Three wounded diggers prepare for South Pole trek

Ready to walk: From left, Cpl Seamus Donaghue, Pte Heath Jamieson and WO2 Scott Warby are training up to take on a trek to the South Pole for Walking With The Wounded.

Photo by Cpl Nick Wiseman
Afghan mission on track, CDF says

General updates senate on Afghanistan, Timor-Leste and Solomon Islands operations

PROGRESS is on track in Afghanistan but combat operations continue for Australian forces in Uruzgan province, CDF Gen David Hurley has said in the Senate Estimates hearing in Canberra on February 13.

“Our Special Operations Task Group will continue to operate against the insurgency and the Advisory Task Force will also retain a combat-ready capability, but our main focus throughout 2013 will be on [the Afghan] 4th Brigade HQ and the Provincial Operations Coordination Centre, where the ADF will continue to advise and train the Afghan National Army’s logistics, engineer and other combat support elements,” Gen Hurley said.

Progress in Afghanistan was hard to measure from a Western perspective, the CDF said, but was noticeable in the change of tactics by insurgents and changes in the priorities of Afghan civilians.

“The Taliban are resilient but their narrative and key messages have less resonance with the Afghan people today than ever before,” he said.

“Regular nation-wide surveys show the majority of Afghans, including the southern Pashtuns, do not want the Taliban to return to power.”

“While they retain the capacity to conduct occasional and spectacular attacks, their military options are limited. They increasingly rely on terror tactics such as insider attacks, IEDs and the use of suicide bombers to exert their influence.”

“Throughout 2012, nation-wide surveys identified that security is no longer the average Afghan’s primary concern. Basic services, such as power and roads, employment opportunities and corruption are now the top concerns.”

It is clear the path ahead will require an Afghan political solution, which can only be designed, agreed and implemented by Afghans and on an Afghan timeline,” he said.

Gen Hurley said 2013 would be a year of significant change to assets that were no longer required as power and roads, employment opportunities and corruption were now the top concerns.

“The ADF has developed an extensive footprint within Afghanistan over the past 10 years, redeveloping that infrastructure is an enormous logistic task so additional specialist personnel will be deployed throughout 2013 to assist,” he said.

“The first significant decrease in the number of ADF personnel in Afghanistan will coincide with the end of transition in Uruzgan.”

“Based on our current assessments, transition will be complete and the majority of ADF personnel will be withdrawn from Uruzgan by the end of the year.”

“The CDF also provided an update on operations in Timor-Leste, where the operational drawdown was well under way, and Solomon Islands, where he said plans were being drafted for the withdrawal of troops.”

“It is our intent to maintain an enduring Defence Cooperation Program once the Regional Assistance Mission Solomon Islands effort concludes,” Gen Hurley said.

“Defence is currently working with RAMSI, contributing nations – New Zealand, PNG and Tonga – and Australian Government agencies to implement a transition strategy throughout 2013 that is sympathetic to the security environment.”

“The ADF will also maintain an ‘over the horizon’ response capability that ensures we are prepared to redeploy to Solomon Islands at short notice if the security situation deteriorates rapidly or unexpectedly.”

He said about 60 ADF personnel remained in Timor-Leste as part of Operation Astute and that he expected the withdrawal to be complete by the end of March.

“Australia has contributed to continuing the Defence Cooperation Program in Timor-Leste since the International Stabilisation Force mission is complete,” Gen Hurley said.

“Twenty-five military specialists continue to train and mentor the Timor-Leste Defence Force under the Defence Cooperation Program. Their focus is on increasing the indigenous capacity in medical and infantry skills, logistics, maritime security engineering and governance.”

Gen Hurley concluded his opening statement with an update on Defence’s response to the suite of reviews into Defence culture released in 2011 and 2012.

“We are making progress. Of the 160 recommendations, 41 are complete and another 115 are in progress,” he said. “The four remaining recommendations will commence as other related recommendations mature.”

“We recognise change takes time and the challenge over the next 12 months is to maintain the momentum so that we continue to build a culture that gives confidence to the Australian people and a workforce that reflects the community it serves.”

The CDF said women who were already serving in the ADF had been eligible to apply for previously gender restricted roles since January 1, 2013, without notice if the security situation deteriorates rapidly or unexpectedly.

“We always enjoy coming to Tarin Kot, Katab and Kandahar – to get the opportunity to see our people doing what they are trained to do and what they aspire to do. I hear about it on a daily basis,” Gen Hurley said.

Mr Smith thanked the contingent at Tarin Kot for their continued work in difficult and dangerous conditions.

“We are confident that we will effect transition in Uruzgan at the end of this year,” he said.

“A lot of effort is now going in to essentially getting our people and our kit home, but we still have a very big and important job to do.”

Chief of Joint Operations Lt-Gen Ash Power and Commander JTF 633 Maj-Gen Michael Crane accompanied the CDF and Minister during the visit.

Checking in: CDF Gen David Hurley chats with troops at Multinational Base Tarin Kot during his latest visit to Afghanistan.

Photo by Sgt William Guthrie
Amphibious ship named Canberra

The first of two Landing Helicopter Dock ships has been officially named Canberra.

**LS Paul Berry**

The first of the two new Landing Helicopter Dock (LHD) ships was officially named Canberra in a traditional ceremony at BAE Systems Williamstown Dockyard in Victoria on February 15.

The LHDs will be the key to the ADF’s amphibious strategy.

About 200 guests joined 350 BAE Systems Williamstown Dockyard shipyard workers for the ceremony officiated by Chief of Navy VAdm Ray Griggs.

Among the guests were Prime Minister Julia Gillard and Defence Minister Stephen Smith, CDF Gen David Hurley, CA Lt-Gen David Morrison and Spanish Defence Minister Pedro Morenes Eulate.

VAdm Griggs said NUSHIP Canberra would be at the centre of the transformation of the ADF.

“Like all naval ships, it is the utility across the spectrum of operations that is most critical,” VAdm Griggs said.

“This ship will give the government options for humanitarian assistance and disaster relief at one end of the spectrum, through to stabilisation operations, peacekeeping operations and right through, if needed, to combat operations,” he said.

CA Lt-Gen Morrison said Army would be heavily involved with the new LHDs. The nesting of a dedicated amphibious capability within 3 Bde in Townsville is essential to ensuring Army can deliver land forces to cut-through to joint operations in its primary operation environment, particularly the archipelagic approaches to northern Australia.

The chief said soldiers from 2RAR had taken up the job of developing a skill and knowledge base in amphibious operations to allow effective projection of land forces from the sea.

“Over the course of about five years we’re going to let 2RAR develop that capability as we bring these ships into service and we start to understand what it means to be an amphibious-ready element,” Lt-Gen Morrison said.

“Army will also contribute other short-notice humanitarian and peacekeeping operations, and three cheers from the large crowd.

“Guests made their way through the mighty ship for the ceremony. Guests made their way through Canberra’s stern door and walked 200m into the vast, cavernous belly of the mighty ship for the ceremony.

“Coming inside the ship gives a totally different perspective of what this ship has to offer and the scale of what we are dealing with,” VAdm Griggs said.

This is the third Australian Navy ship to bear the proud name Canberra.

“Name this ship Canberra. May God bless her and all who serve in her,” Mrs Coates said to applause and three cheers from the large crowd.

Ms Gillard paid tribute to the veterans of HMAS Canberra (I), some of whom were present at the ceremony.

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Southbound soldiers prep

Sled training turns heads in Townsville

AN EXPEDITION to the South Pole is not your typical adventure or physical training activity and with the added difficulty of injury the team has been training hard to make the most of this unique opportunity.

CPL Seamus Donaghue said he has been involved in a combination of cardio, weight, strength and flexibility training.

“To mix it up a little I’ve been doing swim training,” he said.

“Alternating between fast interval and slower, long distance sessions.”

His varied training and physiotherapy visits are focussed on regaining his range of leg movement and getting him to the level required by the harsh Antarctic conditions.

WO2 Scott Warby said preparing for the cold would be the biggest challenge.

“Being born and bred in sunny Australia, expected temperatures of minus 45 degrees in Antarctica are not something you come across every day,” he said.

“As part of my rehabilitation I’ve been doing a combination of 1.5km beach swims, weight training, pack work and bike sessions.”

CPL Seamus Donaghue joined the Australian Army in 2005 and after initial employment training with the Royal Australian Infantry Corps was posted to 5/7RAR.

Cpl Donaghue deployed to Iraq in 2005 and 2007, Timor-Leste in 2008 and Afghanistan in 2010. It was in Afghanistan that Cpl Donaghue was wounded during an engagement with insurgents, sustaining a gunshot wound to his right thigh, resulting in a shat- tered femur and nerve damage to his leg.

Currently posted to the Soldier Recovery Centre in Brisbane, his rehabilitation has been ongoing for more than 24 months and has been a challenging and humbling experience.

Cpl Donaghue believes the expedition will raise awareness of the sacrifices made by all physically and mentally wounded soldiers and acknowledge their ongoing efforts in regaining health, wellbeing and quality of life.

“When the possibility of participating in the expedition came up, I thought it was a great way to recognise the people who have supported me throughout my rehabilitation,” he said.

“I am proud to be involved and am pleased to be able to contribute to a really good cause.”

WO2 Scott Warby had always wanted to join the Army and in 1991 he enlisted into the Royal Australian Infantry Corps.

Throughout his career he has been posted to a range of units including 8RAR, School of Infantry and, most recently, the Combat Training Centre where he assists in preparing soldiers to deploy on operations overseas.

He has deployed on opera- tions to the Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Afghanistan as well as domestic border protection.

In 2011 while deployed to Afghanistan he was shot in the right lower leg.

Passing through the mus- cle, the round missed the bone but he later experienced complications.

WO2 Warby said as soon as he heard about the expedition he thought it would be a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

“I believe the expedition will bring back some of the confidence and sense of purpose that I feel I have lost since my injury,” he said.

“I became aware of the importance of rebuilding myself as a soldier and not letting one incident destroy my desire to be the best soldier I can be.

“I want to show other soldiers that you can come back bigger and better than before.”

WO2 Scott Warby

CPL Seamus Donaghue

PTE Heath Jamieson

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Security awards short list released

The security efforts of Defence personnel have been showcased with 13 finalists chosen in the Defence Excellence in Security Awards on February 6. The Deputy Secretary Intelligence and Security, Steve Meekin, announced the finalists from nominations across Australia and all areas of the Defence workforce and Defence Industry Security Program companies.

“We had a very successful launch of the Defence Excellence in Security Awards in 2012,” Mr Meekin said. “The awards were well received across the Defence community.

“This year the success has continued with the calibre of the nominations continuing to be outstanding and reflecting the excellent work being done in security across Defence.”

Concluding the finalists, he also acknowledged everyone who was nominated for an award.

“The high quality of the nominations provided significant challenges to the judging panel when it came to determining the finalists,” he said. Mr Meekin said the nominations confirmed the effort made by individuals and teams to strengthen Defence’s security culture and honour and celebrate outstanding achievements in security by those who were nominated for an award.

“The awards were well received across the Defence community.”

Outstanding performance by a security specialist
- Flt-Lt Troy Murphy, 292 Sqn, RAAF
- Sig Ewan Eadie, 1 Sqn, RAAF
- Rachel Hinterholzl, Navy Recruit School

Deputy Secretary award for outstanding leadership in security
- Tony Harvey, Directorate of Security Operations, Defence Security Authority
- Sgt-Ldr John Cox, 396 Expeditionary Combat Support Wing, RAAF

Outstanding contribution to security by a team
- Electronic Systems Division, BAe Systems
- Directorate of Cyber Security Operations, Information and Communications Technology Operations Division, Chief Information Officer Group
- Information Security and Assurance Branch, Chief Information Officer Group

Outstanding contribution to security by an individual
- Margaret Roach, Directorate of Security Operations, Defence Security Authority
- Bernard McKeon, HQ 4 Bde

Centralising the admin effort

Cpl Max Bree

New centres opened across the country during January and February to take personal administration burdens off units.

The Army Personnel Administration Centres (APACs) are administration hubs processing pay, leave and other personal administration.

APACs were able to get the same decisions on the same day, while Darwin and Canberra APACs had been operating since 2012.

They might need to come in for assistance for more complex issues. Lt-Col McKone said “maybe for something like member with dependents – unaccompanied in specific cases. The APAC can put together a case for the member and for the member’s CO to forward to DGEPers.”

Since opening 11 months ago, the NT/Kimberley APAC has processed about 270,000 transactions, ranging from pay to transitions and pre-deployment administration.

Major Len Darragh, OC APAC NT/K, said APACs were able to get consistent information to units about administration issues.

“Probably the true value of the centralised approach is you get uniformity,” he said. “We’ll provide advice on conditions of service and commanders get the same advice over and over again.

“Instead of two commanders interpreting policy and coming up with two different answers, they’re getting the same decisions on the same policy.”

More than 200 full-time soldiers and 87 reservists serve in APACs around the country.
Last infantrymen home

Final 50 infantry soldiers depart Timor-Leste as mission draw down continues

THE final platoon of 50 Anzac Coy infantry soldiers attached to the ADF mission in Timor-Leste has returned home.

The soldiers provided security at five forward operating bases in and around Dili during their four-month deployment.

With the end of mission for the International Stabilisation Force and closure of four of the five bases, the number of infantry soldiers has been reduced.

Anzac Coy, originally about 200 Australian personnel as well as a New Zealand Army platoon, had been providing security and contributing to the remediation of equipment and bases in Timor-Leste.

Now, with one remaining base accommodating the final logistics element in country, the infantry soldiers have completed their work and returned to their home base in Adelaide.

Commander of the Australian mission in Timor-Leste, Lt-Col Mick Sasse, said the Timor-Leste police and defence forces had come a long way since the turbulent times of 2006.

“The people of Timor-Leste have really embraced the ADF presence and we have provided them with a secure footing for their future.”

From the days of Interfet (International Force East Timor), Australia has contributed troops in Timor-Leste for the past 13 years, representing more than 10 per cent of the Army’s history.

A small core of personnel will remain in Timor-Leste to finalise base remediation and handovers, with all forces attached to Joint Task Force 631 expected to be out of Timor-Leste by the middle of the year.

All aboard: The last Anzac Coy soldiers board a Hercules to depart Timor-Leste for Adelaide. Inset, Joint Task Force 633 personnel have their baggage checked by quarantine service staff before leaving.

Photos by AB Lee-Anne Mack

Army

February 28, 2013


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Digger makes injury pay

Injured infantryman picks up promotion in Pay Corps

Cpl Nick Wiseman

CORPS transfers are commonplace these days as a retention initiative and way for soldiers to try a new career path but they don’t usually include a jump from private to lieutenant.

Lt Franklin Yong joined the Army as a private in 2010 and after completing his recruit and infantry training at Singleton was posted to 6RAR in Brisbane.

He was keen to see the world and get out with the boys. Unfortunately he tore his quadriceps tendon in a training activity and had to rethink his Army career.

“I knew I couldn’t continue in infantry as effective as I had been,” he said.

“It was time to change and as I had the background, I chose pay corps.”

His background was a double degree in commerce and law, which he had completed before enlistment.

As well as these two degrees, he had also previously studied and completed a Bachelor of Science in Biology.

When asked by recruiting why he wanted to join the infantry, he said he wanted some real-world experience, having spent much of his life as a student.

“When recruiting found out about my education they tried to steer me towards law or finance,” he said.

“But I was stubborn and determined to go to infantry.”

Knowing he wanted to remain in the Army, he had to change careers and chose Pay Corps.

After a successful application last year he was posted to the Army Financial Services Unit in Canberra and commissioned as a finance officer at the rank of lieutenant on January 29 this year.

Lt Yong said he was enjoying the increased responsibility.

“I enjoy the fact that I’m now left to my own devices to get my work done,” he said.

Lt Yong is currently working with the implementation of resource management training within the broader Army.

After he finishes his two-year posting with the Army Financial Services Unit, he is looking forward to further postings within the Pay Corps.
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Career staff move in

THE Directorate of Soldier Career Management – Army (DSCM-A) has now relocated to Canberra from Fort Queenscliff. Operations began at DSCM-A’s new home of Brindabella Park in late January, with a large number of soldiers and some civilian staff relocating to Canberra to be part of the new team.

Director Col Susan Coyle said the directorate’s work was just beginning.

“It has been a significant undertaking to establish DSCM-A in Canberra and we still have a lot of work ahead of us,” she said.

“The majority of my civilian staff have not worked in career management before and are still learning the ropes, but they have joined a dedicated team and we are working hard to clear the transition backlog and to ensure that Army’s capability needs are met.

“We said goodbye to Queenscliff in December and now my team and I are focused on making sure DSCM-A is fully operational in coming months at its new location.”

Career Management – Army’s Reform Program will result in estimated savings of more than $80 million over the period to 2030. The relocation of DSCM-A was the centrepiece of the two-year Reform Program, after last year’s establishment of the Directorates of Reserve Officer and Reserve Soldier Career Management in Canberra and the closure of the regional Army Personnel Agencies in 2011.

It is the first time in Army’s history that all career management directorates have been located under the one roof.

For more information, including contact details for DSCM-A in Canberra, go to http://intranet.defence.gov.au/armyweb/sites/DSCMA/

On the move: DSCM-A posting supervisor Sharon Boyd and WO2 Simon Dettmer settle in to the directorate’s new offices at Brindabella Park in Canberra. Photo by Cpl Aaron Curran

“Mum and I got a better deal coz dad’s in uniform.”

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St Vincent’s ward lease comes to end

The ADF ward at St Vincent’s Hospital in Darlinghurst, Sydney will close on March 31 when the five-year lease at the hospital ends.

The expiry of the lease will not reduce health care entitlements for ADF members, according to Commander Joint Health RAdm Robyn Walker.

“Service personnel will continue to be hospitalised according to their medical needs,” RAdm Walker said.

“The closure of the ADF ward is not expected to have an impact on waiting times. Defence health policy determines acceptable waiting times and this is monitored by local health staff.”

Defence has 14 healthcare facilities providing medical services to ADF members in Sydney. ADF members will continue to access inpatient health services at Holsworthy and Richmond.

The lease with St Vincent’s was not able to be renegotiated. Joint Health Command is currently exploring options for the establishment of new inpatient arrangements to supplement facilities at Holsworthy and Richmond.

The closure of ADF ward is not related to the contract with Medibank Health Solutions. This was a matter between Defence and St Vincent’s Hospital.

More than 5500 ADF members have been admitted for health care since the ward opened on March 31, 2008.

While it was originally known as the Navy Ward, more than 30 percent of members admitted over the last five years have been Army or Air Force personnel. The ADF ward has cared for all levels of illness and injury.

For more details go to http://intranet.defence.gov.au/vcdf/sites/JHC/
In control

Tarin Kot’s movers and shakers will get you there quick smart

WO2 Andrew Hetherington

IF Australian units based at Multinational Base Tarin Kot need a person or a piece of equipment brought in or sent out of Urzug province by air, the unit making it happen will be the Movement Control Detachment Tarin Kot (MC Det TK).

MC Det TK is a small unit of four Army personnel supervised by platoon commander WO2 Meagan Bressow.

“In conjunction with our Air Force air load teams we do dangerous goods checks, confirm the priority of cargo to be sent back to Australia and we move units into and out of Tarin Kot,” WO2 Bressow said.

She and her team work long and odd hours to synchronise with changing flight schedules.

“To move people and cargo out of Tarin Kot quickly we try to use other coalition aircraft when they have space available,” WO2 Bressow said.

“We also handle the bookings for all overseas and return to Australia leave for Tarin Kot-based Australian personnel.”

Since arriving at Tarin Kot in July last year the MC Det TK has moved an enormous amount of cargo and personnel.

“Up to early January this year we’ve moved more than 3.5 million kilograms of cargo, 8755 personnel and 1155 aircraft pallets out of Tarin Kot,” said WO2 Bressow, who is on her first deployment.

Pte Tara Pavel is a movement operator in the detachment and is also on her first deployment. Her main role is to book flights for personnel going on Australian and overseas leave from Tarin Kot.

“The most unusual places I make bookings for are Rome, Germany or to the US,” Pte Pavel said.

“The most unusual destination request I’ve had to book flights to was a small island off the coast of Brazil. This took the person six flights to get there.”

He was happy I’d organised the flights for him but he wasn’t happy with what it cost him to get to a random destination.”

Pte Pavel said her deployment to Afghanistan had been a learning experience.

“I’ve not only been deployed to Tarin Kot, but I’ve also worked at Kandahar and the United Arab Emirates,” she said.

“I now have a wider knowledge and understanding of how other movement detachments operate.”

Part of Pte Pavel’s role has involved helping personnel get home for compassionate reasons.

“Assisting them to get home as quickly as possible is the most satisfying and important part of my job here,” Pte Pavel said.

“If personnel need to get back urgently I have to be switched on and quickly make arrangements for them to fly home.”

One of the other team members is Pte Daniel Lapham. Pte Lapham has only been a movement operator since April last year.

Previously Pte Lapham was an ASLAV and Bushmaster driver and has deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan.

“I arrived here in mid-October last year and apart from assisting with booking leave for personnel going to Tarin Kot, but I’ve also worked at Kandahar and the United Arab Emirates,” she said.

“My previous deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan were nothing like this. I was out and about working with the Iraqi Army, the Afghan National Army and local people. I now work behind a desk and around the airfield.”

Pte Lapham said the best part of his deployment was meeting and working with new people.

“It’s been good interacting with different units and people and seeing what they do here,” he said.

“If we weren’t here, there would be no one to write the movement orders, book people’s leave or flights out of Afghanistan.”
Engineers get to work reducing Forward Operating Base Hadrian

Capt Jesse Platz and Maj Chris Linden

ENGINEERS from the 7RAR Task Group have conducted works to remove infrastructure from Forward Operating Base Hadrian in Uruzgan province.

The task was conducted between December 2012 and January this year as part of the transition process to Afghan-led security responsibility within the province.

Australian mentoring teams worked out of FOB Hadrian from 2010 training and patrolling with the 1st Kandak, 4th Brigade Afghan National Army until they achieved operational independence in November 2012.

Commander of Combined Team Uruzgan, Col Simon Stuart, said in the coming months the base would no longer be required because Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) were operating independently in the area and had the lead for security.

"Where the ANSF and international forces determine they do not require a patrol base or forward operating base and it is marked for closure, the site will be remediated and Australian infrastructure and equipment removed," he said.

The Afghan National Army is conducting and sustaining effective operations from the nearby Patrol Base Tyce, and is continuing to expand its influence.

"Having Afghan security forces in the lead has allowed us to progressively remediate FOB Hadrian, with coalition forces planning to completely remediate the site by the middle of the year," Col Stuart said.

Site supervisor Lt Rob Johnston said the Australian works at FOB Hadrian progressed ahead of schedule.

"Anything that is not needed is being back loaded and we are quite a way ahead of schedule," he said.

Site foreman Cpl Tom Vallas praised the work of his team at FOB Hadrian.

"This is one of the first tasks that the boys have really been able to sink their teeth into. The work effort just proves how much they want to do their job, and they’ve all been excellent," Cpl Vallas said.

The ADF is working closely with Afghan and international partners to ensure remediation of Australian infrastructure in Uruzgan is aligned with ISAF and NATO guidelines and the process of transition of lead security responsibility to the ANSF.
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ARTY TRAINERS HAVE AN IMPACT

Effective fire – Afghan gunners fire a salvo from D30 guns during the final live fire with the Australian Artillery Mobile Training Team in Kabul.

Artillery trainers took on double their expected workload to qualify the latest batch of Afghan gunners, WO2 Andrew Hetherington reports.

Artillerymen have completed four months of intensive training programs for more than 300 Afghan National Army soldiers during their deployment in Kabul.

The Australian Artillery Mobile Training Team (Aus AMTT) arrived in Kabul in mid-August last year.

Their primary mission was to provide individual and collective artillery training and mentoring to all artillery elements of the 1110 Capital Division, whose future responsibility will be to defend Kabul with their 122mm D30 Capital Division, whose future responsibility will be to defend Kabul with their 122mm D30 guns.

“Every one of the 10 AMTTs providing us the missions to work on and work with only one ANA Combat Support Kandaka,” Lt-Col Bolton said.

The team developed and produced an artillery manual to which the ANA officers could refer just taking on the responsibility of training near Kabul.

One of two battery positions under the supervision of Aus AMTT personnel Lt-Col Nick Bolton said the exercise was a rewarding success. “Both batteries have achieved all their training objectives and requirements,” he said. “They continued technical missions, exchanged firing data and planned and executed their own fire plans to support ANA manoeuvres.”

WO2 Matt Miller

“I was the gun team cell leader and supervised my team of six men as they delivered their lessons. This deployment gave me a better understanding of how the ANA operate and at what level their artillery capabilities are at now.”

WO2 MATT MILLER

My instructional skills have improved since arriving and before I came here speaking in front of an audience was not one of my strong points. It was great to see the ANA develop more during the courses we taught them.”

BDR BRAD MARSHALL

“I learnt a lot from the Australians and they are kind people. What I learnt about was mostly about the guns and the ANA training.”

GNR ASADULAH

Final firing cements skills

Final firing cements skills

On target: WO2 Matt Miller observes ANA artillerymen adjusting a D30 gun sight during lessons at the Aus AMTT school.

On December 31, a graduation ceremony was held at the ANA barracks at Pule-Charki Garrison, Kabul, for more than 200 ANA artillerymen following four months of Aus AMTT training for the 1110 Capital Division.
Gamers get together

Wargaming is growing in popularity among soldiers and gaining credibility with leaders as enthusiasts put their strategies into action over gaming tables.

EW can match Cpl Tyron Casey for tactical prowess. He’s honed his strategies over more than a thousand hours in battle during countless past and future wars.

The NCO from 1RAR, along with Maj Dave Hill and Sgt Michael Keep, run the ADF Wargaming Association (ADFWGA), which brings together enthusiasts from all three services with their painstakingly detailed, hand-painted models once a year to fight it out over tabletop battlefields.

“We’re not your stereotypical comic book guys off The Simpsons,” Cpl Casey says. “A rugby front rower from 6RAR plays. An ex-Navy surgeon plays. It’s the perfect complement to what we do as soldiers.”

“Players must win by achieving objectives with tactical prowess and the ability to adapt to the fortunes of war, much like commanding troops in the real world.”

A two-day tournament in December is the only time the ADFWGA comes together, but in that short time it raises thousands of dollars for charity.

Last year’s tournament in Townsville raised $10,000 for Legacy and Cpl Casey says. “We’ve been donating to Legacy since the ADFWGA started in 2010 and so far we’ve raised about $15,500.”

Cpl Casey says although the ADFWGA “only really exists for those two days in December”, many of its members are also part of WW40k, the wargaming society he set up with his wife, Tamara, in 2009, which has also raised about $5000 for charity over the years. WW40k regularly hosts events in Townsville for its following of mostly military members, and this year will host the Anzac Cup at RAF Base Amberley, from April 6-7.

“We run some of the best events in Australia and it’s getting more popular all the time,” Cpl Casey says.

“We now have members in Brisbane and Sydney as well as Townsville. At the tournament in Townsville last year we filled a basketball court with wargaming tables and at this year’s event we might need two basketball courts.”

Wargaming options are broad, from recreations of World War II armies and battles to far future fantasies complete with aliens and high-tech weaponry.

It might look like a group of grown men playing with toys, but it requires serious strategy and an understanding of the principles of wargaming.

Cover, elevation, weapon ranges and manoeuvrability are all simulated and wargame commanders will need to use the battlefield to their advantage, as well as force multipliers such as direct and indirect fire support, in order to succeed.

“All the things you can think of in warfare we can replicate on the table either with rules or a bit of imagination,” Cpl Casey says.

“We want to encourage those who game or used to game to dust off their collections and get back into the hobby.”

“Wargaming has been found to encourage tactical thought and planning, develop an interest in military history.”

The 2013 ADFWGA championships will be held in early December at Lavarack Barracks. The association has encouraged units to aid their teams to compete in Warhammer 40,000, Warhammer Fantasy and Flames of War.

For more information go to www.adfwga.com to get involved in wargaming ahead of the end-of-year tournament, contact WW40k through the website www.ww40k.com

How Wargaming Works

Regardless of the setting, most tabletop wargames follow similar concepts. Two players choose the game, rules and objectives and build their armies to a defined points limit. Different classes of unit have different points values depending on their attributes and effectiveness, so the two armies might not be equal in size but should be evenly matched.

The players then face off on a six-foot by four-foot table and start the turn-based battle. In each turn a player can move troops – the distance a unit can move is determined by its stats and the terrain – shoot and enter melee combat. The outcome of each shot or sword-bayonet stroke is determined by a combination of a unit’s attributes and dice rolls, so an overmatched soldier could occasionally lend a lucky blow on an opponent, but commanders who rely on the dice rather than sound strategy are unlikely to succeed.

Tournaments usually require players to paint their own models, which are matched. It’s the perfect complement to what we do as soldiers.

“Players must win by achieving objectives with tactical prowess and the ability to adapt to the fortunes of war, much like commanding troops in the real world.”

A two-day tournament in December is the only time the ADFWGA comes together, but in that short time it raises thousands of dollars for charity.

Last year’s tournament in Townsville raised $10,000 for Legacy and Cpl Casey hopes this year’s event will do even better. “I don’t think any other ADF competition is as focused on charity as we are,” Cpl Casey says. “We’ve been donating to Legacy since the ADFWGA started in 2010 and so far we’ve raised about $15,500.”

“Wargaming has been found to encourage tactical thought and planning, develop an interest in military history.”

The 2013 ADFWGA championships will be held in early December at Lavarack Barracks. The association has encouraged units to aid their teams to compete in Warhammer 40,000, Warhammer Fantasy and Flames of War.

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Ground Liaison Officers are a crucial link between air and land forces, Cpl Max Bree reports.

NEXT time a Hornet is called to destroy something at Shoalwater Bay or a C-17 moves a tank across the county, it’s the Army’s Ground Liaison Officers (GLOs) who will work behind the scenes to make it happen.

Working with Air Combat Group, Surveillance Reconnaissance and Air Lift Group the GLOs are posted to 16 Air Land Regt but attached to RAAF HQs to make Army’s requests for air support run smoothly.

Capt Ben Gallacher, GLO at 81 Wing, acts as a go-between for Army units and the Air Force when classic Hornets are requested to bomb targets called in by soldiers.

“It’s not as easy as saying ‘hey can we have some fast air?’ We need to prioritise all the requests, consider what the RAAF are capable of delivering and match that to the effect required,” the artillery officer says.

Then I provide the air commander the Army commander’s intent and scheme of manoeuvre so a prioritised list of air support can be released.

“Army is not the only user of assets within Defence. Army has to compete against Navy and the RAAF’s own flying schedule.”

Achieving the right balance between all parties means detailed planning and prioritisation, according to Capt Gallacher, however the Air Force is very accommodating when it comes to mission rehearsal exercises.

“But if it’s an artillery regiment that wants to do some shooting outside of an MRE and drop some bombs, that takes a bit more negotiating,” Capt Gallacher said.

Capt Craig Mann, a transport officer and GLO with 36 and 33 Sqs, assistant GLO Sgt Anthony Begnell (left) and GLO Capt Craig Mann help coordinate air lift support.

Captain Gallacher was also the Army liaison officer coordinating Hawk fighters on Exercises Predator’s Strike and Hamel last year.

“Integrating fast air with the exercise scenario facilitated more realism for the training audience,” he says.

“It allowed air planners at all levels within the brigade to hone their skills.

“At the end of the day you can have simulated air support but, in the thick of the fight, having coordinated fast air in support really adds to the training value of the activity.

“Getting the process right is important; the next time a JTAC works with air support on operations, the aircraft arriving on time and on target could be a matter of life or death.”

“You rely on the individual military appreciation process a lot,” Capt Mann says. “I have to use this process every day when I commence any planning.”

“I have to make sure I cover all the possibilities, because if something in the planning process gets missed, it could mean the difference between mission failure and success.”

Capt Gallacher said the Army had turned to GLOs as a go-between since World War II and recently operated as a go-between with a Hornet at RAAF Base Williamtown.

“Getting the process right is important; the next time a JTAC works with air support on operations, the aircraft arriving on time and on target could be a matter of life or death.”

For more information on air support and ground liaison go to http://intranet.defence.gov.au/army/links/files/16ARMIL/GLO/
BATTALION BREAKDOWN

Battalion HQ – Sydney
Provides close and integral combat health support to 1 Bde and wider NT and SA formations. CHC HQ is located in Darwin and 7 Combat Health Platoon is located in Adelaide.

1 Close Health Coy – Darwin
Provides close and integral combat health support to 1 Bde and other Brisbane-based Forcomd units.

2 Close Health Coy – Townsville
Provides close and integral combat health support to 3 Bde and surrounding Townsville-based units.

Aero-medical Evacuation Pl, 2CHC
The Army’s first dedicated rotary wing aeromedical evacuation capability, used on Op Cathedral and on Ex Hamel 2012. An AME team consists of a doctor, nurse and medic all trained in critical care to stabilise and evacuate casualties from the battlefield.

Passing on skills: LCpl Daniel Heslop, of 8CHC demonstrates the use of the combat application tourniquet to stop catastrophic haemorrhage to members of Combined Team Uruzgan 4 ahead of their deployment to Afghanistan.

F YOU’RE being treated for a blast wound in Afghanistan or having your fungus-infested feet examined at Shoalwater Bay, chances are your carer is from 1 Close Health Battalion (1CHB).

Named in November 2011 under the restructure of Army health, the battalion is responsible for the force generation of all close combat health support to Forcomd, including most operational deployments and major exercises.

Lt-Cpl Ian Marsh has been in command of all Forcomd close and integral medical staff and assets since changes to the Army health system came into effect at the start of 2012.

“Everyone from the medic handing out the Chapstick or the Panadol to the resuscitation teams are now under the command of ICHB,” Lt-Col Marsh says. “Pretty much everything for the deployed close or integral health system is handled by us, but I don’t provide the field hospitals; that’s done by 2CHB.”

Unit medics, nurses and doctors were brought under 1CHB’s control to allow more effective employment of available medical personnel across Forcomd and to quickly move health assets between different units as required.

The new system also provides a more effective force structure to give medics the extra clinical training they must complete each year in accordance with the national legislation for health professionals.

With almost 400 staff posted to the battalion in Close Health Companies around Australia, 1CHB provides combat health platoons to support battle groups and other supporting units, offering primary health, resuscitation, surface and aeromedical evacuation and staging of casualties for up to 12 hours.

The battalion has completed more than 500 tasks last year. Forty two personnel are currently deployed on operations and another 25 are waiting to depart.

“Wherever Forcomd is we’re there providing that medic, nurse or doctor,” Lt-Col Marsh says.

Most combat first aid courses, combat fitness leader courses and military self-defence training in Forcomd are also conducted by 1CHB.

The battalion routinely has up to 40 members a day augmenting Joint Health Command garrison health facilities across the country.

While taking away unit control of medics has sometimes been poorly received, Lt-Col Marsh is confident the changes will eventually be embraced as the battalion continues to prove its capacity to provide the required health services.

“I anticipate people will understand that we are able to provide a more robust combat health system and although they have lost some control of the asset the effect that is provided is well trained, equipped and fit to task.”

Up close with

They’re some of the most important people on the battlefield but soldiers hope to never need them. Cpl Max Bree checks up on the medics, nurses and doctors of 1 Close Health Battalion.

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Medical attention: Capt Samantha Olliver, Capt Peter McGinty and Pte Donald Gilson, of 8CHC, treat a patient in the brigade support platoon during last year’s Ex Hamel at Shoalwater Bay.
School covers all its bases

Specialist firefighters, tradespeople and dog handlers learn their skills at the RAAF Security and Fire School, Cpl Mark Doran reports.

On his last deployment he was Commander FCU 4 in the MEAO. Wg-Cmdr Houghton says living behind a defended wire with armed guards in the UK and overseas for such a long time has given him a strong sense of force protection.

“It’s fantastic to have so many of the key force protection trades in one school,” he says.

“We have been able to rationalise our common areas of training and teach them in one place, which will save money for Defence and allow us to work with greater synergy on operations.”

Posted to RAAFSFS as a dog handler instructor, Army Cpl Bevan McKew was previously an instructor at the Defence Police Training Centre in Holsworthy and said one of his roles was to observe the Air Force training techniques.

“The best thing about this career is the variety of the work we do and the challenges we face as we are only really called when everyone else’s day turns bad.”

“The facilities and training techniques at the school are very modern and we are teaching the most up-to-date skills.”

Gas-operated fire simulators at the RAFFSFS include a passenger aircraft, a fighter jet and a multi-storey building, which are all controlled by computers and software from the simulator control office to give the trainees a realistic training environment.


Photo by Cpl Mark Doran

The LEPPD has been developed as part of the wider implementation of Army’s revised technical regulatory framework and encourages land engineers to enhance their professional development through participation on the professional development program delivered through Engineers Australia (EA).

The LEPPD is open to all full time practicing four-year engineering degree qualified professional land based engineers in Army or the Army program. Professional engineers wishing to take part in the LEPPD should complete an application form, which can be downloaded from the FORCOMD website and mail the original signed application to the contact address listed for approval.

FORCOMD intranet address:

Live-in licence coming soon

Members to sign agreement to maintain living-in accommodation

AN AMENDMENT to PACMAN that affects all members in living-in accommodation comes into force on March 14. From that date members of all ranks who live in will be subject to the provisions of a licence to live in. Head People Policy and Culture Richard Oliver describes the licence to live in as an accommodation benefit in which the mutual rights and responsibilities of both members and Defence are clarified.

“The licence to live in gives members the right to a lockable room, where feasible, that is suitable to their rank and situation, and the right to use the room and facilities free from unreasonable interference by Defence,” Mr Oliver said.

Members agree to take care of the property, to not intentionally cause any damage, to not disturb other members and to not let any other person live in the room. Defence commits to the maintenance and repair of the living-in accommodation in a timely manner. The licence to live in balances organisational needs with the privacy of members.

“A commanding officer, or a person authorised by them, may only enter a member’s assigned room for reasons of command or discipline, or in an emergency. Prior notice is to be given to the member,” Mr Oliver said.

“If the member’s room is entered without their permission and they are not present, a notice advising that the room has been entered and the purpose of the entry must be given.”

An ADF member establishes a licence to live in when they have met certain conditions. When the member is allocated a room, in addition to signing for the room key, they also sign to acknowledge that they will take care of their living-in accommodation. This means that their room is to remain in the same condition during their occupancy, allowing for fair wear and tear. To make sure it is clear what state the room is in, the member completes a room condition report by signing and returning it to the accommodation manager. This completes the requirements.

There are consequences for the member if they break the licence to live in conditions. These consequences are decided by a member’s chain of command and in the most serious cases, a commanding officer may revoke a member’s licence to live in for up to three years.

During any period in which a commanding officer has revoked a member’s licence to live in, the member is not eligible for any accommodation assistance from Defence. This includes rent allowance and access to a service residence. Disciplinary action can also be taken.

As part of the implementation of the new licence to live in requirements, all members living in on March 14 will be deemed to have a licence to live in. If they have not yet signed a room condition report, they are required to do so as soon as practicable after that date.

Members occupying living-in accommodation from March 14 onwards will be required to sign a room condition report under their licence to live in.

Any member absent on deployment or leave, without a signed room condition report, is required to sign the room condition report when they reoccupy their living-in accommodation.

More information is available on the Pay and Conditions website at http://intranet.defence.gov.au/. The determination amending Chapter 7, Part 3 will be incorporated into the PACMAN on March 14. Until then, see section 58B Amending Determination 2012/52 of September 17, 2012.
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TODAY TOMORROW BEYOND
Sheds light the way

Defence Sheds to help current and former military personnel connect

A NEW initiative will bring together serving and ex-serving ADF personnel in an effort to promote good health, provide support and services, and encourage social connections by creating an environment where people can get together to chat and share skills and hobbies.

Based on the concept of Men’s Sheds, Defence Sheds will be established in a number of locations across Australia and will be open to all current and former Defence members regardless of whether or not they have seen active service.

Set up by a group of veterans, the initiative is in response to incidence of post-traumatic stress disorder and other conditions affecting ADF members. Defence Shed encourages men and women to take an interest in their health and overall wellbeing and will help provide for members’ mental, physical and spiritual needs.

Defence Shed representative Wayne Parsons said local sheds would be set up in a number of locations across Australia to ensure they were accessible to as many people as possible.

Support and backing of the Defence Shed initiative has come from the top, including CDF Gen David Hurley and Maj-Gen John Cantwell (ret’d).

“As Defence Shed develops, more support and backing by the right people of goodwill in and outside of the ADF will widen the ability of Defence Shed to help our mates”, Mr Parsons said.

The sheds will also provide access to health, welfare and counselling information and services though the various professional networks and connections to others within the Defence networks.

“It will be a meeting place where people can discuss issues of concern with like-minded mates, work on projects together, get involved in fundraising activities with various charities and learn new skills,” he said.

For more information about the Defence Shed initiative, go to www.defenceshed.com

Part of the team: The Defence Shed initiative aims to help past and present military members. File photo by Capt Jesse Platz

Three months to submit form

THE Director of Relocations and Housing, Alan McClelland, reminded personnel applying for the Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme (DHOAS) to complete the Subsidy Authorisation Request Form within three months of settlement.

“Once members draw down a DHOAS loan with a home loan provider, they’re required to submit the form as soon as possible,” he said.

“DVA will only authorise the commencement of a member’s monthly subsidy payment when it has received a completed and signed form.

“If members are deployed immediately after establishing a DHOAS loan and are unable to submit a declaration form prior to their deployment, they should notify DVA before they deploy.”

DVA can be contacted on 1300 434 627 or email dhoas@dva.gov.au

Defence and DVA sign off

DEFENCE and the Department of Veterans’ Affairs have come together to pledge closer co-operation and improved support services with a new memorandum of understanding (MOU) signed in Canberra on February 6.

The MOU has been developed to better coordinate the delivery of care and support services.

It also introduces the concept of the “support continuum”; the structure of systems that extends across both Defence and Veterans’ Affairs to deliver the seamless care and support needed for eligible servicemen and women and their dependants.

A copy of the memorandum of understanding can be found at www.defence.gov.au/header/documents/SWIP_MOU.pdf

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Your say on Army culture

The Australian Army Journal (AAJ) is inviting submissions for a special issue on culture and the Australian Army.

The special issue encourages a lively discussion about the meaning, understanding, representation, benefits and problems of culture in Army.

The journal is seeking contributions from a variety of people including Army and other Defence members.

Themes to be explored can include leadership, ethics, moral courage, traditions and history, race/indigenous identity/multiculturalism, nationalism, popular culture, gender, sexuality, spirituality/religion, capability and future development.

The AAJ hopes to publish 3000-6000 word feature and scholarly articles, 1500-3000 word essays, 580-880 word book/film/DVD reviews, 200-500 word letters/emails, poetry, songs/song lyrics and videos up to three minutes that can be uploaded to YouTube.

Submissions must be made by March 31 to lasc.publications@defence.gov.au. For more information contact Land Warfare Studies Centre deputy director Lt-Col Nerolie McDonald on (02) 6265 8989 or email nerolie.mcdonald@defence.gov.au.

True story of forgiveness

One man’s journey from the Falklands War into the depths of despair and then out the other side again

Journey to Peace

Author: Adam Joe Lawton
Publisher: Troubador Publishing Ltd
284 pages, RRP $21.95

In April 1982, when Argentina invaded the Falklands Islands, a British Overseas Territory, Adam Joe Lawton was a 17-year-old junior seaman serving on board HMS Sheffield. When 1500 British FALKLANDS LAND FORCES and the Argentine Exocet hit HMS Sheffield, she was hit by an Exocet missile and flooded, becoming Britain’s first ship lost since the sinking of theloop in 1941. In the Falklands War, 258 British and 20 of her crew and the sinking of the ship. This appalling turn of events of unimaginable horror would haunt Mr Lawton for many years to come and take him from a pleasant young man to one filled with hate and anger. Like many veterans returning from the Falklands War, Mr Lawton found it hard to adjust to a peaceful existence. He found himself unable to grieve for his friends, turning to alcohol to try and block out the memories. A Navy lieutenant took the time to look at Mr Lawton and where he was heading on his road to destruction, causing him to have a long hard look at himself. This started him getting his life back on track. The memories of those eventful months in 1982 began to fade away and become dim and distance memories.

By 1995 Mr Lawton had left the navy and had emigrated, living the Australian dream in Brisbane. Then in 1998 out of the blue the memories that had been locked away for so long started finding their way back into his thoughts. That unseen killer of so many war veterans had arrived in Mr Lawton’s life – post-traumatic stress disorder. What followed was a journey of reconciliation and forgiveness as he faced his demons, returning to the Falklands and then on to Argentina to meet up with some of the Argentine pilots from the war who were involved in the attack on Sheffield. In 1982 Mr Lawton had been the third youngest sailor on the Sheffield. Of the other two, one took his own life and the other is in psychiatric care. Journey to Peace is a must read for all those who have served their countries and are dealing with the demons that such service brings.

In the Falklands War, 258 British personnel died. In the 30 years since the end of the war more than 350 ex-members have taken their own lives as a result of PTSD, the most recent being ex-paratrooper Stephen Hood, who featured in iconic film footage celebrating victory at the battle of Goose Green, and took his own life on January 3 this year.
Support at your fingertips

A NEW mobile phone application has been developed to help current and former members to identify and manage mental health symptoms associated with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Launched on February 18 by Warren Snowdon, the Defence Science and Personnel Minister and Veterans’ Affairs Minister, the application was unveiled to troops at Robertson Barracks in Darwin.

The application is called PTSD Coach Australia and was developed to help veterans, current serving members and their families identify the signs of PTSD and encourage them to seek help.

From the results of the 2010 ADF Mental Health Prevalence and Wellbeing Study, Defence estimates that 8 per cent (or almost 2500) of the approximately 51,000 serving personnel could be expected to have a diagnosis of PTSD.

“A priority for this government is ensuring that a range of mental health services and support are available for veterans of all ages, young and old, and that these services are tailored to their needs and the needs of their families,” Mr Snowdon said.

“PTSD Coach Australia provides them with education about PTSD, information about self-assessment and professional care, and tools to manage the stresses of daily life with PTSD.”

Based on an app first developed in 2011 for US veterans, PTSD Coach Australia comprises tools for relaxation, positive self-talk, anger management, tracking symptoms, direct links to support and a scheduler to help users manage their self-care, health appointments and other activities.

PTSD Coach Australia was not designed for stand-alone treatment or self-diagnosis, but as part of a toolkit to assist people in managing PTSD.

“A clinicians’ guide on integrating PTSD Coach Australia into treatment is available on the Department of Veterans’ Affairs At Ease website,” Mr Snowdon said at the launch.

“‘This app doesn’t replace clinical assessment and treatment by a qualified mental health clinician but supports it’.”

PTSD Coach Australia was developed by the Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health for the Defence Health

THE FACTS

GIVEN the nature of military service and the increased likelihood of exposure to trauma, it is not surprising that the rate of PTSD in the ADF is higher than the general public – 8.2 per cent compared to 5.2 per cent.

But the PTSD Coach Australia app can help you learn about and manage symptoms that commonly occur after trauma.

- Reliable information on PTSD and treatments that work.
- Tools for screening and tracking your symptoms.
- A scheduler that allows you to manage all your self-care, health appointments and activities.
- Convenient, easy-to-use skills to help you handle stress symptoms.
- Direct links to support and help.
- Designed specifically for ex and current ADF personnel.
- Always with you when you need it.

Help is at hand: Personnel use the new post traumatic stress disorder application launched by the Department of Veterans’ Affairs at Robertson Barracks in Darwin.

MORE HELP

ADF personnel requiring further support and treatment can contact local Defence Health Facility or call 1800 IMSICK (after hours).

Mental Health All Hours Support Line 1800 628 036 is a confidential telephone service for ADF members and their families available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Services that can be accessed include psychology, medical, social work and chaplains.

ADF personnel who have deployed are eligible to self refer to the Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service on 1800 011 046. It provides counselling and group programs to veterans, peacekeepers and eligible family members and is a free call, open 24/7.

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ADF members and their families can call 1800 011 046 to access the Counselling Service.

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Ice queen on Aussie team

International competition awaits for medic

Cpl Max Bree

MOST girls grow up playing hopscotch or with skipping ropes but Pte Sarah Teed spent her schoolyard days going head-to-head against the boys at ice hockey.

Now a medic at the Army Aviation Centre, Pte Teed has been selected for the fourth time to represent Australia in an international ice hockey competition.

She will travel to Auckland for the International Ice Hockey Women’s Championship on April 8.

Born in Melbourne, Pte Teed moved to the US aged three and then to Canada, where she started playing ice hockey aged nine.

In a small town outside Montréal, Pte Teed began taking on the boys at ice hockey on a rink in the schoolyard and went on to play in the boys competition.

At 14, she went to boarding school in the US and discovered women’s ice hockey referees wouldn’t allow the same kind of smash-up tactics she was used to in the men’s game.

“It’s different, you need to rely on your skills,” she said.

“It’s easier to just fly into a play and look for the puck afterwards. But in the women’s you’re not allowed to do that; you have to be a bit more tactful.”

Pte Teed was first called up to the Australian team when she was 15 and played in two world championships and one tri-nations competition.

After playing at the world championships in 2003, Pte Teed and the team returned with gold medals for winning their division.

Before coming back to Australia and joining the Army, she also turned down a spot on the Montréal women’s professional side.

“It’s not good money for the women’s team,” she said. “It’s good for the men but I could make more in a regular job.”

Currently playing for the Victorian team, Pte Teed flies interstate to play in the national ice hockey competition, playing two games on one weekend every fortnight.

“But she isn’t worried about getting on a plane couple of weeks.”

On the up: Winner of the Army Surf Riders’ Association trials, Lt Travis Battison, shows his style at Scotts Head last year.

Psych Lt Travis Battison taking out first place.

“For me the bits that stand out are actually the moments between the waves. Everyone laughing, swapping boards, hooting each other,” Lt Battison said.

Cpl Nick Wiseman

THE Spartan Race series will premiere on March 2 in Melbourne with 11 keen staff members from the School of Artillery set to compete in what is described as the toughest race series in the world.

Small and shorter than the Tough Mudder race, the Spartan Race sprint will challenge competitors over a series of obstacles across a 7km sprint.

A key difference over Tough Mudder is if competitors do not complete, or miss an obstacle, a penalty of 30 burpees will apply.

Team member Sgt Andrew Cox said a few of the members had done other events but they wanted to do something different.

“It’s the first time the Spartan Race has been run in Australia,” he said.

“We thought it would be great to raise some money and awareness as well as some fun with the boys.”

The team has received sponsorship from several businesses and plans to donate all proceeds to the Commando Welfare Trust Fund.

Sgt Cox said he hoped they could make it an annual event.

Cpl Bill Solomou

ARMY Surf Riders’ Association (ASRA) members will be competing in the upcoming Interservice Surfing Championships in May to decide the champion wave riders for 2013.

ASRA member WO2 Martin Fisher said all Army members could join regardless of experience.

“We do not need to have prior experience or ride a certain type of craft,” WO2 Fisher said.

May day for Army surfers

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Photo by Mathew Simpson

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ICE QUEEN

Army medic selected to represent Australia in ice hockey

Icing on the cake: Pte Sarah Teed, of the Army Aviation Centre, grew up playing ice hockey in Canada and will this year represent Australia in the sport.