Uniform changes to come into force on January 1, 2010

Back on the rack: LCpl Daniel Button and Pte Hollie Truman hang up their polyesters ahead of the introduction of DPCUs as garrison dress of the day. Photo by Tpr Michael Franchi
Uniform changes

A COMPREHENSIVE review of garrison dress will save about $4 million a year and change what personnel wear to work from 2010 in a barracks environment.

The changes were made to more than 10 orders of dress after CA Lt-Gen Ken Gillespie endorsed a review into the clothing items, some of which were in service for 30 years.

The review was commissioned to examine options for the rationalisation of Army Standing Orders for Dress and ancillary clothing items, with the aim of reducing the range and complexity of Army’s clothing inventory.

Brig David Mulhall, Chief of Staff AHQ, said the review team had little trouble identifying opportunities to reduce the number of uniform variants issued across Army.

“We estimate that the savings we have found are in the order of $4 million a year. These funds will then become available for reinvestment into other areas of capability in line with CA’s priorities,” Brig Mulhall said.

As part of the changes there will be the wider wearing of DPCU, a reduction in the initial free issue entitlement of polyesters, and the complete removal of some other items.

“The review team took a pragmatic, common sense approach. In many cases, we simply asked: what is the normal practice across the Army, such as wearing DPCU as dress of the day,” Brig Mulhall said.

Dress Order 4A will be retitled General Duty Dress DPCU and will be mandated as dress of the day across Army, including AHQ. Personnel in non-Army groups who are authorised to wear DPCU as normal dress of the day, subject to approval by their Army administration CO.

There will also be tighter procedures introduced for issuing and handing back of DPCU.

A decision that is likely to be popular is that elastic-sided black leather boots, such as those made by RM Williams and Baxter, are now authorised to wear with polyester and service dress uniforms at all times, except for ceremonial parade orders of dress. These boots may be purchased at members’ expense and are to be brushed polished.

“The review team has more work to do. The decision that is likely to be popular is that elastic-sided black leather boots are authorised to wear with polyester and service dress uniforms at all times, except for ceremonial parade orders of dress. These boots may be purchased at members’ expense,” Brig Mulhall said.

“However, we simply ratified what has become normal practice across the Army, such as wearing DPCU as dress of the day,” Brig Mulhall said.

The changes were made to more than 10 orders of dress after CA Lt-Gen Ken Gillespie endorsed a review into the clothing items, some of which were in service for 30 years.

The following changes are to be made to orders of dress in AS05:

The following changes are to be made to orders of dress in AS05:

- 29 Ceremonial Parade Dress with Sweater – to be worn only by recruits graduating from CRTC.
- 20 Ceremonial Dress Long Sleeve Shirt/Sweater.
- 3A Ceremonial Safari Suit.
- 30 General Duty Safari Suit.
- 6 Mess Dress White Shirt.
- 303 Special Appointment White Jacket.
- 303 Special Appointment White Jacket.
- 303B Special Appointment White Jacket.
- 303D Special Appointment Whites.
- Shorts Polyester.
- Socks Khaki Long.
- Army beret to be removed from service and the wearing of corps’ berets dealt with under a separate CA directive.

Other changes to be made:

- 2 General Duty Dress (polymers) initial free issue (IF) entitlement will be reduced to one set per person for both ARA and ARFA entrants (i.e. one shirt Short Sleeve, one shirt Long Sleeve, one Trouser/Slacks).
- Authorised exceptions to this entitlement will be listed in Block Scales 3002-20, 3002-24 and 3002-25.
- 4A Barracks Dress DPCU is authorised as dress of the day, and is retitled “General Duty Dress (DPCU).” This order of dress is mandated across Army as dress of the day, and is authorised as the dress of the day for one Army personnel serving in non-Army groups, at the discretion of respective Army admin CO.
- Combat Jacket is replaced by “Jacket Fierce or Jacket Interim Cold Weather”.
- Replace the T-Dress DPCU wherever mentioned with the T-Shirt Brown.
- SD1 Scottish Ceremonial Dress, SD2 Scottish Ceremonial Dress, SD3 Mess Dress Scottish and SD4 Mess Dress White Jacket Scottish are approved for purchase at member’s expense. Commonwealth funds are not to be spent to buy British dress and matching accessories in service or ceremonial uniform.
- Gloves Leather Black/Brown are replaced as a general entitlement and retained only for those posted into representation duties to selected countries.
- Female underwear: stockings, pantihose and underpants removed from IFI Block Scales. Bras are no longer to be issued as an IFI item. Female recruits and officer cadets will be assisted through the professional fitting of sports bras.
- Sweater Khaki Lightweight may continue to be worn by those who have already received an issue.
- No further permanent issue are to be made at ADFA, RM, or Kapooka.
- One Army button is to be adopted across all forms of dress as appropriate to that dress and no other corps or regimental buttons are to be worn.
- All Rising Sun badges in future will be oval shaped, as currently worn on outer jackets such as service dress. The square Rising Sun badge, as currently worn on polyester shirts, may continue to be worn until existing stock is phased out.
- Elastic-sided leather ankle boots are authorised for wear with polyester and service dress uniforms at member’s expense. Patent leather boots must continue to be worn when ceremonial parade orders of dress are required. The following styles of boots are approved for both non-IF personnel. Those approved for wear are to be bought at member’s expense and will be reviewed periodically. R.M. Williams Styles Craftsman Dress, Wentworth Dress, Tambo Dress and Baxter styles Henry Baxter, Drover and Horseman. The full list of leather boots approved to be worn will be listed in the CA directive.

NEW DRESS CODE: WHAT’S IN AND WHAT’S OUT

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Wagon project revs up

By Cpl Jane Ashby-Cliffe

MERCEDES-Benz delivered the first 11 prototypes of the G-Wagon off-road vehicles to the ADF at a ceremony in Graz, Austria, on October 29. A total of 1200 new purpose-built cross-country vehicles will replace some of the ADF’s existing Land Rover fleet as a part of Land 121 Project Overlander.

The $4.6 million Project Overlander is the largest land project in the Defence Capability Plan. It will deliver a fleet of approximately 7000 vehicles, modules and trailers to significantly improve the ADF’s operational capability, logistics and mobility.

Director General Land Vehicle Systems, Land 121, Brig David O’Brien said the handover was a significant milestone for the project and Army.

“It is good news for the soldiers who will receive a world-class capability which will be delivered with full integrated logistic support,” Brig O’Brien said.

The vehicles will be delivered on time and on budget, which is an impressive achievement. Six types of G-Wagons will be acquired with the majority rolled out to Army units. The range includes a 4x4 general-purpose station wagon, two 4x4 cargo variants, a 6x6 cab-chassis variant, a 6x6 dual-cab truck, and a specialist 6x6 surveillance and reconnaissance vehicle.

The G-Wagon will serve as a platform for a variety of interchangeable specialist modules to enable personnel carriage, cargo carriage, canine transport, ambulance operations and command and control functions.

Testing of the vehicles will begin in Australia in January 2010 and will include a two-week soldier trial at Puckapunyal Military Training Area. “For the first week we will run a series of activities to see how soldiers operate in the vehicles, before a one-week exercise testing all aspects of the vehicles will be used for,” Brig O’Brien said.

“Having the soldiers involved in the testing will ensure we receive constructive feedback and confirm we are getting a great product that meets their needs.”

The main production of the G-Wagons will begin in Graz in October 2010, with delivery of the first 30 vehicles expected in February 2011. Soldiers will start training at RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland, in March 2011, with vehicles rolled out to units beginning in July.


G-WAGON AT A GLANCE

Engine: Mercedes-Benz, 2.8-litre, 6-cylinder V turbocharged intercooled diesel engine with high-pressure common rail injection system (CDI), with exhaust gas treatment compliant to Australian emissions regulations (equivalent to Euro V)

Fuel: Diesel

Fuel tank capacity: Main tank – 96 litres; Reserve tank – 55 litres

Range: 600km, approx 19 litres per 100km (fully laden)

Max speed: 120km/h on-road

Gross vehicle weight: 4600kg (4x4 station wagon and carryall); 6500kg (6x6 cab-chassis, dual-cab and surveillance)

By Maj. Mark Gillespie (USA, Ret.), former Professor of Military History at the United States Military Academy at West Point. 

“Although much of the work scholars have produced on the First World War is worth examining, generally the length and level of detail are likely to be unsuitable for those readers who seek a brief but complete account of the war. For this purpose Terence Finn’s book serves admirably.”

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DEATH and invalidity benefits have been improved for Military Retirement and Death Benefits for members of the Defence Force. The improvements include:

1. Increased death and invalidity benefits for members of the Defence Force. The increase will be paid with interest. The benefit payments paid after July 1, 2007 will be backdated to the ruling which was made. Affected parties will be advised of any change in benefits as soon as the review has been completed.

2. Average increase in death or invalidity benefits for super were based on a percentage of salary and not linked to age.

3. Pfers-A: A Brig Gerard Fogarty said Army, Defence and wider government agencies fully supported dependants of deceased or injured soldiers. “These organisations work in a co-operative effort to ensure the family is given the right foundation to help them through such a difficult time,” Brig Fogarty said. He said organisations such as the Veterans Affairs’ Department, ComSuper and the Defence Community Organisation offered a wide range of support services and benefits to assist soldiers and their families. These were in addition to the benefits provided in the ADF Pay and Conditions Manual.

WHERE TO GET HELP

To obtain more information on what support and benefits are available to soldiers and their families, visit:

- Veterans’ Affairs Department at www.dva.gov.au
- ComSuper at www.militarysuper.gov.au
- Defence Community Organisation at www.defence.gov.au/DCO

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A boost for super benefits

Sure footing: When things get rocky, structures are in place to support families and dependants of dead or injured soldiers. Photo by Cpl Guy Young

SOLDIERS deploying overseas have been encouraged to put their minds and that of their families at ease by ensuring they are aware of the support available in the event of their injury or death. DGPers-A A Brig Gerard Fogarty said Army, Defence and wider government agencies fully supported dependants of deceased or injured members. “These organisations work in a co-operative effort to ensure the family is given the right foundation to help them through such a difficult time,” Brig Fogarty said. He said organisations such as the Veterans Affairs’ Department, ComSuper and the Defence Community Organisation offered a wide range of support services and benefits to assist soldiers and their families. These were in addition to the benefits provided in the ADF Pay and Conditions Manual.

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VETERANS’ AFFAIRS DEPT

On disability, members can access:

- Pension and incapacity (time off work) benefits
- Permanent impairment and non-economic loss
- Medical treatment
- Rehabilitation assistance (if discharged) to serving members through the ADF Rehabilitation Program
- Aids, appliances and home alterations
- Motor vehicle modifications
- Attendee care services
- Household services
- Financial advice
- Repatriation specific treatment (white card)

On death, member’s dependants can access:

- Lump sum death benefit
- Additional lump sum death benefit for dependent children
- Education payments
- Funeral costs
- Financial advice
- Repatriation Gold Card (free care)
- Other compensation entitlements (e.g. pharmaceutical and telephone allowances)
- Other dependant compensation

SUPERANNUATION

On medical discharge members can access:

- Superannuation invalidity pension based on the level of incapacity in relation to appropriate civilian employment
- Where incapacity is less than 30 per cent – lump sum or retirement pay depending on years of service (for DFRDB members) – lump sum and a preserved employer benefit (for MSBS members)

On death, MSBS member’s eligible dependants can access:

- Annual pension (taxable, indexed for life), lump sum or combination of annual pension (taxable, indexed for life) and lump sum
- Lump sum of member contributions and part of pension

On death, DFRDB member’s eligible dependants can access:

- Annual pension (taxable, indexed for life)
- An option to commute part of that pension into a lump sum

PACMAN

- Bereavement payment (chap 11, part 3)
- Accommodation assistance (chap 7, part 5 and part 6)
- Removal and storage (chap 6, part 6)
- Pay-in of accruable annual, long-service or war-service leave (chap 11, part 3)
- Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (chap 7, part 2A)
- Funeral costs (chap 11, part 4)
- Floral and non-floral tributes (chap 11, part 4)

Rehabilitation Program

- Lottery support to serving members through the ADF

We are providing limited accommodation availability for current serving members call 2IC ATW for details on 02 6933 8229.

Indicate your attendance before 20 Nov 09 by emailing 2IC ATW at matthew.clinch@defence.gov.au.

Be there, spread the word and bring your fellow adventurers.
Kiowas’ final salute

By Cpl Jane Ashby-Cliffe

SEVEN Kiowas graced Darwin’s skies for the last time when they marked the end of an era on October 26.

Soldiers of 1 Avn Regt lined the tarmac to farewell their workhorse of 38 years before the Kiowas took off with an escort of four ARH Tigers.

Commander 1 Bde Brig Michael Krause was a passenger for the final flight and transmitted the following message: “All callsigns Griffin, this is Predator Nine. Outstanding! It’s been a real privilege to fly with you today, a great reminder to me of the regiment’s past and a wonderful glimpse into the regiment’s future. Stay bold! Out.”

Brig Krause said the Kiowa had been fundamental not only to Army Aviation’s capability but had been linked closely to 1 Bde and was a great old friend.

“Although it is sad to see the Kiowa go it is wonderful to see its replacement, the ARH Tiger, which is a phenomenal aircraft and brings fantastic capability,” he said.

Kiowa pilot Maj Fern Thompson said it had been an honour to have “shared flying the Kiowa with the combat aviators of the past and a privilege to fly over the current combat aviators of 1 Avn Regt”.

“The presence of the ARH escort really drove home the final farewell and provided everyone with a window view to the future of Army aviation that lies with the ARH,” she said.

Twenty-seven Kiowas will remain in service with the Army Aviation Training Centre at Oakey, Queensland and 173 Avn Sqn in Sydney. The Kiowa will continue to serve as the training platform for future combat aviators until it is replaced by a new training helicopter under Project Air 9000 between 2014 and 2016.

Kiowas have operated in the Northern Territory since the early 1970s and have been based in Darwin since November 1994. They were deployed to Timor from September 1999 to June 2003 and again from May 2006 to November 2007.

The 2010 model line up of Land Rovers is here. As a member of the Australian Defence Forces you are eligible for the full benefits of the Land Rover Corporate Programme, including 3 years/100,000kms free scheduled service*, 3 years/100,000kms factory warranty†, factory corporate rebates on all models, reduced new vehicle delivery cost**, even free genuine tailored floor mats.

2010 Range Rover Vogue is available with the new 5.0 litre Supercharged V8 petrol engine with 375kW of power, and the acclaimed TDV8 diesel, that delivers a huge 640Nm of torque. Range Rover Sport also comes with the new Supercharged V8 petrol, as well as the new 3.0 litre TDV6 sequential turbo diesel engine delivering 600Nm of torque. Discovery 4 features the all-new 5.0 litre naturally aspirated V8 petrol engine delivering 278kW of power, and the new 3.0 litre TDV6 sequential turbo diesel. And still available is the highly acclaimed 2.7 litre TDV6 with 440Nm of torque. Freelander 2 has a choice of 3.2 litre V6 petrol engine, 2.2 litre TD4 turbodiesel and new Freelander 2 TD4_e, the first SUV in the world with intelligent Stop/Start. Finally, Defender is now available with a new eight model line up – Five 110s and three 130s – From two seats to seven, and with tray back options for the complete deal on the full range of Land Rovers, contact your Land Rover Retailer and introduce yourself as a Land Rover Corporate Client.

*Applies only to full time serving personnel of the Australian Defence Forces (excludes contractors). †3 years or 100,000kms whichever occurs first. Excludes wear and tear items, tyres, battery, oils and additives. ‡Whichever occurs first.
By Cpl Jane Ashby-Cliffe

WO2 Peter Watts has proudly celebrated 40 years of service in the Australian Army.

The Darwin range control officer reached the milestone on September 30. He enlisted in Brisbane in 1969 at the age of 18.

After leaving school he worked as a stockman on a cattle station in central Queensland, and it was during this time he was inspired to join the Army.

WO2 Watts said the manager of the station served as a captain in Papua New Guinea and often discussed his military service.

“He said as a young fella it wouldn’t do me any harm to join the military and get around seeing and experiencing different places,” WO2 Watts said.

“I have never regretted the decision that I made many years ago and have thoroughly enjoyed my time. Although it makes me feel old, I feel very proud and honoured to have contributed something to the Army.”

WO2 Watts joined the infantry and served in Malaysia, Singapore, Vietnam, Rhodesia and New Zealand.

“I have enjoyed all of my postings and deployments but I guess the most rewarding has been to the Officer Cadet School (OCS) in New Zealand,” he said.

“I was the first Australian warrant officer to be posted to OCS NZ, where for the first time young Australian cadets graduated as officers after a very demanding 12-month course.

“It is very rewarding to contribute towards the training of young potential officers, some of whom I remain in contact with today.”

WO2 Watts said he had witnessed many changes over the years but still liked to reflect on the “good old days”. “We worked together, played together, we were a close-knit group.”

WO2 Watts will celebrate his 60th birthday on May 7, 2011, and serves in the infantry corps.

In it for the long haul: WO2 Peter Watts with a photo of himself during the early years of his service. He has served for 40 years in the ARA in infantry corps. Photo by WO2 John McCrystal.
LIA rate changes

By WO2 Graham Mcbean

NEW contribution rates for living-in accommodation were announced on October 16 with increases and decreases in rates based on the standard of accommodation.

The adjustments to LIA contributions were scheduled for 2008 but were postponed until a re-evaluation of living-in accommodation could be completed.

Rates are based on 50 per cent of the assessed rental value for levels 3, 4, and 5 accommodation and 40 per cent for levels 1 and 2.

Big increases across the board are for soldiers moving into new Level 5 accommodation at places like Gallipoli Barracks.

Director Housing and Removals Policy Robert McKellar said the revaluation reflected both private-sector rental growth and Defence work on living-in accommodation throughout Australia.

"More Level 5 accommodation has become available and some refurbishment has also been done. These improvements in quality have contributed to the increased rental valuations for the higher levels of accommodation on-base," Mr McKellar said.

"Where there has been a decline in the average rental value, for some Level 1 accommodation on-base," Mr McKellar said.

Big increases are also being seen in rates based on the standard of accommodation throughout Australia.

"Where there has been a decline in the average rental value, for some Level 1 accommodation," Mr McKellar said.

Key adjustments: A re-evaluation has produced new LIA rates.

"As a result, the new LIA indexation adjustment will occur in July-August 2010. A further indexation adjustment will occur at the same time as the annual GRS adjustment in March-April 2011."

Revaluations are conducted every three years by the Australian Valuation Office (AVO) to compare the standard, amenity and location (along with other factors) with that available in the private sector.

Contribution rates are adjusted annually between revaluations using an index created by the AVO for that purpose.


THE Defence Service Homes Insurance Scheme (DHSIS) is now offering home and contents insurance to permanent and reserve members eligible for the Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS).

This follows recent changes to the Defence Service Homes Act to support Defence’s home loan subsidy scheme.

Members do not have to hold a DHSIS Subsidy Certificate to take out home loan cover. They need only to meet the eligibility requirements of DHSIS.

DHSIS offers both home and contents insurance, and policyholders can take out cover on any home they own, including holiday and rental homes.

The scheme is administered by the Veterans’ Affairs Department and provides contents insurance, through QBE.

For further information, contact DHS on 1300-532-662 or visit www.dsh.gov.au.

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Your comments will be non-attributable.

LIA contributions as at November 26

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<th>then their contribution to living-in accommodation each week is ($...</th>
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<td>one person</td>
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<td>Captain or lower</td>
<td>two or more people</td>
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<td>Sergeant or higher</td>
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<td>Corporal or lower</td>
<td>four or more other people</td>
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<td>Normal entry recruit</td>
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Insurance deal now available

THE Defence Service Homes Insurance Scheme (DHSIS) is now offering home and contents insurance to permanent and reserve members eligible for the Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS).

This follows recent changes to the Defence Service Homes Act to support Defence’s home loan subsidy scheme.

Members do not have to hold a DHSIS Subsidy Certificate to take out home loan cover. They need only to meet the eligibility requirements of DHSIS.

DHSIS offers both home and contents insurance, and policyholders can take out cover on any home they own, including holiday and rental homes.

The scheme is administered by the Veterans’ Affairs Department and provides contents insurance policy through QBE.

For further information, contact DHS on 1300-532-662 or visit www.dsh.gov.au.
NEW STRUCTURE

Band 1: WO2s are offered promotion on open-ended engagement (OEE).

Band 2: WO2s are offered a fixed period of service (FPS) initially for nine years. The only difference between this promotion and a promotion on OEE is the defined period of service with FPS. The warrant officer remains widely employable and will be considered for further advancement along the WO1 tiered continuum. Additionally, the WO1 is eligible for an extension of FPS.

Band 3: WO2s in Band 3 may be offered a limited tenure promotion (LTP). LTP provides for the promotion of members who have skills relevant to a particular position at WO1, but not necessarily the skills to enable wider employability at the WO1 rank. Tenure will be limited to the duration of a three-year appointment.

By WO2 Graham McBean

A RADICAL new policy for the career management of senior non-commissioned soldiers is to help warrant officers being promoted to WO1 and beyond serve to the compulsory retirement age.

CA Directive 37/09 details the new concepts to develop a competitive employment offer to accommodate the anticipated longer lifespan of the average military career.

Career development will continue to be based on performance against peers but the new system will continue to be based on performance and utility of employable troops for senior soldiers to serve in meaningful employment.

Li-Col Michael Rozzoli, Career Management Group SCMA, said the new system formalised the previous ad hoc arrangements.

He said with reduced minimum time-in-rank requirements a soldier could now possibly reach WO1 by age 29 and better management of career alternatives for soldiers not competitive for higher RSM/WO1 duties was needed.

“What the policy does is maximise opportunities for trade and regimental soldiers as well as providing extended service opportunities,” Li-Col Rozzoli said. “Instead of coming to a spot where Army runs out of meaningful jobs it is able to apply the provisions of the extended service list (ESL) and shape some soldiers into other education and professional development.”

The new directive essentially consolidates separate initiatives made to senior soldiers’ career policies throughout the past decade.

One new policy initiative, however, is a band system that WO2s will be assigned to on promotion, not unlike lieutenant colonel to colonel. Band 1 warrant officers will be offered open-ended engagement.

Band 2 are offered a fixed period of service initially for nine years and considered for further employment at the end of the nine years. Band 3 might be offered a limited tenure promotion.

The directive states that on completion of the initial six-year WO1 appointment, competitive WO1s will move to a higher tier of appointment or be offered another position at their current level.

Those WO1s who are not competitive for a further tiered appointment will then be considered under the provisions of the ESL.

The intent of the ESL will be to manage the career options of those warrant officers to either serve until retirement age or reach a point where they need to make a decision.

Li-Col Rozzoli said most warrant officers would notice little change. “If senior soldiers keep out of the bottom 7-10 per cent in terms of performance and utility of employment, then life should be pretty much the same,” he said. “But it is a choice various senior soldiers will need to make with their eyes open.”

CA Directive 37/09 is available on the intranet on the CA’s home page.

By WO2 Graham McBean

ONE lucky person was tickled pink after winning Commander 1 Div’s parking space for two weeks, in a raffle to support breast cancer.

A joint operation at HQ 1 Div to raise awareness of breast cancer enlisted pink hot dogs to raise $1000 for the Queensland Cancer Council. Maj-Gen Mick Slater donated his car parking space as one of the fundraising prizes.

The rassie event was organised by Selina Karjalainen and long-time 1 Div employee Yvonne Monnet, known universally as Inky, who was diagnosed with breast cancer in October last year.

Although the disease had spread to her liver and bones, she has made an astonishing recovery, which friends and colleagues attribute to her remarkable optimism.

Ms Monnet and Ms Karjalainen canvassed local businesses to provide prizes for a monster raffle held on Pink Hot Dog Day on October 23.

A local bakery came through for the cause by providing pink bread rolls for the fundraising morning tea.

Ms Monnet said she had received tremendous support from work colleagues and outstanding medical treatment, and it was time to give something back. “The day was about all the other women out there that are going through breast cancer now – there are about 30 women a day who get diagnosed with the disease,” Ms Monnet said.

“We live in hope, which is a small word, that a cure will be found one day and if today’s event can contribute towards that goal then it will be a debt repaid.”

Maj-Gen Slater said raising awareness of breast cancer was an important goal...
A LONE council member stood in the Darwin street before squadrons of ASLAVs, blocking their entry to the CBD, and calling for an explanation of the troopers’ intentions. The standoff between the cavalry’s military might and city officialdom drew residents and tourists street-side to watch the confrontation on October 31.

Through booming speakers mounted around the city intersection, 2 Cav Regt Lt-Col Dennis Malone called down from the leading ASLAV turret, “2 Cav Regt request the right and privilege to enter the City of Darwin with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, drums beating, band playing and guidon flying.”

Through a tradition dating back to medieval times, 2 Cav Regt was granted freedom of entry to the city. A parade of ASLAVs, quad bikes, motorcycles, trucks and matching troopers moved to the beat of the Australian Army Band–Darwin past the dias, where Lord Mayor Graeme Sawyer and 2 Cav Regt Honorary Colonel Brigadier Ian Bryant (retd) received the salute.

Lt-Col Malone said his unit’s special relationship with Darwin made it only fitting that they would be the only local unit granted permission to share the centuries-old tradition with the city.

2 Cav Regt was the first regular Army unit to be based in Darwin since World War II, so we have a strong and unique bond with the city,” he said.

“The general public’s affection for the cavalry was shown by the great turn-out for the parade.”

Not since 2000 has the unit exercised the right of freedom of entry into Darwin.
AUSTRALIAN personnel assigned to Operation Padang Assist have returned home a month after an earthquake devastated the Indonesian region.

The last elements of the ADF’s Joint Task Force left Indonesia on November 2, having handed over the Australian Army Primary Health Care Facility to local health authorities and completed all reconstruction tasks.

Among the Australian contingent’s many achievements were the production and distribution of 1.3 million litres of water, and the treatment of 1300 patients in a purpose-built medical facility. In the village of Sei Giring, 63 buildings were assessed for structural integrity and more than 532.4 tonnes of humanitarian aid was flown into the region.

The commander of the Indonesian earthquake relief effort, Maj-Gen Aslizar Tanjung, praised the Australians for their support of the Indonesian Defence Force: “Your performance was outstanding, to finish your mission in such a short time. We look forward to more opportunities to work together in the future,” Maj-Gen Tanjung said.

Joint Task Force commander Col Mark Brewer said he was proud of the performance of his personnel during the operation. “To see the Australian and Indonesian soldiers working side by side, forging friendships in the aftermath of a natural disaster, will be an enduring feature of this mission,” Col Brewer said.

CDF ACM Angus Houston said, through working closely together in the aftermath of the September 30 earthquake, the Australians and Indonesians had strengthened the friendship between the two nations.

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The remote village of Tandikat, one of West Sumatra’s biggest suppliers of rice, suffered some of the worst destruction from the earthquake that struck the region on September 30.

Darwin-based engineers from 1CER joined the clean-up effort and helped restore some form of normality for the residents of the town, which was swamped by massive landslides.

CO of the field engineering element Maj Michael Scott said up to 600 bodies were believed to have been buried in the banks of mud created by the landslide.

“The mountains around the village have many natural springs flowing through them. The earthquake destabilised the mountain sides and about 400 metres of dirt on each side of the valley were washed over the town,” Maj Scott said.

“We understand there were two weddings taking place at the time and students were still in class at the local school.”

The Indonesian Army assisted with the engineering work and was responsible for removing any remains that were found.

Evidence of the sheer force of the landslide were obvious further upstream, where a suspension bridge across the river partially collapsed.

The main anchor on one side of the bridge was swept out of the ground and lay about 50m from where it used to be.

Large fields of debris-filled mud made the ground unstable and, while the bridge could be repaired, the job took quite some time.

Around the town, 15 field engineers used backhoes, and front-end and skid-steer dozers, to stabilise the area.

Site supervisor Sgt Lesley Burgess said the focus was on repairing an irrigation channel so the villages could restore their rice crops and return to their normal lives.

“There was a large area that we needed to stabilise before anything else was done here. We needed to make the site safe for our troops to work in,” Sgt Burgess said.

“We levelled a large area above the aqueduct and made sure it was stable by including a retaining slope down to the river.

“Once this was done, we could get down to the bottom and restore the water flow that had been affected by the landslide.”

The task of stabilising the area and restoring irrigation to the crops took about 10 days. Once completed, the engineering team was able to return to Darwin.

Digging deep: Indonesian soldiers watch Australian engineers clear debris around Tandikat (above).

School’s out: Army engineers clean up a damaged school building in Tandikat in readiness for reconstruction (right). Photos by CPL Guy Young

By LS Paul McCallum

FIELD engineers from Darwin helped to clear debris from a damaged primary school in the village of Tandikat after the earthquake in Sumatra.

Walls in the school’s main classroom and administration building had failed and large sections of the roof had collapsed.

Site supervisor Lt Alex Edgar said the team had quickly got stuck into helping the local community.

“We all worked really hard to get this site prepared for the Indonesian Army to come in and be able to rebuild the school as soon as possible,” Lt Edgar said.

“We tried to recycle as much of the original material as possible to help reduce the demand on local supplies.”

Walls were knocked down with a skid-steer dozer while angle grinders were used to cut through reinforced concrete pillars that had been damaged.

Once the clearance work was completed at the primary school, the task was repeated at a nearby elementary school.

Supporting the engineers were firefighters from an Army emergency response section in Darwin and medics from Sydney-based 1HSB.
Fighting tetanus

By LS Paul McCallum

ONE of the biggest elements of Operation Padang Assist was also one of the better-known teams of soldiers who kept operation running.

With members drawn from all around Australia, the deployed Combat Service Support Team (CSST) was made up of personnel from 1CSB, 9FSB and 10FSB, and assists dealt alongside 1CSB.

The team of 45 specialists co-ordinated the distribution of mission-essential stores from Australia and from local suppliers to the works sites where they were needed.

Manager of the logistics team Maj Gabriele Follett said the CSST was involved in every aspect of the operation.

“We had troops on the ground in every site the Australian operation was taking place,” she said.

“Our main control point was at the Padang International Airport so our people were at the joint task force headquarters, the medical facility at Bungai Geringgang and Tandikat, where engineers were clearing debris from landslides and public schools.

“We also had a small team embarked on HMAS Kanimbla to manage the stores and equipment that remained onboard.”

Every piece of equipment and stores item – from ration packs and water through to the plant equipment being used to clear mud and rubble – was controlled and distributed by the team on the ground.

Normally, the team would deploy with about 100 staff but the specifics of Operation Padang Assist meant only 54 core logistics personnel were required at the airport to manage the stores being brought in by RAAF australane freighters.

“We worked very closely with the Air Force ground-movement crew to manage the offloading and forwarding of the stores that were landing at the airport,” Maj Follett said.

Another 20 personnel were situated around the worksites. These included maintenance engineers, small engines, recovery mechanics and petroleum operators.

With limited trucking available, co-operation with the Indonesian Army (TNI) and local transport contractors was essential.

“The operation would not have been able to run if it weren’t for us getting logistics distributed around the theatre,” Maj Follett said.

And without the TNI and local delivery contacts, we would not have been able to supply that logistical support.

“The language difference was a challenge, however we worked together with TNI and we were able to manage the situation.

“We also found a locally contracted interpreter to help us out a bit more.”

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Loyal pal farewelled

MRTF 2 members have farewelled a four-legged mate fatally injured in a vehicle accident.

Nova, an explosive-detection dog, died after the accident on October 23 while training with her handler at Camp Holland in Oruzgan province.

Nova was taken to the base medical facility to receive further treatment, but her injuries were too severe and she was put down by the regimental medical officer.

Base personnel later gathered with the MRTF 2 chaplain for a small ceremony before Nova was cremated.

Nova had recently been involved in Operation Baz Panje, a Joint Afghan National Army, Australian and coalition operation to remove the threat posed by the Taliban in the Mirabad Valley.

MRTF 2 CO Lt-Col Peter Connolly said the death of Nova was keenly felt by MRTF 2 personnel, particularly the specialist dog handlers.

"Explosive-detection dogs are a critical asset in our fight against IEDs. The dogs save countless lives," Lt-Col Connolly said.
Stronger security presence

AUSTRALIAN and Afghan soldiers have constructed a patrol base to establish a permanent security presence in Afghanistan’s Mirabad Valley.

MRTF 2’s Maj David Trotter said Operation Baz Panje allowed the engineers to deploy forward and construct the patrol base after discussions with local leaders on their security needs.

“The combat teams of MRTF 2 inserted into the area via an air mobile operation, disrupting the insurgents’ command and control, and degrading their ability to mount an effective response,” Maj Trotter said.

“This was one of the largest air mobile operations conducted by Australian conventional forces since Vietnam and was highly successful in forcing the insurgents out of the area and creating a secure environment.”

Lt Josh Porter said planning for the new patrol base began when MRTF 2 arrived in country and stores were ordered on a templated design.

“The ground force security effort will prepare the route,” Lt Porter said. “The large convoy, including the majority of construction plant fleet, commenced force protection works immediately after arriving at the site.”

The construction team included a small number of tradesmen and plant operators, ANA engineers and some RAEME personnel.

“The minimal site preparation required, and the proximity of a quarry, allowed a high rate of construction,” Lt Porter said.

The base, with amenities and hardened accommodation, will cater for ANA soldiers. Also included are facilities for coalition mentoring elements as well as joint headquarters to develop the ANA, in accordance with Australia’s objective to train and mentor the ANA.

Lt Porter said the new patrol base was the first of its kind in the area.

“The intent of the patrol base is to provide the infrastructure for a sustainable permanent presence in the Mirabad Valley, while causing minimal disturbance to the local population,” he said.

Maj Trotter said the insurgents remained on the back foot and had been unable to mount a cohesive or effective response.

“The ground force security effort will be maintained throughout winter, continuing to provide security and stability to the Afghan people in an area that has traditionally been a safe haven for Taliban leaders and operatives,” he said.
A MULTINATIONAL engineering team has hammered East Timor’s Gleno Stadium into shape.

Soldiers and engineers from the East Timor Defence Force (F-FDTL), the US Navy Seabees and the ISF have restored the Gleno Stadium, which was reopened on October 24.

When work began on the well-known local landmark the roof had collapsed, there was no plumbing in the toilets, no electric lighting and the change rooms were inhabited by rats.

Reconstruction project manager Lt Tommy Gains said the opportunity to work with the F-FDTL engineers had been a rewarding experience for the East Timorese and ISF engineers.

“The F-FDTL engineers were happy to work with us on this project as it was a great training opportunity for them,” Lt Gains said.

“It’s definitely been helpful to us as we have had the chance to get to know the F-FDTL engineers better and we’ve learnt from them as well. We were all eager to help do something that would benefit many members of the local Ermera community.”

Work at the stadium required the digging and cementing of new footings, the replacement of walls and finishing touches such as the painting of murals.

The roof trusses were constructed in Dili by the ISF and F-FDTL engineers with the assistance of local technical college students.

The return of football to the venue is another milestone in the restoration of normality for the people of the Gleno area.

Teams from around the nation will be able to bring football back to the stadium for all the locals to enjoy.

The official reopening of the Gleno Stadium included a football match between the Ermera and Dili districts.

Before the match, there was an Australian rules football demonstration, a RAAF working dog display, and sporting competitions between teams from the ISF and East Timor’s army and police.

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It's an honour: WO2 Andrew Nichols meets former criado Timao da Silva in Dare, East Timor. Photo by AB Jo Dilorenzo

New command for ISF

COMMAND of the ISF in East Timor has been handed over to a naval officer for the first time.

Cdre Stuart Mayer assumed responsibility from the outgoing commander, Brig Bill Sowry, at a handover parade in Dili on October 23.

Brig Sowry said economic stability and community confidence in East Timor had been moving in a positive direction.

While there is still work to be done, the improvements in East Timor’s social and economic stability are apparent,” Brig Sowry said. “The streets are busy, marketplaces are open and employment opportunities are being created.”

He said in the past the improvements had enabled ISF troops to reduce their presence on the streets while still being ready to provide a rapid response if called.

“Importantly we are seeing provincial policing responsibilities passed from the UN to East Timorese police units,” he said.

The association is planning the trek into the mountains of East Timor in honour of the criados – the Timorese men who assisted Australian soldiers during WWII.

The citation said Brig Sowry had “overseen a period of ongoing improvements to ISF soldiers’ living conditions, support tasks and he has achieved a commendable level of credibility, respect and honourable standing within Timor-Leste.”

MEDAL OF MERIT AWARDED

BRIG Bill Sowry received the Medal of Merit, one of East Timor’s highest accolades, on October 12. East Timor President Jose Ramos-Horta awarded the Medal of Merit in recognition of Brig Sowry’s service.

The citation said Brig Sowry had “led with outstanding presence and integrity, and that he stood out as a leader of compassion and humility. “Brig Sowry has maintained a visible focus on capacity building, adapting to the needs of the Timor-Leste people through a grass-roots approach,” the citation said. “Brig Sowry has provided enabling support for the F-LOTI to undertake independent population support tasks and he has achieved a commendable level of credibility, respect and honourable standing within Timor-Leste.”

A trek to remember our mates

TWO of the last five living criados have met for the first time since World War II as part of 2/2 Cdo Association’s preparations for a trek in East Timor early next year.

The association is planning the trek into the mountains of East Timor in honour of the criados – the Timorese men who assisted Australian soldiers during WWII.

Mr Correia vividly recalled patrolling with the commandos and being ambushed by the Japanese.

“The Japanese attacked us and threw a hand grenade.”

The shrapnel caught Mr Correia in the neck but he survived and worked with the Australians for the remainder of the war.

Mr Correia was recently awarded East Timor’s Medal of Merit by President Jose Ramos-Horta.

The treks of Portuguese Timorese Timor were vital to the Aussie 2/2 Independent Coy’s operations in the rugged Timor mountains.

They risked their lives so they could provide assistance and fight alongside the commandos working deep in Japanese territory.

While the Portuguese translation of criado is servant, the commandos adopted a new translation and dubbed the criados their “little mates.”

MEDAL OF HONOUR

On October 12, West Timor President Mamo Da Silva awarded the Medal of Honour to Mr Correia in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the West Timor State.

Mr Correia, then 93, was recently awarded the Medal of Honour in recognition of his outstanding contributions to the West Timor State.

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The floor of the building shakes as the four 120mm main guns of the Abrams begin an urban assault with a volley of rounds that echo through the buildings and fill the air with desert dust.

US Marine Corps (USMC) infantrymen swarm into the first buildings on the outskirts of the village. They engage targets with their assault rifles.

This scene is not in Afghanistan or Iraq, but at the USMC Air Ground Combat Centre in 29 Palms, California.

The other unusual thing about this live-fire urban assault exercise is the accents coming from the tanks crews; the voices are distinctly Australian.

The live-fire exercise is the beginning of Australian Armoured Corps soldiers’ participation in Exercise Gold Eagle.

The exercise will conclude with a divisional-strength exercise that will involve nearly 100 Australians from 1 Armored Regiment.

This is the first time the Australian soldiers will have participated in the exercise in conjunction with USMC 1 Tank Btn.

Capt Lachlan Simond says this year Gold Eagle involved an Australian tank squadron conducting a reciprocal live-fire exercise with a USMC tank company.

“We have completed live-fire training on an urban training range, with Marine Corps infantry and our tank soldiers fighting hand in hand,” Lt Col Graham says. “This has already demonstrated to me that the Australian tank soldier is trained to an excellent standard and is capable of operating well with one of our key allies.”

Lt Col Graham highlights the value of exercises such as Gold Eagle and the opportunities they offer to compare Australian Army skills and drills with those of close allies and partners.

“The exercise continues to show me that our tank soldiers are world class and could be deployed anywhere in the world,” Lt Col Graham says.

The exercise will culminate in a divisional live-fire exercise involving over 60 Abrams, infantry, artillery and close air support.

Lt Nicholas Hornbuckle in position on his Abrams before deploying into the field.

“Doing the Eagle Rock”

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Lt Nicholas Hornbuckle in position on his Abrams before deploying into the field.
Fans are not holy!

IN RESPONSE to Maj Peter Scott’s letter (Army, October 29), I find his logic flawed.

Having been a life-time fan of and competitor in motorsport, and never being involved in a) a drink-driving offence (although I am in no way a tee-totaler) or b) a car accident involving injury, I can see no correlation between the comparison of motorsport and Army personnel being unnecessarily injured or killed. Further, the assumption that speeding and alcohol misuse are a key issue involved in a serious vehicle accident.

I’ve carried out the project differently, that this initiative has improved the recruitment of much-needed tradesmen into Army, then it has been a success. It could easily be argued that the exposure returns to cost ratio well exceeded the delivery of a football to the NRL grand final by a Black Hawk crew.

I can’t agree with Army’s (or Project Digger) is a bad idea, although Project Digger should have been based on a F1K Holden.

WO2 Paul Conney
Land Systems Division, DMO
Victoria Barracks, Melbourne

CPL A from 2 Cdo Regt states the obvious: our equipment and tactics should match the current operational environment (Army, October 1). However, basing your argument on the fact that Indonesia won AASAM for the second year in a row is ludicrous. CPL A should go on to further his research and investigate world shooting competitions such as those in Europe, which is what the world’s most prestigious and longest running shooting competition is. In which numerous countries participate on a much grander scale and which the Sultan of Oman’s Shooting competition has won, and continues to win, 80 per cent of all the available prizes year after year.

If Oman is invited to AASAM in 2010, CPL A will then have the opportunity to shoot his Stey (if he is good enough) against the Oman team and their weapon of choice – the Stey.

I’ll also add that AASAM only shoots out to 400m and therefore cannot be compared to weapons that shoot out to 900m. Rather than fancy new weapons, soldiers and personnel should take a good, hard look at their marksmanship skills and look at how often they get out and shoot live-fire rounds. They may wish to utilise the services of a shooting coach, something I did in LTC before they start blaming the weapon for their poor shooting ability.

And before CPL A takes a jibe at the shooting ability of the Australian Army Shooting Team, the Indonesian team, among other military shooting teams, is a professional full-time shooting team, something conspiring of ex-Olympic shooters. Give Australia the time and resources to do the same and you will find we will improve our position.

As for introducing a “family of weapons” with a high percentage of interchangeable parts etc all I can say is that I wish my unit had the budget of a special forces unit. I think the smartest decision is to not only continue the research and development that Col Noble has highlighted in his response to also let our allies with deeper pockets make the purchases and conduct the trials so that we may observe the success or demise of another “let’s buy another Gucci weapon” idea and either adapt it or dismiss it.

Capt Alexs Stirkis
HQ 17 CYS Bde
Randwick Barracks

I READ with interest the comments by CPL A and Col Noble on the effectiveness of the F88 and M4.

I know critics of “here come the armchair experts” are no doubt reverberating through RAfN as I write, however, I have some level of expertise to be able to comment on the topic.

During my time in Army I have used the SLR, F88, M4, AK-47 and SVD. I am a competitive rifle shooter, having represented the Army and Australia both internationally and domestically. As politically incorrect as it is, I am also an avid hunter who for the past 22 years has also been machining my own ammunition, studying ballistics relevant to the terminal performance on the game I have been hunting and the calibres of my rifles.

I find Col Noble’s comment that “The AK-47, due to its sighting system, is a 200m weapon is extremely flawed as I have put a number of men through well-aimed rifles and have been able to apply effective fire with open sights up to 400m from the kneeling position – as witnessed by a suitably qualified SF SNOC”.

I have also used the SVD with open sights to 700m from the prone position and I’m impressed with its performance. Judging from the number of second-hand examples I’ve seen around the place, I can only guess that they too are pretty popular with our adversaries. As a result I can only agree with CPL A on the stated range mismatch and do not believe it is based on the quality of the weapon or the amount of “fruit”, or lack of it, used in the sighting system.

Although there are some design issues with the F88, I believe the mismatch is due more to the choice of cartridge than the weapon itself.

Even before the argument of historical battles occurring below 300m is taken into account, the energy generated by the SS109 is not sufficient for the task it is expected to perform, especially if fired from carbine length barrels.

The most recent challenge to the combat effectiveness of the 5.56mm cartridge is the US SF Command, who have actively gone outside their procurement channels to create an ammunition round to match their full automatic M249 system. While the US Centre of Naval Analysis Study on Small Arms in Combat demonstrates that soldiers and experts in theatre commented on the limited ability to effectively stop targets, should those personnel targets who were shot multiple times still be able to continue fighting. These two official channels alone back up the biographical accounts from veterans who have served in the Middle East and been reviewed in this publication.

This is not surprising when it is realised that our small similar-sized deer is the 243 win – a cartridge which holds less than 300mph and is much more pro-pellant and projectile weight. Given that the average male weighs around 75-85kg, you’re not in a good position to start with when forced to a 5.56.

Now when those same aggressive personnel targets are doped up on drugs, motivated by martyrdom and at an extended range, there are certainly valid grounds for finding a more reliable solution.

WO2 Alastair Fitzmaurice
Top Spy Sqy
Gallopip Barracks

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Battle to find cup champs

BRAGGING rights went to 3 Tp, A Sqn, in 2 Cav Regt’s annual troop competition, the Keldie Cup.

The competition was run over two rigorous four-day exercises of mid-intensity war fighting at the High Range and Mt Bundey Training Areas.

The objective was to test and assess 2 Cav Regt members in teamwork, tactics, techniques and procedures required for successful cavalry operations.

Troops were tested on a broad range of mounted and dismounted competencies, including close target reconnaissance, route clearance, convoy escort, observation posts, quick attacks and screening operations, as well as responses to mass-casualty incidents and civil disturbance scenarios.

The winning troop, led by Lt Steve Cotterill, reaped the benefits of the unit’s heavy training schedule for 2009, and the recent operational experiences of a large number of the unit’s personnel.

CO 2 Cav Regt Lt-Col Dennis Malone said the Keldie Cup gave soldiers an awareness of how far they could push themselves physically and mentally.

“Individual and troop-level endurance and cohesion are tested to the limit. The Keldie Cup this year is equal in intensity to any other training I have been involved in,”Lt-Col Malone said.

“The overall results were pleasing and set an excellent baseline for training in 2010.”

He said the Keldie Cup ensured the regiment maintained the ability to face a broad range of threats in tactical environments beyond the current MEAO operations.

Named after 2 Cav Regt’s first CO, Lt-Col J.D. Keldie, the competition has been contested since 1980.

LCpl David Vandenberg – gunner:
The exercise gave the junior commanders the ability to test themselves while under the pressure of fatigue.

Tpr Andrew Raue – driver:
It gave us an understanding of how a troop operates 24 hours a day, from the troop leader to the crew to the drivers, and how much we can actually do.

WO2 Jay Robinson – SSM:
It gave soldiers the tough and demanding training they deserve in a well-executed mid-intensity conflict-based exercise.

Lt Tristan Hedger – troop leader:
The activity put the troop through our paces and allowed my soldiers and me to understand exactly where our capability lies and what we can achieve. A very worthwhile activity.

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Course offers cold comfort

IF YOU ever get caught in a blizzard, it would be a good idea to have WO1 Gregory Hains with you.

WO1 Hains, RSM 5 Avn Regt, attended a cold-weather survival course at Mt Hotham, Victoria in August in preparation for his posting to the Combat Survival Training School (CSTS) in 2010.

The CSTS runs two of the courses a year. The course simulates a hostile combat environment and train aircrew and other selected personnel to survive and evade capture in cold-weather conditions.

WO1 Hains said moving through snow-covered terrain, while trying to avoid the enemy, was physically challenging.

"If you have already completed the environmental and combat survival courses then give it a go," WO1 Hains said. "Like all survival training, just bring an open mind, a willingness to learn and a positive attitude. Those things will get you through every time."

 refuge: WO1 Hains reviews a snow shelter under construction.

The course includes theory and practical lessons covering the priorities of survival, building and living in improvised shelters, fire lighting, acquiring water, movement, escape and evasion and how to avoid an avalanche.

CSTS chief instructor Flt-Lt Ben Kurylowicz said the course was an integral feature of training for personnel likely to deploy on operations in cold weather. "Warfare in these environments is not only a battle against the enemy but could also be a battle for survival against the elements," Flt-Lt Kurylowicz said.

For all enquiries or expressions of interest for courses in August 2010, call Flt-Lt Ben Kurylowicz on (07) 4752 1501 or email benjaminkurylowicz@defence.gov.au

Snug fit: WO1 Wayne Harper, current CSTS instructor and the 2010 5 Avn Regt RSM, tries WO1 Hains’ shelter for size.

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A COMBINATION of three courses has enabled soldiers from the three Regional Force Surveillance Units (RFSUs) to share their experiences of patrolling northern Australia’s remote areas.

Thirty-eight soldiers from 51FNQR, the Pilbara Regt and Norforce took part in the final phase of the patrolman’s, patrol 2IC’s and patrol commander’s courses from September 12-27, at the Mount Bundey Training Area, 200km south-east of Darwin.

Conditions were demanding, with oppressively high temperatures and humidity.

New and experienced RFSU patrolmen completed a range of patrol qualifications.

CO Norforce Lt-Col Chris Goldston, whose unit conducted the courses, believes having soldiers from the three RFSUs training together provided many benefits.

Key among these were the opportunity for RFSU soldiers to share their experiences of operating in the vastly different environments of northern Australia; for soldiers in the vastly different environments to operate together; and to exchange ideas and experiences that will benefit future operations.

Norforce’s Pte James Woods, who won the Student of Merit award, said it was a good experience to hear how the soldiers from Cape York and the Pilbara did things.

“Our areas might be different, but we all have the same sort of jobs in a patrol – the same skills of watching and reporting,” Pte Woods said. “I’ve done many Operation Resolute patrols over the years as a patrolman. Going to the next level and helping the patrol commander run things is something I’m looking forward to doing.”

Pte Glen Maskill, the Pilbara Regt, was named the Student of Merit for the patrolman’s course and Cpl Jason Smolski, Norforce, the Student of Merit for the patrol commander’s course.

The courses coincided with 1 Bde’s annual training exercises at Mt Bundey, which involved Abrams, APCs and artillery. Lt Tim Wilson, one of two officers from 1 MP Bn who completed the patrol commander’s course, said being collated with 1 Bde was a rewarding experience for the RFSU soldiers.

“A number of these soldiers are from remote communities and have had limited opportunities to see some of the Army’s more impressive equipment,” Lt Wilson said.

He said he was about to start his first Op Resolute border protection patrol and that the course had prepared him well to command a six-man patrol.

The soldiers who did the courses will conduct surveillance patrolling operations across northern Australia, where the six-man patrols operate hundreds of kilometres from their base and can extend their patrolling for up to 28 days.

The RFSU area of operations covers the Australian coastline from Karratha in Western Australia to the Torres Strait down to Cairns in Far North Queensland.

Norforce’s new Honorary Colonel, NT Administrator Tom Pauling, joined Lt-Col Goldston on a visit to the trainees during the courses.

“What he saw were young Australian soldiers from all walks of life and many cultures operating and working together to protect Australia,” Lt-Col Goldston said.

“He believed what he saw was a fine example of how indigenous and non-indigenous Australians can work together to achieve a common goal.”

Choose your target: Pte James Woods takes aim during a break-contact drill during his patrol 2IC’s course.
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Urban ops boost in Townsville

By Sgt Andrew Hetherington

A NEW $4.4 million training facility at Townsville will improve the urban combat skills of soldiers deploying overseas.

The Urban Operations Training Facility (UOTF), opened on October 22, is located within the Townsville Field Training Area (TFTA). It will provide the ADF with a multi-dimensional, reconfigurable and non-theatre-specific training area.

S o l l a v a r a c k Barracks Redevelopment Lt-Col John Hathaway said the UOTF was constructed as a flexible training environment for soldiers to practise urban combat skills.

“The facility consists of 150 shipping containers on a three-hectare site, which can be reconfigured to suit different scenarios within a built-up area for individual training or for teams working in co-ordination,” Lt-Col Hathaway said.

Only blank ammunition will be used at the site.

Before the facility’s construction, soldiers trained for urban operations at the Line Creek Junction facility (LCJ), which is also located at the TFTA.

The LCJ site, modelled on a small Australian town, was built from bricks and mortar and is not mobile.

“The modular and reconfigurable design of the UOTF provides more avenues of approach for trainees and is less tactically constrained,” Lt-Col Hathaway said. “The LCJ facility will continue to be utilised alongside the new UOTF site.”

A number of objects at the facility will add to the realism of training. “Old car bodies and old furniture from RAAF Base Townsville and Lavarack Barracks was placed around and within the containers,” Lt-Col Hathaway said.

“Some signage was printed in wingding format to create challenges in language interpretation for trainees.”

3 Bde units will be the primary users of the UOTF. Commander 3 Bde Brig Stuart Smith said it would be “a vital training facility for 3 Bde soldiers and will enable us to remain smart, tough and adaptable for our primary role of being ready for contingency operations.”

The Urban Operations Training Facility is an asset of DSG-NQ and can be used by units after making a booking through the TASMIS website on the DRN.
In the cold light of day

A taste of the Kokoda Track brought the military history books to life for Cpl Leanne Morris and her colleagues from 51FNQR.

IT WAS an adventurous training activity that held special meaning for soldiers from 51FNQR, when they were rewarded for excellence in performance of their duties with the chance to trek up the famous Kokoda Track.

The battalion has a strong historical link to the exploits of the 31/51 Bn at Porton Plantation in World War II, and the requirement to carry all personal equipment and give battlefield presentations along the way made the experience all the more real.

Cairns RSL, a staunch supporter of the battalion, funded the activity, which was run by Kokoda Trek Experiences. 51FNQR’s team comprised a patrolman from Cairns’ A Coy, a patrolman with advanced medical qualifications from the Torres Strait’s C Coy, a team leader from Operational Support Coy, and myself, Cpl Leanne Morrison, a clerk from Weipa’s B Coy.

The anxiety about the trip melted away once we arrived in Port Moresby, and seeing the Bomana War Cemetery made everything feel more real than a history book. I didn’t have to worry about food, no Japanese soldiers planning ambushes, no equipment breaking. Even on the hardest days, smiles and--white footage taken 67 years ago and rations. It looked the same as in the black-and-white footage taken 67 years ago and we found an old ration tin.

The first day was easy – nobody struggled, no equipment broke and I became confident in our whole team. Our guide, Merv Haines, a 7RAR Vietnam veteran who leads tour groups along the track several times a year, was an expert at providing history. He brought the history of the Kokoda campaign to life for us.

We moved into the highlands, trekking through an ancient, dripping-wet, moss-covered rainforest to Diggers Camp, at 2000m altitude. Up at Myola, we saw the spot where the biscuit bombers dropped rations. It looked the same as in the black-and-white footage taken 67 years ago and we found an old ration tin.

Back at Digger’s Camp, with dry clothes, a sleeping bag and a grass hut to shelter in, you could still feel the cold and wetness of the highlands, providing only a sense of what it might have been like to fight in the campaign.

I was safe in a hut and there were no Japanese soldiers planning ambushes. I didn’t have to worry about food, ammo or the condition of weapons. The Australian soldiers who fought along the Track were ill-equipped, sitting in waterlogged pits in the rain, anticipating Japanese attacks at any moment.

To endure the cold and fight so well would have required impressive strength.

Further down the track, past Eora Ridge, we could see the rectangular pits the Australians had dug with their helmets, spoons and empty bullet half-tins during the campaign.

When the rain set in at Ioribaiwa, we competed with other trekking groups for shelter in a grass hut.

Pushing on to Ogi Creek, we had to swim through freezing water and dry our clothes by the camp fire. At Nauro, a whole village greeted us with food and songs, making us very welcome.

After passing collections of old grenades, rounds and helmets, we eventually arrived at Brigade Hill, where I gave a small speech in the rain on a battle where 62 Australian soldiers were killed almost 67 years ago to the day.

Knowing some of the history and mentally matching some of the battles to the ground made the trek more rewarding. Even on the hardest days, smiles featured in every photograph and nobody complained, especially knowing the soldiers who fought in this area had to carry 30kg packs plus rifles and dodge bullets along the same terrain.

Meeting the oldest remaining Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel at the village of Naduri was a highlight. Ovuru Ndi, 103, supported the Australians in WWII and told stories of cheating death at the hands of the Japanese. He brought the history of the Kokoda campaign to life for us.

We found an old ration tin.

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These arrangements do not cater for any material of a humanitarian or goodwill nature. These items attract normal international rates of postage and should be sent via the civilian mail system.

New path for young men

By Lt Bill Heck

WHEN candidates volunteered for the Indigenous Pre-Recruit Course being held in Australia Post defence mail, they got involved in more than they bargained for.

Thirty young people have travelled from all parts of the country to take part in the eight-week course to give them a taste of military life and experience the benefits offered by a career in Defence.

The program was designed in consultation with indigenous groups, TAFE, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, the Department of Indigenous Affairs and the ADF.

WO1 Colin Watago is the man on the ground, running a course he says can change lives for the better.

"This is a process of changing thinking and behaviour to develop a work culture and mutual respect based on traditional Defence ethos and values," WO1 Watago said.

"In short, the end state is to help bring young people to be citizens who contribute in a positive way to the community, irrespective of whether or not they end up working for Defence.

"The course includes rigorous physical training, a field phase, visits to Defence facilities around Sydney, and classroom elements culminating in an opportunity to test for Defence Force entry."

Jason Scroggy, a 21-year-old construction worker from western Sydney, said he decided to do the course to change the direction of his life.

"I didn't like school much, dropped out in Year 9 and tried lots of different work since," he said.

"I know I would really like to join the Army and this course is going to help me to get my education up to the standard I need."

Nelson Donaldson, 18, of Townsville, said he wanted "to make something of my life instead of just wasting it."

"I am looking to join the Army, not only for the work but also the discipline because I want to be able to go back and teach other kids how to do something with their lives," he said.

Deputy Director of Defence Force Indigenous Affairs Michael Rowe said success rates for the course to date were encouraging.

"This is a specialised pathway to employment program with over 80 per cent of the graduates going on to pass the Defence Force aptitude tests," he said.

"It is delivered collaboratively, it is intensive, it is culturally appropriate and it consolidates skills including communication, teamwork and leadership."
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Located near RAAF Edinburgh, this large home will suit a growing family, or a family caring for a parent. There is a professionally built self-contained flat under the main roof. The house has a great east outlook and is recently painted inside and out. New front yard with U/G dripper watering system.

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Rev heads: Corey Lees and Thomas Csorba pause for a photograph with Team Army’s AC Russell Peters, Cln Ian Muggleton, Cln Kenny Gregory and Armygeddon during the Gold Coast Super GP (left). Photo by ACW Kylie Gilson

On target: Bdr Bradley Woodron, 8/12 Mdm Regt, provides security to a dismounted artillery observer party during Exercise Predator’s Gallop at the Mt Bundy Training Area (right). Photo by Sgt Shannon Joyce

Make a wish: Pte Jae Butler-Evans and CO 1RAR Lt-Col Peter Connolly mark the unit’s 64th birthday at Camp Holland, Afghanistan.

PEOPLE
November 12, 2009

Pleased to meet you: Capt Sally Fraser, JMCO Sydney, makes a new friend outside the JTF 629 headquarters building in Padang, Indonesia, during Operation Padang Assist. Photo by Cpl Guy Young

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Winner of the October 29 competition is ...

"Health authorities’ fears are realised as the swine flu mutates into a more deadly form."  
Maj Nathan Elmes  
Army Malaria Institute

We also liked ...

"Little wolf, little wolf, let me in!"  
Tpr Rodney Dreis and  
Tpr David Royle  
2/14 LHR (QMI)

"Now, who had pork in their hot box!?!?"  
Sgt James Delarue  
2CER

"Don’t peeve the pig!"  
Pte Rebecca Conolly  
HQ School of Arty

BULLETIN BOARD

Defence study scheme  
APPLICATIONS for semester one 2010 study under the Defence Assistance Study Scheme must be received by the appropriate service delegates by COB November 13. More information can be viewed at http://intranet.defence.gov.au/dsp/sites/CESP/default.asp?page=45418&Title=DASS

Review of punishments  
SERVING and discharged ADF members who were convicted and received a punishment or order for service offence from the Australian Military Court or a summary authority between October 1, 2007 and August 28, 2009 might have the right to seek a review of their punishment or order. Requests must be made by November 23. For more information visit www.defence.gov.au, contact your unit legal officer, phone the Defence Counsel Services on (02) 6127 4099 or email ddcs@defence.gov.au.

MS charity concert  
The RMC Band will hold a concert to raise funds for the ACT, NSW and Victorian branches of Multiple Sclerosis Australia at The ‘Q’ Performing Arts Centre, Queanbeyan, on November 15 at 7.30pm. Adult ticket prices are $35 and are available by calling (02) 6298 0290.

DIKKO

30 LIFESTYLE

"Say again, over"

If you can think of a clever, witty caption for this picture, email captioncomp@defencenews.gov.au with "caption competition November 12" in the subject line. Keep entries under 25 words. Entries MUST include sender’s name, rank and unit.

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Streching the point

Injuries not only affect fitness but can harm your health, motivation, lifestyle and career. The good news is many injuries are preventable – all it takes is a bit of planning and due caution. Here are eight tips for keeping injury at bay.

1. Check equipment
   Make sure playing surfaces and gym equipment are safe. Watch for potholes and rocks, and ensure weights are secured and cables are not frayed.
   All your training gear should fit properly and be in good working order. Above all, remember to wear it – even for the most casual of occasions.

2. Get fit
   Don’t play sport to get fit, get fit to play sport. Many sporting injuries are caused by fatigue, which can reduce muscle timing and the speed of mental reaction. This affects co-ordination and the ability of the protective muscles to respond to stress (leading to muscle, tendon and ligament strains).

3. Warm up
   It is often tempting to jump straight into physical activity and warm up as you go. Unfortunately, the physical demands and level of co-ordination required to, say, walk to the gym or sports field are vastly different from those involved in the actual activity. The chance of injury is high during this adjustment phase.

4. Listen to your body
   Your body can usually be relied on to tell you when things start to go wrong. Always stop training or playing at the first sign of injury. Avoid pushing through the injury, as this will only make it worse and can lead to more injuries as your body tries to compensate. If you are feeling ill or overly tired, skip the session. Missing one session can save you from missing more from injury.

5. Watch the weather
   The elements can have a marked effect on injury potential, but remember to stay hydrated (by drinking water) regardless of the temperature.
   Even when it is cold your body uses and loses water.
   Dress to suit the weather. When your body is cold, reaction time slows and muscle elasticity decreases, so wear warm clothing.
   When it is hot and humid, wear clothing that both protect you from the sun and allow the skin to breathe. A lightweight shirt is a good sun barrier and will trap sweat and provide a more effective means of heat loss through evaporation.

6. Park your ego
   While a will to win is good, injuring yourself and others because you are too competitive is not.
   Impress others in the gym with your flawless technique rather than being trapped under the weight bar or flying off the back of the treadmill.

7. Finish treatment
   Always complete your physiotherapy treatment. The pain might be gone but it does not mean the damaged tissues have fully recovered.

8. Lead, not follow
   Forget about following a program you have read about in a magazine or on a website, or doing an exercise because everyone else is. See your training consultant to have a program tailor-made to your needs.

Follow these eight tips and your chances of injury may be significantly reduced.

Following a few simple guidelines can have far-reaching effects on your body’s ability to ward off injury, writes Lt Rob Orr.

DEFENCE RESERVES SUPPORT

RESERVISTS - Know your rights and obligations

This card has been designed to help you understand your rights and obligations as a Defence Reservist.

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Remember to collect an Employer Handbook for your boss. It contains everything they need to know about employing a Reservist.

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Tournament Matches commence on Wednesday 18 November at various grounds in Canberra for details visit ascacricket.net.au/IDCC_2009.html

Telstra IDCC GRAND FINAL
Thursday 26 November, Manuka Oval
09:30hrs activities commence
10:00hrs game commences

Telstra International Challenge Shield Twenty20
Friday 27 November, Manuka Oval
13:00hrs game commences
Australian Cricketer’s Association v’s World Defence XI
Federal Golf Club would like to offer Defence members a special membership offer from the date of sign up, the cost of a membership is $770. Payment is to the end of our financial year, 31st March 2010. This fee is inclusive of all levies & GST. No nomination fee is applicable. Direct debit payment option will incur an administration fee. This offer applies to the full playing, seven day category. For further information, please contact the club on (02) 6281 1888.

PISTOL-shooting “guru” WO1 Ian Beattie, CATC, had his eye in to win the Silver Gun trophy in division 2 of last month’s Australian Police and Services National Pistol Competition at Holsworthy’s Liverpool Military Area Range Complex.

The 33 Defence competitors contested divisions 2 and 2A (service personnel) and division 5 (Defence civilians).

WO1 Beattie, a military master coach for AASPA, won a Smith & Wesson 686 stainless-steel competition revolver for his division 2 effort. Second place went to WO2 George Friesey.

Cpl Terry Parker (retd) won division 2A ahead of Capt Clive Whelan (retd) and Capt Dave Scherreick (retd).

Pistol shooting, through the AASPA, is a National Army Sports Association-approved sport. The AASPA has 106 members from the three services and Defence civilian ranks.

It is looking to expand its membership base in the hope of becoming an approved ADF organisation, opening the way for interservice and national competition.

Captains go the distance

By LCpl Glenn Power

A MARATHON six weeks earlier wasn’t enough, apparently. So 13 members of 9 Bde’s 144 Sig Sqn and one from 9CSSB took up the challenge of covering 50km or 100km in the Adelaide Trailblazer Challenge last month.

The event encouraged participants to test their physical and mental limits over a variety of distances and, although all but one of the team was new to the experience, the Army competitors were more than equal to the task.

Capt Stephen White and Capt Craig Richardson, both 144 Sig Sqn, came second in the 100km event in an impressive 13hr 21min. They finished in darkness as they, and the winners, clocked up the fastest time in the event’s nine-year history.

Many of the 144 Sig Sqn team had used the Adelaide Marathon only weeks before to prepare for the event.

The 14 military participants started at 7am with little realisation of what hardship lay ahead for some, would be the next 24 hours.

The early part of the course, along the River Torrens and through Adelaide’s genteel eastern suburbs, gave way to the rough, steep tracks of the Adelaide Hills, and finally into a more forgiving finish for those who took on the extra 50km.

Which was just as well, according to Capt Richardson. “Although the remainder of the course was relatively flat, the pain and stress on the body resulting from the initial 50 kms, increased with each kilometre and the only option was to slow down,” he said.

Capt Richardson and Capt White were “blown away” by their effort, especially since they were the only leading team carrying packs.
Maybe it is time to try something a bit more exciting – like shooting. The SSAA offers a variety of target rifle, clay target, handgun and hunting opportunities. So get off the muddy field and get on target!

Go to our website and click ‘Free Shooting Sports Pack’ for an information kit and a couple of free magazines. Enter promo code: army09 www.ssaa.org.au

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34 SPORT

IN A near-fairytale finish, the Defence Hockey underdogs defied the odds win gold and silver medals at the World Masters Games in Sydney.

The men’s team won gold in the over-35B category and silver in the over-40s against tough international fields.

The Defence women’s team battled hard but failed to match the men’s results.

The over-35B team, calling themselves the Old Warriors, beat Manly Magic 1-0 in a thriller to claim the gold medal, while the over-40 Older Warriors had to settle for silver after losing 1-3 to the Tassie Old Boys.

The teams were made up of more than 50 Army, Navy, Air Force and APS personnel, who danced the night away in celebration after their triumphs.

Leut Stuart Cayzer, from Defence Hockey, said the Warriors were on the warpath during the games and their medal achievements would live on in Defence hockey history.

Victory was especially sweet for the Old Warriors, who seemed to lose their way in the middle of the round-robin competition after the two A-category grand-finalists both flogged them by eight goals.

But they rallied in the play-offs to get the golden result in the B-category.

The Older Warriors fancied their chances in the gold-medal showdown against the Tassie Old Boys, after holding them to a 2-2 draw in their earlier round-robin match. But injuries to several key players diluted their firepower on the day of the final.

The Defence Warriors had many heroes, who played crucial roles in helping their teams to snatch victory from apparent defeat throughout their matches. Many injured players courageously put their bodies on the line.

Army’s heroes during the games included WO2 Scott Downs, AATC Oakey, who was solid in defence and repeatedly routed the opposition with daring runs down the sideline that bewildered even the spectators.

WO2 Downs said that after a week of tough competition the Warriors were teams of walking wounded, and yet all players still put in for their teammates.

“Many players were on the pitch with hamstrings that were close to snapping – or that did during the final – and feet that were permanently blistered and bleeding,” he said.

WO2 Downs said the way the teams “gelled” spoke volumes for Defence Hockey’s combined-service culture.

The women struggled early and were forced into the middle rounds of the finals. They closed the week strongly, though, winning their last two games, including the play-off for 10th-best team in the final game.

Among the best for the women Warriors was Capt Cath Kelaher, who performed strongly throughout the tournament and was voted most valuable player in the final game.

The three teams were a mix of former national Defence representatives as well as players who had competed only at club level. Several Defence Hockey life members and honour-roll inductees showed how committed they still are to the sport.

The teams were recognised as punching above their weight. Many players had not met before the registration day or had not played together for five to 10 years.

Sticking with it: WO1 Shane White (above right) and WO1 Pip Iseppi (left) copy each other’s manoeuvres in the men’s over-35B and women’s categories during the World Masters Games. Photos by Bill Cunneen

ENDURA
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HAVING spent nearly six months worshipping his body like a high-maintenance temple, Sgt Jason Stafford is relieved to have “rejoined the human race.”

A strict diet and training regime had seen him through his most punishing program of bodybuilding competitions, culminating in the World Natural Bodybuilding Federation’s (WNBF) Asia-Pacific Championships in Sydney recently.

A win in his light-heavyweight category would have entitled him to an all expenses-paid trip to New York for the world titles. He came second – and, he admits, that might have been a blessing in disguise.

“I honestly don’t think I would have been able to make it,” he says.

“I have just done the same number of competitions in 5½ months as I did in the previous two years and I’m feeling really burnt out.”

Sgt Stafford, a PTI at RMC Duntroon, had decided to tackle competitions in parallel federations. With an eye on the international arena, he was interested in trying out the International Natural Bodybuilding Association’s (INBA) program. That meant working his way through to the International Olympia on the Gold Coast this season, while completing the regular WNBF program at the same time.

He recorded two wins, two seconds and a third in the six competitions he entered.

His result in the International Olympia was “not worth mentioning.” “But at least it gave me an idea of what I’m up against and where I need to be in an international context,” he says.

Yes, despite his present state of exhaustion, Sgt Stafford still plans to take on the world, after a break, in what can be a dissatisfying, albeit addictive, sport.

“When you think you do all that work and preparation so you can stand on stage for five minutes in your budgie smugglers in front of a group of strangers who don’t know anything about you and whose sole job is to pick flaws in your physique – potentially, there is a very little reward for a lot of sacrifice,” he says.

But after 10 years of bodybuilding and three of competition, the 35-year-old is not quite ready to give up the life of extreme discipline.

The serious preparation starts about 16 weeks out from competition, with a month of cutting out the junk and making the transition to a peak diet.

Then comes a couple of months of high-carbohydrate eating (cycling between high-, moderate- and low-calorie menus), and finally three weeks of carbohydrate rotations before a week of finely tuned diet “manipulation.”

At his peak, Sgt Stafford puts in six one-hour cardio sessions (at 5am) and six hours of weight training a week, and sets the clock to eat every two hours.

“Although my wife didn’t leave me over the last few months, there were probably a few times when she thought about it,” he jokes.
Eyes on the prize: Maj Arthur Dugdale (right) helps the Defence Warriors reach gold in the over-35B men’s hockey at the World Masters Games. Photo by Bill Cunneen

GOLD CHASE

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See P35

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Meet and greet: An Australian member of Interfet introduces himself to a local in East Timor in 1999.

Photo by Gary Ramage
The 1990s saw the end of 20 years of isolationism for the Australian Army during a period which came to be known as the Long Peace. But by 1993 the world had changed. The Cold War had ended and a few dozen diggers had served in the first Gulf War. The evolution from peace to mass deployment started with the 1RAR Battle Group that served in Somalia in 1993. Diggers deployed as part of UN forces in Cambodia and Trinidad. Rubicon monitors were sent to war-ravaged Bougainville in 1997, followed by a peace-monitoring group. This regional response model would form the basis for the initiative in East Timor in 1999. In 1996, 18 soldiers died in the collision of two Black Hawk helicopters during training near Townsville.

Notes from an insider

When injury forced Wayne Cooper’s hand, he took up the privileged role of writing for his fellow soldiers on subjects he could relate to.

1990

1991

1992

1993

1994

1995
A matter of timing

For Maj Jason Logue, the position of Army reporter was the right job – for that moment.

View from above: Then Maj-Gen Peter Cosgrove, right, surveys the terrain near Balibo in his role as Commander International Forces East Timor. With him is WO1 Dale Sales.

Photo by Darren Hilder

Lucky: Then Cpl Jason Logue in East Timor in 1999.

IN MID-1997, as an infantry junior NCO with a young family and a communications qualification, I had decided to try my hand at a career in the Army.

For a junior NCO, it was an amazing experience. I was exposed to the Army’s leaders and, through their decisions, gained an understanding of the interplay between Defence and government and, for the first time in my career, senior Army personnel actively sought me out.

Yet the experience taught me life as an Army reporter has a use-by date. After three years, I felt detached from the Army I was supposed to inform.

Don’t get me wrong, I had some fabulous experiences while at the newspaper, and much of what I learned there set me up for the role I fulfil now.

I was lucky enough to get on one of the early Heros to Dilli in September 1999 and spent an amazing couple of months “unleashed” with Interfet.

Those few years in the battalions were the most valuable skills I had when I stepped into the piles of excrement at Komoro airfield. My previous life meant the three Aussie battalions were quite happy to “embed” me for patrols and missions.

The highlight was October 10 at the little border outpost of Motaain. I saw 100-odd Aussie infantrymen, supported by others, apply measured aggression to de-escalate what could have been a significant setback to Interfet’s cause.

The vision and stills shot by myself and others were fantastic evidence when the negotiations kicked off. That imagery also legitimised the actions of the Australians in the eyes of the UN and the world.

Without the knowledge I gained at the newspaper, I wouldn’t have made the career decision that has me fighting off the Kamaro hordes at Command and Staff College.

I also worked with some great people that in an insular battalion environment I would never have been exposed to on a regular basis.

FEBRUARY

Diggers destroy threat

AUSTRALIA’S contribution to removing the kill-joy landmines in Mozambique will continue as the fourth deployment of diggers serving with the Accelerated Demining Project heads to Africa.

Australian engineers’ efforts have so far led to the destruction of 8725 landmines, 3211 UXOs and the clearance of more than 1.1m square kilometres.

APRIL

Security alert

SECURITY staff in Canberra have issued a national-wide warning for soldiers to be on the lookout for people presenting themselves as military personnel. The warning follows an incident at Kapooka where a false engineer, claiming to be from SARS and working undercover for the Australian Federal Police, tried to buy DAF and polyester uniforms.

A police search of his vehicle revealed an SLR with three different registered numbers, two loaded magazines and some knives.

JUNE

Black Hawk disaster

TUESDAY June 18 was a day of grieving for the Australian Army as it remembered the greatest single loss of Australian soldiers since the Battle of Long Tan. Services were conducted around the country to remember the 15 SASR and three 5 Avn Regt soldiers who died when two Black Hawk helicopters collided at night over the High Range Training Area near Townsville.

DECEMBER

Gallant diggers

GOVERNOR-GENERAL Sir William Deane has presented Australia’s first decorations for gallantry since the Vietnam War. UNAMIR II’s Maj Carol Scott and Cpl Andrew Miller were honoured for their distinguished service, particularly in relation to the massacre of civilian refugees at Kiboho on April 22 last year.

1998

FEBRUARY

HIV ruling

THIS Federal Court has overturned a Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission decision that found the ADF had discriminated against a HIV-infected soldier in discharging him. The full bench found the issues revolved around “bleeding safety”.

March

Army after 2000

ARMY has released a plan that will see Australia’s land force modernise and grow during the coming decade. The aim is to provide a deployable force structure of seven task forces, a logistic support force and a special operations group, requiring about 50,000 soldiers.

MAY

War ends on Bougainville

“TODAY the war in Bougainville is over.” Those words, spoken by Bougainville Revolutionary Army Gen Sam Kaouma, were met by a deafening roar of approval at the casacde ceremony in Arawa. The signing signals an end to nine years of violence.

1999

MARCH

Training reality

CA LT-GEN John Sanderson has recommitted the Australian Army to effective, realistic training that will incorporate appropriate safety precautions. He was countering media speculation about the Army’s priority to the RAAF and Navy, land forces would be the first to hit the ground in any future battlefield in the coming years.

APRIL

Sniper weapon trials

MARKSMEN from around Australia set their sights on the future recently when they conducted user trials on a range of weapons at the School of Infantry. Sniper pairs tested 7.62 antipersonnel and 50 antitank missile systems that could enter service as early as April 1998.

FEBRUARY

1 Bde more ready

1 BDE in Darwin is about to be put on the same level of readiness as 3 Bde in Townsville. Defence Minister John Moore pointed to recent deployments in Bougainville, PNG, Irian Jaya and the Gulf, and added “further contingencies could arise in our region, including in East Timor”.

JULY

Sim system set to go

BASIC marksmanship skills are about to go high-tech thanks to nine new facilities around the country. US company Firearms Training Systems Inc designed the Weapons Training Simulation System (WTTS) to accurately simulate small-arms fire, eliminating the dangers and some of the costs of traditional ranges.

AUGUST

PNG work ends

ONE of the Army’s longest overseas deployments will come to an end later this year when a PNG-based engineer unit ceases activities after 36 years. The unit, known as the PNG Eng Section, will be the first soldiers to hit the ground in the UN-sponsored operation.

SEPTEMBER

Night fight

The ADF will expand its operational capabilities by introducing night-fighting equipment early next year. The gear includes monocular and binocular night-vision goggles, a night sight and a night-aiming device.

NOVEMBER

Dumpling weapons

THOUSANDS of captured military weapons are soon to be dumped at sea or blown up as interfeld soldiers continue their campaign to make East Timor safe. Weapons ranging from knives and machetes through to pipe guns, grenades and anti-armour rockets are awaiting disposal by Army ammunition technicians.

1996

MARCH

Training reality

CA LT-GEN John Sanderson has recommitted the Australian Army to effective, realistic training that will incorporate appropriate safety precautions. He was countering media speculation about the Army’s priority to the RAAF and Navy, land forces would be the first to hit the ground in any future battlefield in the coming years.

JUNE

Black Hawk disaster

TUESDAY June 18 was a day of grieving for the Australian Army as it remembered the greatest single loss of Australian soldiers since the Battle of Long Tan. Services were conducted around the country to remember the 15 SASR and three 5 Avn Regt soldiers who died when two Black Hawk helicopters collided at night over the High Range Training Area near Townsville.

DECEMBER

Gallant diggers

GOVERNOR-GENERAL Sir William Deane has presented Australia’s first decorations for gallantry since the Vietnam War. UNAMIR II’s Maj Carol Scott and Cpl Andrew Miller were honoured for their distinguished service, particularly in relation to the massacre of civilian refugees at Kiboho on April 22 last year.

1997

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APRIL

Sniper weapon trials

MARKSMEN from around Australia set their sights on the future recently when they conducted user trials on a range of weapons at the School of Infantry. Sniper pairs tested 7.62 antipersonnel and 50 antitank missile systems that could enter service as early as April 1998.

MAY

Diggers’ heroism awards

EIGHT bravery decorations and six service commendations have been awarded for courage following the Black Hawk tragedy that claimed eight lives last year. Governor-General Sir William Deane invested the 13 SASR soldiers and one 5 Avn Regt soldier whose acts helped prevent more casualties.

JULY

Elite women

THREE officers have created Army history as the first women to complete the arduous commando officer selection course and qualify to serve in one of the Army’s elite units. They were allowed to undertake the full selection course and other specialist courses but cannot serve in tank companies.

OCTOBER

Gunners a big hit

Gunners from 6RAR’s new Fire Support Company proved their mettle when they fired two 155mm Howitzers at Widgee Training Area during Exercise Heavy Metal. It was the first time the guns had completed a live-fire practice since they arrived in Brisbane in May.

NOVEMBER

Aussies for Bougainville

AUSTRALIAN troops will play a part in regional peace after a request from PNG to participate in a neutral Truce Monitoring Group (TMG) for Bougainville. Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer and Defence Minister Ian McLachlan said the TMG’s task would be to monitor the truce agreement signed by all parties at the Bougainville peace talks in New Zealand.

DECEMBER

Review backs new Army

AUSTRALIAN defence planners have shifted their focus from the low-level contingency scenarios of the past to maritime approaches after a strategic review. While the Government would give higher priority to the RAAF and Navy, land forces would remain an essential component of one

50 YEARS OF SERVICE

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