EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Brief Overview**

This document proposes a modification to the existing Brigade structure to better align to the demands of the modern operational environment. It is intended as an extension of Plan Beersheba’s Multi-Role Combat Brigade and is based on the development of a Multi-Role Battalion operating within a new Beersheba Regiment.

**The Issue**

The last half century of operational experience has demonstrated that the Australian Army could be better organised. Plan Beersheba is a great start but leaves most sub-brigade units as single role formations. This requires the formation of ad-hoc battle groups in order to be operationally viable.

**The Problem**

Operating as single role units has several negative drawbacks. Several are listed below:

- Units often require extensive pre-deployment training to become operationally ready.
- Soldiers and leaders lack experience working in an operationally realistic environment.
- Inefficient utilisation and development of capabilities due to the unfamiliarity of operating in multi-role formations.
- Reduction of skills in areas that are dependant on training in a multi-role environment.
- Reduced clarity of what capabilities are affected with a change in funding levels.
- Reduced understanding by the general public of the Army’s capabilities.
- Reduced efficiency and clarity when building a tailored operational force for a given operation.

**The (Potential) Solution**

The proposed solution is the creation of a Multi-Role Battalion as the basic sub-unit of the Brigade. Capable of sustained independent operation, some of the following benefits would be:

- Troops would have increased experience operating in an operationally realistic environment even when in barracks.
- Increased familiarity would reduce the need for pre-mission training, or alternatively, allow increased time to be spent on more advanced manoeuvres.
- Capabilities would be utilised and developed in a more efficient and effective manner due to their regular use in a multi-role environment.
- Unit preparedness would be increased due to the advantages described above.
- Increased clarity of what operational capabilities would be affected due to a change in funding.
- Increased efficiency in developing a tailored operational force to meet a given mission.
- Increased clarity for non Defence personnel to understand what the Army is capable of offering to a mission.
Disadvantages Mitigated

Changing to a Multi-Role Battalion presents a number of issues. The major ones are:

- Administration of troops can become more difficult due to the need to train and allocate soldiers in a mixed Corps environment.
- Capabilities not located within the Multi-Role Battalion could be lost.
- Command within the Battalion can become more complicated.
- Command by the Brigade can become more complicated due to the large number of Battalions.

These are suggested to be mitigated with the following actions:

- Creation of the Beersheba Regiment to directly command the Battalions, both increasing operational flexibility and reducing the burden on the brigade.
- Creation of command advisor teams to assist commanders in effectively utilising their broad range of capabilities.
- Retention of the Armoured Combat Regiment for heavy tracked combat vehicles.
- Creation of a Brigade Combat Support Regiment to house capabilities not located in the new Multi-Role Battalions.
- Creation of a Command Support Company to house the supervisors and managers responsible for training, personnel allocation and supporting individual Corps and Trade capabilities.

Notes:

- Terminology: To keep things easier to read, the terminology of platoon and company is used for all forces even when troop, battery or squadron would be more appropriate.
- Accuracy: The intent is to give a general idea of what this force structure could look like. Given the scale and scope, there will inevitably be capabilities/costs missed or poorly identified.

PLAN BEERSHEBA PLUS

The Plan

The existing force structure of single-role units is inefficient in terms of force generation and funding allocation.

The creation of Multi-Role Battalions that are capable of sustained independent operation, functioning within the new Beersheba Regimental structure will allow maximum flexibility both prior and during an operation.

THE MULTI-ROLE BATTALION

The new battalion is designed to possess the majority of required capabilities within its structure.

The Multi-Role Battalion is not designed to be the perfect fit for every task, rather to have the flexibility to be easily and rapidly adjusted as the situation and mission dictates.
**Infantry**
Rifle Company (x2)

**Mobility**
Cavalry Company (x2)
Cavalry Fire Support Platoon

**Fires**
Mortar Platoon
Artillery Platoon

**Support Weapons**
Recon, Sniper, Surveillance Platoon
Direct Fire Support Weapon Platoon
Anti-Armour Platoon

**Communications**
Signals Platoon

**Command**
Battalion Headquarters
Administration Platoon

**Engineers**
Combat Engineer Platoon
Heavy Engineer Platoon

**Logistics**
Transport Platoon
Logistics Platoon
Catering Platoon

**Maintenance**
Vehicle Maintenance Platoon
Equipment Maintenance Platoon

Diagram: Multi-Role Battalion
THE BEERSHEBA REGIMENT
The Beersheba Regiment is intended to be the command link between the Multi-Role Battalions and the brigade. Without this the command of the numerous battalions would be unwieldy and inefficient.

The Regiment would either manage and support the battalions operating as separate entities or command them as a unified force. Individual elements and capabilities would be rearranged between the battalions as needed.

It would contain:

**Multi-Role Battalion (x3)**

The Regiment would contain three battalions. This is to allow a single regiment to support the complete Raise-Deploy-Reset cycle, minimising disruption to the rest of the brigade. It would also provide the depth needed to conduct higher intensity combat operations.

**Regimental Headquarters**

The Regimental HQ is proposed to operate with a command element and a limited number of support elements including capability advisor teams and a signals team.

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Diagram: **Beersheba Regiment**

The structure of the Multi-Role Battalions within the Beersheba Regiment is intended to be adjusted to meet the requirements of the allocated tasks. The example below displays a regiment operating with two combined-arms manoeuvre battalions, concentrating the artillery within a separate fire support company and one combat support battalion.
THE MULTI-ROLE COMBAT BRIGADE

The new Brigade would include the following major sub-units. This is not intended to be detailed or comprehensive list.

**Beersheba Regiment (x2)**

The reason for two regiments is to provide enhanced flexibility during brigade level tasks. It is intended that capabilities would be moved between the regiments as required during an operation. It would also allow the detachment of one whilst allowing the remaining brigade to continue functioning.

**Armoured Combat Regiment**

The Armoured Combat Regiment is intended to hold all tracked heavy combat vehicles along with a logistics support element.

**Brigade Combat Support Regiment**

The Brigade Combat Support Regiment is intended to contain the capabilities not located within the other regiments and would provide the link with the wider world. This would include communication, medical, engineering, logistical and transport elements.

**Command Support Company**

The Command Support Company is intended to provide support to and for the individual Corps and Trades located within the various regiments. This includes manning allocation and support, subject matter expert guidance and capability support. It would contain many of the roles currently located in the headquarters of the existing single-role units.
Diagram: **Multi-Role Combat Brigade**

**THE TIMEFRAME**

**Creation**

The suggested creation timeline is deliberately tight in order to minimise ongoing costs and to finalise the change prior to the posting cycle disrupting the knowledge base. Starting from a green light:

- Blueprint Version 1: Month Four
- Blueprint Version 2: Month Seven
- Blueprint Version 3: Month Ten
- Relocation: Month Eleven
- Begin Brigade Training: Month Twelve

On Relocation all units/elements would begin the uplift to their new locations. There would need to be a period to adjust and improve this allocation of space. This will be a chaotic and disruptive period.

**Sustainment**

The largest change to the typical yearly schedule would be the need for an Information Exchange period. This would be a period for exchanging lessons learnt between the various units and personnel. It is required to ensure improvements are effectively disseminated across the Army.
THE COSTS

Financial

Funding to build additional storage for the new Multi-Role Battalions may be needed. The current single-role unit facilities would need some adjusting to support the new force structure. Some sharing of workspace would need to occur in the short term.

Manning costs may also change depending on the final personnel count and the need to adjust training regimes.

Operational

Each brigade would need to adapt to the new structure which would reduce its readiness in the short term.

Historical

Combined units will have limited abilities to preserve historical links.

Conclusion

The ultimate purpose of these changes is to better align the Australian Army to “Train as you fight” following the experiences of the last half century.

The new Regiment / Battalion combination is not intended to be the perfect fit for every operation, rather to increase the flexibility and sustainability of an operational force.

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