

Australian Peacekeeper

AUTUMN 2020

MAGAZINE



**COMMEMORATING 25 YEARS OF
ADF SERVICE IN RWANDA.**



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WHATS INSIDE

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Australian Peacekeepers Magazine attempts to provide insight into the experiences of peacekeepers, Defence members and war veterans and the issues that confront them together with encouraging informed debate regarding issues dealing with but not limited to Commonwealth compensation, pensions, superannuation and occupational health and safety that affect Peacekeepers and their families. We welcome input from members and would love to feature personal experiences in each issue. Please email the editor with any stories you would like to see printed. The views expressed in the articles are those of the particular author and not those of the Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association (APPVA). The APPVA will not be legally responsible in contract, tort or otherwise for any statement made in the articles in this publication.

Cover

Trooper Jonathan Churches. Picture credit George Gittoes, was inspired to paint the picture after discussions regarding the Peacekeeper Narrative I had with George Gittoes in October 2018. Paul Copeland.

APPVA membership is open to Veterans both ADF and AFP that have served. To join head to peacekeepers.asn.au/register

Contributions by way of articles and photographs are invited from readers of Peacekeeper in the interest of promoting the Association.

Contributions should be sent to: chook126@bigpond.net.au



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PRESIDENT'S REPORT



1st QGM - 2020

Happy New Year to APPVA members and your families,

As you know the APPVA Constitution 2019 was ratified by you the members, Consumer Affairs Victoria (CAV) and the Australian Charities Not-for-Profits Commission (ACNC) in Nov 2019 and one of the changes that was made, included a new structure for the APPVA to a flatter management structure.

Whilst we remain an association that I represent across the nation, our naming conventions have changed, Basically the terms 'National' and 'NATCOM' are no longer used. Your respective state/branch representatives are now known as Regional Coordinators. There is only one APPVA with one committee that includes regional representation.

This transition was made to better reflect the way the association operates with the APPVA, focussing on its priorities without the branches having to manage their own committees and being bogged down in corporate governance red tape which has been time consuming and not productive in terms of outcomes for you our members and putting our brand and Association at risk.

The challenge now for all of us is to support our local Regional Coordinators with providing relevant information and suggestions about issues that are affecting you and your family.

I know the new structure will take some time to settle in, but the

Executive are committed in delivering the best possible outcomes for all of our members including the traditional support services and representation to other like-minded ESOs and to government forums; but also, at a local level with social gatherings.

I would like to thank all of those members who participated in the survey in relation to what you the members wanted from us, we have listened and will publish those results in coming weeks.

What's next you ask?

The Executive will formalise the appointments of the Regional Coordinators but in the interim the Regional Coordinators will continue to function as they did when they held the title of 'State President'. The target date for the formal appointments is 10 February 2020.

The Regional Coordinators and their current committees should be looking at 'winding up' their state-based incorporations and committees, so as to reduce their corporate governance requirements to their respective State government Consumer Affairs departments. This will generally mean a state based General meeting and two motions followed by some form filling and submission to complete the legal responsibilities.

Our Secretary will shortly formally announce the date for the next QGM that will take place in March, we will also announce the dates for the remaining QGM's for the remainder of 2020.

On behalf of the APPVA I would like to congratulate Mr Trevor PLYMIN who was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) – General Division, in this year's Australia Day Honours and Awards list for services to the veteran community and their families. It is always refreshing to see our members being acknowledged and recognised for the amazing services they provide to the veteran community, congratulations Trevor.

I have also extended in many forums the appreciation of the APPVA and members to those volunteers and emergency services personnel, who, have over the past few weeks dealt with some of the most devastating

and horrific fires in recorded history in Australia.

There have been thousands of people that have been affected by this disaster in many ways. The number of people who have died as a result of their bravery and actions to protect others has left us all in despair to say the very least.

The loss of wildlife and stock has also devastated our great country with impacts that will affect our country for many years. The number of homes and buildings is well into the hundreds and potentially into the thousands across the country.

The Prime Minister announced on Australia Day 2020, of the approval to award the National Emergency Medal (NEM) to those, Fire, Police and emergency and Defence services personnel who provided sustained or significant service to the 2019 - 2020 fire season.

Whilst we reflect and help those that we can rebuild, I must remind everyone that the fire season is by no means over, I urge you all to please take care, be alert and look after each other. Should you or someone you know within our veteran community or in the wider community to be affected, please encourage them to reach out to Open Arms or another like-minded organisation or medical service for support.

Open Arms - Veterans and Families Counselling provides support for current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families. Free and confidential help is available 24/7.

Phone 1800 011 046 (international: +61 1800 011 046 or +61 8 8241 4546) or visit www.OpenArms.gov.au

I thank you for your service and your ongoing support to the APPVA, as we all strive to 'Looking after our own'.

I would like to commend PM Scott Morrison and his government on his announcement on 4 Feb 2020 of the new roles for National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention and the Family Advocate.

These initiatives provide all the necessary tools to not only look back from 2001 to current day but also to

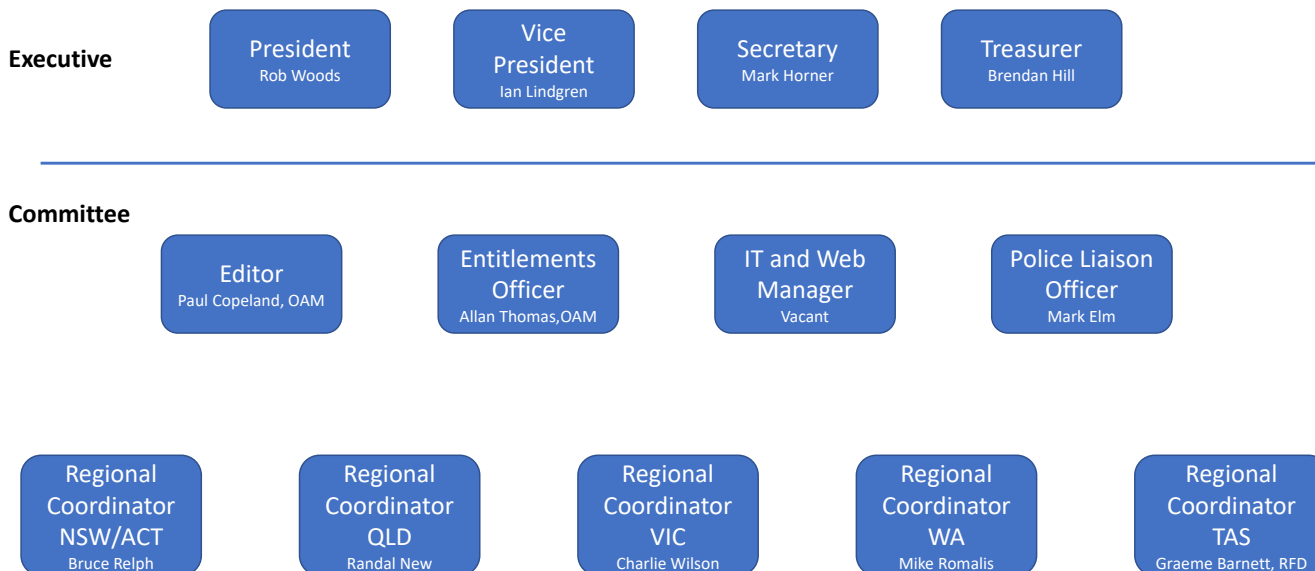
continue the monitoring and providing good policy for the government of the day to address veterans and Defence suicide with Royal Commission type powers as well as provide support to the families.

The APPVA fully supports this initiative and I am confident that the process will have a positive impact towards reducing veteran and Defence suicide, provide much needed support and representation

to families. I encourage any member or someone you know who has been affected by suicide to get involved.

**Sincerely,
Rob Woods, JP
President**

New APPVA Structure



EDITOR'S REPORT

25th Anniversary of the Australian Medical Support Force, To the UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda, The Australian Peacekeeping Memorial, Saturday, 21st February 2020.

The Commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of the deployment of Two Australian Service Contingents (ASC), to the troubled nation of Rwanda was conducted at the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial on ANZAC Parade, Canberra on Saturday 21st February 2020.

The event was well attended, particularly by the Veterans of Rwanda. The Australian Federation Guard (AFG) participating in the event, along with His Excellency General, the General David Hurley AC DSC (Retired), Governor General of the Commonwealth of Australia, who gave the Commemorative Address.

The Call to Remembrance was read by Air Vice Marshal Tracy Smart AO, who was a Squadron Leader Medical Officer, deployed to Rwanda with the Australian Medical Support

Force (AUSMEDFOR) to the Second UN Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR II), in 1995 with the Second Contingent (ASC2).

The presentation of the Meritorious Unit Citation (MUC) was made to the Chiefs of Navy, Army and Air Force, as the Operation was a Tri-Service effort. The AUSMEDFOR received the MUC for "sustained outstanding service in warlike operations as part of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda II on Operation TAMAR, over the period July 1994 to March 1996.

A Reading was made by Captain Amanda Garlick (RAN). CAPT Garlick (nee Rutter) was LEUT Rutter a RAN Nursing Officer in the First Contingent (ASC1) of AUSMEDFOR UNAMIR II.

The Ode of Remembrance was cited by Warrant Officer Class One (WO1) Brent Doyle OAM, RSM of the

Army Training and Doctrine Centre, who was a Royal Australian Engineer Sapper, deployed with AUSMEDFOR UNAMIR II in the First Contingent (ASC1).

Of note with the Wreath laying was the acknowledgement of the APPVA, and the Australian Peacekeeping Service Alliance (APSA); with the Vice President APPVA Inc., LTCOL Ian Lindgren (Retired) laying the wreath on behalf of the APPVA; and Paul Copeland OAM, laying the wreath on behalf of all Australian Peacekeepers.

Afterward, all Rwandan Veterans were invited to the Great Hall at the Australian War Memorial (AWM), for the Official presentation of the MUC Insignia to the veterans in attendance. To all of those recipients, a hearty congratulations.

Paul Copeland

Australia honours our Rwanda Peacekeeping Veterans

The Hon Darren Chester MP
 Minister for Veterans' Affairs
 Minister for Defence Personnel
 22 February 2020

Australians will commemorate the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda (UNAMIR), Operation TAMAR, with a National Commemorative Service in February 2020.

Minister for Veterans and Defence Personnel Darren Chester said Operation TAMAR was established in July 1994 in response to the humanitarian crisis in Rwanda and in support of the United Nations Assistance Mission.

"The focus of this commemoration will be a National Commemorative Service conducted by the Departments of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) and Defence at the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial on Anzac Parade in Canberra on Saturday, 22 February 2020," Mr Chester said.

"As part of the service, the Meritorious Unit Citation Warrants will be presented to the Australian Defence Force on behalf of Australian Service Contingents 1 and 2 for their

services in Rwanda on Operation TAMAR between 25 July 1994 and 8 March 1996.

"This is an important part of our history and the commemoration will be broadcast live on ABC across the country, providing all those in the community with the opportunity to recognise the dedication and sacrifice of these Australians and thank them for their service."

From 1994 to 1996 it is estimated that up to 800,000 people were killed in Rwanda. The magnitude of the violence and killings perpetrated on largely innocent civilians gained worldwide attention and condemnation.

"For the Australian service men and women deployed to Rwanda, forming part of the United Nations Assistance Mission, advanced training and prior deployments could not prepare even the most experienced for what was awaiting them in Rwanda," Mr Chester said.

"Through this mission, Australian service men and women gained great respect and admiration for their compassion, professionalism and humanity.

"Significantly all three ADF Services were represented by 14 Royal Australian Navy, 629 Australian Army and 44 Royal Australian Air Force personnel."

The Meritorious Unit Citation has been awarded to members of the Australian Service Contingents 1 and 2 for their services in Rwanda on Operation TAMAR between 25 July 1994 and 8 March 1996. To be eligible to wear the citation insignia, veterans must have completed 30 days of service on Operation TAMAR between these dates. The Meritorious Unit Citation can be awarded posthumously.

The Hon Darren Chester MP
 Minister for Veterans' Affairs
 Minister for Defence Personnel
 Senator David Van
 Senator for Victoria
 22 February 2020

The service and sacrifice of Australia's Rwanda peacekeeping veterans from Operation TAMAR will be remembered today at a national commemorative service held at the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial on Anzac Parade in Canberra.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel Darren Chester said it is crucial to honour the efforts of Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel in bringing peace to a country overrun with conflict.

"From 1994 to 1996 it is estimated that up to 800,000 people were killed in Rwanda — the magnitude of the violence and killings perpetrated on largely innocent civilians gained worldwide attention and condemnation," Mr Chester said.

"The men and women who served in Rwanda were faced with unimaginable conditions and not even their advanced training and prior deployments could prepare them for what they encountered.

"In the face of these conditions, our ADF personnel went above and beyond in their duties. Thank you



Chief of the Defence Force General Angus Campbell AO, DSC, and Vice Chief of the Defence Force Vice Admiral David Johnston AO, during the National commemorative service for the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda, known as Operation Tamar at the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial in Canberra.



The Last Post is sounded during the National commemorative service.

for your service to our nation and to helping a country in need.”

The two Australian contingents worked in the capital, Kigali and travelled throughout the country, providing help to civilians from July 1994 to March 1996.

At the service, the Governor-General His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) presented the Meritorious Unit Citation Warrant to each Service Chief, or their representatives, who accepted on behalf of their respective service personnel who deployed on the operation.

The Senator for Victoria, David Van, representing the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs acknowledged the role of all Australian peacekeepers who served in Rwanda.

“All three services were represented during Operation TAMAR, and Australian men and women gained great international respect and admiration for their compassion, professionalism and humanity in undertaking the peacekeeping operation,” Senator Van said.

“Today’s service is an opportunity

to honour the service of those involved in Operation TAMAR in support of the United Nations’ peacekeeping efforts and I look forward to meeting many of those who took part and personally thanking them.

“Today is also an opportunity to reflect on all those Australians who have served in peacekeeping operations since 1947 with the aim of making the world a safer and more peaceful place.”

Following the commemorative service, a reception will be held in the Anzac Hall of the Australian War Memorial, where a number of Operation TAMAR veterans will be presented with their individual Meritorious Unit Citation insignia.

“For the some 700 ADF personnel who served in Operation TAMAR, the Meritorious Unit Citation is a worthy tribute in recognition of what they were able to achieve in Rwanda,” Senator Van said.

“Australia will not forget your efforts and I congratulate you on being awarded the Meritorious Unit Citation as deserved recognition.”

The Commemorative Service

will start at 10am today at the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial, Anzac Parade, Canberra. To watch the service, visit the Department of Veterans’ Affairs Facebook page (www.facebook.com/DVAAUS) or watch it live on ABC.



Operation TAMAR, Rwanda 1994 - 1996

“I didn’t feel safe inside the compound, I didn’t feel safe outside the compound.”

So said one Australian peacekeeper of their experience whilst serving on Operation TAMAR in Rwanda during the mid-1990’s, one of the most confronting international operations since Australia’s first Peacekeepers deployed to the field in 1947.

This Central African country, smaller than Tasmania but with a population of some seven million in the early 1990s, had been a colony first of Germany, then of Belgium after the First World War. During the 19th century Europeans identified two main Rwandan ethnic groups. Hutu and Tutsi, though the main distinction between them was in social status, Under Belgian rule, the ‘ruling class’ Tutsi largely ran the country. Their time in power ended with independence in 1962, after which Rwanda’s Governments were generally Hutu dominated. Tens of thousands of Tutsi went into exile in neighbouring Uganda as bitterness about their privileged status lingered. By 1990 many were members of the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF), which invaded Rwanda that year, precipitating a three-year long civil war.

A 1993 ceasefire brought in a short-lived combined Hutu-Tutsi government, which collapsed when an aircraft carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi was shot down outside Rwanda’s capital, Kigali on 6 April 1994, killing all onboard. Hutu extremists seized power and instituted a carefully planned genocide against Tutsi and Hutu who had been willing to negotiate with the RPF.

From Kigali the murderous rampage spread into the Rwandan countryside. The genocide was carried out at first by members of the Rwandan Army and militias, but government propaganda broadcast on local radio around the country and their fear of the RPF drew in civilians.

For many the handiest weapon was a machete. Images of masses of bodies floating in rivers and lakes, and of scenes of brutality in churches and schools where victims had sought refuge, were seen around the world. At least half a million and perhaps 800,000 Rwandans were murdered, and about two million fled their homes, many to neighbouring countries.

United Nations Peacekeepers, members of the UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), had been in the country since late 1993 monitoring the ceasefire after the civil war. Despite warnings, they were taken by surprise when the genocide began and 10 Belgian peacekeepers were killed in the initial wave of violence. UNAMIR was powerless to stop the slaughter. Belgium withdrew its troops, other countries soon followed. And by the end of April there were fewer than 450 UN Personnel in Rwanda, where not long before there had been more than 2000. In mid-May 1994 the UN Security Council authorised a deployment of 5500 extra Peacekeeping Troops.

Australia responded to the UN’s request for a contribution with an offer of a tri-service Medical Support Group of 300 personnel comprising a Medical Company, an Infantry Company for protection and Logistics support. Two of these Contingents were deployed, each doing a six-month tour. It was the largest deployment of Australian Medical Personnel since the Viet Nam War two decades previous.

The Advance Party of Australian personnel arrived Kigali in early August 1994 and were immediately confronted with evidence of the fighting around the airport. Six months later it was still obvious: *“when we landed”,* remembered a member of the Second Contingent, *“the very first thing I was everything blown to hell. there were bullet holes in the walls”*. The first Australians to arrive went straight to the Kigali Central Hospital, the base for the next 12 months. It was a shambles, strewn with wreckage, with signs of the recent violence

all too evident. The clean-up was harrowing, and once it was finished there were holes and other damage to the building from mortar, machine-gun and artillery fire to repair.

Travis Standen was with the first Contingent. His assessment was simply that *“Rwanda was a dangerous place”*. Even getting to the hospital to the UN Compound a five-minute walk away was fraught. The route passed an RPF Barracks and the hostility was palpable. Everyone went armed and wore helmets and flak jackets. Rwandan soldiers were still dragging civilians off the street in broad daylight. An Australian officer described the RPF as *“unpredictable and dangerous individuals...including many of their field grade officers”*, the very men who should have maintained discipline.

The bulk of the First Contingent of Australians arrived in late August and began work. Their main job was to provide medical assistance to UN personnel but, said Peter Matthey, *“there’s not much wrong with the UN guys. It was more the locals that we dealt with”*. Most were civilians, survivors only now having badly infected wounds treated, landmine or road accident victims and people suffering from one or more of the serious diseases abroad in the wake of the mass killing. Many were children. John Turner remembered *“they were all orphaned... they’re the only ones left in the family”*. Carol Vaughan-Evans, a doctor, regularly worked in a Kigali orphanage where *“there were always sick children...I promised myself I wouldn’t become attached.. but, after six months, leaving was one of the hardest things I had to do.”*

Kigali was the Base, but the need for medical care was acute everywhere in Rwanda and the Australians sent roving teams into the countryside, always with Infantry escort. Evidence of the genocide was widespread: *“we went into this monastery”,* remembered Travis Standen, and *“it was quite clear*

that a lot of killing had been done... because... all over the room, the walls, the roof, the floor, there was just blood stains, chop marks in the concrete where machetes had come down."

On 19 April 1995 a 32-person Medical Team and Infantry Platoon were despatched to the Kibeho refugee camp in the south of Rwanda. The RPF who ran the camp had begun clearing it before the Australians arrived and the situation was becoming desperate. The refugees, mainly Hutu and among them people who'd been involved in the genocide, had gone days without food. Some had died in stampedes and others were killed by the RPF. On 22 April the violence intensified, becoming a large-scale massacre. Andrew Miller remembered "a massive amount of fire power" directed into the valley where thousands of people had crowded. When the firing died down the Australians went out to bring in wounded. For his work that day Miller received the Medal for Gallantry (MG). So did Carol Vaughan-Evans, who treated patients, as one witness said, "with bullets flying all around". She later reflected "we had witnessed murder on a grand scale. It was... beyond our comprehension."

The Medical Company Sergeant Major, WO2 Rod Scott; and the Infantry Platoon Commander LT Steve Tilbrook were also to receive the MG for their service at Kibeho.

The Australians remained in Rwanda until August 1995. They had fulfilled their mission, though the UN has often been criticised for failing to halt the genocide. Few were sorry to leave. "Couldn't wait to get out of the place", remembered Travis Standen. When their aircraft took off, Andrew Miller joined the "mass whoops and cheers and clapping and carrying on". No Australians lost their lives on Operation TAMAR, but several were injured and many came home suffering from PTSD. "I have nightmares, can't sleep", said Travis Standen seven years after his tour. Though it had been a difficult, testing experience, many still shared Andrew Miller's sentiments: "I'm extremely proud that I went...we made a difference while we were there."

Today, Rwanda is stable and a contributing member of the



LTCOL Ian Lindgren (Retired), the Vice President of the APPVA, at the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial for OP TAMAR 22 Feb 2020. Ian Lindgren

international community. Economic growth continues to rise, creating greater opportunities for locals resulting in a reduction of poverty and inequality throughout the region.

"Our bodies and minds bear amputations and scars, but none of us is alone", said President Paul Kagame at a ceremony marking the 25th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide. "Rwandans exist in a state of permanent commemoration, every day, in all that we do... Today, light radiates from this place."

Rwandans are united by their culture and their history; the foundation of this growing prosperity is without doubt in no small part due to the efforts of Australian and other United Nations Peacekeepers from the contributing nations.

From: The Order of Service for the National Service of the 25th Anniversary of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda, Operation TAMAR.

Editor: I spoke to a number of Rwandan Veterans on that day of commemoration. Many were proud and said that it was great closure for them to have their service recognised by such a great Commemorative Service and the awarding of the Meritorious Unit Citation.

One thing that I did notice, was that almost all of the Rwandan veterans, besides a couple, were NOT wearing their UN Blue Berets. Was this because they had lost faith in the UN,

in the aftermath of Rwanda?

However, there remains some recognition issues that continue to be outstanding, for example:

Warlike service for the Strategic Reconnaissance Team from HQADF who drove through areas of genocide North to South from Burundi into Rwanda;

The Australian UNOSOM II Personnel who risked their lives attempting to Air Deliver 8 NATO European/Canadian War Stock M113 APCs in IL-26 Russian Aircraft from Mogadishu, via Uganda to Kigali in the middle of the fighting, repatriating badly wounded and raped nuns and foreign nationals, taking up to three sorties – all under fire, the fourth cancelled due to the Kigali Airport being destroyed; and

The RAAF Aircrews that delivered aid and other supplies in support of the UN Mission in Rwanda also remain under-recognised.

The APPVA is pursuing these matters.



Dreams. A Veteran of the Kibeho Massacre in Rwanda.

"Why don't you understand?" I scream at the crowd I am addressing. I am so frustrated and angry that you just don't get it. I am suffering from PTSD and the fact that you can't see that brings me to tears. How can I explain this to you? Sure, I know you have read a few articles, seen a few pictures and even read the odd book but you still don't see what I see, or feel what I feel. I'll show you some more pictures. Have you seen these ones? Look closer, read more in depth, it's all there. Why do you still not get it? I know you have served overseas, but you weren't where I was. Is this a competition about who had a harder time? No I don't think so. Here, check out this magazine, it has a four page spread with pictures about where I served. Why can you still not understand why I am the way I am? I easily get frustrated and angry at the littlest things, sometimes I even lash out. Things that don't bother other people really annoy me, and yet things that don't bother me annoy others. I am not a very patient person. That is only some of what PTSD does to me. How about I show you some movie clips from my mind? I've got about twenty hanging up in the back room. Would that help you understand? No! I didn't think so. Your not really even interested in watching any. You never will be, it all happened so long ago, in a place you have never even heard of. It's not that you don't care, it's that you have moved on. So has the rest of the world. But don't you understand this is still happening for me right now? This will never leave me and there is no moving on for me. I am forever stuck here. This is so frustrating and now you have put all my emotions into a terrible turmoil. Can you please try to understand just a little? I guess I will have to leave it at that because it is embarrassing having tears of frustration and anger pouring down my face in front of you. I will never be able to explain this enough for you to get it. I am the only one who does gets it. Time to wake up. The dream is over.

My dreams have changed over the years, evolved if you like. It's been twenty five years since I witnessed the Kibeho Massacre in Rwanda and yet I still see things like it was yesterday. My dreams are always so real, so raw and so emotional. At first they were all about not having enough medical supplies like bandages to treat mass casualties around me. Then they progressed to feeling like I was always being assessed or judged by higher authorities while I was treating multiple casualties, being told how I could have done better. Then the worst dreams came next. They were about coming across scenes of horror as I found hundreds of dead and dying casualties with horrific wounds that I would have to treat. Then there were the badly injured that should have been dead, but somehow continued to live, that I would have to keep treating, just wishing and hoping they would die soon. These dreams would wake me up and I would lay there sweating as I tried to figure out my emotional state.

For a while I dreamt that I could never quite get my uniform right. I would be missing my boots or my brass was not clean enough. A lot of the time I had the incorrect rank sown on my shirt sleeves, or I would be wearing the wrong coloured beret. These dreams progressed to not having the right medals, forgetting to bring my medals or forgetting to update my now out of date medals, to be worn on a parade. One time I was finally awarded a Commendation for Distinguished Service in recognition of the work done in Kibeho and I was really proud and also relieved that I had finely been formally recognised for bravery and courage under fire during the Kibeho Massacre, but then I woke up and was deeply disappointed to find that it had only been a dream.

How about trying to understand the continued feeling of despair and hopelessness that appears every day when I think back and wonder if I could have done better. Did I pick

the right people to treat? Should I have not picked some because they died anyway? Should we have used our weapons to defend those poor people? Would we have been killed if we had? Who knows? I don't. Do you? Can anyone answer this? No! I didn't think so.

What about living with the continued attitude of others thinking that Peacekeepers are not the same as other war veterans, and the belief that peacekeeping is more of a United Nations paid holiday? As Paul Copeland OAM. JP. said about his United Nations mission in Cambodia, "The whole place is like a powder keg, one match and it could explode." Well guess what? Kibeho was the powder keg that did explode. Some holiday.

So now my dreams are about trying to tell people about why I suffer PTSD and what it is like to suffer from PTSD. No wonder people can't understand. How can they know what it feels like to watch over 4,000 helpless, unarmed men, women, and children be slaughtered in front of you while you are not allowed to intervene due to United Nations rules of engagement? They were not there. They will never know how it feels to be forced to choose which casualties to treat and which to leave to die, due to the sheer volume of injured. They have never done negative triage. Probably never even heard of it. The feeling of guilt and frustration about this will never go away. The best dream I have is when I am behind the sandbag wall and I see the "enemy" and I shoot two of them. It makes me feel good and that I have finally been able to do the "right thing." I wake up so peacefully happy until I realise that yet again it was just a dream.

Any way, I guess I will just get on with my life. I will continue to be angry and annoyed when I hear of others being awarded honours for simply doing their mundane everyday jobs. I will still be astounded when I see people honoured so swiftly for their bravery or courage simply because it was witnessed by the world. The

world didn't see us. I will remain amused that it took eleven years for my mission to be upgraded from non-warlike to war-like service, and that it took seven years of stressful struggling with bureaucracy for my friend to finally be told our mission can now wear a unit citation, twenty five years after the mission.

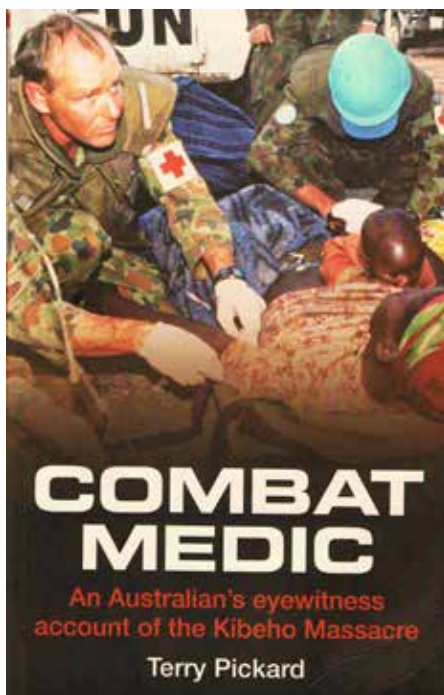
Now I know why so very few veterans from any conflict talk about what they have been through. It hurts to remember. I also know that others have been through far worse than I could ever imagine. So I will continue to dream my PTSD dreams and be happy that I am here, but also realising you weren't there, so you will still never get it.

Perhaps this comparison will help a little. Oskar Schindler watched in horror from the hill above, while mounted on his horse, as the slaughter of the Jews in Krakow Ghetto in Poland continued. The Germans were ruthless in not sparing anyone. Helpless men, women and children were being murdered by the hundreds in front of his eyes. To save ammunition the Germans lined men up against a wall and with one rifle shot would kill at least six, and then they would finish the others off with a pистe. Others would be chased down and shot, and yet others were simply beaten to death where they stood. No matter where people ran and hid they were mathematically hunted down and killed. Oskar felt the horror and frustration and the total disbelief that something like this could actually happen, his face showed the total helplessness that he was feeling. His anger and disgust at the whole situation grew as he watched in amazement as a little girl in a red coat wondered unnoticed down the road. He could do nothing. Later he would have to pick the people he could save and the ones he could not. His list could not include everyone. He would always question weather he picked the right ones or weather he could have saved more than he did.

Second from top: In heavy rain, Rwandan troops entered the hospital compound and started shooting. In desperation, people surged over the razor wire and swamped the soldiers' position.

Bottom: Rwanda the Australian Contingent 1994-1995.

Photos George Gittoes



Terry's book "Combat Medic", well worth the read.



Sergeant Terry Pickard under fire in Kibeho,



Remembering Operation TAMAR - Rwanda

With the recent 25th anniversary of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda, Operation TAMAR, Australians had an opportunity to remember the service and sacrifice of our peacekeepers who deployed to Rwanda—and all those who have served before and since.

Operation TAMAR saw Australia send two contingents of medical and support units to Rwanda from August 1994 to August 1995. Australian peacekeepers worked in the capital, Kigali, and travelled throughout the country, providing medical help to civilians, including those in internment and refugee camps. Members of both contingents were confronted with scenes of violence and brutality the like of which few other Australian peacekeepers had experienced.

The Operation TAMAR veterans

showed great resilience, but for some this deployment has had a lasting impact—with them suffering PTSD since their return. Thankfully, many of these veterans have shown courage in seeking assistance and support from services like Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling (Open Arms).

Open Arms is Australia's leading provider of high quality mental health services to the military community and they understand the culture and experiences of Australian veterans and their families (many of their counsellors are veterans themselves).

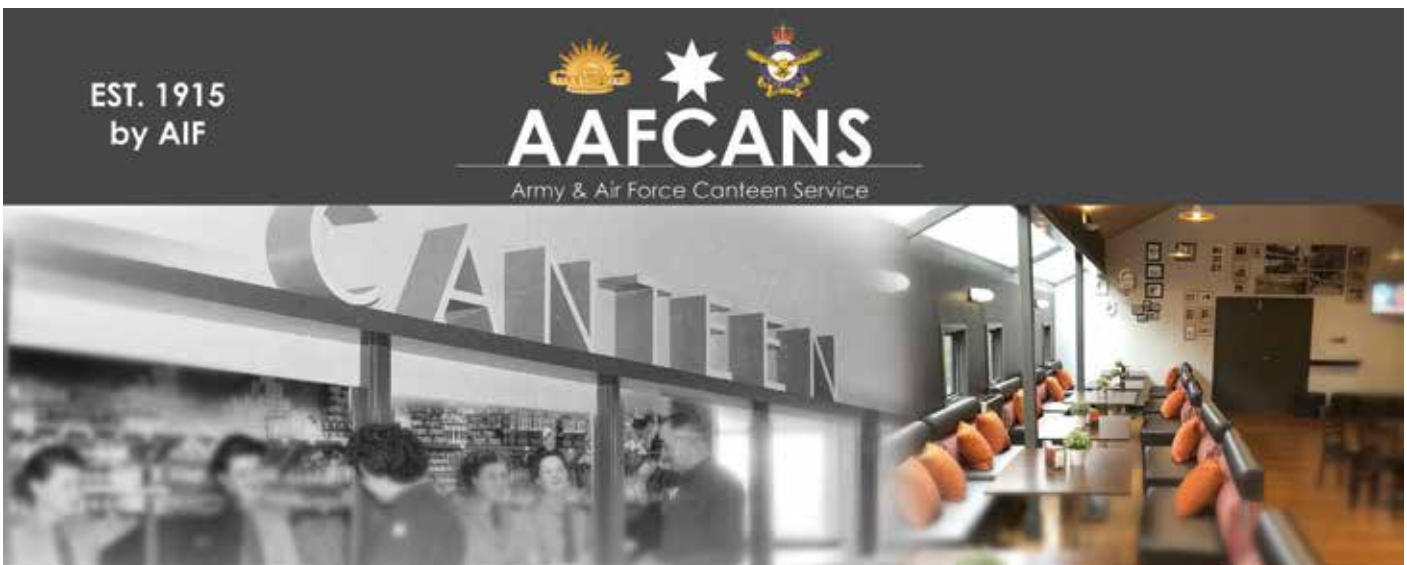
Available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, their specialist counsellors can offer assistance with immediate counselling needs or with someone to talk to about longer-term issues. The free and confidential support line (1800 011 046) is a safe place to call for

help in a range of situations including managing stress, trauma and/or significant life challenges.

Open Arms also offer group programs to assist veteran and defence communities live their best lives. From sleeping better, pain management, stress reduction workshops to relationship retreats, and suicide intervention education workshops there are a range of programs available.

There are also online resources and mobile apps including PTSD Coach and High Res which can help you learn about and manage the symptoms that commonly occur after trauma.

If you know a current or ex-serving ADF member (or someone who is part of a military family) who needs support encourage them to call Open Arms on 1800 011 046 or visit openarms.gov.au



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Gin and Tonic: its military history and Dutch Courage

How G&T saved soldiers lives and strengthened the Empire

David Wells

HISTORY OF GIN AND TONIC

A brief history of gin and tonic reveals how the origins of the drink are far more significant than a frivolous Christmas party tippie – so much so that Winston Churchill credited the cocktail with not only saving the lives of British soldiers but also contributing to the strength of the Empire.

The history of the drink, widely known as a G&T, is intertwined with the military history of the British Army and the Royal Navy.

There are two halves to the story – one is that of tonic and how it came into being, and the other is that of gin itself and how British soldiers had a part in its development and distribution.

Not only did gin and tonic eventually become a lifesaver, due to its creation as a less bitter method of consuming its key ingredient, quinine, which was used to stave off malaria for British troops in tropical climates dating back to the 1800s, but the spread of gin itself can be attributed to British soldiers discovering the juniper-flavoured Dutch gin Genever in the 17th century, while fighting in the Thirty Years War in the Netherlands.



HISTORY OF GIN AND TONIC WATER

Churchill, pontificating over the drink's role in both protecting British troops from the mosquito-borne infectious disease, malaria, and as a boost to morale, once said:

"The gin and tonic has saved more Englishmen's lives, and minds, than all the doctors in the Empire."

And this is why.

In the early days of the British Raj - the rule of India by the British Crown's Empire that spanned from 1858 right up until 1947 - malaria had massacred a multitude of British soldiers' and government officials' lives at an alarming rate.

The parasitic disease threatened to lay waste to the ranks of British troops, and the ambitions of the British Empire along with it.

It was thanks to how a discovery,

made about a hundred years' earlier in the 1700s by Spanish conquistadors, found its way into European hands that gave the Empire a new weapon to fight malaria – and eventually led to the creation of a new tonic beverage - thus one half of the G&T story.

CINCHONA BARK TONIC

The indigenous population of Peru had long used the bark of a tree, cinchona, as a form of homeopathic medicine to treat a variety of fever-based illnesses – a discovery that Peru's new Spanish rulers were quick to pick up on in the 17th century.

It was later discovered that the bark also worked as a treatment for malaria, not only treating the symptoms of the disease but also as a prevention.

The active ingredient was quinine, which, crushed down into a powder, could be administered as a medicine.



The treatment eventually filtered through Europe and into the hands of the Empire, whose administrators fuelled demand for cinchona bark as they realised this was the medicine they needed to supply masses of soldiers with protective doses of quinine in hot, damp climates such as India, where our Imperial interests not only included a military station, but also included trading operations with the British East India Company.

Almost 800 tons of cinchona bark are said to have been imported each year into India by the mid-1800s as the medicinal powder was administered to both British civilians and soldiers as a standard ration.

HOW QUININE BECAME A TONIC

The powdered bark was very bitter – not something that soldiers readily wanted to consume.

The answer lay in a little experimentation – mixing the powder with other ingredients such as sugar, and some soda, to make the treatment more palatable, resulting in a sweeter, bubblier liquid to help the medicine go down ... creating a tonic for the troops.

Higher ranking officers and officials experimented further, adding their own pick-me-up ingredient with a measure of gin – and thus the Gin and Tonic was born.

THE GIN STORY – HOW BRITISH SOLDIERS AND SAILORS PLAYED A PART

A form of juniper-based distilled spirit is documented as far back as the 11th century when it was made by Italian monks, but Dutch genever, thought of as the 'mother of gin', is thought to have originated in about the 16th century.

Like many recipes, genever and gin evolved over time, with many variations but a Dutch physician named Franciscus Sylvius is largely credited with the growth of genever as a popular medicinal potion in the 1500s.

By the time English soldiers arrived in Holland in 1618, the Dutch had already been drinking a potent form of genever, or jenever, a malted grain-based spirit flavoured with juniper berries which at times had



been marketed as a treatment for a variety of ailments including stomach pains and gout, to aid circulation, or as a morale boosting pick-me-up.

This is the first part of the gin story, as soldiers fighting in the Thirty Years War and sailors brought genever back to English shores before variants soon began to appear.

DUTCH COURAGE

We also have military banter to thank for the idiom Dutch Courage – which relates to the history of genever and gin.

There are various popular folk history stories around the phrase.

One was that English soldiers seized on the notion that foreign soldiers were said to have downed tots of genever before a battle – sipping from their hipflasks as they marched to war.

Gossip, banter and hearsay is thought to have fuelled a disparaging slur that cowardly enemy soldiers had to drink copious amounts of the stuff

before they were brave enough to fight ... hence 'Dutch Courage'.

Or perhaps the 'Dutch Courage' idiom could have simply come from English soldiers themselves picking up on the practice of having a shot of genever before battle, for its calming effects and for warming up the body in cold weather.

Another version suggests that soldiers generally on all sides picked up on the drink's bravery inducing effects – a courage boosting pick-me-up.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GENEVER AND GIN?

Similarities still exist between genever and gin – juniper based with citrus peels and spices, but where genever is made from malted grains, rye, barley or corn, gin can be distilled from any raw material.

Various factors influenced the development of gin in Britain in the 1600s after its original form was brought back by soldiers and sailors.

William of Orange, who was Dutch, took to the throne in Britain in 1689 to rule with his wife Mary II. In a trade war with France, he not only relaxed legislation on the distillation of spirits but also imposed tax duty on French imported spirits like brandy.



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The result was an explosion of experimentation, trying new methods of distillation and ingredients, and the relaxed rules also allowed the use of English grain in distillation, including low-quality barley that had been rejected by the beer brewing industry.

Between 1695 and 1735, hundreds of small gin-distillery operations set up as a result – sparking a problematic drinking epidemic among the poor, known as the Gin Craze, as cheap, freely-available gin variants flooded the market.

However, it wasn't until the 1800s that technology spurred on the development of gin.

New inventions and methods, especially following the invention of the column still in about 1826, created higher proof spirits, that could not only be made more quickly for less cost, but also introduced repeat distillation methods – which eventually led to something along the lines of the gin we know today, including the London dry-style gin.

GIN AND THE ROYAL NAVY

The British Navy helped spread gin worldwide as British influence dominated the globe.

Not only that but, again, a need for medicinal treatments for military personnel led to officers turning to whatever they could find as a treatment - this time for scurvy.

Gin was already thought of as a treatment for some ailments but by adding lemon juice to the citrus ingredients, the drink was considered a tonic to prevent the illness brought on by a lack of vitamin C - a high risk factor for sailors at sea for great lengths of time.

By the 18th century, every naval vessel was required by law to carry a certain quantity of the spirit.

That included "lime or lemon juice and other anti-scorbutics to be provided and kept on board certain ships".

In the 18th century, it was believed to be the cure for various illnesses, and a legislation was passed requiring every vessel to take on board a certain quantity of this spirit.

All newly commissioned ships received a 'Gin Commissioning Kit' - a wooden box containing two bottles of 'Navy Strength' gin and glassware - in a practice that lasted for almost two hundred years.

The tradition has long been abandoned but there is still a special relationship between the Royal Navy and gin.

WHAT IS NAVY STRENGTH GIN?

Navy Strength gin is typically stronger

(57% ABV) than the original mixture (41.2% ABV).

Prior to 1816, there was no way to measure the strength of a spirit.

The Royal Navy Supply Offices, known as 'Pussers', needed to find a way to check that they were receiving what was ordered.

They started to add grains of their gunpowder to their gin to test its alcoholic strength.

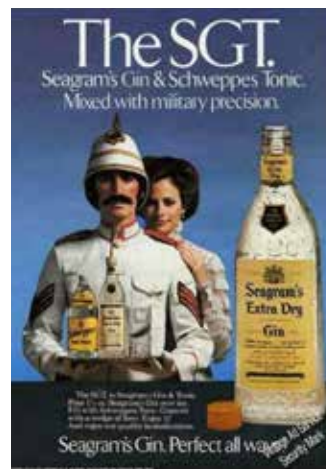
By heating the mixture using the sun's rays and a magnifying glass, they would find out whether the mixture was or wasn't 'proof'.

If the gunpowder failed to light, it was diluted gin.

Only if the gin was at least 114 proof (or as we know it today, 57% ABV), the gunpowder would still light.

The gin became famous as 'Navy Strength', and the technique would protect the Navy from being overcharged for watered gin and made sure that all ships were safe.

Retrieved from: <https://www.forces.net/stories/gin-and-tonic-its-military-history-and-dutch-courage> on 18 December 2019.



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How ready is Australia for Peacekeeping Operations?

Australia has a proud history of engagement with the UN, including participating in and leading UN peace operations, from Cyprus in 1964 to East Timor in 1999. But peace operations have fallen off the Australian priority list over the past 20 years, and our experience gained in the early 2000s is beginning to look dated.

Many of those who had peace operations experience in the Australian Defence Force and the Australian Federal Police have now moved on in their careers. The nature of peace operations has also changed. UN peacekeeping missions today are much closer to war-fighting or counterterrorism operations than they were when Australia last led them.

In October last year, the prime minister announced an Australian co-deployment of peacekeepers to the Golan Heights. With this in mind, it seems reasonable to consider

Australia's readiness for future peace operations. If we intend to dust off our UN peace operations role, how well prepared are we? Based on discussions I had in mid-2019 with subject-matter experts from the AFP, the ADF, the government and the non-government sector, the answer is mixed.

Given Australia's current focus on the Pacific, it's most likely that that's where an Australian contingent would be deployed if the need arose. Police networks are much more prevalent in the region than militaries, which means the AFP is more likely to be called on than the ADF to respond to a crisis.

Australia gained deep levels of experience in regional stabilisation missions such as RAMSI throughout the 2000s and was even considered a world leader in peace operations policing. In 2014, as a member of the UN Security Council, Australia secured the first-ever resolution focused on

UN policing. Since then, however, our commitment to and specific capability for police peacekeeping appear to have quietly faded. The capability shortfall ranges from a lack of basic understanding of how the UN system works (for example, the effect of a Security Council mandate on the rules of engagement, and how the chain of command works in a UN mission) to a lack of specific UN-mandated predeployment training, which used to be, but is no longer, integrated into the ADF training continuum.

AFP readiness was dealt a significant blow when, in 2015, the agency's International Deployment Group (IDG) underwent a substantial internal restructure. This group was a highly trained and specialised unit focused on the particular challenges of police peacekeeping that are distinct from the day-to-day work of the AFP (such as dealing with actors with access to weapons not readily available in Australia, multiagency





cooperation and international mandates). Of course, internal restructuring is a consistent feature of government. At the time, the perception was that the role would no longer be required in an environment of limited AFP resources.

However, what was lost was the readiness to deploy quickly, as instruction in those essential and specialised skills was removed from AFP training. The AFP does maintain extensive community policing and mentoring networks across the region and it's already well represented in the front lines of relevant institutions. But the reality is that any decision to pull people from those roles to contribute to a peace operation would be at the cost of existing tasks, and diverting resources from established functions to a new line of effort would require time and funding and interrupt other essential work.

To put it another way, the AFP doesn't have built-in 'fat' as an organisation, and diverting officers to peacekeeping missions would take them away from anti-drug operations, airport security, institution-building, counterterrorism and other vital work in our region. If a crisis requiring peace operations policing arises, the mission will need to be 'recruited to', and AFP officers will need to undertake specific training before they can be deployed. The restructuring of the IDG is a significant blow to the operational readiness of the AFP for peace operations.

There also seems to be some confusion between the ADF and AFP about whole-of-government capabilities and readiness. For example, the status of the AFP's IDG isn't well known within the ADF. Unless the reality of the AFP's readiness is accurately understood and taken into account by the ADF now, the viability of planning for a real-life crisis is at risk.

It was clear from my discussions with AFP and ADF members that there's a unanimous political will to act if something happens in the region on the scale of events in Solomon Islands or Timor-Leste. What's missing is the readiness to respond to such a crisis quickly. For example, peace-operation-specific skills aren't integrated into large-scale military exercises such as Talisman Sabre, as they reportedly once were. The departmental resources required for AFP and civilian agency participation in military exercises are considerable and divert officers away from their day jobs.

So, while the scenarios practised in exercises, such as humanitarian disasters, stabilisation or peace operations, would undoubtedly have a strong police or civilian lead in real life, rehearsing with those key players is increasingly difficult because only militaries are resourced with planning as a central task. If the transition from war-fighting to peace operations—or from green to blue—isn't practised sufficiently with Australia's regional and strategic partners, we may be



underprepared should a crisis arise.

What's lacking in our current peace operations readiness is clear: there's no whole-of-government policy. People working in this area see Australia as a frontrunner in regional training and leadership for peace operations, but it seems that view is based on our peace operations experience of 15 to 20 years ago and the ADF's standing in the region as a professional, highly trained defence force.

The AFP and ADF need to work with government agencies in a more consistent and concerted fashion. Other components of planning—such as policy and political enablers—need to be brought into the conversation to ensure that operations, policy and planning across the whole of government are more consistent. A coordinated approach, including integrated and updated training and exercising, would ensure that Australia's readiness is understood across the board and that accurate planning is based on today's capabilities, not those of two decades ago.

Josie Hornung is a research fellow at the Australian Civil-Military Centre (ACMC) and a PhD candidate in international relations at the University of Queensland. This work was conducted for ACMC and is informed by discussions with officials from the Department of Defence, the Australian Federal Police and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Image: Department of Defence.

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High-Risk' secret plan to withdraw British Troops from Bosnia revealed



1st Battalion The Royal Welsh Fusiliers, who had been held hostage in Bosnia, disembarking from a Canadian aircraft in June 1995

Declassified documents have revealed how Sir John Major shut down a "high-risk" operation to withdraw troops from Bosnia in 1995.

Defence chiefs drafted a "high-risk" top-secret plan to withdraw British troops from a key battleground during the Bosnian War, newly declassified documents reveal.

The air evacuation from Gorazde, involving 1,500 military personnel, was presented to Prime Minister Sir John Major in 1995.

The planned mission was proposed amid fears the Muslim enclave would fall under an offensive from the Bosnian Serb Army.

Details of the plan, codenamed Operation Screwdriver, disclosed how helicopters would be brought in, under the cover of relative darkness, to airlift British troops to safety.

The documents, released by the National Archives at the Kew show, said the operation would last "10 to 15 minutes".

However, the proposed mission was not without its risks.

According to briefing notes, the operation would have involved a fleet of 30 helicopters, as well as Harrier jets, all on standby in nearby Italy.

A copy of a letter from the then Defence Secretary Michael Portillo to the prime minister in July 1995, said: "We must never lose sight of the fact that this is a high-risk operation in military terms."

The classified note said the operation would require "tactical surprise" to be effective, as well as a green-light from United Nations commanders.

"It is planned that some disruption measures will be employed immediately prior to the evacuation sortie," the message read.

"These would range from the precise electronic jamming of 'enemy' communications through to the destruction of any key installations posing a threat to extraction."

However, the prime minister was not impressed with the plan.

<https://www.forces.net/news/high-risk-secret-plan-withdraw-british-troops-bosnia-revealed>



A Chinook was one of the helicopters that was proposed to be used in the mission. MODUK.



Sir John Major was the prime minister at the time of the war.



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Australia's evolving role in Afghan training missions

Australia's role in the NATO-led Resolute Support Mission is evolving in recognition of progress made by the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF).

Around 100 troops from the Train, Advise and Assist Command – Air (TAAC-Air), Command Staff Academy, Sergeant Major's Academy and national support functions, will return to Australia.

Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC said the success of these training efforts was a credit to the high quality and expertise of Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel.

"The ADF has been integral to the development of a modern and effective Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and I want to thank our Australian personnel for the expertise they have brought to their respective missions," Minister Reynolds said.

"While Australia's contribution to the NATO-led Resolute Support

Mission will continue, elements of the ADF's support have transitioned to reflect the progress made by the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces, and the Afghan Government's evolving requirements."

Australia's role with the Command Staff Academy and Sergeant Major's Academy has ended, reflecting the growing competency of our Afghan partners within these training institutions.

A small team of mentors and trainers will remain to train Afghan military leaders through the Afghan National Army Officer Academy.

Australia's support to the Afghan Air Force has shifted from providing tactical advice to the delivery of strategic advice.

Two Australian advisers will continue to assist the Afghan Air Force by delivering support to the Afghan Ministry of Defense.

Since 2001, Australia's mission in Afghanistan has been to support the Afghan Government help contain the

threat from international terrorism and support the development of a capable and sustainable defence force.

In this time, the ADF has mentored the 4th Brigade in Tarin Kowt, Uruzghan, advised the 205th Corps in Kandahar, contributed to the development of the Afghan Special Security Forces and the raising of the Afghan Air Force.

Australian forces have also supported the training and advising of over 2,500 Afghan Officers through the Command Staff Academy and over 600 soldiers at the Sergeant Major Academy.

In April 2020, the Afghan National Army Officer Academy, where the ADF continues to provide support, will see its 5,000th officer graduate.

Australia will continue to contribute around 200 personnel to Operation HIGHROAD, which is the ADF commitment to the NATO-led train, advise and assist Resolute Support Mission.

An Australian Army Guardian Angel provides security while officer cadets at the Afghan National Army Officer Academy (ANAOA) undertake instruction in the close training area at Qargha, Afghanistan.



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Navy medic Adrian studied online to expand his career horizons. And you can too.



Adrian
Studied a Graduate Certificate in Health Promotion, Curtin University

For Navy medic Adrian, life in the defence force was jam-packed. His role involved training up-and-coming navy recruits in evacuating casualties, nursing the wounded, giving trauma care and providing life support.

Put simply, it was a lifestyle, not just a job. For many in defence, it's a situation that's all too familiar.

However, Adrian had a "career itch" he hadn't yet scratched. Despite his Bachelor of Paramedics and 10-years in the Navy, he'd always wanted to work in health promotion. Namely, he wanted to develop policies that help children make better choices about food and exercise.

The flexible solution

Not long after Adrian decided to pursue a change in career, he discovered Open Universities Australia (OUA).

As Adrian found, OUA offers hundreds of subjects and degrees with leading Australian universities – all of which are available to study online.

What's more, Adrian found that he could pick up one subject at a time, allowing him to continue his full-time involvement as a Navy medic while studying in the evenings.

As a passionate member of defence, this was an ideal solution.

Making it happen

With online study in his sights, Adrian's dream was fast becoming a possibility.

Empowered by the ease and flexibility on offer, Adrian took the leap – enrolling in the Graduate Certificate in Health Promotion with Curtin University, through OUA.

"It was an easy online process – simply going online, choosing what I needed to do. I basically followed the bouncing ball from there." Adrian says.

An ocean of opportunity

Now on the other side of studying his degree through OUA, Adrian is incredibly glad that he took the leap.

Online study has helped him develop skills in researching, implementing and evaluating health promotion programs to better the health of others – giving him the knowledge and career opportunities he'd always dreamed of.

What's more, as with all courses available through OUA, Adrian's qualification is exactly the same as if he had studied on-campus.

An option no matter your goals

Whether you've been harboring a desire to explore a different career like Adrian, would like to go for a promotion, or are simply curious about a new topic or industry, online study is an ideal way to make it happen – without having to sacrifice your current defence role.

While a degree may be in your sights, many defence personnel choose a single subject to get started. It's an ideal way to follow a passion, stay current in an area of interest, or simply test the water and see whether online study is for you.

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Throwing the doors open in a time of need

It was the busiest time of year for the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) and Royal Military College – Duntroon (RMC), but when the calls came to accommodate hundreds of firefighters, SES personnel, transiting ADF members and even a childcare centre, the Duntroon Garrison team launched a massive coordinated effort to make sure their guests had everything they would need.

Within a day, the ADFA gymnasium facilities at Campbell, ACT, were set up to accommodate 350 people, with the nearby RMC ready to accommodate an additional 76.

“To the best of my knowledge, nothing like this has ever been done before at ADFA or RMC,” ADFA executive officer Lieutenant Commander Jon Little, said.

“We hired portable showers and toilets, acquired towels and linen so that everyone had a towel, sheets and as many blankets as they wanted,” he said.

Working through a roster system, ADFA trainee officers were utilised to provide a central point of contact

for the guests. The trainee Officers undertook these roles in addition to assisting ADFA Staff with the Year One Familiarisation Training of 360 new Officers.

“It was great to watch our trainee officers apply theoretical lessons in practical applications,” Lieutenant Commander Little said.

“They were required to develop last-minute solutions to uncommon problems, such as dietary requirements presented on the day and pharmacy scripts that needed to be filled late at night when firefighters returned from duty.

“The firefighters, with some being former ADF members, shared their stories and gave the trainees life experiences that we could never give them.”

The trainees also escorted groups of guests to the cadet’s mess, which was in itself a massive coordinated effort.

“So that we could rotate everyone through, groups had set times to eat at the mess,” Lieutenant Commander Little said.

“All nine Canberra messes provided cut lunches and hot boxes to firefighters if they didn’t have the opportunity to eat at the mess.”

In total, Canberra messes provided 14,960 meals in support of Operation Bushfire Assist.

Before the last contingent of firefighters departed the ADFA on February 10, ADF Director Education and Training Group Captain Jeff Howard presented Rural Fire Service Queensland officer Sam Eitz with a cap as a token of appreciation in front of 36 departing firefighters.

“Honestly, I don’t think anymore could have been done for us,” Mr Eitz said.

“Any questions, any issues we had was met with ‘yes we can get that done’ or ‘yep, we’ll make that happen’ so we felt supported by everyone around us.”

“We can’t thank everyone enough for everything that was done for us while we were there.”

L-R QLD Fire and Emergency Services officer, Sam Eitz, receives an ADFA from RAAF, Group Captain Jeff Howard, Director Education and Training, ADFA.



Captain Peter McCarthy

By Barry Hickman
 Tasmanian APPVA member

A single brick embedded in the footpath at Port Sorell's defence memorial is a quiet, powerful reminder of a "forgotten" soldier.

Port Sorell's Barry Hickman served as a United Nations peacekeeper in the Middle East back in 1986 and '87, and it was there he came across Captain Peter McCarthy.

"We used to stay at a hotel called The American Colony, in East Jerusalem" he said.

"We'd stay there as we were coming onto station to get briefed, and then stay there again as we were leaving. There was a crossover of several days with people coming and going, and a bit of an informal debrief amongst ourselves."

"Peter came as I was going."

Less than a year later, Captain McCarthy was dead, killed while on a routine patrol in Southern Lebanon. He was driving a UN jeep down a track from a ridge line which overlooked the coast of Lebanon.

"There was a landmine in the road, because the local Amal group thought, or at least hoped, the next person on that road would be their Israeli enemy.

"A landmine can't see the black UN painted on your white jeep."

12 January 2020 marked 32 years since Captain Peter McCarthy was killed. He became the first Australian military personnel to die in post-World War II peacekeeping operations.

Mr Hickman said a few years ago the Lions Club had decided to finance the development of the Port Sorell Defence Memorial by selling bricks to line the footpath.

"In my case I bought three bricks," he said.

"One for my uncle who served in World War II in Lebanon, one for me and one for Peter McCarthy.

"He was forgotten, by some, for a long time, because he wasn't considered to have been deployed in a warlike situation."



Last Post Ceremony - Commemorating Captain Peter James McCarthy (Royal Australian Corps of Transport, UNTSO). 10 December 2018. *Marcus Fillinger*

Namibia 30 years of independence

On March 21st 2020 Namibia will celebrate 30 years of Independence and a number of UNTAG veterans are returning to Windhoek to reflect and participate in celebrating this milestone.

Approximately 35 UNTAG Veterans plus partners and families from various countries including Australia, Denmark, Finland and Poland have indicated they will be returning.

The roles of the Australians 17th Construction Squadron leading up to the elections and independence from South Africa was as follows:

- Service support: Support was provided to approximately 500 electoral centres and police stations through the siting and erection of either permanent or portable accommodation as well as the provision of essential services;
- Construction engineering: including the construction, modification or upgrade of UNTAG working and living accommodation, the provision of essential services (power, water



and air traffic control facilities) and the maintenance and upgrade of roads and Opuwo airfield.

- Ready Reaction Force: On two separate occasions during the November 1989 election, the ASC's Ready Reaction Force was used to disperse rioters who were offering violence to UN election motors, including Australians. Corporal

John Hodge was awarded the Conspicuous

Service Medal (CSM) for crowd control actions during the election period.

The squadron also conducted other works tasks which included an upgrade of the Rundu air base (construction of a movement facility and helipads), construction of a school building for one of the local schools, and the upgrade and maintenance of roads and hard-stands in the area.

As part of the return to Namibia I will be visiting "the North" around Oshakati to hand over funds raised to support "Warren UNTAG" with a roof for his constructed residence where we shall create the "Bear Cave" other ranks watering hole and Yogi's corner as a memorial in the AO for the Australian that served as part of UNTAG in the North. Also to be installed on a wall is a cast RAE corp badge that belonged to 6 CER/17 Construction Squadron at Enoggera Barracks

From the High Commissioner of Namibia

Namibia will be celebrating the 30th Anniversary of its Independence on 21st March 2020. Our independence was midwifed by the United Nations under the umbrella of the United Nations Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG). Namibia is one of the success stories of United Nations Peacekeeping and is enjoying peace and stability since 1990.

Peacekeepers from a number of countries around the world served within UNTAG. Among such peacekeepers was the Australian Contingent 17th Construction Squadron, which was part of the UNTAG Peacekeeping Force that assisted Namibia in its transition to independence from 1989 to 1990. The Australian Veterans commemorated their 30th Anniversary of involvement in UNTAG in 2019. I had the honour and privilege of meeting Mark "Jack" Horner and Adrian Ross of the Australian Veterans as well as Ghazan Khan from the Singapore UNTAG Veterans, during my short visit to Melbourne in May 2019.

I wish the Australian UNTAG Veterans a safe journey and fruitful visit back to Namibia for the 30th Independence Anniversary. I have no doubt that it will be a memorable reunion with some of their Namibian friends and colleagues from other countries. I wish to also express my thanks and appreciation for their financial support to "Warren UNTAG"

and continued ties with Namibia. Looking forward to future interactions and wishing them the best in all endeavours.

High Commission of the Republic of Namibia

Anne Namakau Mutelo
High Commissioner/Ambassador to Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines & Timor-Leste



Nambija_Ian Bear Malcom at the 2015 UNTAG Reunion in Windhoek 2015

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It's our little way of saying 'thank you'.
Talk to us today. Or when you can.

EWS Fire Deployment



With the holiday season well underway and the New Year unfolding Everyman's Welfare Service (EWS) was poised to assist in the huge bushfire disaster effort within Victoria, in a short space of time staff from Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria were deployed to the Gippsland and North Eastern regions of Victoria. Tasked to support mobilised ADF and international resources deployed to assist in the bushfire recovery effort within fire affected areas and communities.

The greater ADF community has rallied together from many locations, forming up in various task groups under the Operation Bushfire Assist 2019-2020 banner, including: 3 Combat Engineers Regiment (3CER) from Townsville working with The Papua New Guinea Defence Force Engineer Battalion - forming TG Dingo, 8/9 Royal Australian Regiment supporting the Republic of Fiji Defence Engineers, RAAF logistic & catering elements from the Top End and local engineering and supporting units from 4 Brigade - headquartered in Simpson Barrack Watsonia. Efforts have been focused on assisting state authorities to re-open roads, restore essential services, remediate fences for livestock control and deliver food, water and fodder to affected communities.

Several our fulltime and part-time representatives (Reps) form part of Task Force 646, providing a supportive presence within the operational area and refreshment

services at established base camps. Some have supported local relief centres established to care for fire affected communities. Further efforts have focused on one of our traditional service activities - using our Brew Trucks in the field, serving deployed personnel undertaking road clearance and hazardous tree removal works within fire affected areas, as directed by respective Incident Control Centres managed by the Department of Environment Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) and their neo-agencies.

Our deployed team includes several Reps with overseas operational experience: Ben Ridley ex 8/9 Royal Australian Regiment member - Afghanistan MTF4 & Solomon Islands RAMSI, Kristian Kemper ex 41 Military Police platoon INTERFET East Timor and Shane Lavell EWS - UNTAC Cambodia.

We have enjoyed working alongside defence chaplains throughout this deployment as a ministry multiplier during this time of National Disaster. Focusing on pastoral care, personal support, providing a listening ear and a supportive presence. We have valued your interest, supportive comments, financial assistance and prayerful support throughout this national response.

We serve because we care.



Heads up from a local contractor Ben Ridley Bonag Rd



EWS Brew truck search & rescue task



8-9 RAR Bushies Tpt for Fijian Engrs



Assembled 3CER & PNG DF Engr Battalion



Aust Day Omeo caravan park



Reps Shane Lavel & Ben Ridley PNG & 3CER Angora Range Omeo



Time for a break Bonang Rd Orbost -Shane & Fijian Engrs



Time for a break Bonang Rd Orbost -Shane & Fijian Engrs



Ben on the Bonang Rd



Fijian Rugby match in Aust rules territory Orbost

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Antipodean Movers' fun in the sun, or ... Just another day in paradise ...



INTRODUCTION

Cambodia, the South East Asian/Indochinese paradise, which like its' neighbours, had enjoyed a 'reasonably sedate existence' from antiquity 'till the mid-1800's, and then enjoyed the gentle guiding hand of European Masters as a French Protectorate, until gaining Independence in 1953. From that period until March 1970, the country quietly progressed with the rest of South East Asia, and apart from some minor interruptions to its peaceful existence by the 'police actions' in its' neighbours, Laos and Vietnam, in the late 60's, the Republic of Cambodia basked in the glow of being considered the Paris of the East. However, from Lon Nol's coup, establishing the Khmer Republic, in 1970, until April-May 1975, the Republic suffered numerous civil wars amongst the numerous factions who considered themselves best suited to rule this paradise.

Then, enter Pol Pot, whose absolute despotism during the next four years, turned Cambodia into a charnel house.

After the Vietnamese intervention in the late '70s and early '80s, and world-wide attention, the very painfully-conceived result of a tenuous union between the major players, the National Government of Cambodia and the State of Cambodia, "The Supreme National Council" was created, and would represent Cambodian Sovereignty until the United Nations elections could be held, scheduled for mid-1993.

The UN Security Council Resolution which authorised the resolution of the problem in Cambodia by the creation of UNTAC (the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia; or in French: l'Autorité Provisoire des Nations Unié au Cambodge - APRONUC), was that the personnel be deployed as quickly as possible after the Peace Agreement was signed in Paris, in October 1991.

Accordingly, the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia, UNAMIC, (or in French: le Mission Préparatoire des Nations Unies au Cambodge - MIPRENUC) was established to 'pave the way' for UNTAC, to commence in February 1992. In order to deploy the 16,000 military personnel and 5,000 civilians, Movement Control and Reception/Concentration Centres were to be established outside Cambodia to induct, and coordinate the orderly deployment into the mission area.

Pending the elections, the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) was created, in early 1992, with the responsibility to:

- oversee the demobilisation of 70% of the military forces of all parties,
- supervise the cantoning of the military forces whilst retraining and regrouping was conducted,
- assist and control internal security and police forces, and monitor the ceasefire,
- verify the cessation of external aid to the military forces of the parties,
- ensure the absence of coercion in the repatriation of the refugees,
- assist with reconstruction of the civil infrastructure, and
- organise and run the elections.

WORK ... ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE AIR MOVEMENTS INVOLVEMENT

The Danish Government had initially offered a Movement Control capability but withdrew in early April 1992. The Canadian Government had provided some Logistics personnel to commence the Reception / Concentration tasks with their commitment to UNAMIC. To counter the capability shortfall the Australian Government provided a Movement Control Group, whose tasks, initially, were considered to be those of Headquarters UNTAC-level management and coordination of the deployment activities.

The Australian Government was quite specific that the deployment was to be for a maximum of four months only. The personnel, drawn from all over Australia were formally advised Fri 1 May 1992, concentrated at Randwick Army Barracks, Sydney, on Tues 5 May for pre-deployment concentration, and departed Mon 11 May, with an overnight stop in Bangkok; they arrived in Phnom Penh at 1000 hrs, 12 May 92. Amongst the ADF group of 30 personnel were seven Navy, 16 Army, and three RAAF Officers and four SNCOs; the lucky RAAF participants were the author, (then) FLTLT Mike "OBie" O'Brien, and contributors: (then) FLTLTs Neil Collie (recently ex-RAF), and Steve Force, WOFF Errol Reidlinger, FSGTs Neil Gray and Wayne Riddle and SGT George Molnar.

Upon arrival at Phnom Penh we were accommodated at "Pteah Australii", the home of the UNTAC ANZAC Force Communications Unit, for three days, until other accommodations could be arranged in Phnom Penh city for the Headquarters wallahs, and deployment to the various up-country locations for the 'MovCon Det' personnel, like Siem Reap, Battambang, Kompong Soam, U-Tapao, and Bangkok (!). That our accommodation was not with the other Australian personnel was to the UN's method of reinforcing our "UNTAC HQ status", distinctly separate from the Australian Contingent. Accordingly, we lived in 'hotels' of varying degrees of salubriousness and economic status (however, the balcony parties were quite



The Australian Movement Control Group, pre-boarding UN Transall @Don Muang Airport, Bangkok



Some of the vehicles donated by Japan, less than six weeks after receipt!

the in thing for the 'jungle-pyjamaed' after-five set'). At first living in hotels was seen as good fun, but after a while the constant noise of traffic and the ever-present 'nightly-' and 'pre-dawn choruses' of horizontal enjoyment, construction, funeral processions and general cacophony became a bit wearying. Similarly, the 'eating-out' novelty soon wore off (there not being much variety in the wine-lists, and 'blue steak' was just unheard of!).

and issued, a record of UNTAC Drivers Licences, and were somewhat bemused by the battalion-sized contingents who arrived with consecutively numbered Home-nation licences, all issued on the same date, and the majority of whom proceeded to immediately disprove the veracity of those same documents. This was indeed a portent of the driving "skills" I was to encounter in many future [all!] UN Missions.

Initially the Australian 'MovCon' personnel were regarded with considerable suspicion by some of the already 'well established' nationalities from the forerunner UNAMIC Mission who had 'settled in' so to speak, and were accordingly reluctant to share their power. An example is the UNAMIC Force Commander who had been 'relegated' to the appointment of Deputy Force Commander of UNTAC. There was quite a degree of animosity on behalf of some of the personnel who considered that they had prior rights to the transport assets as they were provided by their country, and other nationalities should not have any say in their disposition or use.

Until our arrival there had been no form of accountability, or passenger/freight/cargo documentation for any of the modes of transport being used by the UN. The usual procedure for having anything or anyone carried by air (helicopter or fixed wing) was to turn up at the airport(s) and cajole [US "Dead Presidents], and/or threaten [at gunpoint] the crew into carrying the item/non-ambulant cargo, and then hoping that the aircraft would proceed to the destination advertised, and that the cargo would be unloaded, and given to whom it was intended. Notwithstanding that the UN agencies IATA and ICAO are responsible for promulgation of airway regulations and Dangerous Goods Transportation Regulations, none of the operators in Cambodia in May '92 seemed to be too concerned about what they carried.

There was a "tasking office", n operation, whose stated purpose was to allocate flights to effect sustainment and support operations, however their parochial attitude more often than not precluded efficient use of the resources ... pencil-drawn wall charts are quite easily 'amended', depending on the attributes of the requester!

One of the Australians' first tasks, therefore, was the institution of International Standard Transportation procedures, for example manifesting of cargo, be it



Hotel Neak Poan Dancing Restaurant "... rooms USD5/hr, nightly by negotiation; weapons to be deposited at Reception".

The UN 'working' hours (0800 to 1200, 1400 to 1800, Mon to Sun inclusive) were designed to take into account the necessity of conserving energy during the hottest part of the day, and also to account for the enormous influx of people demanding sustenance from the very meagre resources; in effect, there were just not enough restaurants to cater for the thousands of UN personnel flooding into Phnom Penh, all of whom expected to all be fed at the same time. There was, however, a noticeable increase in restaurants catering to the UN tastes, and allowances largesse, within the first couple of months.

Similarly, a commensurate increase in surface traffic, mostly white 4WD Toyotas and Nissans, was experienced; in fact, Phnom Penh was the most frustrating of cities in which to drive as there appeared to be a complete absence of road rules, not only on the part of the Cambodians, but moreso, the UN drivers, some of whom were less than competent. Amusingly, we were the ones who instituted,



Not quite in accordance with DG Storage Regs...

'self-loading or otherwise'. We quickly realised that our tasking would extend beyond HQ/management duties to encompass 'a hands-on approach' to ensure the capability available would be best used. The majority of the work performed by the RAAF personnel was to coordinate, and facilitate the application of air transportation procedures as we knew them, which was extremely difficult, as were the rules and regulations pertaining to storage of dangerous cargo and explosives. Australia is a signatory to the UN agencies' transportation requirements, and the Department of Defence follows these rigorously, with exceptions only approved in times of declared national emergency.

A task which took considerably longer to succeed at was that of coordinating airframe usage to capability, and forecasting requirements and loads (to reduce the wastage of flying empty airframes around the country on 'positioning legs'), and 'flight following/notification' (maintaining communications with aircraft to enhance safety). This problem was not as great in respect of riverine, sea and land transport, and I believe that the 'operating nationalities' had a great deal to do with this.

Due to the variety of national military forces in-country there were considerable differences in the way problems were approached ... from the 'get stuck in and have a go' style, to the 'if we ignore it, it will go away' approach. It took us nearly two months to be 'allowed' to trial an Air Movements Operations Coordination Centre ("AMOCC", apt indeed!), which was based on the ADF/RAAF MOVCOORDC. It represented a novel approach in asset-management which incorporated planning for more than two days ahead, obtaining feed-back from the airframe operators in respect of which missions were not flown, and why being shot at constituted adequate reason for aborting a task, and actually involving the planning, operations and movements staff in further planning and decision-making.

For the statisticians, the following aircraft types and details may provide an insight into the variety of work being carried out by the UN air force in Cambodia; there were, in country and based at U-Tapao (Thailand, near Pattaya), the following air assets:

- 6 x Puma helo (Fr.), 2 t. capable, 16 troops (30 if combat-loaded), based at Pochentong Air Base, Phnom Penh (PNP);
- 3 x C160 Transall (Fr.), less than C130 capability, with less range, also PNP-based;
- 3 x L100 series C130's, 1 from Transafrik, and 2 from Heavylift, with civilian crews, very professional, based at U-Tapao;

- 20 x MI-17 helos, 2 t. capable, internal or external, up to 40 pax combat-loaded, ex USSR Air Force (Afghanistan), based at PNP, several of which had been 'airconditioned' by the NADK, much to the (ex-USSR Air Force) crews' displeasure;
- 3 x RNIAF Fokker F27, 25 pax/5t., crewed very professionally by Dutch Air Force crews, based at UTP, where the Dutch had a large military presence;
- 1 x Beechcraft exec, 6 - 10 pax depending upon range requirement and runway capability, crewed by Danes, based at PNP for the use of the Mission director and other VIPs; and
- 2 x MI-26 helos, 20t., internal or external, or 80-odd troops combat loaded [110 allegedly, if seriously combat loaded], leased from Aeroflot, operated by Aerolift/Heavylift, and crewed by Australians/Kiwis/Russians, based at PNP, who did an excellent job moving oversize/heavy stuff (like full TEUs) into areas inaccessible to fixed-wing.
- The considerable air-lift capability in the region, with Pochentong Air Base, Phnom Penh, averaging 40 aircraft departures/turn-arounds/arrivals per day (daylight hours only, as there was no night-operations capability), was severely impeded by the paucity of material handling equipment and poor road transport infrastructure, and as a consequence, small problems often become major headaches very quickly.



Commercially contracted An-12 operating [snrrrk!] in support of NGO

For the majority of the deployment, the Air Movements section at Pochentong consisted of two people, an RAAF Officer [and from him, more to come!] and SNCO, assisted by a French Air Force 'BOMAP' (air despatch) team, subordinated to HQMCG, who loaded the French aircraft and assisted when available with the other aircraft; naturally, there were only two of us who spoke any form of French (the author and FLTLT Collie), and only one of the BOMAP team was conversant in English ... but as we said, they had to work as hard to understand our French as we did to speak it!

As the wet season set in, in June, and as there were only four airfields in-country with fixed wing capability, the maximum use of helicopters became a priority topic of conversation amongst the Phnom Penh glitterati.

Speaking of glitterati, a question: what glows quite quickly after exposure to the South East Asian sun? Answer: any member of the Movement Control Group after taking the anti-malarials prescribed for us. It seems that



UNTAC MCG Air Movements Operations Office at Pochentong

these particular medications were on trial, and we were the guinea pigs ... one of the side effects was a diminution of pigmentation blocking-agents, with a subsequent increased susceptibility to sunburn! But none of us came down with malaria.

As I was to discover, the supply and allocation of administrative necessities in most UN Missions was not determined by the operational requirement for support, but more on the assumed status of the 'requirer', computers and communications assets being a case in point. From our arrival until well into the third month of our deployment we struggled to maintain reasonable communications and flight-following capability with the aircraft on daily taskings. Had it not been for the good relationships we formed with the Canadian contingent with whom we shared office space and resources, along with the Polish and Pakistani logistics elements, there would have been little ability to effect any change to the 'developing nation' mentality that pervaded the Mission. Further, the parlous state of the Cambodian infrastructure after more than 20 years of destruction and neglect often worked against us. Modern technology was completely ineffective when there is only electricity intermittently. But, we were instrumental in getting the railway running.

The Netherlands Government provided 48 army personnel for MovCon duties, who arrived 4 July;



UNTAC Rail PhnomPenh to Batdambang

unfortunately, only 12 were Movements trained (the balance were 'conscripts', some with only three months military service), and none of whom had any Air Movements / Transportation qualifications or expertise. We then had to instruct them 'on the job', and in order to encourage them to accept their responsibilities, we gained approval for our return home to be staggered, with an Advance Party (four pers) scheduled to depart 10 Aug, the Main Body (16 pers) on 17 Aug, and the Rear Party (10 pers) on 7 Sep '92.

The rear party comprised most of the AirOps people as this part of the transportation infrastructure was the most critical, and proved the most difficult for the Dutch to grasp. There was considerable reluctance to continue the administrative processes of booking personnel to flights (ie seat allocation) to ensure that there was no 'mad scramble' for seats when aircraft were scheduled to depart, and to raising of passenger and cargo manifests to identify who and what were on the aircraft, in the unfortunate event of crashes.

To further increase the enthusiasm for our replacements to learn, and assume responsibility for the operations and projects, we were advised that we had to take some of the leave we had accrued - a consequence of 7-day-a-week ops was that we had not used any of the "Compensatory Time Off" days (6 days per month) to which we were [unbeknownst] entitled. Thus, in the last week of July, and the first two weeks of August, most of the Australian Movers took a week off, and went 'on hols' to either Pattaya, Bangkok, or in the case of O'Brien and Force, Hong Kong.

As well as the Movements and Transportation aspects of the Mission, the Australians were also involved in the Logistics Management and Planning aspects, and Project Management, as transportation coordination was an integral part of all project tasks.

Three main projects were managed and coordinated to a smaller or larger degree by Australian Movement Control Group personnel, and the Canadian Logistics personnel; they were:

a. "Operation Wishbone" - provision of foodstuffs and containers to the refugee and cantonment sites. The food encouraged the soldiers to give up their weapons, and the containers were used initially to transport and store the foodstuffs, then to secure the weapons. This operation was predominantly a Canadian/Australian effort, which commenced 11 Jun, and continued throughout the duration of the deployment.

b. "Operation Mercury" - provision of generators to provincial headquarters and other necessary sites. The generators ranged from small, man-portable, to large, 2,000lb air-portable, town power generation units. Again, predominantly Canadian/Australian, military and civilian personnel. This operation commenced 18 Jun, and had not been completed by the time we left mid-Sep.

c. "Operation Locktite" - provision of portable buildings and camp-complexes for use by UN personnel and administrative infrastructure rebuilding, throughout the country. Comprising Canadian and Australian military personnel and several contracted civilian companies, notably "WeatherHaven" from Canada, and "MSD" and "Ausco" from Australia, this operation, like "Mercury", commenced on 18 Jun, and had not been completed by the time we left.



Mi-17 at Pochentong ... awaiting the hordes' mad-scramble for seats.



Mi-26 at Pochentong, being [floor-] loaded with 20tonnes of tinned fish, cooking oil and rice.

The majority of project transportation/positioning was effected by using the Mission's rotary wing assets, the venerable Mi-8/17s, and the impressively capable Mi-26's. It would be an understatement to say we were impressed by the capability of the aircraft and the skill and dedication of their civilian crews.

On a cultural note, the author was requested by the Australian Diplomatic Mission to assist with the transportation to Australia by RAAF C130 and QANTAS of the "Age of Angkor" Khmer antiquities exhibition being mounted by the Australian National Gallery. These national treasures were packaged by an Australian company, at the Phnom Penh Museum of Fine Arts, then transported by RAAF C130 to Bangkok, where they were trans-shipped to QANTAS 747 for the voyage to Australia (the process was reversed in November '92 for the return voyage).

The RAAF MCG personnel were all involved in this project in some form or other, and although not strictly UNTAC-related, the successful completion of the task reflected further credit on the Australian movements personnel. Two RAAF C130 flights were involved in this task and gave us the opportunity to work with some professionals for a couple of hours on the days that they were in Phnom Penh (23 Jun and 22 Jul). These two flights were also used to convey stores and mail to the ANZAC Contingent in UNTAC, and we were probably the most sought after Australians in Cambodia on those two days, more than normally so because of our transport assets' attractiveness.

The arrival of the first C130 was much awaited by us, as we knew that it would bring 'care-packages' from home ... and it would be well worth building pallets in the heat and

humidity (about 35' and 85 - 90% by midday). The pallet of M&Ms addressed to the FCU Padre suffered somewhat for not having been collected upon arrival ... I am assured that they were gratefully received nonetheless.

The involvement in the "Age of Angkor" task supplemented our rather fragile link with home, which for the first six weeks was via post, which generally took about two weeks from mailing to receipt; phone communications outside the military communications nets was tenuous for the first couple of months, until the military and commercial contractors were able to rebuild the civilian, mostly mobile, telephone system.

Less work ...

Of note, we were not blind to the depredations of Cambodia's previous rulers and pretenders, and took the opportunity to absorb the evidence of the most recent, Pol Pot. The Tuol Sleng/S21 Prison, previously a school, now a museum to four years of horror, was certainly an example of man's inhumanity. Most of the photographic evidence presented was as documented by the Khmer Rouge themselves, and rescued by the Vietnamese authorities upon their expulsion of Pol Pot's administration in 1979.

The evidence of the Killing Fields, so graphically illustrated in the film of the same name, was to be found all around Phnom Penh, and most major towns. Choeng Ek, a few kilometres from Phnom Penh further imprinted the horrors that had been visited upon such a beautiful country.

Notwithstanding the horrors of the Killing Fields and the indiscriminate sowing of land-mines throughout the country, the magnificence and grandeur of the 12th/13th Century

Bayon-Angkor complexes was overwhelming; yet there were moments when our up-country MovDet personnel must have questioned our *raison d'être*, as they were often called upon to be 'tour guides'. And, alas it is in more recent times that the area has been opened up for the modern blight: tourism. Perhaps the intervention of UNESCO and other worthy archaeological organisations will ensure its' longevity.

CONCLUSION

That the UN's Elections were held in May '93, in relative security and peace is in no small part a testament to the efforts of the Australian Movement Control Group personnel, whose adaptability and enthusiasm to achieve the best results from the multi-modal transport assets; in particular the RAAF Members, who were able to bludgeon their Air Movements skills into the daily operations, were of primary importance.



MCG Intro AS Movement Control Group UNTAC, May-Sep 1992

Boarding options to meet the needs of today's parents

At Clayfield College, we offer flexible stay options in our Boarding House to suit the needs of modern-day family lifestyles.

Home to boarders from Years 5 to 12 throughout Australia and all over the world, we provide a supportive environment that nurtures young girls to be independent and to value and respect others.

We appreciate that our lives are all getting busier and that parents require a level of flexibility to meet their ever-changing commitments. Whether you are looking for a full-time boarding experience for your daughter, a place for them to be during your office hours or when you travel for work, or a weekly place from Monday to Friday, we can provide alternatives tailored to your needs.

Full-time boarding

Students reside within our Boarding House for the school term and leave during the school holiday periods.

Weekly boarding

Students stay with us from Monday to Friday and return home during the weekend. With this option, parents enjoy knowing their daughters are able to focus on their academic, sporting or cultural commitments in a safe and caring environment during the week, whilst still enjoying their home environment on the weekend.

Overnight boarding

Students stay with us overnight to assist when they have increased commitments in co-curricular activities or academics, or when parents have a work or travel commitment. This alternative allows girls to spend less time travelling to and from the College and more time studying, performing or training.

Late collection

Students may remain within the Boarding House up until 9:00pm, Monday to Friday. Parents collect their daughters following afternoon tea, attendance at co-curricular activities, dinner and shower in the Boarding House, and two hours supervised time with our specialist tutors. This is



a great option for parents who work long hours, but would prefer their daughter to sleep at home.

Living at Clayfield

Our campus and Boarding House are centrally located within the inner-city suburb of Clayfield. Our facilities include a Physical Education Centre with fitness studios, 25-metre outdoor pool, tennis and netball courts and extensive green space and ovals. There are also a number of whole school facilities including the Chapel, Learning Resource Centre, Technology Labs, and School Assembly Hall. Shops, cinemas and other leisure facilities are a stroll away, or easily accessible via public transport.

We offer a boarding experience that ensures the physical, social and mental wellbeing of the girls are met.

The experience includes:

- tiered accommodation based on age (small dormitories, twin share, single rooms with ensuite facilities)
- breakout rooms and communal spaces
- specialist tutors five nights a week
- comprehensive range of co-curricular activities (sport, the arts, community service)
- nutritious meals prepared by our on-site chef
- recreation calendar of weekend activities and social events
- resident psychologist and Health Centre with registered school nurse
- guest speakers (motivational, educational)

- daily laundry service
- generous leave privileges.

Learning at Clayfield

We are a boutique school, with a culture of connectedness. Within our Clayfield family, each girl is known and cherished. They are empowered to design their own learning path according to their unique interests and talents.

Our school's big heart inspires girls to unlock their passions, ignite their love of lifelong learning and explore their natural curiosity within an environment of kindness.

With a strong focus on participation, our girls enjoy a wealth of high impact learning and co-curricular opportunities. They are prepared for our rapidly-evolving world by providing them with a holistic education, and through encouraging them to work collaboratively, be connected to their community, and have concern for and value others.

At Clayfield, we inspire girls to lead happy and purposeful lives by helping them to discover their role in the world. Proudly, we develop young women who are bold, imaginative and reflective.

Explore Clayfield

We warmly welcome you and your daughter to come and explore our small school with a big heart by booking a personal tour via enrol@clayfield.qld.edu.au or 07 3262 0262. Further information about our flexible boarding options can be found on our website.



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EDUCATION AND DEFENCE FAMILIES

To help alleviate some of the impact when transferring between schools, Defence provides a firstclass educational advisory service and assistance schemes.

The Education Assistance Scheme (EAS) provides a range of financial support to Defence children.

Tutoring: School aged children on transfer to a new location may be entitled to 14 weeks of tutoring in any subject identified by the school as indicating a gap in the child's learning.

Boarding School Allowances:

Assistance may be available under the EAS to enable ADF families to access boarding school for a dependant in the critical years of schooling.

Special Needs Assistance:

The EAS can provide assistance for assessment, therapy and additional support for students who are receiving these services.

Tuition fees may also be provided for a child with special needs.

Defence Scholarships: Defence sponsors four scholarships per year for dependants of personnel working in Defence Organisation, and is managed by AFS Intercultural Programs Australia and DCO.

The Defence School Transition

Aide Program has two parts;

Defence School Transition Aides in primary schools and Defence Transition Mentors in secondary schools nationally.

The program aims to facilitate the best possible educational outcomes for dependants of ADF members and to provide support during parental absences for Service reasons.

Defence recognises that some children of ADF members may experience some disruption to both the academic and social aspects of their schooling each time they move.

The different structures of the education systems between Australian states and territories can result in learning gaps. DSTAs support the smooth transition of mobile ADF dependants from school to school and across curriculum jurisdictions upon ADF relocations or postings.

The DSTA is a school-based position which focuses on practical support integrated into the classroom, school and school community. Activities performed by DSTAs include:

- being a point of contact for parents of ADF school children.
- coordinating appropriate welcome and farewell activities.



SQNLDR Samuel Wright gives Murray Bridge North School Year 6 & 7 students a tour of the inside of a RAAF Balloon.

- introducing ADF parents and children to the school.
- supporting individual children during parental absences.
- enabling ADF families to meet other families.
- enhancing the relationship between the school and their Defence community.

To find out which schools have DSTAs in your region, contact the Regional Education Liaison Officer at your local Defence Community Organisation Office.

For more information go to <https://www.defence.gov.au/DCO/>



Corporal Hanley and his wife, Maddi, and daughters Willow (left) and Alera, at the Defence Community Organisation Family Day held at the RAAF Base Amberley Heritage Centre.



Supporting at risk veterans transitioning to civilian life

Programs supporting younger at-risk veterans and veterans transitioning to civilian employment are set to expand to hundreds more people as part of a significant funding boost from the Morrison Government.

An extra 170 young and vulnerable veterans leaving the Australian Defence Force annually will get guidance and a single point of contact with 10 additional case coordinators backed by a \$4.8 million investment in the Coordinated Client Support program that already helps around 1,200 veterans facing difficult circumstances. The investment means the entire high-risk cohort of veterans leaving the ADF will now be covered under the Coordinated Client Support program.

The Government will also boost the resources of the Personalised Career Employment Program by \$5.6 million and will expand its eligibility to another 1,600 ADF members each year looking for career development and job placement support as they set up for civilian life.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said his government was backing younger veterans facing tough challenges as they transitioned out of the ADF.

"We'll show the same commitment and duty to those veterans who have served us that they have shown our country," the Prime Minister said.

"Research shows veterans under 30 who are involuntarily discharged as being at higher risk of suicide than the general population so we want

to ensure they get the support they need as they navigate the range of government services on offer.

"These programs are about reaching out to those veterans who need our help to ensure they get it."

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel Darren Chester said under the Coordinated Client Support program, DVA works closely with Defence to identify veterans at risk before they transition out of service and provide them with a single point of contact.

"We are committed to putting veterans and their families first and by providing those most at risk with a single client coordinator it ensures a seamless continuation of support as they leave the ADF, assists them to access appropriate health treatment as well as the finalisation of their DVA claims," Mr Chester said.

"Currently the PCEP supports those aged between 17 and 24 who have served less than four years by providing them with greater opportunity for job placement within the civilian community. The investment announced today will extend this to those up to 30 years of age, meaning a further 30 per cent of transitioning members can now access the program in Townsville alone."

Minister Chester said the Government was also delivering on a 2019 election commitment with a \$15 million investment to roll-out employment-related programs for veterans through a one-off grants

package for Soldier On, Team Rubicon Australia and the Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL National).

"To further support veterans seeking employment, Soldier On, Team Rubicon Australia and RSL will assist those who find the transition to the civilian workforce challenging through tailored employment-related programs," Mr Chester said.

"You only need to look at the mobilisation of Team Rubicon Australia to assist in the recent response to the bushfires to know the results will be promising. I look forward to seeing the ongoing results of this important program."

Member for Herbert Phillip Thompson welcomed the further announcements, particularly the potential benefits to members of Townsville's veteran community.

"Townsville has a strong military and veteran community, with around 750 transitions from the ADF here every year, and having served in the ADF, transitioned into civilian life and having watched my mate's transition I know how important it is to get it right," Mr Thompson said.

"DVA and Defence have been working hard to improve the transition process and the additional support outlined today will go a long way to supporting those most in need.

"As a government we have done a lot, which I know is appreciated by the ex-service community, but we know there is still more to do."

The Government has made promoting the valuable skills of ADF personnel and veterans a high priority, including through the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program and Veterans' Employment Awards.

The Government invests a record \$11 billion to support 280,000 veterans and their families each year, is reforming the Department of Veterans Affairs with more work underway, has cut waiting times for claims and has also launched the Australian Veterans' Card and Lapel Pin, so veterans can be appropriately recognised, including by businesses who want to offer special discounts and offers to veterans.



Plan your transition

The pathway to civilian employment can look different for every veteran. One thing that will set you up for success is making sure that you prepare for the next step in your career.

The Veterans' Employment Toolkit has been developed to assist you to prepare for your transition to civilian employment.

Plan early

Defence Community Organisation (DCO) provides a range of transition services to support ADF members and their families to transition into civilian life.

Transition support services include:

- ADF Transition Seminars - providing ADF members with access to a one day transition seminar held in a range of cities across Australia
- assistance with preparing for civilian employment
- access to coaching services.

The Leaving the ADF guide will assist members and their families to better understand the process, administrative requirements, employment assistance services and other support available to assist transition.

The Career Transition Assistance Scheme (CTAS) helps facilitate your transition with training and financial support. Talk to your transition coach about this and any other support and employment services that can be tailored to your needs.

To get your core military training skills recognised and aligned with the civilian equivalent before you discharge, contact the Australian Defence College who run the ADF Transition and Civil Recognition Project.

Prepare for the challenge

Transitioning to civilian life from the ADF can be a challenging time for some. Some tips to prepare could be:

- talking to friends or family who have made the transition
- connect with informal support groups on social media set up by veterans
- connect with an ex-service

organisation (ESO), they are an excellent resource for you

- seek professional assistance services tailored for transitioning veterans.

A great online tool is Engage, a Defence online portal that you can use to find employment services and other support for your transition.

Engage is for current, transitioning, and former ADF members, as well as their families, and/or those involved in their support.

Reach out to your networks

Chat to your military contacts and personal networks to let them know you're preparing to leave the ADF.

Many veterans find the next step in their career through their existing networks.

Think about the right career for you

Consider what you want your next career to be, and research how to get there. You might not land there first, but you can take the necessary steps towards your end goal.

There are a number of recruitment agencies across Australia specialising in finding jobs for veterans. They can help you find the best job that suits your skills from your previous career in the ADF and may be able to assist you into these roles.

Set realistic expectations

It's a good idea to research the salaries in the industry you are interested in, to get an idea of what they offer. You may not get the same salary as you did while serving. The benefits and allowances that you received whilst serving may not apply to your new civilian job.

Financial advice

You might be interested in talking to a financial adviser. The ADF Consumer Centre can advise you about getting financial advice and can recommend advisers. If you're discharging for medical reasons talk to your ADF Transition Coach who will provide you with access to some assistance to pay for your financial advice.



Jason Woodcoe - former Flight Lieutenant RAAF.

Find a mentor

To help you transition to civilian employment, a mentor may be able to provide advice, guidance, share expertise and networks to assist finding employment or adjusting to the civilian workplace.

A good mentor would be someone who has transitioned themselves. You can find a mentor through your employer, ex-service organisations, your networks or professional organisations.

Consider the impact on your family

When you begin the transition process, consider the impacts on your family. Some questions you may wish to think about include:

- Will your work / caring responsibilities change?
- Where would you like to live – is this a good place to find the type of work you would like to do, for the kids' schooling, and access to support?
- How will your change of career affect the family income and how will you and your family adapt to a possible reduction in salary when you first leave defence?
- Do you need to consider changes to your housing when leaving Defence?

To download the guides and toolkits head to www.veteranemployment.gov.au/veterans/plan-your-transition.

Further information can be found at engage.forcenet.gov.au | defence.gov.au/dco/transition | defence.gov.au/adc/ADFTCR

defence.gov.au/DCO/Transition/yourtransition

ADVOCACY AND WELFARE NEWS

MYSERVICE.

The past three years has seen a flurry of activity within the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), particularly in terms of getting better online access for veterans to submit their claims via 'MyService'.

MyService is designed to process claims faster, by interactive data exchange with the Client to DVA. MyService allows for "Claiming made Simple":

- Apply for free Mental Health Treatment;
- Access support for a service-related condition or injury;
- Upload your supporting information for your claim quickly and easily;
- Access your DVA Veteran Card;
- View your accepted conditions;
- Track the status of your claims

MyService is linked to MyGov. You will need to set-up an account with MyGov and the MyService Website provides this link and instructions.

Link: <https://www.dva.gov.au/myservice/#/>

Australian Veteran's Covenant.

The Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant serves to recognise and acknowledge the unique nature of military service and the contribution of veterans and their families. The Covenant is supported by the Veteran Card, Lapel Pin and Oath. These provide the opportunity for Australians to identify veterans when they are not in uniform or wearing their medals, and offer respect to them and their family.

Employers, businesses, local community groups and the broader Australian public are able to commit their support for the Covenant. The Covenant provides the framework that enables veterans and their families to better connect with their community.

To apply for The Veterans' Covenant for Veterans and Reservists, to go the link: <https://recognition.dva.gov.au/how-veterans-can-apply-information-page>

Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988 (DRCA)

The DRCA is the compensation legislation that applies to current and former members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) with conditions linked to service prior to 1 July 2004.

Compensation coverage under the DRCA can be provided for injuries, diseases or deaths that are linked to most peacetime ADF service between 3 January 1949 and 30 June 2004 (which includes British Nuclear Test defence service), as well as hazardous and peacekeeping service during the same period. The DRCA also covers certain periods of operational service between 7 April 1994 and 30 June 2004, including warlike and non-warlike service.

The DRCA does not cover any ADF service prior to 3 January 1949, or any period of operational service prior to 7 April 1994. These types of service are covered under the *Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986* (VEA). Some members who served for 3 years continuous full-time service with service between 7 December 1972 and 7 April 1994 may have dual coverage under the VEA and DRCA for their peacetime service.

From 12 October 2017, all claims that were considered under the provisions of the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* (SRCA) are now considered under the DRCA. All existing claims under the SRCA are now treated as claims under the DRCA. There is no change to existing entitlements or the manner in which claims under the DRCA interact with claims under the *Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004* (MRCA) and/or the VEA.

SRCA Clients and Former CMF and Reservists with conditions or injuries that they believe were service-related, should consult with a qualified Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP) Compensation Advocate. Link: <https://web.atdp.org.au/>

Special Operations Forces-Pilot.

The Veteran Space has been rapidly developing in the past three years. The Special Operations Forces Pilot (SOF-P) at Holsworthy with 2 Cdo Regt has concluded, with a further SOF-P now underway at Swanbourne with SASR. The SOF-P has identified conditions related to service that will be automatically accepted due to the occupation of the Operator.

This has been a long time coming. Advocates are hopeful that a wider application of this approach will be afforded across all trades, mustering and ratings across the ADF.

Warlike Service automatic acceptance for some Mental Health Conditions.

The Policy has also been introduced for veterans who have served on warlike service, who have PTSD, Depression, Anxiety Disorder and Adjustment Disorder; and claim these conditions, that they will be automatically accepted as a result of the Reasonable Hypothesis and the ease of claiming the conditions for Younger Veterans. The requisite is that the veteran must have served 28 days in the declared warlike Operational Area.

Unfortunately, veterans who have served on non-warlike service operations, particularly Peacekeepers with Non-warlike Service classification have not been included in this Policy. There is lobbying to have Peacekeepers included into this Policy, particularly after the findings of



the Peacekeeper Mental Health Study that was released in October 2014 (Creamer et al., 2014); and with a Paper authored by the Phoenix Australian Centre for Post Traumatic Mental Health (Forbes, et al., 2016).

DVA eNews.

To keep updated on the fast developing DVA Space, I highly recommend that readers subscribe to the DVA eNews: www.dva.gov.au/about-dva/media-centre/dva-e-news

Recognising Sacrifice on Operations.

Discussion with Commando Combat Veterans has been around the recognition of those who were Killed in Action, and/or Killed in Service; along those who were severely Wounded, Injured/III. There has been a range of propositions ranging from badges on the ribbons of Service Medals, an Australian "Sacrifice Medal" [Similar to the Canadian Forces]; and a Ribbon above the medals.

There has been great interest in this area, particularly toward the recognising the NOK of those Commandos who were KIA or died whilst conducting their duties in service. This would of course not be particularly restricted to the Commando or SOF community, however Commandos had the highest amount of soldiers KIA in Afghanistan, with SASR very close behind. Peacetime service has been equally dangerous with SASR losing 15 soldiers in June 1996. We have lost a number of Commandos as a result of training accidents in Australia, and they should not be overlooked.

Veterans have lost their livelihoods as a result of their personal sacrifice whilst serving on operations, who were seriously wounded, injured and ill as a result of that service. I'm not talking about breaking a leg at PT, but in the process of executing their duties in a malevolent and/or high-risk environment on Operations. Many of these veterans were medically discharged, which is a confronting conclusion to a loved career.

So, guys, please don't shoot the messenger, I encourage open, frank, honest discussion; particularly the input from those who lost their loved ones and those who lost their occupation as a result of their service. I would be most grateful if you could email me your views: aca_vetentitlements@commando.org.au

Conclusion.

2020 is going to be a very challenging and dynamic year for veterans. There are a range of contentious issues that remain on the agenda by a number of Ex-Service Organisations (ESO), however DVA is making headway in improving the claim process for our veterans.

Paul Copeland.
Advocate Level 4.

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VETERANS' ADVOCACY CENTRE (VAC) UPDATE

The VAC is continuing to grow, now consisting of 4 Compensation Advocates, 3 Wellbeing Advocates and 3 trainee Compensation Advocates. When we started over 4 years ago we never imagined how big the centre would become, with our clientele ranging from local, national and international. With 150 clients in the last 3 months we are kept very busy.

With only one part time paid advocate the VAC remains a NFP charity run by volunteers, with funding for our services provided through BEST Grants, continual fundraising through events, functions, guest speaking at local community groups and generous donations.

Last year we released a 2020 VAC Monty Calendar through the efforts of many of our Veterans and volunteers to assist in our fundraising efforts. It was a great experience for all involved, bringing our clients together and participating for a wonderful cause. Sadly though one of our Veterans who participated has recently passed away, leaving very special memories for our calendar.

As part of our serves, the VAC holds a monthly Coffee Club for our Veterans and their families, as well as providing a Veterans Pantry consisting of basic household items, toiletries, frozen food, backpack beds for the homeless and further essentials.

Following the recent devastating fires across the country, 2 of our Veterans packed their trailer with items provided by the VAC and headed south to be part of Operation Veteran Assist. These boys were able to provide much needed food through donated food vouchers, along with essential items, and backpack beds to displaced Veterans' in the fire ravaged region. Thank you for volunteering and doing such a great job supporting our Veterans and their community.

We are proud of the unique supportive services we provide to Veterans and their families. For further information or to get in touch please contact us via the information below.

Veterans Advocacy Centre
Suites 5-7, 78B Main Street, Alstonville NSW 2477
Ph: (02) 6628 3096 | admin@veteransadvocacycentre.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/vacalstonville



Two of our veterans heading to Victoria to support in Operation Veteran Assist.



Congratulations to Di McLelland on attaining her Level 2 Wellbeing Advocate accreditation. Another experienced Advocate at the VAC

KEY DATES FOR PEACEKEEPER VETERANS FOR 2020

1. 70th Anniversary of the UN Commission on Korea (UNCOK) 9-23 June 1950 where Australian UNMOs detected the invasion of North Korean forces into South Korea, which started the Korean War;
2. 70th Anniversary of the UN Command in Korea (UN-K), the UN Forces War in Korea 1 July 1950 to 27 July 1953;
3. 60th Anniversary of the Australian Services Contingent (ASC) to the UN Operation in the Congo (ONUC) 1 Aug 1960;
4. 55th Anniversary of the ASC to the UN India-Pakistan Observer Mission (UNIPOM) 20 September 1965;
5. 40th Anniversary of the Australian Contingent (ASC) to the Commonwealth Monitoring Force in Rhodesia (CMF-R) [Dec 1979-Mar 1980]; to my recollection this Operation has never been Officially Commemorated;
6. 30th Anniversary of the ASC to the UN Transitional Administration Group (UNTAG), Namibia [Note - there was no official commemoration of the 25th Anniversary of ASC UNTAG];
7. 25th Anniversary of the withdrawal of the ASC AUSMEDFOR to the Second UN Assistance Mission to Rwanda in August 1995, including the involvement of 32 Soldiers maintaining the Casualty Clearing Post (CCP) at the infamous Kibeho Massacre during the period 19-25 April 1995 [Commemorated in February 2020, with presentation of the MUC];
8. 20th Anniversary of the withdrawal of INTERFET on 20 Feb 2000;
9. 20th Anniversary of the establishment of the ADF Commitment to the UN Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) aka OP TANAGER on 20 Feb 2000;
10. 20th Anniversary of the ADF and AFP Commitment to the International Peace Monitoring Team (IPMT) aka OP PLUMBOB and OP TREK to the Solomon Islands, 4 November 2000;
11. 15th Anniversary of the withdrawal of the ADF Commitment to the UN Mission in Support of East Timor (UNMISSET) on 25 June 2005;
12. 15th Anniversary of the deployment of ASC [ADF] and AFP to the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) on 10 April 2005; and
13. 15th Anniversary of the establishment of the UN Office in Timor Leste (UNOTIL) on May 2005, which was a Political mission with Police (AFP) training the East Timorese Police Force and an ADF commitment to train and develop the ETRF through the Defence Cooperation Program (DCP).

Other Key Dates which will be Commemorated by ESO:

14. UN International Day of UN Peacekeepers - 29th May 2020. The UN and Overseas Police Association of Australia (UNOPAA) and the AFP generally organise this at the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial on ANZAC Parade, Canberra; and
15. Australian Peacekeeper Day - 14th September 2020. The APPVA has committed to organise this Commemoration at the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial on ANZAC Parade, Canberra.

POWERFUL NEW BODY TO TACKLE ADF AND VETERAN SUICIDES

A powerful, new independent body will be created to investigate all suspected veteran and Australian Defence Force (ADF) suicides and causes to help save lives.

The Morrison Government will establish a permanent National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention.

The National Commissioner will have the enduring power, scope and resources to investigate suicides and related issues as they arise, rather than being restricted by a one-off review looking at past practices.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the independent Commissioner would also have the power to compel witnesses to give evidence.

"This is about being forever vigilant for the care and well-being of our veterans," the Prime Minister said.

"Those veterans and all serving men and women protect our community and our freedoms. It is our duty to do the same for them.

"I have thought long and hard about the best response to this issue. I have spoken to veterans right across Australia and I have met with their families and also local, state and national organisations.

"I believe what we have developed addresses the needs of those veterans, their families and our serving men and women.

"We will be permanently vigilant about their welfare."

The National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention will be empowered to perform two roles:

- The Commissioner will be an independent and permanent public accountability body, with the same powers of a Royal Commission to compel the production of evidence and summon witnesses, and make findings and recommendations to Government.
- The Commissioner will also provide an ongoing investigative function of individual cases of suicide, working with each state and territory coronial office, making recommendations to Government.

The Government will invest an initial \$40 million to support the Commissioner's work and this will be expanded to ensure they have whatever resources they need.

The Government will also establish an immediate, independent review of historical veteran suicide cases, conducted by the Commissioner, focusing on the impact of military service and veterans' post service experience.

An interim report will be delivered within 12 months. Families will be engaged in this process if they wish, with an opportunity to participate and tell their stories openly and safely.

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and the Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care, along with coronial and legal experts, will provide technical expertise in support of this work.

Minister for Veterans and Defence Personnel Darren Chester said the Commissioner would also deliver an Annual Veteran and Defence Suicide Death Report to the Parliament.

"This will be a transparent report directly to the Parliament on an annual basis on suicides within the defence and veteran community, including an update on

the implementation and evaluation of measures to reduce suicide risk factors," Mr Chester said.

"The Government is committed to ensuring ADF members, veterans and their families have access to the right support, at the right time, especially those who are vulnerable or at risk."

Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds CSC said the Chief of the Defence Force and each Service Chief was committed to being open and transparent, to support improved health outcomes for ADF personnel and veterans.

"The mental health and wellbeing of our vets and Defence Force members is an issue of national and enduring importance.

"These comprehensive measures have been developed with a very clear focus on finding the most effective and practical ways of better identifying, preventing, understanding and acting on suicide and suicide risks among our vets and service men and women."

A Veteran Family Advocate will also be appointed to directly engage with the families of veterans, to improve the design of all veteran programs and services, including mental health supports and services.

"The new Veteran Family Advocate will focus on mental health and suicide prevention, and contribute to our understanding of risk factors relating to the wellbeing of veterans and their families, particularly during transition from the ADF," Mr Chester said.

"The Advocate will represent the views of veterans and their families by engaging and advocating to help shape policy and the administration of veteran benefits and support.

"We want to assure defence and veterans' families that help is available now and it can make a difference. Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling provides support and counselling to current

ADF members, veterans and their families and can be contacted 24/7 on 1800 011 046."



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James Blunt: ‘Leaving the Army is incredibly hard’



James Blunt during a show last year (Picture: PA).

The singer, who spent eight years in the Army and served in the Kosovo War in 1999, is using his new single and tour to support veterans.

Former British Army officer and singer James Blunt has been speaking to Forces News about his decision to raise money for two military charities.

The singer is fundraising through his tour which got underway last week, as well as through his new single ‘Monsters’.

“I think leaving the Army is incredibly hard,” said Mr Blunt, who served with the Life Guards in the Household Cavalry.

“You’re not in the Army for money, you’re in it and working at it to look out for those around you, for the regiment, for the soldiers who you’re working with, for Queen and country, for all of those things.

“There’s a real sense of family - a bond, a purpose.”

Help for Heroes volunteers are

collecting donations from concert-goers at every UK venue on Mr Blunt’s tour, ‘Once Upon A Mind’.

While all the proceeds from ‘Monsters’ are also being split between Help For Heroes and the Royal British Legion.

The song was written for his father, Charles Blount, who served as a colonel in the Army Air Corps.

The 45-year-old says he hopes his fundraising will help those injured while serving in the British Army.

“As anyone in the Army knows, once you’ve been injured within the Army, then long-term support isn’t always there,” he said.

“You know, the Army do their best but under limited funding - that’s the story, isn’t it?”

“At the end of the day, they have to push funding up to the frontline and people taken back to the rear don’t get much of it.”

He continued: “For masses of people who went to Afghanistan and to Iraq, the injuries that they came back with were all too common from IEDs, then leave you in a particular state that you can feel fairly deserted if you come back.”

Mr Blunt spent eight years in the Army and served with NATO forces during the Kosovo War in 1999.

Since leaving the Army, he has sold more than 20 million records worldwide.

He only has a few more UK concerts before the European leg of his tour starts in Brussels, Belgium, in a few days time.

The ‘Goodbye My Lover’ singer will also perform in Australia and New Zealand as part of the tour.

Help For Heroes’ head of supporter fundraising, David Martin, said Mr Blunt’s “fantastic generosity” will help ensure the support of military veterans.

David Sivills-McCann
www.forces.net



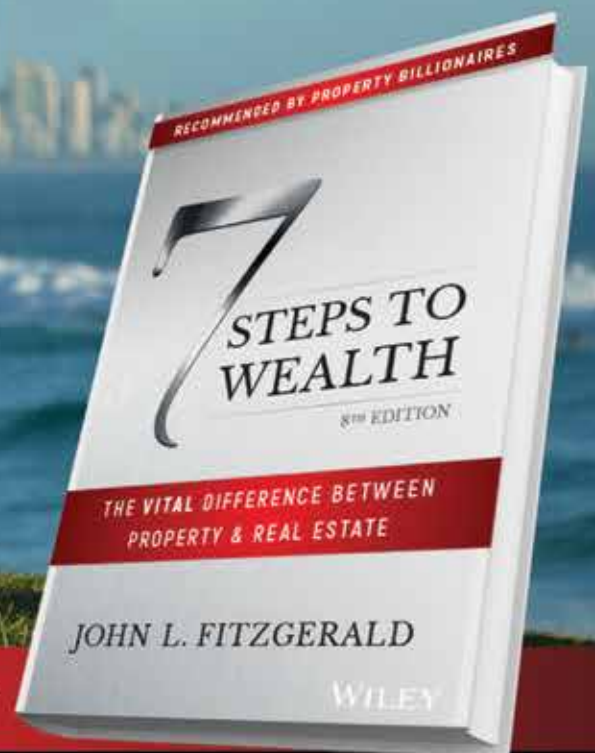
Mr Blunt’s father, Colonel Charles Blount, during a training exercise in 1984.

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