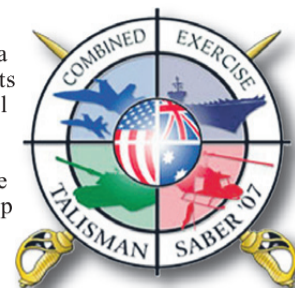


Berthing in the rain



By Graham Davis

RAN Reservists are playing a vital role in support of the massive Talisman Sabre 07 exercise now being played out in northern Australia and in the Coral Sea.

The June/July exercise involves thousands of Australian and US personnel, several dozen ships and more than 100 aircraft.

A high level of logistic support is paramount to the success of the biennial drill. This is where the RAN Reservists came in.

When it was decided that four warships, three from the US Navy and one from the RAN, would visit Brisbane in the lead up to the exercise, and that they would arrive within hours of each other, the Senior Naval Officer for South Queensland, CMDR Forbes Peters, realised that all available Reservists would be needed to secure and release the visiting ships. They would also be required for dockside security patrols, visiting ship liaison duties and ship briefings. The Reservists also had to arrange extra tugs and locate as many brows as possible.

More than a dozen Reservists ranging from able seamen to lieutenant commander put up their hands to help out.

The task of finding extra tugs and brows and briefing senior staff on the arriving ships was left to Reservists, LCDR Merv Russell, the region's visiting ships liaison officer and WO Graham Dennien, the region's operations officer.

CMDR Peters brought in additional personnel to support the Reservists and his own PNF staff. This saw three staff and 20 seamen from Rogers Division HMAS *Cerberus* flown in to help with dockside duties. Some local soldiers assisted,

along with a group of students from the School of Signals near Oakey. Moving the shoreside parties from ship to ship saw a number of vehicles borrowed from Bulimba Barracks.

It was these personnel and assets which were ready when on June 6 the four warships steamed across Moreton Bay and into the Brisbane River.

First to arrive was the amphibious transport the USS *Tortuga*, followed by a second amphibious transport the USS *Juneau*. Both ships were secured to wharves at Hamilton. Next came the RAN's HMAS *Ballarat*, tethering to the bulk sugar wharf on the opposite side of the river. Then came the massive helicopter landing ship the USS *Essex*. Because of her draft she was secured to a much deeper berth at Fisherman's Island.

Each arrival saw RAN personnel, both Reservist and PNF, in action, but their work did not end with the arrivals. Instead they worked in rostered shifts to provide shore patrols.

"They worked long hours and often in the rain," CMDR Peters told *Reserve News*.

When the four ships departed a few days later, the berthing and slipping parties were again on the job.

It will only be a brief respite for the sailors and their officers because a number of the Talisman Sabre ships are expected to return to Brisbane in July.

Above left, **WET WELCOME:** HMAS *Ballarat* makes a splash, berthing at Brisbane's bulk sugar wharf in the rain and left, US amphibious transport ship, USS *Juneau*, makes its way under the Gateway Bridge to Hamilton.



Defence says thanks for all your support

Seven ACT employers were recognised for their support of Defence Reserves at a ceremony at the Australian Defence College on May 27.

The event recognised employers who have supported their Reservist employees to enable them to perform Defence service.

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence, Mr Peter Lindsay, presented the employer awards.

To be eligible for such recognition, organisations had to display consistent support of their Reservist employees' service as a member of the Defence Reserves. Awards were presented in the categories of government, large private enterprise, medium private enterprise and small private enterprise.

"In an environment of heightened operational tempo, ADF Reserves are being called upon to

play an increasingly vital part in the fulfilment of Defence objectives," Mr Lindsay said.

"These awards are our way of publicly saying thank you to employers of Reservists for their contribution to ADF capability. Without their support, our ability to meet the current operational and training needs of the ADF would be significantly reduced."

Award recipients: Certificates of Recognition: ACT Legal Aid Office; Logistic Solutions Australasia; Thine Projects Australia Pty Ltd; Office of National Assessments; Directorate of Senior Officer Management, Defence Personnel Executive; Deputy Chief Executive Officer Division, Defence Materiel Organisation; and Directorate of Materiel Operations and Planning, Electronic and Weapon Systems Division, Defence Materiel Organisation.



WINNERS: L to R: Logistic Solutions Australia's Mr Glen McNamara, Dr Simone Alesich of the Office of National Assessments, ACT Legal Aid Office's Mr Martin Hockridge, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Defence Mr Peter Lindsay, ACT Chairman of the Defence Reserves Support Council Mr Chris Peters, CDF Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston, Thine Project Australia's Mr Ben Mackey, Directorate of Senior Officer Management's GPCAPT Corrie Metz, Deputy Chief Executive Officer Division's Mr Boyd McCarron and Directorate of Materiel Operations and Planning rep GPCAPT Nick Barneveld.



PROUD AS PUNCH: L to R Mr Ernie Sheppard, Ben's mother Doreen, Ben, his grandmother Mrs Valerie Sheppard and his sister Kristie. **Photo: Graham Davis**

Good Sheppard follows proud family tradition

By Graham Davis in Brisbane

Ernie and Valerie Sheppard are very proud grandparents.

When they heard their grandson Ben, aged 15, was taking part in the "commissioning" of the new Australian Navy Cadet unit TS *Ipswich* and then marching behind the ship's company of HMAS *Ipswich* in their final Freedom of Entry to the City of Ipswich, they knew it was an event they had to watch.

The couple travelled more than 2000 kilometres from Melbourne to be present for the events.

The Sheppards joined Ben's mother Doreen and his sister Kristie, 18, to watch Ben, a cadet able seaman, stride out in his dress whites.

It was a poignant sight because Ernie, as a Royal Navy veteran, had worn a similar uniform.

A brother and an uncle of Ben's had also worn the navy whites.