoing), 8/7 RVR now has an allocation of Bushmasters and G-wagons. The focus will continue to be increasing the number of qualified drivers in the unit in all vehicle

platforms, but also maintaining the infantry PMV driver's competency while developing and enhancing those member's skills, not just driving but the mechanical and tactical employment as the availability for ongoing training is now possible.



Mod 2 Infantry IET Course

CAPT Charles Wright



Strengthening Combat Skills and Preparing for Deployment

The RAINF Infantry Soldier IET Mod 2 is the second part of the Initial Employment Training (IET) for soldiers after completing their Land Combat Module (Mod 1). The course focuses on honing essential skills for combat corps, equipping soldiers with the tactical expertise needed for security, offensive, and defensive operations at the section and platoon level.

The recent restructure of Kapooka's training schedule has moved the delivery of the RAINF Mod 2 course from Forces Command to Brigades. Previously, Kapooka's five-week training covered these foundational skills.

However, with the Recruit training course now shortened to three weeks, soldiers' transition from Melbourne University Regiment, with shortfalls in training which need to be delivered by individual infantry battalions. This change has required battalions to deliver 'gap training' in Battlecraft, Fieldcraft, and navigation training, as well as the RAINF Module 2 course – quite a change!

Structure and Training Progression

In response to these changes, the Mod 2 course was divided into two distinct phases: The Field Phase and the Range Phase.

The Field Phase, conducted in May, focused on teaching core soldiering skills, such as tactical

movement, patrolling, Defensive and Offensive fighting tactics, techniques and procedures. In August, the battalion conducted a combined Field and Range Phase, providing an immersive training environment that culminated in live-fire exercises.

The program qualified 39 soldiers from units across Victoria, Tasmania, and Western Australia, including representatives from:

- 5/6 Royal Victoria Regiment (RVR)
- 8/7 RVR
- 12/40 Royal Tasmania Regiment (RTR)
- 11/28 Royal Western Australia Regiment (RWAR)
- 16 RWAR

Key Components of Module 2

The RAINF Module 2 course is built around key combat skills that prepare soldiers for real-world scenarios. Highlights of the course include:

Navigation, Battlecraft and Fieldcraft

Training: This element of the course emphasizes navigation, situational awareness, and tactical operations, providing trainees with the ability to operate effectively in diverse terrain and challenging environments.

Offensive, Defensive and Security

Operations: This component of the course, introduces soldiers to the complete spectrum of operations they may be expected to conduct as an Infantry Soldier. This block was conducted in a tactical field environment using blank ammunition and pyrotechnics.

Weapons Proficiency and Qualification:

A new addition to the curriculum is the 9mm pistol qualification, adding to the range of weapon systems soldiers need to master. This builds on the skills taught during basic training and Land Combat Module, ensuring every trainee is proficient with both rifle and sidearm.

Live Fire Training: The live fire progression is central to the RAINF Module 2, starting with the Weapon Training Simulation System (WTSS)

before moving to permanent basic ranges and manoeuvre ranges. Soldiers progress from individual and pair-based live fire, including day and night sneaker lanes, to a full section attack by day and night.

Pack March Endurance Test: As a critical test of both physical fitness and mental resilience, soldiers complete a timed 10.1 km pack march. This challenge reinforces endurance and the ability to operate under strenuous conditions.

Preparing Soldiers for Future Operations

By combining rigorous field exercises and live-fire training, the RAINF Module 2 course ensures that every soldier develops the skills needed to meet the demands of the modern battlefield. The restructuring and Brigade-led training approach have not only maintained the high standards expected of the Royal Australian Infantry but have also fostered a stronger sense of cohesion and capability within the battalions.

The successful completion of the August phase has produced 39 fully qualified soldiers, ready to advance to the next stages of their careers in the Australian Defence Force.

The RAINF Module 2 is a testament to the dedication of our training staff and the resilience of our soldiers, ensuring that they are prepared, equipped, and ready for any challenge that comes their way.

Enhanced Combat Shooting

CPL Jaedyn Houlden



Combat Shooting: The new way forward for today's warriors

Training in the ADF has evolved in a remarkable way in recent years, most impact in how we train our shooters in the subtle art of armed combat. Though the old ways still hold value, as is true in many facets of warfare, the new teachings are set to lift the capability of our shooters to match, and even surpass, those of both the equipment we employ and of the competition.

Mastering the fundamentals

A tool is only as good as its operator. In Combat Shooting, shooters will spend a majority of time learning, relearning and rehashing the basics. Developing a solid and consistent stance, grip, trigger-press and acceptable sight picture is highly desired and is the foundation of every training session. New techniques are added on top of this solid base,

testing and improving a soldier's ability to adapt to new and unforeseen challenges.

One should never underestimate the importance of dedicating time to solidifying the fundamentals, they are the building blocks for everything that comes after, including improvisation.

Training like an athlete

The whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Similar to how an athlete would train for an Olympic event, shooters are mastering the method of breaking down techniques into isolated components, analysing and exploring ways to add efficiencies, maximising repetitions of individual movements, then rebuilding as a whole to add to an expanding arsenal of highly refined techniques.

Let me run you through a typical session on the firing line. Warming up correctly is of great



value, not just the body, but also the mind. Stretching and exercises to increase heart-rate are standard, breathing and mental focus are the real game-changers. Visualisation, the way a pole-vaulter might visualise the pole placement and their body positioning throughout the entirety of a perfect vault, is a most valued training technique for fine-tuning the shooter's mind. Shooters are encouraged to use visualisation and engage all sensory inputs when performing any technique.

An emergency reload drill, for example, requires a soldier to know first and foremost the sensory cues to identify such a stoppage. From there,

knowing the most efficient avenues for hands to move, being aware of what that feels like, the location and feel of fresh magazines are all vital when the eyes are actively seeking out the next threat and the body running toward the next firing position.

In each session, the basics are built upon, over and over, adapting new neural pathways to solve for problems in training before they arise in combat.

Upping the tempo

Speed is the biggest addition in these new teachings. Knowing when to dial it up to

eleven comes with confidence in the basics. Repetitions will get you there, perfect practise makes perfect. As optimal technique begins to breakdown, the keen shooter senses it is time to adhere to this temporary limitation, slowing it down to correct the technique. Soldiers are their own best critic, especially when shown how to critique others. As Combat Shooting is geared towards group learning via bulk hands-on experience (trigger time), when efficient movements become cemented in neural pathways, adding speed is the natural progression. Competition, the final test.

It is reassuring to see the vast improvements in our forces' expertise in the profession of arms. The thinking has changed greatly since the prior focus on training for accuracy at longer distances was not matched by the reality of close engagements in the battlespace. Speed is now seen as the essential factor in enhancing both lethality and survivability.

Getting better

Train hard, train often, but know when to prioritise rest. The desire amongst our avid gunslingers to raise their skillset to a John-

Wick-like status is evident at any given day during a Combat Shooting course. A high level of physical fitness, however, is of utmost importance for our soldiers. Combat Shooting practices are designed to build fundamentals in a relaxed yet professional environment, then gradually ramp up the tempo to the point of demanding as much physical mastery from the soldier as can be given. Brains naturally become flexed as they are packed full of new growth, raising the skill baseline and potential of all shooters. Precision and speed in high stress environments, this is the way and the pinnacle of Combat Shooting.

Whilst the development opportunity for the shooter has been dramatically enhanced, laying the groundwork for soldiers to truly pursue excellence, the addition of a modernised selection of weaponry exponentially increases the capability and flexibility of our highly skilled warriors. As instructors and soldiers chomp at the bit to employ their newly refined training techniques with the latest service pistol, the future has never looked brighter for the frontline of the ADF.



Ex Austral Shield

LT James Clarke, Adjutant



Austral Shield – Derby, WA

In July this year, a thirty soldier detachment (Platoon) from 4 BDE led by

8/7 RVR supported Exercise Austral Shield, deploying soldiers to training areas around Derby in Western Australia. Exercise Austral Shield is a joint, major exercise allowing the ADF to practice its ability to defend our region and rapidly deploy to Australia's north.

During this exercise, the platoon was established as an opposition force (OPFOR) to the ADF creating part of the 1st Battalion, Visayan Peoples Front and specialised cells of a Special Forces Unit to tactically infiltrate and test ADF forces operating in and around RAAF Curtin and the surrounds of the Derby township.

The key ADF base in this region is RAAF Curtin which is able to expand to support up to 10,000 soldiers and enable long range bombing missions, key high speed attacks from fighter jets and can also be used as a mounting base for further sustained operations into the pacific theatre.

Our platoon quickly became adept at clandestine operations, we were forced to blend in to the general populace often hiding on remote cattle stations, using 4WDs to move around the AO, using the salt flats and cross country tracks to avoid ADF detection when moving around to conduct missions and

conduct reconnaissance on AS forces and key locations.

One of the highlights of the trip was conducted by a 4 man recon patrol, 63A with specialised recon training. Against them was the highly trained and experienced 2 Security Force Squadron, a full time unit of RAAF Airfield Defence Guards who had a plethora of equipment at their disposal including but not limited to ground sensing radar, security cameras at all major routes into RAAF Curtin, standing patrols, listening posts, a ring of pits dug all around RAAF Curtin and multiple vehicles, weapon systems and drones at their disposal.

A four-man recon patrol was formed and spearheaded by Patrol Commander PTE Gilardi and Patrol 2IC PTE Pogue with a seemingly impossible goal of penetrating the multi layered defences of RAAF Curtin in an attempt to plant an inert IED on the transformer to the electrical station, thus destroying the power source at RAAF Curtin and impacting AS Forces ability to operate within the region.

“Mission:

63A is to destroy power generators at RAAF Curtin NLT 22 0700h Jul 24 IOT disrupt enemy activity throughout the base.

Execution:

Purpose - Commander's Intent:

- *To commit enemy forces away from coinciding VPF operations.*

Method - Recon element will penetrate into RAAF Curtin to sabotage electrical system.



End State - 63A will have successfully eliminated power and enemy forces will be forced to full stand to with no electricity.

2. SOM - *This will be a five phase operation.*

Phase 1 - *Vehicle INFIL*

Phase 2 - *RECON Patrol penetration into RAAF Curtin perimeter.*

Phase 3 - *Planting of time based IED.*

Phase 4 - *Foot EXFIL from RAAF Curtin*

Phase 5 - *Vehicle EXFIL to CP"*

Excerpt taken from Operation Electrical Bill CONOPs Back brief

Two days of careful planning ensued, aided by CPL Byers and many other members of the Platoon. At 21 2200 Jul 24, 63A was inserted then undertook a lengthy patrol through thick vegetation dealing with snakes, cows and infrequent friendly force patrols to a predetermined location where the recon team would cut a hole in the perimeter fence to infiltrate RAAF Curtin. Once through, 63A moved up further till they avoided physical defence assets and approached the target. Noise from the power plant aided in masking the patrols movement to the generator system and made it extremely easy to pinpoint the exact location they were after. The transformer was located, and the inert IED was placed with the timer set to explode with enough time for the patrol enough time to escape.



The patrol exited the base through the same infil route, but immediately began to hear PMV-L and quad bikes driving the perimeter and roads north and south of the breach point. The patrol utilised their SOPs to evade detection and the patrol moved to marry up with transport assets. The patrol then made its way back to our hide, eager to tell the rest of the platoon of the mission they had just pulled off. The adjudicators cut all power to the base crippling AS forces and denying them the ability to utilise a large proportion of their infrastructure including their sacred air conditioning.

Overall, it was an incredible effort by all 30 soldiers from 8/7 RVR and 4 BDE to not only survive but thrive in the hot, sandy and harsh conditions of remote Western Australia. It is a credit to the high level of individual soldier skills to the tactical acumen provided at the section and platoon level that ensured reconnaissance, raids, ambushes and patrols were carried out to an extremely high degree of proficiency IOT enable a high level of effective and realistic training against the AS forces of 13 Brigade. Good soldiering.



Reconnaissance

LT Robin Ng



Since 2022, the Battalion has embarked on a journey to raise and provide the 4th Brigade's Reconnaissance and Sniper (RS) capability. These capabilities, driven by the Land Combat Capability Review (LCCR), mark the first time Reserve infantry Battalions have possessed a capability mirroring their full-time counterparts.

The challenges units face in maintaining RS capabilities are well known: basic courses are notoriously difficult, there is a large training liability and the skills gained are perishable. These challenges are undoubtedly amplified in a Reserve context, where our soldiers' family, civilian and personal commitments place competing demands on their time, and our access to staffing and resources is limited.

Despite these challenges, 8/7 RVR conducted the 2nd (Australian) Division's first-ever Basic Reconnaissance Course (BRC) from February to March 2023 at Puckapunyal, where 12 members from the 4th, 5th and 13th Brigades qualified as Reconnaissance Patrolmen. This six-week continuous course built on initial success realised in late 2022, when several members became the Battalion's first reconnaissance-qualified members after completing 7 RAR's BRC.

BRC is certainly no walk in the park for trainees. During the barracks phase, they worked long days following hours of daily physical training to absorb instruction on the theory and practice of reconnaissance. Their



navigation skills were put to the test at the start of the field phase, in which some serials saw trainees relying only on a compass, or a map and their trusty navigation data sheet to reach their checkpoints.

Trainees began cohesively working as a team to achieve reconnaissance tasks during their full mission profiles (FMPs). During the FMPs, these members honed their newly gained reconnaissance skills, while employing specialist equipment such as the Image Capture and Transfer System. The FMPs concluded with a platoon raid on an enemy encampment, which was naturally followed by an eight-hour-long culminating activity that pushed the 12 trainees to their physical

and mental limits. After catching some well-deserved rest, the trainees completed the field phase by preparing for and conducting live-fire patrol break contact drills – a first for all members involved.

The immense effort of the trainees and staff on our inaugural BRC has generated unquantified momentum for the Battalion's efforts to build its RS capability. Aside from the trainees who made the course a success, special thanks is given to SGTs Finlay, Kelly, Reid and CPL Shannon-Jones. Their previous experience within the Royal Australian Regiment and tireless efforts to facilitate the course were pivotal in contributing to this successful outcome.



The Battalion's efforts have demonstrated Reserve units are capable of raising their reconnaissance capability, without the need to rely on full-time units that have limited capacity to train Reserve members. Notably, this success was repeated by 31/42 RQR in mid-2024, which saw the Battalion gain its most recently qualified Patrolmen. Our NCOs have maintained their dedication to building capability by qualifying as Patrol Commanders, following their completion of the five-week Advanced Reconnaissance Course. As awareness of RS Platoon has spread, RS Platoon has welcomed several former full-time members transferring from other units, who bring significant experience and contemporary knowledge to the Platoon.

In November 2024, RS PL certified its reconnaissance capability to final operational capability during the Regiment's 2024 Warfighter. This significant milestone was a testament to the achievements of its members in raising RS PL, and highlights a continued focus on developing operationally-relevant capabilities within 2 (AS) DIV. The Platoon will continue to select suitable members



for future RS courses during screening activities, ensuring that we sustain the positive momentum generated. The Platoon will also continue to raise awareness of RS capabilities and conduct cross-training with other 1 and 2 (AS) DIV units, which will build on existing efforts with 5/6 RVR, 22 ER and 9 REGT RAA.



Sniper Cell



Only a narrow portion of the sniper's capability is elucidated by his doctrinal role *"to provide highly accurate direct fire support to the infantry battalion"*. Indeed, best known for their surgical kinetic effect on the enemy, precision fires make up only part of the sniper's contribution to shaping the battlespace. Snipers are a force multiplier that also provide battlefield commentary, coordinate fire support, and complement other intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance assets with observation and information gathering.

The raising of the 8th/7th Battalion's Support Company in early 2023—with the Sniper Cell sitting within Reconnaissance and Sniper

Platoon—has marked the first time a sniper capability has ever been organic to a reserve infantry battalion. With the cooperation of the 8th/9th and 7th Battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment (RAR), the Battalion was able to qualify its first home-grown SERCAT 5 sniper in 2022, followed by another this year. Bolstered by members of the Battalion who had previously served as snipers within the RAR, the capability was successfully raised and the 8th/7th Battalion's sniper cell was born. Support from command and members at various headquarters and training establishments was instrumental, of note the support of Sniper Cell, Tactics Wing. At the individual soldier level, gratitude must be extended to SGT Kelly, SGT Finlay and



SGT Reid for the critical role their experience and support have played for the budding reconnaissance and sniper capabilities.

Members of the Cell have since participated in exercises with international partners and Special Forces units, forging new relationships with experienced peers and broadening their own knowledge. Closer to home they have practised their skills on the range and supported the Battalion on exercise, often working closely with reconnaissance patrol members.

Earlier this year, a member successfully became the first SERCAT 5 member to complete the Advanced Sniper Team Leader Course run by Tactics Wing, School of Infantry, an important step in the maturation of the Cell that brings in current best-practice knowledge. This milestone paves the way for future 2 (AS) DIV members to demonstrate trade and skills progression in line with their 1 (AS) DIV counterparts, as well as for the Battalion to provide valued instructor support.

The job of the sniper is far from easy. It is cognitively demanding, high stakes, and often conducted in austere conditions far from friendly support. Many have doubted the feasibility of sniper elements in the Reserve space, giving consideration to the significant time and resources required to develop and maintain the skillset of a sniper—which can even pose challenges for Regular soldiers. Indeed, snipers in the Reserve face additional

challenges to the maintenance of their skills. This necessitates the selection of incredibly dedicated individuals who are willing to spend extended periods away from home, as well as conduct their own training and education outside of planned activities. Members of the Cell, including its two On-the-Job Trainees are commendably upholding this high standard.

The Cell is currently preparing to support the Battalion on its annual warfighter exercise, where snipers will conduct missions in support of combat team manoeuvre. Into 2025 and beyond, the Cell has several things to look forward to. The LAND 159 Phase 1 project will provide a much needed modernisation of weapons and equipment—consisting principally of the new Accuracy International ASXR and Barrett M107A1 rifles, along with modern optics and ancillaries. Cell members will also support RAR-run sniper courses in support of the broader capability, mentoring additional SERCAT 5 members to complete them. In many ways the Cell is still in its infancy, however it is looking forward to furthering its capability in support of the Battalion and Army's wider strategic goals.

Sussurus in procellam



8th/7th Battalion The Royal Victoria Regiment Domestic Operations

Transit Security Element

CPL Jessica Russell

OP RESOLUTE TSE 106 (Transit Security Element)

Operation Resolute is a maritime security initiative sponsored by the Department of Home Affairs to counter unauthorised vessels. The Transit Security Element is a contingency that utilises members to form part of the Transit Security Element (TSE) for Operation Resolute, which is Defence's contribution to the Government's effort for border protection.

TSE embarked upon Royal Australian Navy (RAN) patrol boats and Australian Border Force (ABF) Patrol Boats in teams of 2-8 to provide members for boarding party's and security of detained illegal fishermen and potential illegal immigrants who are intercepted by the patrol boat.

In July 2022, 7 members of 8/7 RVR deployed as part of TSE 106 which was mounted by 5/6 RVR. This commenced with force concentration at Simpson Barracks where members conducted the RAN swim test, an Army BFA and numerous deployment briefs. The rotation then flew to RAAF Base Darwin on a RAAF C130 Hercules. Where the rotation was accommodated at Defence Establishment Berrimah (DEB) for the entirety of the rotation.

Training commenced at DEB with the Boatswains Faculty providing the training. The rotation received training for the RAN Defensive Tactics and 9mm pistol shooting (LF1-6), boarding operations and Survival at Sea.

During their down time members of the rotation had the opportunity to enjoy some of the local restaurants, bars and tourist attractions such as Litchfield National Park, Crocodylus Park, The Noonamah Rodeo and even the circus.







Once training was complete force assignment to RAN and ABF patrol boats began, this rotation were able to experience both the Armidale-class and Cape-class patrol boats as well as Ocean Protector and Ocean Shield. It was a busy rotation at times there were only enough members left at DEB to man the QRF.

This was a very hard working rotation with members staying on past their original contract end date and over Christmas to help the next rotation cover positions they could not fill. For many members this was one of the most enjoyable deployments they have been a part of, with friendships built that will last a lifetime.





8th/7th Battalion The Royal Victoria Regiment External Engagements

Norforce Exchange

**CAPT Tyler Pedersen-Hor,
RSO 8/7 RVR**

Signals Exchange with NORFORCE – An Enduring Partnership

With the changing security environment and global dynamics becoming increasingly contested, the Australian Army's focus remains on operations to shape our environment and terrain, while maintaining partnerships that enable the upholding of the global based rules order. To that end, with the 2nd Division being formally given the task of homeland security, 8/7 RVR are proud to maintain regular rotations in the past few years with NORFORCE through

the TSEs (Transit Security Elements) in order to enable border security and the surveillance and reconnaissance effects ongoing throughout the region.

Throughout the vast swathes of land and distance throughout Northern Australia in regions such as the Kimberley, highly reliable and long distance communications are critical to enabling operations in the area, from reporting, logistical resupply and a command and control perspective. Our signallers provide direct support to patrols in the area through the provision of specialist signals skills, including through satellite communications, HF and support to littoral or naval movements.





Coordination of effects occur through watch-keeping actions that 8/7 RVR is pleased to support as well. The rotations are highly valuable and mutually beneficial as we are able to continue building relationships with local units in the region, engage in exchange of skills and ideas and building professionalism for the more junior soldiers, some of for which it will often be their first live operation they will be supporting.

A Proving Ground – Putting Skills to the Test

The criticality of the task before the signallers to remain in contact with patrols across hundreds of kilometres is enormous, to enable accurate reporting and battle track their progress. Losing contact means that patrols in the area may not get resupplied or be able to call for help in the case of live incidents and medical evacuations. Newer techniques within the signals space are constantly being produced and adapted to ensure reliability, robustness and timeliness in communications. It is our signallers that implement them, and then take that knowledge back with them when they operate as part of Country Victoria's Own back home.

The knowledge transfer that comes back from TSE is invaluable. Frequently, soldiers are more

confident in operating independently and in small teams in the physical absence of more senior NCOs and officers after they come back from operations, which is important to continue to foster a culture of mission command and enable the operations of the battalion, which will need to be able to operate together at longer distances as we continue the path to motorisation and as the nature of tasks within the domestic realm evolve. All signallers who participated in the rotations, as well as the support staff that conducted mounting and training of the soldiers, are commended for their dedication to duty in supporting Australian operations.



Invictus Games - Germany 2023

CAPT Brody Hannan



Coaching the Australian Invictus Games Team in Germany

In August 2023, I had the privilege of coaching the Australian Invictus Games team in Düsseldorf, Germany, serving as the table tennis coach and assistant coach for indoor rowing and powerlifting. The Invictus Games, founded by Prince Harry, Duke of Sussex, is an international adaptive sports competition for wounded, injured, and ill service personnel and veterans, with the 2023 Games in Germany saw over 500 competitors from 22 nations compete in 10 sports.

I had applied to join the coaching staff before I was posted to 8/7 RVR, and I'm grateful that the unit supported my involvement. Over 2022-23, I drove monthly to Sydney and Melbourne

for weekend team training sessions, preparing for the Games. After months of training, we flew to Germany on a RAAF KC-30 flight (with no in-flight entertainment, but served by RAAF-uniformed flight attendants).

Competing in Germany

After landing in Germany, we spent a few days in pre-competition training before diving into the Games. Each athlete had to compete in at least three sports, keeping everyone busy throughout the competition. I was constantly running between venues to coach, while squeezing in some sightseeing in the evenings. Our athletes performed exceptionally well, earning multiple medals, including gold in indoor rowing and powerlifting, and silver in table tennis.



The Opening and Closing Ceremonies featured performances by Macklemore and Rita Ora, along with keynote speeches from Prince Harry. The experience was surreal, and I had to constantly remind myself that this was indeed, an Army 'trip', with other uniformed personnel. Very different to my usual 'green' role!

The Role of Adaptive Sports

The Invictus Games is more than just a two-week competition of medals and sightseeing; it's a vital part of Defence's rehabilitation efforts. The Australian Defence Force (ADF) Adaptive Sports Program, part of the larger ADF Sports Cell, supports around 8,500 personnel through





29 sports associations. Adaptive sports provide an essential outlet for serving and former ADF personnel, helping them regain confidence, build camaraderie, and improve their quality of life—whether their injury was service-related or not. Members medically downgraded, for example, could compete and train for Adaptive Sport within the Invictus Games team, keeping them engaged and motivated through their rehabilitation and recovery, till they eventually return to full-service.

For current or former members of 8/7 RVR, I strongly encourage you to get involved in the Invictus Games, whether as an athlete or coach. Supporting members who are currently injured and supporting them in their rehabilitation and recovery improves overall unit and Army's capability. Thank you to 8/7 RVR for allowing me such a unique experience.



Overseas Exchange

CAPT Brody Hannan

A Year Parading in the UK: From 8/7 RVR to 7 RIFLES

After two incredible years as a Platoon Commander with Charlie Company in Shepparton, I've had the opportunity to spend the last 12 months with the UK's 7th Battalion, The Rifles (7 RIFLES), as a Company Second-In-Command. This was through the Reserve Foreign Force Service Arrangement (RFFSA), which allows Reservists from Five-Eyes nations to integrate into each other's training, courses, and deployments.

The most common question from mates back home in 8/7 RVR has been, "What's it like?" Summing up such an eye-opening year is hard, but here are three key takeaways.

1. We Should Be Proud of Our Training – We're Ahead of the Curve

Having been imbedded in a UK Reserve unit for 12 months, I can tell you that we (8/7 RVR) are light years ahead of other Reservist units.

For one, our kit, equipment, benefits and salary are envied by the world. Brits continually ask me about our kit – our webbing, packs ('bergens'), body armour, helmets and NVGs are highly sought after. We also have our own organic vehicles, and a Support Company!

Regarding pay, UK Tuesday night parades are only 2 hours long, meaning a private soldier will only make \$30 for a single parade night... and it gets taxed! The structural differences are equally stark. For example, UK Regular soldiers are forced to retire after 24 years of service, no matter their age, and aspiring officers must enter Sandhurst before the age of 29. To join

the Royal Marines, you must be 24 years or younger. It's a rigid system that contrasts with the flexibility we often take for granted back home.

Our 'mindset' is different, too. Namely, the Combat Marksmanship Continuum and Army Combative Program introduced into the Australian Army in recent years have transformed the way we think. 'Scanning while reaching', 'enemy, weapon, mates', raising your weapon during a load, unload and stoppage so as to allow you to see both the enemy and your workspace, are things that don't exist in the UK Army. UK Reservists (and indeed many Regulars), still use kit and techniques that we stopped using 10+ years ago. In short, our training and mindset place us ahead of the curve in terms of both tactical preparedness and soldiering skills.

2. Different Approaches, Different Results – Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures

Despite our shared history and military traditions, the tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTPs) between Australian and UK forces are often worlds apart.

Attending 7 RIFLES' annual Brigade Warfighter, I was embedded in a section as a digger ('bod'). I was shocked by how truly foreign everything was. Field signals are different. The way they set up hootchies ('ponchos', or 'bashers') is different. Patrol formations are different (they love this one formation called 'half attack', effectively an L shape with half the section in extended line, the other half in single file behind the outermost soldier). Patrol harbours are in triangles, or 3 x single

file lines, one for each section. When 'taking a pit', a section commander will leave their entire section in fire support, while they and a grenadier flank the pit with just the two of them. The entire section will then 'regroup' on the now-taken pit, before they go again and move onto a depth position. I felt like I was a new recruit, having to learn even the most basic soldier skills all over again.

In asking the blokes in my section about why they do all these things – I realised they're not wrong – but neither are we. Our TTPs are different simply because we prioritise different things – an L Shape patrol or a triangle-shaped harbour for example, prioritises firepower at the detriment of security, in comparison to our All-Round Defence.

3. The UK Army is Rich in Opportunities Rare in Australia

One of the greatest advantages of my time with the UK Army has been the vast array of opportunities for personal and professional development. The British Army is heavily invested in sport, adventurous training, and overseas deployments, providing experiences that are rare in Australia.

Tuesday nights consist of bayonet assault courses and blank fire, platoon raids by night. I've completed the UK Major's suite of courses, where I've had to research, brief and debate on UK foreign policy. Through Adventurous Training, I've been able to complete

mountaineering courses in the Bavarian Alps, learn how to navigate underwater on an Ocean (SCUBA) Diver course, and go rock climbing and mountain biking in Northern Ireland. I'm a part of the British Army Indoor Rowing team, set to compete in the European Championships in Bulgaria in 2025. 7 RIFLES have their own Nordic Skiing team, and I've learned how to race bobsleigh in Norway – all a part of the British Army. Instead of Puckapunyal, the annual Brigade Warfighter is in Germany, Estonia, Spain, Kenya or the United States. 7 RIFLES deploy yearly to Cyprus on UN Peacekeeping Missions, to Estonia (forward posturing along the Russian border), and on OP INTERFLEX, training Ukrainian soldiers.

The UK Army's commitment to developing its people through these unique experiences is simply unparalleled. It raises the question: **how could we, in 8/7 RVR, be more ambitious in the way we train and develop our own soldiers?** With all the exciting international exchanges, courses, and exercises emerging within our unit, I believe we are well on our way.

My time with 7 RIFLES has deepened my appreciation for what we have in 8/7 RVR. We are well-equipped, well-trained, and positioned for even greater opportunities. For anyone considering the RFFSA, I can't recommend it enough—it's a life-changing experience open to all Reservists – of any rank!



Task Unit Hawk - Support to Land Forces

CAPT Henry Vong

Land forces /Chief of Army Symposium (CAS) 2024

The Chief of Army Symposium (CAS) 2024 is the capstone event for Chief of Army. This year, CAS 2024 was held in Melbourne and coincided with Land Forces exhibit for Defence industry. The intent of the gathering is to foster deeper partnerships with our allies, partner forces, industry and academia.

This high-profile event was not only an opportunity to display Australia's Defence capabilities but also a crucial gathering for global military leaders, industry experts, and strategic partners to discuss the mounting security challenges in the Pacific region.

Our battalion's role in support of CAS 2024 was primarily centred around operational support assisting the events unfolded seamlessly. One of our primary responsibilities was enabling bilateral meetings between senior Australian Army leaders and military representatives from partner nations. These discussions were essential as they centered on cooperation in response to increasing military activities in the Pacific.

Task Unit Hawk (TU HAWK) was commanded by LTCOL Sonogan and team comprised of members of 4BDE and 8/7 RVR. TU HAWK handled everything from secure communications to managing transportation logistics for visiting delegations. We established secure and efficient movement corridors for dignitaries and ensured their safe passage between venues, a complex but rewarding aspect of our responsibilities. Knowing we were facilitating crucial dialogues between international defence leaders added a great

sense of purpose to our work. The experience underscored the importance of our Reserve force in high-level, strategic defence functions, and our contribution played a part in Australia's positioning as a reliable, committed regional partner.

One of the more dynamic elements of supporting CAS 2024 was dealing with security challenges posed by public protests. Melbourne saw a strong public turnout of protestors voicing concerns about the country's Defence Industry being linked to the conflict in Palestine. The protests were a reminder of the democratic right to free speech, but they also presented a unique challenge for those of us coordinating security operations for event attendees.

Victoria Police led the public safety efforts and supported the event to manage the operational security of the venue. Working in partnership with Victoria Police proved essential, as Victoria Police officers handled crowd control effectively, allowing the protests to proceed while minimizing any impact on the event's schedule. Supporting this mission underscored the Reserve's unique ability to operate flexibly and adapt quickly to evolving circumstances, embodying the spirit of resilience and cooperation.

This experience reinforced how the Army Reserve contributes not only to Australia's Defence but also to its international relationships and long-term security objectives. CAS 2024 was a powerful reminder of the work we do in service of our country, whether on deployment, during training, or supporting events like these.

8/7 RVR 2 RAR Association

Mr Jason Country, Secretary

As Secretary of the 8/7 Battalion-2RVR Association, it is an honour to be invited by the RSM to write a few words in the Ranger Journal.

The 8/7 Battalion-2RVR Association has been in existence since 1997. We are from the Battalion for the Battalion. Our mission is to serve current and former soldiers of the Battalion and their families, by providing connection and support. One of the ways we have been doing this by supporting the "Young Diggers" therapy dogs charity, which provides dogs to former soldiers and first responders with PTSD in Victoria. Another way is by supporting the Junior Leader of the Year award and the Champion Soldier of the Year award for this Battalion.

2024 has been a year of re-engagement with the Battalion after the isolation and separation of the Covid-19 years. In May our committee attended Ranger Barracks to map this re-engagement with the RSM and SGT Logan. Since then, we have had further meetings at Ranger Barracks, as well as activities at Simpson Barracks and Puckapunyal.

At our annual dinner in October, we presented the Junior Leader of the Year award to Lance Corporal Daniel Ryan and the Champion Soldier of the Year award to Private St Ares Gillardi. Both of these soldiers have exemplified good leadership and soldiering in today's Army.

As an Association, we look forward to getting out and seeing more of you in the coming year at your depots, or at exercises and events. We also say farewell to the RSM, WO1 Matthew

Vermey as well as the CO, Lt. Col. Derek Sonogan. Thank you for your service to our Battalion. We wish both of you well in your new postings within the Army.

For those of you taking time off over Christmas and New Year, may you have a refreshing break with your family and friends. For others that are going on training courses or deployments over the same period, we send you our best wishes and look forward to seeing you again in 2025.

Good soldiering to you all!

RVR Association

Mr Alastair Cox, President



The Royal Victoria Regiment Association (RVRA) came into being in 1994. Its formation has allowed all past members to maintain a connection with their former Battalions (Bns) and also the current serving members.

It may not have occurred to you that since 01 July 1960 when the RVR was formed from its antecedent units, that thousands of Victorians have proudly served both the 8/7th and 5/6th Bns in the last 64 years.

We have endured tough times over the years such as during the Vietnam War when a selective National Service was the law from 1965 to 1972. Both Bns were made up predominantly of young men who decided to voluntarily join the Citizens Military Forces as it was then called, rather than take the chance of being called up for service in the permanent forces during an unpopular war. These volunteers were not interested in the Bns history, nor were they interested in what training was scheduled that parade night or the next weekend. They were much more interested in what time the boozer opened. I recall that the OR's boozer was so crowded on parade nights that you were barely able to lift your beer can to your mouth without some bugger accidentally

knocking your elbow and spilling part of the precious liquid. At that time there was no tax at all on grog for the ADF. So beer and the rest was very cheap and it was a case of the more you drank the more you saved! Then when National Service abruptly finished under new Prime Minister Mr Gough Whitlam in December 1972 you could have kick to kick with a footy in the boozer with a very few mates and not hit anyone else. Nearly everyone had shot through, such was their lack of interest and commitment.

Then some years later when our tax free pay was taxed as a second job, many keen volunteer soldiers left because they had been forced into a higher tax bracket and it wasn't worth paying the extra tax. At the time we used to joke that you could make more money pouring beer in the local pub than being a keen part time soldier.

Still later when the Army Reserve (ARes) budget was cut to next to nothing we would go away on weekend training to Pucka and elsewhere but we wouldn't be paid for Friday night. We'd get paid for Saturdays but we had to bring our own cut lunch otherwise you'd go hungry until dinnertime. True! We would not get paid for Sundays either. Rat packs were issued by the Q staff but we were told to bring them back unopened under pain of death! They were so old the chocolate was white and there were packets of cigarettes in them. Live and blank ammo was as scarce as rocking horse s**t. We would train with empty magazines on our SLRs and there was no link for our GPMG 60s – when we squeezed the trigger the bolt would move forward in the breech reminding us to call

out “bang” if you were carrying a rifle or “bang, bang, bang” if you carried the gun, you’d recock it, squeeze the trigger and repeat. All very disheartening of course resulting in even more keen trained people leaving.

Finally in the late 90’s we got new uniforms (DPCUs), new weapons (F88 and F89s) and new radios under a project called the “Revitalisation of the Reserve”. Then several months later MAJGEN Cosgrove went to East Timor on the Dili Dash for Cash as it was called. We had to hand back all our new equipment and in exchange we got back all our old Vietnam era equipment. Talk about one pace forward and two paces rearward! Very discouraging, especially when there was no place for Reservists on that initial deployment.

Today the ARes is a much more valued partner in Defence. We all have proved our worth by back filling ARA units, we have provided support to our units in Iraq and Afghanistan, we have sent formed bodies of troops to East Timor, the Solomons and RCB as well as on other Ops like Resolute. Under the latest National Defence Strategy, the Reserve will have an important role in the Defence of Australia. Your PMVs are an important asset for this vital job.

Finally, I also have many friends who like me were proud Reservists from 8/7 and 5/6 who transferred to the ARA. I myself, did 10 years in the ARA and commissioned to CAPT from WO2. When I joined all those years ago I never imagined that I’d do that. But it just shows that if you enjoy doing what you are doing keep challenging yourself and go on to keep achieving you’ll get even more job satisfaction, as I did.

I must say I enjoyed my near 40 years in the GRes and the ARA and I encourage you to stay in for as long as you can. You are a long time out of the system but those memories of the good and the not so good times with the people you served with who were your mates will stay with you for ever. Don’t loose touch, stay in contact with them through the RVRA.

This year I have been successful in recruiting several new, keen people to the RVRA committee. I’ve given them each a position to look after such as recruiting, membership and welfare. I’ve asked them to investigate and report back to the committee on improvements that can be made to make the Association more relevant to you, our potential members. The results of this work will help improve the RVRA and its ability to assist the Bn COs and other key leaders to achieve their objectives.

My committee members and I look forward to seeing you at your depots and at other locations, observing your training and talking to you.

For more information visit **www.rvr.asn.au** and our Facebook page Royal Victoria Regiment Association.

Good luck and good soldiering.

Ranger Barracks Museum

Mr Neil Leckie

The Ballarat Ranger Military Museum

Within the Australian Army there are two levels of museums: Fully-government funded museums, such as the Australian War Memorial in Canberra and the School of Infantry Museum at the Infantry Centre at Singleton in NSW, and

Unit Historical Collections funded by unit members or from the battalion's (limited) funds at the Commanding Officer's discretion. The Ballarat Ranger Military Museum falls under the category of a Unit Historical Collection. The difference with the Ranger Museum is that it, along with four or five other Unit Historical Collections around Australia, is open to the public. The museum is a great source of information on the history of the unit for the battalion's members, but also for the people of Ballarat. It can also be useful for the members

and ex-members of the battalion from the battalion's out-centres.

The 'Volunteers' were raised in Ballarat in 1858. They decided that they would like the word 'Rangers' in their unit's name so in 1860 the Ballarat Volunteer Rifle Regiment became the Ballarat Volunteer Rifle Rangers. A further change occurred in 1863 when the 'Rifle' was dropped and the name became the Ballarat Volunteer Rangers for the next 20 years. The ineffective 'Volunteer' system was scrapped in 1883 and replaced by a paid Militia. Ballarat became the 3rd Battalion, Victorian Rifles and Bendigo (and Castlemaine) the 4th Battalion.

The Ballarat Drill Hall was subsequently built in 1885/86 for the 3rd Battalion. It was not named Ranger Barracks until 1958, on the centenary of the raising of Ballarat's Army Unit.



By 1989 Ranger Barracks was the home of the former 2 RVR, by then renamed as 8/7 RVR. That year the ARA Quartermaster, Captain Bill Akell, found some trophies in boxes in the

'Q' Store and asked the then Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Douglas Ball what he should do with them. The CO's reply was to find a room within Ranger Barracks and turn it into a museum. Hence the Ballarat Ranger Military Museum was born.

The Ranger Museum has a Charter to hold and care for memorabilia of the battalion's history and for the Army in Ballarat. It does not accept RAN or RAAF Memorabilia or Army memorabilia not related to the battalion or Ballarat. For those who have visited the museum in recent years they would have noticed that the museum is literally 'bursting at the seams'. Something had to be done and as the government department controlling buildings would not allow the museum to build a second hut, or extend the current hut, the only option to gain more space was to follow

the Army History Unit's suggestion to make a smaller display where visitors can see a 'potted history' of the battalion. Consequently, visitors to the barracks will see the twin 40' containers in the museum yard beside the hut. This temporary display is nearing completion and memorabilia from the hut will, by Christmas, be placed in the containers to show a chronological 'potted history' of the battalion. Visitors next year will be able to do a walk-through of the display followed by a visit to the main hut where they can look at the 'bits and pieces' that an Army needs, most of which has been used by the battalion. There will also be a library and research area in the main hut. The funding for this extension has been provided by the Executors of a deceased estate.

Sergeant David Logan and Lance Corporal Robert Geddes at Ranger Barracks are now on the Museum Committee and are your first point of contact for visits or information relating to the battalion's history.



Acknowledging our Past - Opening of the Pompey Elliot Room

SGT David Logan

Opening of the “Elliot Room” 8th March 2022

In recent years it was decided to honour the lineage of the battalion by naming the two lecture rooms at BHQ in Ranger Barracks, Ballarat after the two Battalion Commanders who commanded the 7th and 8th Battalions of the 2nd Brigade of the first AIF when they first stepped ashore at Gallipoli on 25th April 1915. The 8th Battalion was commanded by LTCOL William Bolton and the 7th commanded by LTCOL Harold Elliot.

The opening was conducted on 8th March 2022 by his grand-niece Mrs Rosemary Fellows who flew out from the USA for the occasion as his oldest surviving relative. The opening was attended by the current Commanding Officer of the battalion LTCOL Derek Sonogan and his headquarters staff. Mrs Fellows is also the grand-daughter of CAPT George Elliot MC who was “Pompey’s” nephew and the Regimental Medical Officer 56th Battalion, 14th Brigade, AIF (WW1).



Medals of MAJ GEN Harrold Elliot



Medals of CAPT George Elliot



“Pompey” Elliott’s Story

Harold “Pompey” Edward Elliott was an Australian soldier, politician, and lawyer whose life and career embodied courage, leadership, and dedication to his country. Born on June 19, 1878, in Victoria, Australia, Elliott grew up on a farm and went on to study law at the University of Melbourne. His determination and discipline led him to pursue a military career, where he would soon become one of Australia’s most respected military figures during World War I. Elliott gained his nickname, “Pompey,” from his days at university, inspired by the fierce Roman general Pompey the Great. His military career began with the Boer War in South Africa (1899–1902), where he served with distinction and developed a reputation for bravery and tactical skill. Upon returning to Australia, he resumed his legal practice but kept his military connections, rising through the ranks in the militia when in 1913 he was promoted to LTCOL and commanded the 58th Battalion (Essendon Rifles).

When World War I erupted, Elliott enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force and was appointed



Statue of MAJ GEN Harrold Elliot

command of the 7th Battalion, 2nd Brigade. His leadership was instrumental during the Gallipoli Campaign, where he led his men through brutal combat, earning the admiration of his soldiers. On arriving back in Egypt he was promoted to Brigadier and on his request placed in command of the 15th Brigade, a Victorian unit. Elliott’s efforts continued in the Suez and Western Front, where he served with distinction in battles like Pozières, Bullecourt, and Polygon Wood.

Known for his uncompromising dedication to his troops, Elliott was deeply concerned with their welfare and famously clashed with superiors over tactical decisions he believed would needlessly endanger lives. During the mutinies over disbanding battalions in September 1918, Elliott was the only brigade commander with sufficient sway over his men for a battalion, the 60th, to obey his order to disband in order to reinforce the dwindling numbers of the other battalions after years of heavy fighting.

After the war, Elliott entered Australian politics, winning a seat in the Senate as a member of the Nationalist Party. Although he continued to advocate for veterans' welfare, he found political life frustrating and felt constrained by the government bureaucracy. His post-war years were difficult, marked by emotional turmoil as he struggled to cope with the trauma of combat and the loss of many of his men.

On March 23, 1931, Elliott died by suicide, a tragic end that reflected the profound psychological wounds he carried from his military experiences. Harold "Pompey" Elliott is remembered as a brilliant, courageous soldier who deeply cared for his men and remained fiercely loyal to his ideals. His legacy continues to inspire Australians, especially those who serve in the armed forces, as a symbol of leadership, sacrifice, and compassion in times of war.

Honours & Awards 2023 - 2024

LTCOL	Sonogan,Derek James	DLSM*, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
MAJ	Baird,Kaylene Elizabeth	DLSM*, DLSM**, DLSM***, DLSM****, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
MAJ	Dignam,Francis Thomas	DLSM
MAJ	Ford,Matthew John	DLSM*
MAJ	Glushko,Anton	NEM NTHQLD 2019
MAJ	McKinley,Shannon John	DLSM**, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
MAJ	Powell,Robert William	DLSM*, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
MAJ	Runciman,Adam Leigh	DLSM*
CAPT	Fiocco Wood,Simon Charles	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CAPT	Holloway-Roden,Samuel Francis	NEM NTHQLD 2019
CAPT	Normand,Elizabeth Rachel	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CAPT	Vong,Henry	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
LT	Campanale,Orazio Victor	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
LT	Portelli,Matthew Luke	ADM
WO1	Dick,Robert Neville	DLSM****, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
WO2	Beales,Trevor Charles	DLSM****, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
WO2	Crowe,David John	DLSM**
WO2	Driscoll,Alex	DLSM
WO2	Krupa,Piotr	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
WO2	Ludeman,Glenn Andrew	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
WO2	Moncur,Stephanie Lauren	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
WO2	Reid,Glen	DLSM**, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
WO2	Revett,Adam Christopher	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
WO2	Short,Geoffrey Stuart	DLSM*, DLSM**, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
WO2	Simmons,Justin David Graham	DLSM
SGT	Day,Luke William	DLSM
SGT	Kelly,Adam Todd	DLSM*, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20, ARMY COMMENDATION - BRONZE
SGT	Logan,David John	DLSM**, DLSM***, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
SGT	Wright,Braden Nicholas	DLSM

CPL	Aulich,Bradley James	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Bellefemine,Navarre Cesare	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Bisognano,Taylor	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Bowden,Timothy Joel	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Brown,Shaun Christopher	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Carrucan,Charles Joseph	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Champion,Christopher Stephen	DLSM, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Chapman,Scott David	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Coltman,George Campbell	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Dinning,Drew Allan	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Edmunds,Jacob Andrew	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Fernandez,Stephen Paul	DLSM, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Gallagher,Byron Thomas	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Gatt,Laurence	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Heaney,Callan Jeremiah	DLSM
CPL	Houlden,Jaedyn Westley	DLSM, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Hujdurovic,Ammar	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Karipoglou,Minas Matthew	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	McNamara,Robert Martin	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Merriman,Jareth Taylor	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Paffrath,William John	ADM
CPL	Petering,Warrick Joel	DLSM*, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Rylance,Melanie Ann	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Schmidt,Benjamin James	ADM
CPL	Star,Mischelle Maddolyn	ADM
CPL	Studham,Garth Raymond	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Taylor,Daniel Paul	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Walsh,Patrick Thomas	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Wang,Peng	ARMY SOLDIERS MEDALLION
CPL	Webb,John Frederick	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Woolley,Justin Robert	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Yeung,Song En	ADM, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
CPL	Yorston,Marie Kathleen	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20, ARMY COMMENDATION - BRONZE
LCPL	Balshaw,Scott Patrick	DLSM, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
LCPL	Brown,George Clifford	DLSM, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
LCPL	Carlesi,Daniel Johnathan	DLSM*, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
LCPL	Church,Jesse Nathaniel	ADM

LCPL	Elvey, Timothy Darren	ADM
LCPL	Geddes, Robert John William	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
LCPL	Hore, Tyson Allan	ADM, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
LCPL	Lee, John	ADM
LCPL	Maxwell, Caleb Nicholas	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
LCPL	Mitchell, Caillin Lachlan	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
LCPL	Nugent, Christopher Bryan	ADM
LCPL	Pineda, Joshua Ferreras	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
LCPL	Russell, Jevan William	NEM NTHQLD 2019
LCPL	Ryan, Jeremy Andrew	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
LCPL	Simpkin, Christopher Scott	NEM NTHQLD 2019
LCPL	Watson, Nicholas Norman	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
LCPL	White, Alex Anthony	NEM NTHQLD 2019
LCPL	Xuereb, Simon	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Adamo, Gino	ADM
PTE(P)	Bassett, Jayce Charles	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Bhatia, Arun	ADM
PTE(P)	Bishop, Paul Edwin	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Bocskor Dane, Blake James	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Bourke, Nicholas Charles	DLSM**, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Buchanan, Brayden Albert	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Chand, Tysheen Junior Shyam	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Chung, Nathan	ADM
PTE(P)	Cranston-Fremlin, Jaydn Sheldon	ADM
PTE(P)	Crowhurst, James Andrew	ADM
PTE(P)	Durante, Eric Robert	ADM
PTE(P)	Elliott, Jacob Brendan	ADM, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Fox, Christopher John	ADM
PTE(P)	Hart, Christopher Peter James	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Hennessy, Patrick William	NEM NTHQLD 2019
PTE(P)	Henry, Michael Matenga	ADM
PTE(P)	Hine, Cameron Mitchell	ADM
PTE(P)	Holmes, Peter John	ADM
PTE(P)	Horvath, Jacob Francis	ADM
PTE(P)	Howard, Raigan James	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Hunter, Philip Thomas	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Judd, Samuel Thomas	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Juusti, Daniel Kane John	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20

PTE(P)	Kannikanti,Vamsi Krishna	ADM
PTE(P)	Leger,Michael Anthony	ADM
PTE(P)	Li, Jiayang	ADM
PTE(P)	Liddicoat,Jarrold Wayne	ADM
PTE(P)	Lupic,Josip Phillip	ADM
PTE(P)	Malady,Christopher Brendan	ADM
PTE(P)	Matthews,Steven Roger	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	McGrane,Cameron Everest	ADM, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	McNicholl,Shayn Gavin	ADM
PTE(P)	Mibus,Eric Paul	ADM
PTE(P)	Mullins,Matthew Jack	ADM
PTE(P)	Nagesh,Ansul Manjunath	ADM
PTE(P)	Nelson,Connor Paul	NEM NTHQLD 2019
PTE(P)	Orellana,Hamilton Jose Manuel	ADM
PTE(P)	Pach,Chol	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Pedersen,Danica Ashlee	ADM
PTE(P)	Poole,Braydon James	ADM
PTE(P)	Saric,Stefan	ADM
PTE(P)	Schnur,Patrick Nicholas	ADM
PTE(P)	Serdenes,Nicholas	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Singh,Kuldeep	ADM
PTE(P)	Skruzny,Ambrose Anthony	ADM
PTE(P)	Smith,James Michael	ADM, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Smith,Job	ADM
PTE(P)	Smythe,Benjamin Kyle	ADM
PTE(P)	Sozanski,Jack Alexander	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Suppiah,Sriananthan	ADM
PTE(P)	Swannack,Karl Anthony	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Taylor,Sherman Silvestre	ADM, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Turner,Sam Wynn	ADM
PTE(P)	Van Niekerk,Joshua Freddie	ADM, ARMY SOLDIERS MEDALLION
PTE(P)	Vearing,Julian Lee	ADM, NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Walmsley,Chelsea Lyndal	ADM
PTE(P)	Walsh,Andrew John	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Watts,Jamie Lachlan	NEM BUSHFIRES 19-20
PTE(P)	Williams,Jordan Leslie	ADM

Promotions 2023 - 2024

Year	Starting Rank	Name	Ending Rank
2023	CPL	Kelly	SGT
2023	LCPL	Bellefemine	CPL
2023	LCPL	Mackie	CPL
2023	LCPL	Smart	CPL
2023	PTE	Hull	LCPL
2023	PTE	Luciani	LCPL
2023	PTE	Sutcliffe	LCPL
2023	PTE	Timms	LCPL
2023	PTE	Tyndall	LCPL
2024	MAJ	Ford	LTCOL
2024	SGT	Groth	WO2
2024	SGT	Krupa	WO2
2024	SGT	Moncur	WO2
2024	SGT	Read	WO2
2024	CPL	Dinning	SGT
2024	CPL	Simms	SGT
2024	LCPL	Aulich	CPL
2024	LCPL	Bisognano	CPL
2024	LCPL	Gallagher	CPL
2024	LCPL	Ho	CPL
2024	LCPL	Star	CPL
2024	LCPL	Sutcliffe	CPL
2024	PTE	Brown	LCPL
2024	PTE	Keyte	LCPL
2024	PTE	Kosmac	LCPL
2024	PTE	Mitchell	LCPL
2024	PTE	Rodriguez	LCPL
2024	PTE	Youngson	LCPL

Vale – Warrant Officer Class Two

Mark Broemmer

Born 14 Mar 1963 to Ralph and Margaret at St John of God Hospital in Ballarat. He was baptised that year at Our Ladies Help of Christians in Wendouree. Completing Ralph and Margaret's family, Mark's brother Paul was born in 1966.

Mark went to Primary School at Our Ladies Help of Christians and then Secondary School at Saint Patrick's College where his love of the Army started with Saint Pat's Army Cadets.

In early 1982, Mark went to a dance at the Provincial Hotel in Lydiard Street here in Ballarat. He saw this girl, named Monica, and asked her to dance. Mark and Monica would be married in July 1984. Mark and Monica had three boys by the end of the eighties.

Mark worked, at the Paddle Shoe Factory in Sebastopol, the Mars factory in Wendouree and Selkirk Bricks in Ballarat North before moving into the food area. He was the Fish Manager at Safeway in Eastwood Street, Ballarat. This was followed by some years where he had Noah's Fish Shop in Little Bridge Street, Ballarat. During these times Mark was doing what he could to maintain, with Monica whatever he could to put food on the table for his family. More recently Mark found a position as a Prisoner Officer in Melbourne's Raven Hall Correctional Centre.

Mark was not only an active member of the Army Reserve, if he was not at work or Army he would be at the RSL where he was the president of the Sebastopol sub branch or at the 8/7 museum or something with the Ballarat Arms & Militaria Collectors given his great interest in firearms as we all know. Now as if



Mark wasn't busy enough he also had time to run a couple of "Facebook" pages.

Mark, as with many personal of the support Corps to the Battalion, and later at 4CSSB or 4BDE just quietly get on with the task at hand, be it a former CO dinner for say 15 pers to the Regimental dinners of times gone by where it would be for 100 pers. Mark was quite at home in either the barracks kitchen or out in the field running the field kitchen with the odd wakeup call from the "chuffers"!

Mark enlisted 22 Sep 1980 into 2 RVR as a rifleman

LCPL RA INF 01 Jun 1987

CPL RA INF 08 Aug 1988

CPL RAACC 08 Aug 1988



Mark Broemmer top row second from left, Sub 1 for CPL Jan 1982

SGT RAACC 31 Oct 1994

WO2 RAACC 04 Sep 2001.

Honours & Awards:

03 Dec 1999 CMD 2DIV Commendation

08 Feb 2007 Aust Def Medal

13 Feb 2007 1st & 2nd to Clasp to the Reserve Force Medal

07 Dec 2010 3rd Clasp to the Reserve Force Medal

13 Sep 2016 4th Clasp to the Reserve Force Medal

26 Nov 2020 5th Clasp to the Reserve Force Medal.

Operational Service:

Operation Vic Fire Assist 2009.

As those of us that have been around for some time when the PmKeys migration happened not all details came across correctly, so some information may not be 100% correct.

When did I meet Mark?

I don't know that I ever actually met Mark as such. We both enlisted early 80's - Mark late 80 and I early 82 to B Coy in Russell St. The way platoons were set up we were in different ones and in 83 Mark went from infantry to catering down at The Castle, BHQ in Curtis St. Now Dan Murhys.

So I really didn't have much to do with Mark until about 88 when I too went to The Castle, but in a different area, don't trust my cooking.

Mark was one of those guys out the back in check pants and white tee shirt doing things in the kitchen whenever I went to get some hot water for a brew, and later in the night be walking to one of the three messes with trays of hot or cold food at about 1030, end of the night as it was then. Then pottering around cleaning up afterwards, in the kitchen when I would be making a traveller for the trip home. Mark always had a heavy coke close at hand, later on a diet coke which he really didn't like.

I would stop and have a quick chat mostly about the road conditions up and down the Hwy or our kids, Mark always asked about you, how you were etc.

After a while he would call me TC and say help yourself you know where everything is and offer me a sample of what was being made, to which I would call him a “bait layer” and he would call me “the Unit taste tester”.

There were often Unit dinners as well as weekends or Cses on that Mark would be catering for out of the Ballarat kitchen and looking for GDs to help, I would often come in to do the “dish pig” I mean wash dishes for the dinners or even to just lend a hand.

At the end of one of these I came in and found Mark out the back at Curtis St kitchen punching holes into 1Lt milk and 2Lt fruit juice cartoons to drain out. This was an over order for the activity and had to be destroyed, not given to the boys home as in the past.

The home was always told don't send a thank you just keep it quiet, but someone did. There may have been some issues with this practice, it seems.

As time went on Mark and I attended more activities and became closer friends. We bonded over things like “fly spray eggs” “hot salad for dinner” even the “curry everything” weekend amongst others.



23 May 1982 B COY -Company Sigs on training weekend enfield forest

Mark often as time went on would offer me a bed for the night at Monica and his family home due to the weather conditions and the distance I was travelling etc.

In the early days of Marks catering, he was often referred to as the “Rambo cook” due to him always carrying a bayonet on his webbing and being a “gun nut”.

Mark often ran functions from start to finish on his own and would spend hours sometimes days before the function doing prep work and at times with the assistance of family due to no GDs. Monica was often seen around doing things for functions and supporting Mark.

With Mess dinners he would be in early in the morning doing prep work then as his staff came in to take over, he would give instructions and go get ready as he was not meant to be working the function but did both including the clean-up.

Mark was always there for you. He always did his best to make sure everyone was well fed and watered.

Mark was always happy in his kitchen and didn't care what needed to be done he would just do it, as recent as Berala Strike where he was peeling spuds for a meal, but made sure I left with plenty of “supplementary rats” for the crew on the hill.



Mark would when/wherever possible help you, even if it was just as a sounding board.

Over the years we would chat about all sorts of things, friends, family, the system, both of late and life in general.

One story Mark did tell me about when he started post his induction training in corrections was being in the control room and told to just worry about these panels and none of the others which was going so well, till the MFB turned up!

It seems he was not told about the fire alarm panel. Lucky it was a false alarm, and no one was injured. I was very happy to hear that he was in the control room and not a unit.

To finish off with:

Whenever I hear a chorus line in a song by Jona Lewie I think of Mark... “you'll always find him in the kitchen at parties” I found this to be true of Mark, constantly working in and around the kitchen.

Mark will be missed by so many people in so many places and leaves some very big shoes to fill...

I'm proud to have called him my friend...

WO2 T C Beales, With notes from Neil Ieckie



Vale – Warrant Officer Class Two

Bradly Turner

8233666 Warrant Officer Class Two Bradly Turner (WO2 Turner) was born on 27 August 1963. He enlisted in the Australian Army on 02 Jun 1982. WO2 Turner served in the Australian Regular Army for 41 years. His final posting was with the 8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment. WO2 served in the Operations cell as the Operations Warrant Officer OPSWO for two years and as the Warrant Officer Co-ordinator WO-COORD for two years. WO2 Turner discharged from the Australian Regular Army on the 06th December 2023. WO2 Turner served his nation his whole adult life. Knowing his job was done, he was ready to enjoy retirement. WO2 Turner was set to travel Australia. With his 4WD prepared for camping and fishing, he was set to see Australia on his time. Unexpectedly and with great sadness, WO2 Turner passed away on 31st January 2023, only eight weeks into his retirement.

Private life:

WO2 Turner was a very private man. He had dedicated his life to service and his family. WO2 Turner never married and had no children. During stand down for Christmas leave, WO2 Turner would holiday with his family in Bairnsdale. This would see the extended Turner clan come together and camp and fish by the sea. This occurred for over three decades. WO2 Turner was the defacto camp commandant, organising the goings on in the camp and keeping an eye on the kids. WO2 Turner was the uncle that his nephews and nieces would hang on every word. Excited to see him for the yearly Christmas family camp.



Military Career:

WO2 Turner served in many units and in many different roles. They include: the 6th Battalion, Royal Australia Regiment; 2nd Battalion, Royal Australia Regiment - Signal Platoon Head Quarters and Mortar Platoon Head Quarters. NORFORCE - Advanced Patrol, Operations Cell Training Squadron; Head Quarters 5th Brigade - Operations Section; Head Quarters 5th Brigade - Individual Training Cell; School of Military Engineering - Assault Pioneer Cell; Directorate of Operations and Training Area Management – Head Quarters; Joint Operations Support Services – Australian Capital Territory; School of Infantry - Assault Pioneer Training Team and Company Training Team; Combat Training Centre - Observer Team 2- Jungle Training Wing, 8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victorian Regiment – Head Quarters.

Operations:

WO2 Tuner deployed to East Timor 2001. He completed five rotations of Butterworth: 1985, 1988, 1991, 1992, 1993

Decorations:

- Australian Defence Medal
- Defence Force Service Medal
- Fifth Clasp to the Defence Force Service Medal
- Fourth Clasp to the Defence Force Service Medal
- Third Clasp to the Defence Force Service Medal
- Second Clasp to the Defence Force Service Medal
- First Clasp to the Defence Force Service Medal

- United Nations Medal with Ribbon UNTAET
- Infantry Combat Badge
- Australian Active Service Medal with Clasp EAST TIMOR 2001
- Returned From Active Service Badge
- Australian Service Medal with Clasp SE ASIA

Farewell:

From 8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment Operations Cell.

RIP Bradley John Turner.

Written by

Warrant Officer Class Two Geoffrey Short