



# 8th/7th Battalion Royal Victoria Regiment

*Swift & Brave – Yield to None*



## The Ranger

The Annual Journal of 8th/7th Battalion  
The Royal Victoria Regiment

2018 Edition

*Serving our Nation*



# Army

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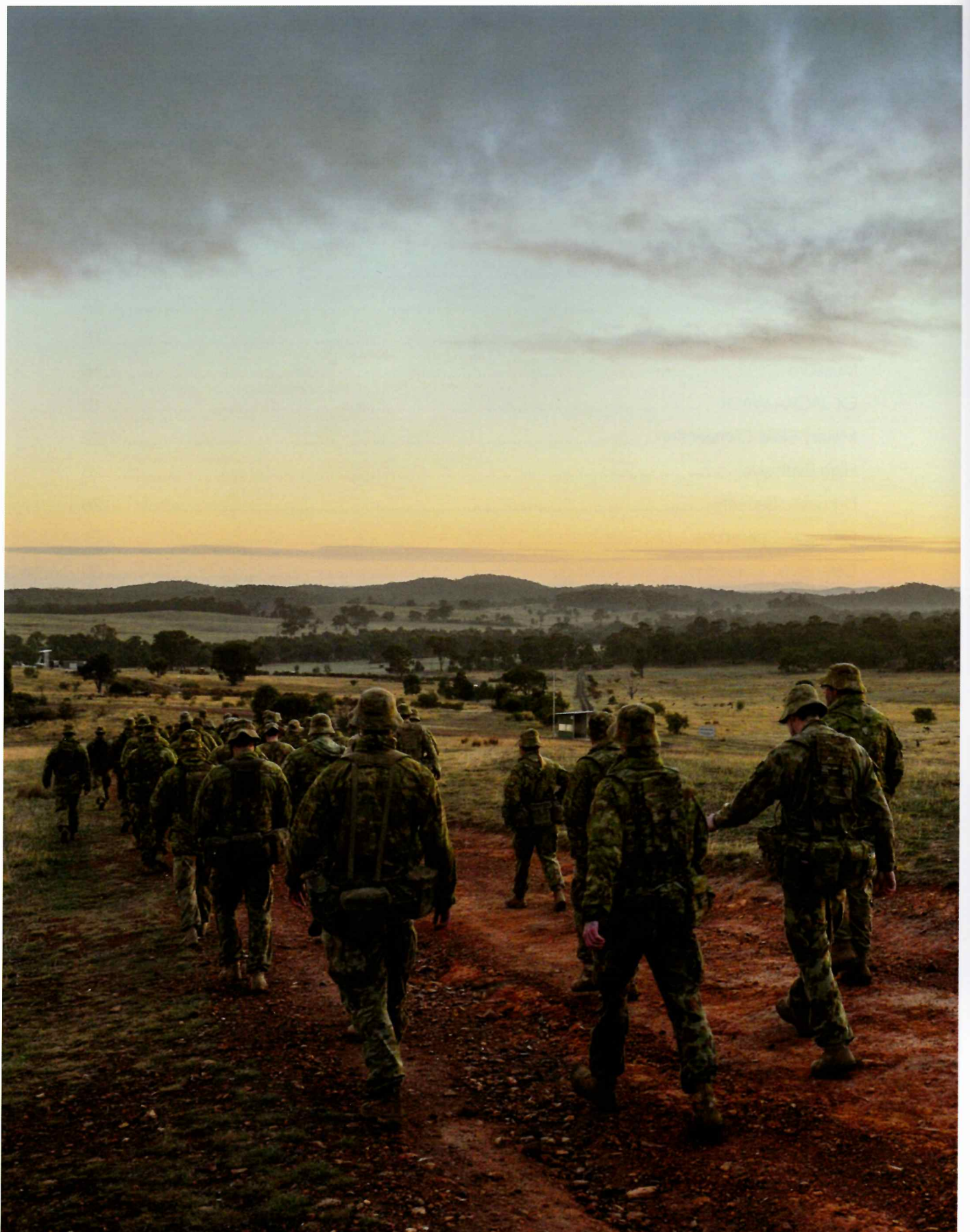
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## Commanding Officers Address

It is my honour to write the opening few words for the Ranger magazine for 2018. And what a year it has been, full of many changes; welcoming the Sunshine depot into the unit as Bravo Company, reorganising the regional depots into Charlie Company and many changes within Battalion Headquarters, along with the usual changes of staff.

The unit had the usual round of farewells at the end of 2017, with the Second Division's Capability Enhancement Review resulting in a more significant turnover of personnel than usual. Most noticeable was the farewell to the Regimental Sergeant Major, Warrant Officer Class One Barry Fawcett and the welcoming of his replacement, Warrant Officer Class One Michael Carroll, CSM. And it is fair to say that Mick had an immediate impact upon the unit. He brought wealth of knowledge from his two year posting as an instructor at the USMC Urban Warfare Training Center at Twenty-Nine Palms in California, along with numerous operational deployments.



The addition of the Sunshine depot, formerly Alpha Company, 5/6 RVR, was a remarkably smooth transition and credit must go to the OC, Major Derek Sonogan, and his team for their work in making it so. The addition of the officers and soldiers at that depot has been nothing other than an absolute boon for the unit. They also took on responsibility for the Monegeetta depot and folded them into Bravo Company without skipping a beat.

Charlie Company underwent a very significant reorganisation, taking on responsibility for six depots, all under the command of Captain Robert Powell, who had been recently promoted and only just returned from Rifle Company Butterworth. Three of the Charlie Company depots were designated special conditions depots and, as such, were limited in their parading to weekends or longer periods. Quite a challenge to throw to their CHQ, but very well handled and they looked at the opportunity this provided to them rather than see it as a negative. The opportunity this provided was for them to run additional training weekends to cover off on the time lost in not parading Tuesdays. This challenge resulted in some of the most dynamic training conducted at sub-unit level, whether in room clearance drills at Bendigo or cordon and search at Warrnambool.

The team at Alpha Company continued to provide a strong showing under Major Jason Beck, ably supported by his command team, spread across Geelong and Laverton. The highlights of their year would likely have been a couple of activities in Geelong – a company march in support of ANZAC Day, and Urban Assault activity held at the Old Geelong Gaol. Both activities were extremely well planned and executed and the latter brought together a variety of the training conducted throughout the year.



Battalion Headquarters shrunk in size this year, losing a fair few of our full time staff in the Q area but also the caterers and most of the drivers. Although it was disappointing to have them depart the unit, for the part timers at least they still remained at the depot, albeit under the command of 4 CSSB now. Thankfully we were still able to call on them regularly for their support, which they provided to the excellent standard we expect. The Operations Officer, Major Andrew McQuilkin, has his hands full operating as the unit's

senior ARA member, but also as the OPSO for Battlegroup JACKA, both of which he handled with apparent ease, although I suspect there were more challenges than he made me aware of.

The unit Adjutant, Captain Sam Beverly, was deployed for the majority of 2018, but returned in time to instil in the junior officers a little more Professional Military Education before he departed at year's end. The Chief Clerk, Warrant Officer Class Two Gary Kirk, also departed at the end of the year, headed for retirement after a distinguished career both within 8/7 but also broader Army.

The year has been a significant one of achievement. Not only have we fulfilled our requirements for the Reinforcing Battlegroup, we have developed our workforce with the new combat shooting continuum, Army Combatives Program and support to domestic operations. Additionally, we have seen many continue their journey up the ranks and for some, commence it, something that gives me more satisfaction than almost anything. For those that received awards and recognition of your efforts, well done. It would be remiss of me not to mention the excellent work the team from Charlie Company did in winning the Divisional Military Skills competition. An outstanding effort by all the members of the team.

I am very proud of the men and women of the battalion, from the most junior private up, for their positive attitude and commitment to serving their mates, the unit and their nation. I thank them all for their efforts and the only thing I can promise them is that I will be sure to call on them again in 2019 and will probably ask even more of them and, most pleasingly, I am convinced they will deliver.

I wish you all good soldiering.

**David Cadogan-Cowper**  
Lieutenant Colonel  
Commanding Officer

## Regimental Sergeant Major's Foreword

It is my pleasure and honour to be writing my first RSM's foreword in 2018 but more importantly, for Country Victoria's Own. This year has flown by with a myriad of tasks, exercises, parades and events that have cemented the unit's reputation as a no-nonsense go getter.

The unit welcomed A Coy 5/6 RVR who became B Coy 8/7 RVR courtesy of the 2nd Division Capability Establishment Review (CER) and what an addition you have made! The CER also saw a reduction in the ARA Cadre which has meant the paradigm changed in what part-time members were required to do as part of Normal Framework Operations. The sub-units chain of command have responded in a calm, measured and professional way.

From February, where Force Preservation Training set the expectations for the year ahead for BG Jacka, 2nd Division Military Skills, Training Support Requests and wider support to Army, the remainder of the year only grew in intensity. The unit and members at all stages have assumed a quiet confidence when given our assigned tasks and conducted them with aplomb. This was never more evident than a team from C Coy – Bendigo (Commanded by CPL Scott Connor) representing 4 BDE won the 2nd Division Military Skills Competition. (8/7 RVR also retains the title for 2019).

ANZAC Day saw the unit achieve 41 support tasks across half the state to which the next nearest unit (CATC – Puckapunyal) had 15. Our ceremonial commitment has not abated with tasks for the Ex-POW Memorial in Ballarat and Remembrance Day that have won plaudits from afar with the quality of the support given. Absolutely well done!

The focus of the unit has shifted within the Force Generation Cycle from Reset to Ready. Naturally, this has also shifted our thinking to more combat orientated collective training which also is in parallel with OPLAN MAGPIE in support of civil agencies. The Army Combative Program training at RAAF Laverton enabled a large percentage of the unit to gain qualification Level One and Two in Army's version of yoga. This reinforces Combat Behaviours at the individual level.

2018 has been a year of building for the future with the promotion of: 7 LCPLs, 9 CPLs, 1 WO2 and 2 LTs. We will have another 8 PTEs and 3 LCPLs and 3 CPLs ready to promote in early 2019 with 10 CPLs identified for SGT promotion courses. This influx of fresh blood and skills has infused a renewed sense of enthusiasm who command outstanding soldiers. The culture you are creating is awesome. I congratulate each of those members and wish each of you the very best of success. The promotion throughput has also allowed for junior soldiers to experience leadership and get a taste for it. This will serve us well for the coming year 2019 and beyond. This will be a year that will enable many to experience the Joint-Combined Interagency Task Force setting as part of Exercise Talisman Sabre. The future of Army will only demand more from the part-time force...and like lotto, you have to be in it to win it!



The unit has grown to almost completely full on the Unit Establishment (UE) over the course of the year. It is imperative that each officer or soldier must communicate with their chain of command early and often if they have an impact or change of circumstance in parading ability. Army has recruited very well and we are rapidly approaching a point where we have more soldiers than positions available. In short, you need to progress through specialist courses, promotion courses leading to promotion and NCO must progress to the next rank. We cannot recruit a SGT off the street, we have to grow them! Don't wait to be told to nominate for a course, get after it!

I extend best wishes to those members of the unit who are departing on posting, differing service categories or retirement. There too many to name but each of you have more than value added to the fabric of the battalion and you will be sorely missed.

To all of Country Victoria's Own and your families, thank-you for your service this year! I can say that I am extremely proud to be a part of the unit and to observe each of you ensuring that our 'patch is always in the room' when the sleeves get rolled up and work is required to be done. 2019 will enable all of us to become a 'light and lethal' force ready for use as part of the wider ADF. Great soldiering this year, best wishes for the Christmas and New Year and I look forward to what 2019 will bring us all.

Be the Hunter, not the Hunted.

**M. Carroll, CSM**  
Warrant Officer Class One  
Regimental Sergeant Major

## Alpha

Big Anzac march heads Alpha's year

After the usual mandatory training, force preservation and the usual pleasantries at the start of 2018, Alpha Company's eyes turned to Anzac Day commemorations.

The company had the honour of leading the second-biggest Anzac Day march in the state, in Geelong on the big day, debuting their new service dress.

With a maximum turnout of 60 soldiers, the group first breakfasted at the local RSL, before taking a long and twisting path down Geelong's main streets, on a route designed to avoid roadworks.

The RSL was very grateful for the company's efforts, and particularly Training WO, WO2 Mitch Nielsen, and CSM WO2 Peter Hardcastle for their liaison with the group.

The main focus of the middle of the year was the Battalion ambush training weekend, which saw A Coy provide the headquarters element for the activity.

With an ambitious plan to put in two ambushes on the Saturday, on a formative/summative approach, skills were practiced first by day and then by night.

Company command was rewarded with an exceptional weight of fire that more than appropriately serviced the engagement area.

This part of the year was also consumed with training focused on contingencies for a serious security incident, with much revision training in the relevant skills. That was followed by the first exposure to the Army Combatives Program (ACP) which replaces Military Self Defence (MSD).

The new training seeks to bring together many forms of unarmed combat into a simple, cohesive whole that also links to the new combat shooting continuum.

The OC could vouch for the efficacy of the training, after being on the receiving end of many a vicious throat-punch from the coy 2IC. Many scores were settled on the day, with the OC's inability to swallow for a fortnight afterwards a testimony to the brutal efficiency of training.

In many ways the training year culminated with an advanced training activity, again masterminded by the Trg WO.

The company made use of the decommissioned prison, now a tourist attraction, next door to its Geelong depot.

The Old Geelong Gaol dates back to 1849, and was still in use up until the early 1990s. It is now run as a community service project by the Rotary club.

The multi-floor facility, with an outdoor courtyard and wings, dovetailed perfectly with the company's recent Army Combatives Program training.

Soldiers in full battle gear and weapons tackled a mock terror threat, by night, with knife-wielding enemies holding hostages. The aim was to practice new unarmed combat drills, with shooting kept to a last resort.



The result was training that was a little different, but pulled together newly learned skills in a new and different training area.

At about this time we also farewelled LT Simon Hampson, OC of our Geelong platoon, who moved to take up a new job in Sydney, and welcomed the arrival of LT Nick Kitchen, to take up the reins of our Laverton platoon.

October saw a contingent of the company involved in Exercise Jacka Walk at Puckpaunyal, with hundreds of reservists from Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania. The culminating point was an exceptional live fire exercise, the brainchild of WO2 Rohan Free.

A Coy OC MAJ Jason Beck stepped up as Director of Practice for that exercise, manning the radios to Range Safety and subordinate callsigns over many long days of shooting. The ultimate live fire shoot on well prepared, dug-in positions involved indirect fire support from mortars, direct fire support from PMVs, and the machine-guns, rifles and grenade launchers of the ground troops.



A company dinner at the Geelong depot in November saw CSM Hardcastle again rise to the occasion, with an extraordinary dinner presented to the troops at an even more extraordinarily reasonable price.

The immaculate dining room was ornamented by the entire Hardcastle family, who handled all aspects of serving the meals ably prepared by WO2 Mark Broemmer.

As the year ended, the company was also proud to see two of its members recognised as the best private soldier and junior NCO respectively in the battalion for the year – with Pte Benjamin Schmidt and LCPL Justin Ludeman recognised in this regard.

As the year concludes with the Battalion officer and senior NCO dinner at Bendigo, Alpha Company stepped up to provide the colours party for the night, with the rehearsals that involved.

From the senior leadership team, we farewell 2IC Captain Francis Dignam, Trg WO WO2 Mitch Nielsen, and Sgt Rodney Spong, all posting out.

The company thanks all three for their efforts, and wishes them well in their new postings.

**J. Beck**  
Major  
Officer Commanding

## Bravo

It was a year of transition in 2018 as the men and women previously parading at Sunshine as part of Alpha Company of the 5th/6th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment joined with soldiers parading at Monegetta to become a new and improved fighting force under the banner of Bravo Company 8th /7th Battalion, The Royal Victorian Regiment. The beginning of the year saw the arrival of a new full time Training Warrant Officer (WO2 Luke Dancey) based at Sunshine, along with a host of new part-time Officers and Non Commissioned Officers: Company Second in Command (CAPT Nik Dragojlovic), Company Sergeant Major (WO2 Adam Revett), Company Quarter Master Sergeant (SGT Trevor Beales) and platoon commanders (LT Nick Arundel and LT Simon Fiocco Wood). These fresh faces joined the existing old guard of LT Will Wheatley (platoon commander) and MAJ Derek Sonogan (Officer Commanding) who maintained the headquarters continuity at the Sunshine depot.



The team faced some early obstacles with some hiccups involving posting orders/weapons/vehicles (or the absence of them...) to kick off the training year! But these challenges did not stop Bravo Company from contributing soldiers to participate in AASAM at Puckapunyal in March and the Battalion weekend training in May.

Promotions were plentiful in the company in 2018 with Nick Arundell being promoted to LT and Adam Revett to WO2. Patrick Walsh, Dale Vistarini, Ben Bryant and Nick Morecombe were all promoted from LCPL to CPL, and Patrick Aulich and Callan Heaney promoted from PTE to LCPL. A host of new soldiers also arrived with other JNCOs posting in from the SERCAT 7 to SERCAT 5 to bring the company's posted strength to just under 100 soldiers and officers.

With the Battalion moving into the readying year, the Bravo Company Headquarters volunteered to lead the charge to form the Combat Team HQ forming part of Battlegroup Jacka. Exercise Jacka Walk was the first hit out for the Company with the soldiers participating in an excellent Live Fire Platoon attack supported by Mortars and PMVs.

2018 also saw the start of the G-wagon capability being developed within the company. The new vehicle will be replacing the Land Rover fleet by the end of 2019. The company's Centre of Gravity for mobility (PTE Jackson) became qualified to operate the vehicle in January and then instructed on the next two G-wagon courses, qualifying a further 10 members of the company. Moving forward, every soldier will need to complete these types of driver courses or otherwise obtain one of the other few specialist qualifications available to part time soldiers – Signals...!

The development of the Battalion's Signals platoon capability also moved location to Sunshine in 2018, with plans for the platoon to be raised after July 2019 and the first designated Platoon commander being LT Wheatley. SGT Kliko will take up the post of Regimental Signals Sergeant and they will both start the journey to become our crypto custodians!

2018 was an excellent year; well done to all members of the Company. As we look forward to 2019 and the many excellent training opportunities offered the up swell of morale is infectious! Good soldiering.

**D. Sonogan**

Major

Officer Commanding

## Charlie



Charlie Company saw big changes in 2018 with the realignment of depots resulting in the company AO being expanded to include six depots throughout Western Victoria. Being dispersed across 140,000km<sup>2</sup> Charlie Company now encompasses an area larger than many European countries!

Although there was a large amount of change in the company one thing that has remained consistent is the determination and positive attitude of the soldiers. I along with the CSM, Bob Creelman have been continually impressed with the efforts and the exceptional dedication shown by all members of the company.

The realignment of depots and special-conditions-parading has provided plenty of challenges associated with a geographically dispersed and physically dislocated sub-unit. There have also been exceptional opportunities presented during the last 12 months, including the introduction of the 9 Platoon training weekends. These activities organised and executed by the sub-unit provided additional training opportunities for soldiers on special-conditions-parading to participate in combat skills training and professional development. One of the training weekends conducted in Warrnambool saw soldiers train in Tactical Care of the Combat Casualty and Urban Target Approach, culminating in each section commander leading full mission profile of a building clearance.



*C COY 2018 Best NCO –  
CPL Braden Wright (Shepparton)*



*C COY 2018 Best Soldier –  
PTE James Smith (Mildura)*



*C COY 2018 PT Award –  
PTE William Paffrath (Bendigo)*



The realignment of the Charlie Company AO has also resulted in a need to improve effective lines of communication. This has greatly improved our ability to quickly and succinctly disseminate training and mission essential information to soldiers regardless of location. During this year Charlie Company has developed standardised training outcomes, ensuring training was conducted in a demanding, realistic, interesting, progressive and safe manner. The Depot Commanders have been working tirelessly to achieve these goals while also reinforcing recruiting in the regional areas to maintain the presence of 'Country Victoria's Own' throughout Western Victoria.

Not only has the company progressed through the Readying period of the Force Generation Cycle, we have also deployed soldiers to Transit Security Element and to Rifle Company Butterworth, with the soldiers returning to the Unit early in 2018. These Continuous Fulltime Service opportunities have provided a fantastic opportunity for soldiers and officers alike to further develop their skill at arms and bring this knowledge back to the company.

This year has also marked the raising of the Charlie Company Signals Detachment, led by CPL Brown. This team has supported every activity the unit has been involved in, including providing support to Battle Group JACKA as the OA Node. This small team has provided extraordinary dedication over the last 12 months to raise the Sig Det, qualify members and has provided continuing support to activities in the Battalion, the Brigade and to Battle Group JACKA. The service of these members has not gone un-noticed with their support being sought for future activities.

During 2018 there has been high tempo periods of training through the Battle Group JACKA Road to War preparations and the introduction of OPLAN MAGPIE, both of which soldiers have provided exceptional support to. In many cases participating in multiple weekend training activities each month. The ongoing commitment to these activities is testament to the professionalism and dedication of the Charlie Company soldiers. I thank you all for your service throughout this year and I look forward to working with you all again in 2019.

R. Powell  
Captain  
Officer Commanding





# Orderly Room

## 8/7 RVR UE Statistics

Depot	Non-effective (17/18)	Non-effective (18/19)	Effective (17/18)	Effective (18/19)	Total (17/18)	Total (18/19)	17/18 (%)	18/19 (%)	(%) Change
BALLARAT	2	20	35	18	37	38	94.59%	47.37%	-48.57%
BENDIGO	4	12	17	10	21	22	80.95%	45.45%	-41.18%
GEELONG	6	25	24	9	30	34	80.00%	26.47%	-62.50%
LAVERTON	8	38	37	12	45	50	82.22%	24.00%	-67.57%
MILDURA	2	9	6	0	8	9	75.00%	0.00%	-100.00%
MONEGEETTA	3	14	9	2	12	16	75.00%	12.50%	-77.78%
SHEPPARTON	3	12	13	4	16	16	81.25%	25.00%	-69.23%
SUNSHINE	12	45	51	21	63	66	80.95%	31.82%	-58.82%
SWAN HILL	1	6	4	1	5	7	80.00%	14.29%	-75.00%
WARRNAMBOOL	3	10	9	3	12	13	75.00%	23.08%	-66.67%
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>249</b>	<b>271</b>	<b>82.33%</b>	<b>29.52%</b>	<b>-60.98%</b>

Change in effective Service by depot for FY 17/18 and 18/19

Svc Type	Positions	Filled	Vacant	Occupancy
APS	3	2	1	66.7%
ARA	14	12	2	85.7%
Ares	377	265	112	70.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>279</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>70.8%</b>

### Unit vacancies

Depot	Number of persons	Depot	RAINF
BALLARAT	50	BALLARAT	31
BENDIGO	22	BENDIGO	19
GEELONG	33	GEELONG	30
LAVERTON	50	LAVERTON	46
MILDURA	9	MILDURA	9
MONEGEETTA	15	MONEGEETTA	15
SHEPPARTON	13	SHEPPARTON	11
SUNSHINE	66	SUNSHINE	64
SWAN HILL	6	SWAN HILL	6
WARRNAMBOOL	13	WARRNAMBOOL	12
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>277</b>	<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>243</b>

### Count of Pers by depot

### Trained Ares RAINF by depot

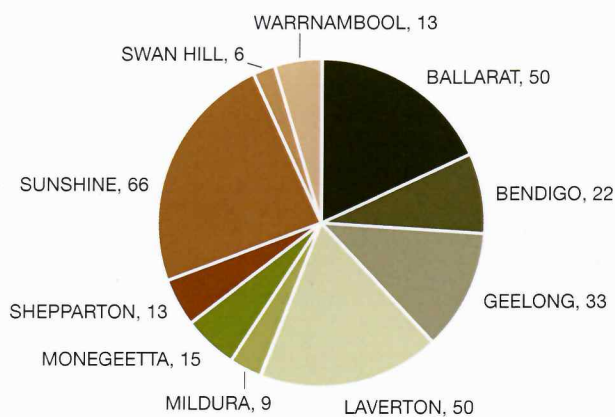
Depot	All Corps		RAAOC		RACT		RAINF						Total		
	LT	SGT	CPL	CPL	CAPT	LT	WO1	WO2	SGT	CPL	LCPL	PTE			
BALLARAT	1	1	1	1	1			1				1	4	10	
BENDIGO						1							2	6	10
GEELONG			1				1			1	2	5	16	26	
MONEGEETTA							1				2	1	4	8	
SHEPP'TON							1			1		2	5	5	
SUNSHINE						1			1	2	2	3	20	29	
WILLIAMS							1					3	20	24	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>112</b>		

Category	Pers
ARA	16
Ares (Trained)	259
APS	2
ARA Pools pos	4
Ares Pools Pos	82
Recruits	33
Trainees	53
<b>Total</b>	<b>363</b>

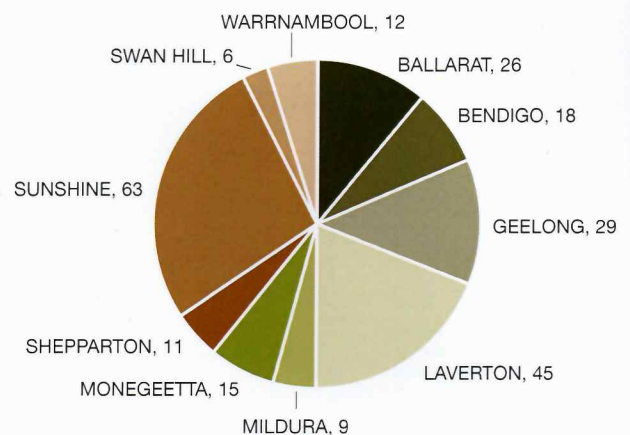
### Ares vacancy by rank and location

### Current strength

## Number of personnel



## RES-A RAINF



## Operations

2018 was a year of significant change for the Battalion with the implementation of the 2 Div Capability Enhancement Review (CER) and the transition from the RESET Phase of the Force Generation Cycle to the READYING Phase. The CER resulted in the reduction of ARA staff from 24 to 14 with the most significant impact being on the Quartermaster Staff in 2018 and the pending reduction of the clerical staff in 2019. The transfer of the Sunshine Depot from 5/6 RVR to 8/7 RVR, was a positive outcome of the CER with the addition of a Company with strong esprit de corps and increased footprint in western Melbourne for the Battalion. The reduction in ARA staff, and the total number of depots increasing to ten, necessitated a realignment of the Company structure based on predominately geographical lines. The CER also resulted in the posting of the majority of Admin Company to 4 CSSB and a change in a paradigm from being a largely self-sufficient organisation to one which required external logistical support.

The transition to the READYING Phase mid-year resulted in the priority switching from individual training and support to 8 Bde, to generating collective capability for the Reinforcing Battlegroup, BG JACKA. The Battalion is well postured to provide a Combat Team, specialist elements of Manoeuvre Support Platoon and components of the Battlegroup HQ in 2019. From May onwards the Battalion's program became even busier with the requirement to generate Force Elements to be able to contribute to a Domestic Incident Security Force (DISFOR). As a result, for short period there was a requirement to conduct two training weekends per month: the first focus on foundation warfighting for BG JACKA while the second focused on specific skill sets for the DISFOR.

At the end of 2018, the Ops Cell farewell WO2 Rohan Free (OPSWO) who is posted to NORFORCE. WO2 Free planned and executed easily the most memorable activity for the year during EX JACKA WALK, a platoon live fire attack with supporting arms.

**A. McQuilkin**

Major

Operations Officer

## Signals



8/7 RVR has a long history of regimental signals, with a Signals Platoon having been previously based out of the former Maryborough depot, and at other locations across the state. In recent years, the unit has developed its communications capability as the Army has rapidly become more networked and digitised. During the last force generation cycle as part of Reinforcing Battlegroup Jacka over 2014-2016, 8/7 RVR successfully demonstrated that it could produce an effective mounted and digitised Combat Team

signals detachment. The unit also worked closely with 5/6 RVR and 108 Sig Sqn to form the BG S6 cell and platoon HQ, and continues to maintain close ties moving into the current cycle.

In the wake of HAMEL 16, it was clear that 8/7 RVR would be required to develop and maintain its own regimental signals capability, in order to effectively support unit activities and future force generation cycles. This need has been further reinforced by the steady introduction into service of the Army's new suite of digitised radios and the Battlefield Management System (BMS), which have demanded an increasing depth of technical proficiency from operators at all levels. In time, every member of the unit will be expected to maintain at least a basic level of proficiency with the new radio systems, and this will require a more sustained training and skills-retention effort than has been the case for past generations of communications equipment. For the first time, the unit was able to set up and run its own internal Basic Combat Communications Course (BCCC), with training sessions in July and November 2018. Both courses were a success, and have resulted in the majority of personnel across the unit becoming qualified to use the new equipment. The unit is now well-placed to begin developing a core group of specialist signallers, who will form the future 8/7 RVR Signals Platoon.

Over coming years, 8/7 RVR will continue to develop its signals capability. However, in the future this capability will come to look substantially different to the signals platoons of the past. If it is to play an effective role as part of a Battlegroup supporting an ARA Combat Brigade, 8/7 RVR must adapt to the rapidly changing reality of information warfare. This means that regimental signallers must not only become familiar with digitised and networked communications systems, but also begin to understand the limitations of a contested, congested and complex electromagnetic environment and the importance of electronic warfare and cyber effects in the modern battlespace. This is an exciting opportunity for signallers, riflemen and commanders keen to play a role in BG Jacka, on operations, and at various other activities. As the unit's signals capability develops, it will increasingly be at the forefront of 8/7 RVR's evolving role, and those involved will be exposed to new equipment, new training, and an insight into the most rapidly changing aspects of land warfare.



L. Holt  
Captain  
Regimental Signals Officer

## Padre

Greetings from the Padre. What a busy year 2018 was. Our unit has a large geographical reach in Victoria and I did manage to visit almost every depot (apologies to Shepparton & Warrnambool). These visits were extremely helpful in getting a feel for the diversity and rich heritage of our unit.

One of the highlights for me was the privilege of dedicating a new memorial at Robinvale in April to coincide with the centenary of the battle of Villers-Bretonneux, with which Robinvale is a sister city. Ably supported by a guard comprised of members from Mildura and Swan Hill this event was attended by over 2,000 people, received national coverage on the ABC Back Roads program and was a brilliant opportunity to highlight 'Country Victoria's Own' battalion.



2018 also marked the centenary of the signing of the Armistice, thus ending the 5 years of conflict that became known as the First World War. This afforded us the opportunity to reflect upon the idea of peace. As students of history we all know that this hard won peace was not long lasting and, in fact, the terms of the peace treaty may have led to the next world conflict.

This past year afforded us all many and varied training opportunities to learn and thus refine our skills as soldiers. Whilst the purpose of our training, unashamedly, is to fight and win the battle, the higher purpose should surely be to secure a lasting peace for our family and friends, our nation and indeed the world.

As we pause to remember the end of conflict that occurred 100 years ago I invite you to consider why you choose to do what you do. Many of you have demanding civilian occupations and yet you regularly sacrifice your own time to train as soldiers. Yes it is good fun, we get experiences that just aren't available on 'civvy street', and we get paid for doing it, but have you ever stopped to reflect on the bigger reason?

Thank you for your service and I look forward to soldiering together again in 2019.

Richest blessings,

D. Davis

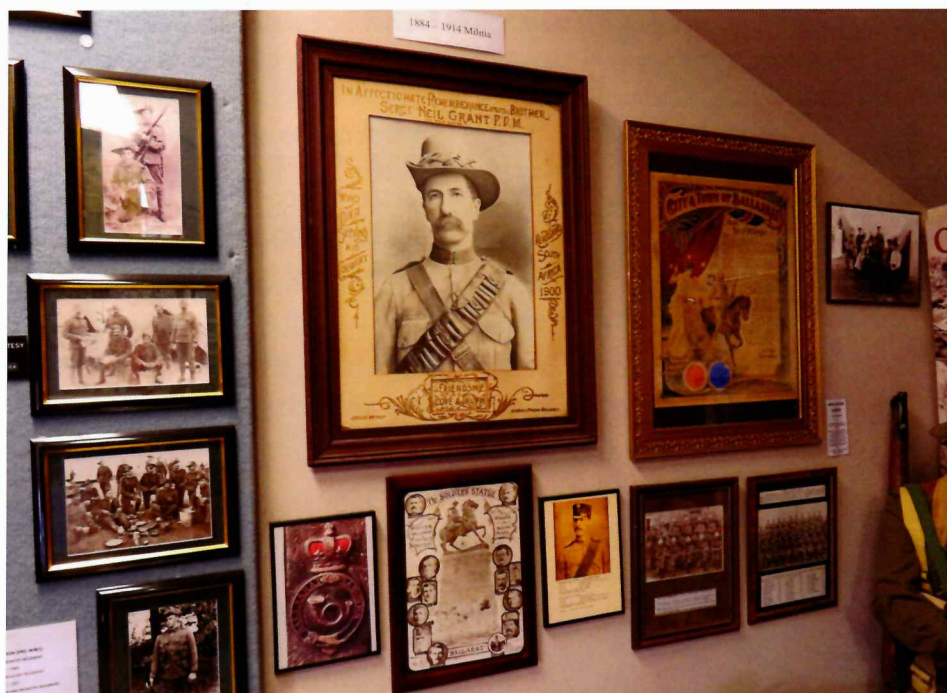
Captain

Chaplain

## Museum

The Ballarat Ranger Military Museum, located in the former Ballarat Airport Type P1 Hut, contains the 'Unit Historical Collection' of 8/7 RVR. The Charter of the 'museum' is to hold, preserve and maintain military history and memorabilia for the battalion, be it from the battalion itself, or from Ballarat or towns associated with the battalion's history.

The 'museum' collection contains historical memorabilia going back as far as The Ballarat Volunteer Rifle Regiment, which was formed in 1858 as a part of the Victorian Defence Force. Five years later a second name change saw the unit then called The Ballarat Volunteer Rangers. Meanwhile the Bendigo unit was named the Bendigo Rifle Regiment. In 1883 the 'Volunteer' era ended and was replaced in 1884 by a 'Part-paid Militia. The Ballarat Volunteer Rangers were renamed the 3rd Battalion, Victorian Rifles and the Castlemaine/Bendigo unit named the 4th Battalion, Victorian Rifles. In 1885/6 a new 'Drill Hall' was built in Ballarat. At the time of opening the Ballarat Drill Hall had the largest clear floor area (ie without internal supporting poles) in the Southern Hemisphere.



After Federation the Australian Army was formed and in 1903 Ballarat's unit became the 7th Australian Infantry Regiment. Castlemaine and Bendigo were then known as the 8th Australian Infantry Regiment. In 1908 the Castlemaine and Bendigo unit split. This caused a change of name to both the Ballarat and Castlemaine/Bendigo units:

1st Battalion, 7th Australian Infantry Regiment in Ballarat,

1st Battalion, 8th Australian Infantry Regiment in Castlemaine, and

2nd Battalion, 8th Australian Infantry Regiment in Bendigo.

The next change to the Australian Army followed the Lord Kitchener visit in 1909/10 after which he proposed that Australia would need 93 'Infantry units. This change was adopted from 1 July 1912.

Bendigo raised the 66th Infantry (later known as the 66th (Mount Alexander) Infantry while Ballarat raised the 70th Infantry in the east and the 71st Infantry in the west. These would later have Territorial titles added to form the 70th Infantry (Ballarat Regiment) and the 71st (City of Ballarat) Infantry. The north-west of the state was the home for the 73rd Infantry (Victorian Rangers). By 1915 Geelong's 69th Infantry had been formed from part of the 70th Infantry, while Warrnambool's 72nd Infantry had been formed from part of the 71st Infantry. In 1912 Shepparton's militia would form a company of the Melbourne based 60th Infantry. The Shepparton company would also at times be attached to the 57th and 58th Infantry, the 58th Infantry being Lieutenant Colonel 'Pompey' Elliott's battalion.

The Great War, starting in 1914, saw the formation of the 8th Battalion based on Ballarat's 70th Infantry, with the 7th Battalion being based on 'Pompey' Elliott's 58th Battalion in Essendon and towns through to the Murray River. In 1916 the 37th Battalion was formed in Seymour, the 38th Battalion in Bendigo and the 39th Battalion in Ballarat. Along with the 40th Battalion, these three battalions formed the 10th Brigade, a part of the by now Major General John Monash's 3rd Division. With the formation of the 4th and 5th Divisions in Egypt, the 7th Battalion was split to form the 59th Battalion and the 8th Battalion split to form the 60th Battalion. The 7th and 8th Battalion Colour Patches were turned on their sides to make the Colour Patches for the 59th and 60th Battalions, 15th Brigade, 5th Division. The 15th Brigade was commanded by the now Brigadier-General 'Pompey' Elliott.

Post war the country Victoria militia would consist of the 7th Infantry Battalion (Mount Alexander Regiment) in Castlemaine, the 8th Infantry Battalion (City of Ballarat Regiment) and the 38th Infantry Battalion (Bendigo Regiment). In 1929 the 38th and 7th amalgamated to form the 38th/7th Battalion, then in 1936 the 7th Battalion moved to Mildura as the 7th Battalion (North West Murray Borderers). Geelong was served by the 23rd Battalion (later including Warrnambool's 21st Battalion) and Shepparton came under the 57th Infantry Regiment.

In World War II the 7th and 8th Battalions militia served in Darwin and the islands. Geelong's now 23rd/21st Battalion and 38th Battalions were disbanded to reinforce other militia battalions. At the same time as the 7th and 8th Battalions were fighting, the 2nd AIF had been raised. There was a 2/7th Battalion, and a 2/8th Battalion in the 2nd AIF. These two battalions only have a numerical connection with the two militia battalions!

Post war the Citizen Military Forces were re-raised. In country Victoria the combination of the 8th and 7th Battalions from Ballarat and Mildura and their surrounding towns saw the 8th/7th Battalion (North Western Victorian Regiment) raised. As the HQ was to be in 8th Battalion's Ballarat the number was selected as 8th/7th! When the Pentropic organisation was raised in 1960 the Melbourne based CMF Battalions formed 1 RVR and the country Victorian based battalions formed 2 RVR. In the 1980s 1 RVR eventually became 5/6 RVR and in 1987 2 RVR was renumbered 8/7 RVR. Consequently, the four original battalion numbers from the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division AIF, ie 5th, 6th, 7th and 8th Battalions, remain of the Army's Order of Battle.

Parts of the history of all the battalions mentioned above can be seen in the 'Ballarat Ranger Military Museum'! The museum is open Thursdays 1300 – 1600 hrs, the fourth Sunday each month from 0900 – 1220 hrs and 'By Appointment'!

The museum now has the required funds to expand and build a second hut. It is still waiting for the approval to get started on this expansion!

**N. Leckie**  
Major (Retired)

## EX JACKA WALK

Exercise JACKA WALK 2018 was the major activity for the year over 520 soldier participating from the 4th and 9th Brigades and the 9th Regiment. The activity was designed to exercise CT Jacka's HQ elements in a CPX and its platoon level elements through a field training activity culminating in live fire combined arms platoon attacks. 8/7 RVR had a number of roles and responsibilities for the exercise; providing the Operation Cell for the HQ and a CT HQ for the CPX , two platoons for the field training exercise and support staff for LFX 2.

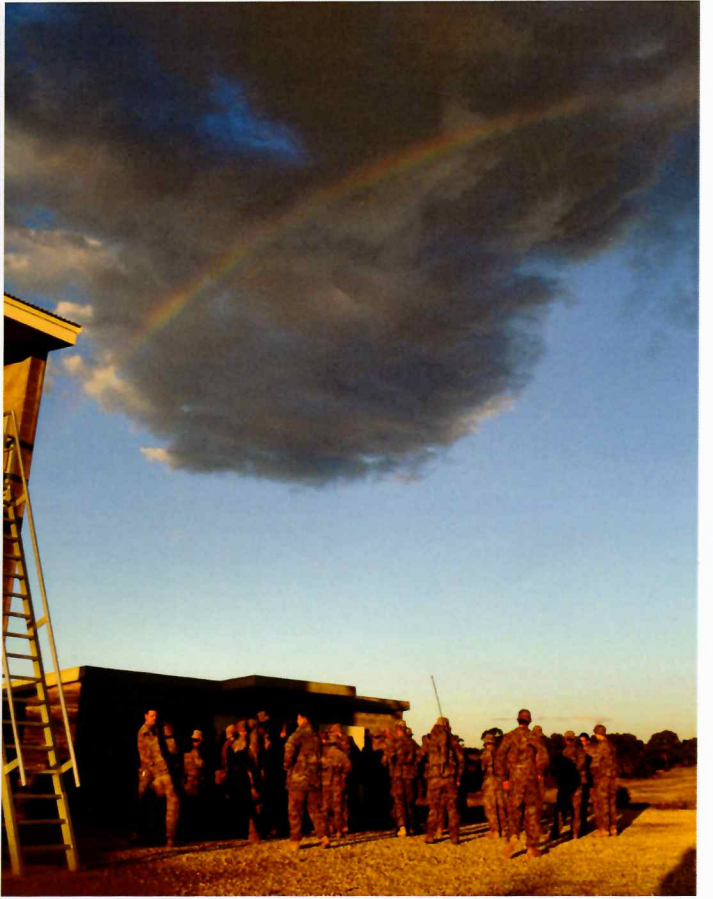
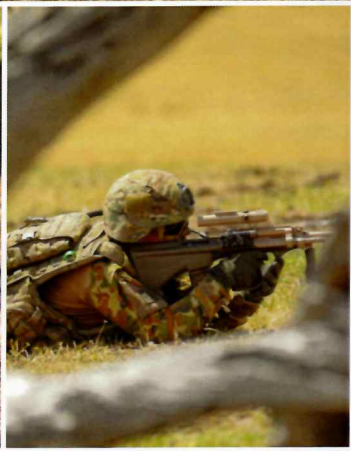
8/7 RVR commitment to the CPX included the OPSO, OPS SGT, OA Sig Det, C CSM C Coy as the HQ CSM and B Coy HQ for the CT B HQ. The BG HQ was consisted of over 60 personnel and 22 vehicles, they were put through their paces with a number of challenging scenarios requiring coordinated detailed planning form all elements of the HQ.

The rifle platoons were put through a series of activities to meet the exercise outcomes, they began with the FO's from 9 RGT being integrated into the platoons. The platoon then conduct a Cat A ranges zeroing weapons and confirming LF 6 proficiencies. They were then put through sneaker ranges and PMV familiarisation before moving in to blank platoon activities as the training was staggered, the idea was that platoons would move with other platoons from their combat team. However due to the complexity of the stager for the Cat A and B Ranges, platoon ended up moving through the exercise with platoons form other states and battalions. That allowed them to see our other battalions are operating. The next step was to confirm live fire pair, group and section moment. Testing the section commander's ability in manoeuvring a section around a live fire battle filed. This lead to the final activity of the exercise; the platoon attack range, the range consisted of three platoon objective that were to be secured in sequence with 2/10 Bty providing OS and 4/19 PWLH providing cavalry lift and SBF positions. Platoon commanders were then taken away and walked through their task from the FUP to the Limit of Exploitation, they were then given time for rehearsals and planning their concept of ops. In planning they had to coordinate movement to the FUP, OS and firing from the SBF positions.

All up from the five platoons eight separate attacks were conducted, with the two 8/7 RVR platoons 21 and 22 conducting two each. The conduct of the attacks from all call signs especial on the second run through were very good. The coordinating with OS and Cav and command from all levels was well rehearsed and executed live. The aggression, coordination and rate of movement and the weight of fire during the assault was what is expected of an infantry attack. All elements achieved outcomes of the exercise without incident.







## Military Skills Competition

The 2nd Division Military Skills competition was conducted at Puckapunyal Military Area. Charlie Company as the previous victors of the 4th Brigade Military Skills competition were privileged to compete against the best of the 2nd Division. The soldiers of Charlie Company had the home ground advantage, working in areas they knew well.

The section got off to a good start completing the first three serials quickly and smoothly. On the third stand the Section Commander, CPL Connor, was evacuated as a non-battle casualty injuring his ankle. This meant that the section second in command, LCPL Otten, needed to step up and take the reins of the section, completing the rest of the stands. These stands included the All Arms Call For Fire activity, of which CPL Connor had trained extensively. LCPL Otten provided a gallant effort to destroy the mock enemy to his front, however, the adjustments required to get rounds on target left the team with a considerable deficit.

Back at the Exercise Control Command Point the 8/7 RVR training staff watched the scores come in and it seemed like all was lost with other Brigades catching our Charlie Company Team. Until the final stand, objectively the most important stand, the range. This task required the Team to conduct a 2.4km webbing run into a falling plate serial at 100m. When the scores from all Teams were recorded the Charlie Company Team had a considerable lead winning the competition and taking home the glory.

They didn't get to have all the fun though. After the soldiers had cleared the range and returned to conduct the post activity administration and await the results, the 4th Brigade Commander, 2nd Division Commander and Deputy Chief of the Army (current Chief of the ARMY) had their own competition with the other staff on hand. We are unsure if there was anything rigged but Team Deputy Chief of the Army had decisive wins against the other staff, three shoots in a row.

## High Explosive

During the period of 04 -06 May 18, 8/7 RVR conducted a HE LFX Range Weekend. This was conducted at the DFSW Range at Puckapunyal.

The aim of the weekend was to support Force Generation of the Combat Team for Battle Group JACKA. This involved conducting currency training and for many, qualifying in 40mm GLA, 84mm, and M81A1APW.

The ARA Staff mentored and provided support to key appointments and a safe, successful weekend was enjoyed by all.

On the weekend of Weekend in 27-29 Jul 18 the Battalion conducted High Explosives (HE) training weekend utilising the Static Grenade Range (SGR) and Assault Grenade Range (AGR) at Puckapunyal. The weekend also presented the opportunity to address shortfalls for some members on the M18A1 Claymore. This activity formed part of the continuation training required for infantry soldiers to progress in rank and trade to ECN 343-3. Bravo Company took the lead in the planning and conduct of the activity, with support from Alpha and Charlie companies, which involved 42 participants and 13 staff and safety supervisors.

LT Nick Arundell was appointed Officer Conducting Exercise (OCE), SGT Glenn Ludeman as the Officer in Charge (OIC) SGT Trevor Beales as the Quartermaster.

The activity saw a number of soldiers gain the required competency towards PTE(P) with F1 and F3 grenades being employed on both the SGR and AGR. The conduct of the AGR also incorporated dry fire and movement utilising each soldiers' primary weapon system (F88) until they were in position to employ grenades.

A number of concurrent activities were also conducted including sandbag revision, first aid (including instruction and practice in the correct application of tourniquets, provided by 4 CSSB medics). Soldiers were also able to revise and rehearse basic skills such as fire control orders, judging distances and revision of why things are seen.

The revision of sandbagging was critical in the restoration of the OIC tower on the AGR in order to achieve the required protection for the practice. This activity under the command of CPL Dinning, which saw him make the most of his previous knowledge and experience as an assault pioneer. For the soldiers involved this proved to reinforce the earlier revision which was necessary to meet CPL Dinning's high standards of sandbagging. (And at the conclusion of the activity Range Control staff expressed their appreciation of the restoration work to the OIC tower!)

Overall, a successful training weekend with a lot of bang and plenty of achievements recorded on soldier log books.





## Domestic Security



Domestic Security Training was a highlight of the training year. The weekend kicked off a series of training weekends in 2018 for the battalion focused on security training for a serious security incident.

The weekend was a showcase of the contemporary threat environment and the role the Army Reserve plays within the integration of the readiness brigade and role of supporting the local populace on the home front.

Held at both the Bendigo and RAAF Williams (Laverton) depots, soldiers were put through their paces in a mix of theory based and practical scenarios led by the junior and senior NCOs of the battalion.

All instructors drew successfully on their years of knowledge to develop training aids which enhanced training outcomes.

Soldiers enjoyed the opportunity to experience a different style of training. The battalion is poised to continue its integration within 4 Bde to support a response to a domestic security incident.

A. Zambrano-Perez  
Lieutenant

## Offensive Operations

On the 25 August 2018 8/7 RVR conducted an introduction to Company offensive operations training weekend at Puckapunyal Military Area (PMA). Led by B Coy, the force was inserted into the PMA at 0830 on Saturday morning, patrolling as Platoons from the insertion point (IP) into the Company harbour. Orders were issued, battle preparation conducted, test firing, reorganisation of call signs, and by 1330 the company was patrolling to secure the forming up point (FUP).

Conduction a two up, one in depth with Manoeuvre Support (MS) section in a Support by Fire (SBF) role the company attack did not get off to a perfect start! The MS Section was spotted by a Listening post (LP) and engaged early. With communications broken and distorted the OC decided to commence the attack early and crossed the LD immediately.

After a 1300m assault, supported by the MS Section in the SBF the LP (OBJ 1) was neutralised by 21 on the left flank with 23 on the right continuing the fight to neutralise OBJ 2. Depth (CS 22) was committed to take over the battle from 23 after they lay exhausted at the top of the feature. 22 continued on to the Limit of Exploitation (LOE) before reorientating to the south to harass the enemy forces on OBJ 3.

At this stage first Company attack was halted, with the Observer Trainers (OTs) providing feedback and points/guidance on the companies Sustains/Improves and fives in the After Action Review (AAR).

After a brief rest the Company Commander took stock, issued fresh orders and the company reformed and did the attack a second time. With the same formations and Order of March (OOM) the company attacked OBJ 3 from the south/east with 22 securing the FUP, 21 on the left and 23 on the right. MS Section provided the SBF and the attack flowed smoothly with the LP neutralised by a section attack preceding the Company's main attack.

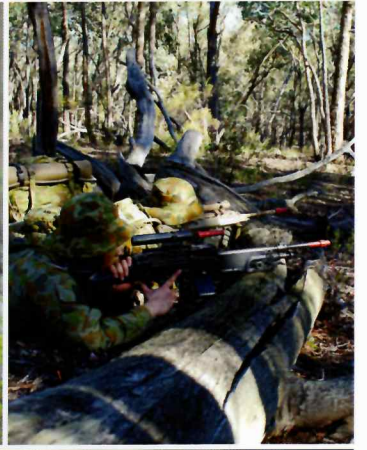
After an intense day B Coy then patrolled back to the Company harbour for much needed rest and relaxation, however the enemy had other ideas! A 5 man enemy probe occurred at approx. 2200 with the 23 main gun position calling in the observation report of enemy approaching. The OC moved the MS Section into position and gave a fire control orders of 200 rds rapid. The enemy was easily driven off with the company left to prepare for a dawn assault on the enemy position.

After a frosty night's sleep, 21 stepped off early with MS to secure the FUP, 23, CHQ and 22 followed soon after moving into the FUP and crossing the LD at the appointed time. The terrain however had other ideas with the 2 up formation veering off axis to the right, meaning the depth platoon was engaged on the flank by the enemy LP. After they reoriented, 21 conducted a platoon attack and secured the left flank. 23 and 22 got back in the fight and moved quickly to take Obj 2. With help from MS Section providing great direct fire support from their SBF location.

A quick reorg was conducted, a fire plan draw up with a new SBF oriented south to harass OBJ 3 provided by 23A. 22 and 23 moved into the new FUP and with 21 in depth commenced the assault on OBJ 3. The enemy were by this time harassed, shell shocked and weary and the Platoons rolled right over them without any casualties.

The training weekend was a great opportunity for 8/7 RVR Soldiers and Officers to practice their high end warfighting skills in preparation for the Live Fire attacks planned to occur in October. See OPS OVERLAY sketch for the plan issued by the OC for the attack on all 3 objectives on the Sunday morning.





## Defensive Operations



From 16-18 Nov 18, members from 8/7 RVR came together in Puckapunyal to hone their defensive skills during the annual DEFOPS weekend. With a platoon of 35 soldiers drawn from the ranks of A and B Coy, and a strong enemy force of over 20 members from C Coy, the weekend was set to be interesting.

After a short stomp onto the defensive position on Hasset Hill, the platoon began defensive routine and the conduct of section fighting patrols to clear the surrounding areas. In the evening, the platoon patrolled to an assembly area in order to posture for a nearby ambush. They instead found themselves preparing to launch a quick attack after the enemy, dressed in ghillie suits, was spotted by the platoon commander while he was taking a leak at the edge of the position.

After clearing the enemy from the area, the platoon patrolled back to the defensive position, prior to conducting a platoon ambush along a nearby track. The next morning, the platoon conducted a fighting withdrawal from the position, in order to effect delay on the enemy.

With great weather, and all objectives met, the exercise proved to be excellent and interesting training for all the soldiers and officers involved.

**Nick Kitchen**  
Lieutenant

## Army Combative Program

Over the period of 27 – 31 Aug 8/7RVR with the help of WO2 Boag from 10/27 RSAR the Army Combative Program level 1, 2 and instructor course was run to aid the unit in getting members qualified for the unit's upcoming level 1 course.

The week saw 16 members qualified in hand to hand combat, both as an individual and in pairs. When the dust had settled and broken bones set back in place (WO2 Nielsen's broken rib), the week was finished off with students given the tools to help instruct other students in the techniques required when conducting courses.

During the September training weekend held at Laverton the unit conducted its first level 1 Army Combative Program. The weekend saw those members just qualified as instructors give detailed lessons and when broken into smaller groups helping new students in honing the skills and techniques required to defeat any threat that may arise.

Members from Alpha Bravo and Charlie Company enjoyed the chance to learn new skills and the ability to blow off a bit of steam by taking great pleasure in bashing our volunteer threat dummy, PTE Onal, who spent the entire day coping blows from everyone, which, anyone who has worn the safety suit will know is an exceptional effort.



When the weekend was complete and the tally taken, the unit had successfully qualified 102 members in level 1 Army Combatives. It was great to see such enthusiasm from all those who attended and great to hear the desire to do more continuous training back at their own depots.

Next year we look forward to running more level 1 courses and also a level 2 course. We again would like to thank WO2 Boag for his time as his wealth of knowledge and subject matter expertise on Army Combatives which is second to none. I also want to thank all the instructors for their help in making the training weekend a great success.

A Marcelino  
Sergeant



## Ambush

The June weekend saw members of the battalion conduct an ambushing weekend. Long lead-up training on Tuesday nights was followed by equally long orders by platoon commanders, in the field. Soldiers inserted into their respective AOs, with an aim to complete one day ambush, followed by a night ambush.

After the day ambush was successfully triggered it was on to the night ambush, where soldiers were able to appreciate the contrast in proximity to the enemy during the conduct of day and night ambushes.



With 2 Platoon inserting into their ambush position before last light, it was up to SGT Knight to establish the trip flare as part of training outcomes.

Upon the ambush being initiated the value of the flare was observed when the enemy party led by SGT Marcelino attempted to bypass on the flanks and were observed by platoon members, leading to a second initiation with a rapid rate of fire by the machine-gunners.

The weekend culminated with a company marry-up procedure, where all members experienced – many for the first time – the space a company takes up on the ground, as well as the time it takes to successfully marry-up.

That was followed by a short march-out of about an hour's duration (circa five kilometres) to encourage the diggers to work on their pack fitness.

Alejandro Zambrano-Perez  
Lieutenant



## Ceremonial

8/7 RVR (Country Victoria's Own) certainly lived up to its name with approximately 70 -80 ceremonial support tasks in 2018. As the largest and most visible military presence in Western Victoria, our 380 members are sewn within the fabric of these communities. It is only natural that the battalion fields requests far and wide.

Firstly in January, the Governor of Victoria, the Honourable Linda Dessau, AC requested support from 8/7 RVR to support Australia Day activities which saw a contingent from A Coy assist in the activities at Government House. The Governor is a keen supporter of the unit with many invitations extended from Government House to the unit and regiment.

## ANZAC

With the Centenary of Commemoration of the First World War drawing to a close, it became evident that the unit would field an inordinate amount of requests. The official figures were 23 Catafalque parties, nine guest speakers, one marching contingent (A Coy – Geelong), Melbourne Storm NRL ANZAC Day match and seven visits to schools and organisations. We emptied the cupboard to support all tasks! The unit provided ceremonial support to approximately 2.2 million Victorians within the unit's area of responsibility. This exposure was exemplified with countless media (television, print and social media) articles with the familiar Big V hat badge on the slouch hat coupled with the ubiquitous white over red colour patch which put paid to our unofficial motto of 'Country Victoria's Own!'





The service at Robinvale saw 8/7 RVR once again feature heavily as a Catafalque Party at one of the most spectacular sites for a memorial. WO2's Free and Young enabled a detachment to undertake this task and the service again was featured heavily in local, state and national media.

SGT Glenn Ludeman also conducted many support tasks in the Bendigo area which featured the amazing efforts of the 7th Battalion. B Coy supported the AFL and numerous activities at Reservoir RSL, Bacchus Marsh, Romsey-Lancefield, Elmhurst development Group, Sunbury, Caroline Springs, and Altona RSL. A Coy had a formed body which marched en-masse through Geelong which was coordinated by TRGWO A Coy (WO2 Mitch Nielsen) and commanded by MAJ Jason Beck.

Numerous school visits put a contemporary face to the term 'veteran' and also to demonstrate just what service to the nation really represents nowadays. SGT Jake Holl, WO2 Bob Creelman, CPL Kelly, PTE Godson and CPL Swapnil Sawant all were the face of the battalion and saw plenty of coverage that would have in earlier days, cost them more cartons than a brewery could produce.

The attendance at the Ranger Barracks Regimental Mess lunch post march in Ballarat, saw almost 100 soldiers, families, and friends of the battalion enjoy each other's company in an unusually warm ANZAC Day. Nothing illustrates the worth of something more than people attending an event that they have plenty of other options to attend. People voted with their feet.

To give context, the unit conducted 41 support tasks to ANZAC Day with 360 soldiers (April 2018 figures) where our nearest unit in tasking's – Combined Arms Training Centre (approximately 2000 soldiers) had only 15 support tasks.

Throughout the year, support continued outside of ANZAC Day with the rededication of the Ross Creek Avenue of Honour and Vietnam Veterans Day on 18 August 2018. It has always given me a sense of awe of the history of not only the military, some of the significant soldiers from Country Victoria, but also the Australian national story features heavily within our backyard. Just what our citizen soldiers have done continually amazes me. The Great Ocean Road is a testament to doing *something bigger than yourself*. This still resonates today through our current generation of soldier and officer who always go above and beyond.



## Remembrance

Remembrance Day saw another herculean effort by the battalion with support to nine different events in Willaura, Bendigo, Ballarat, Caroline Springs, Swan Hill, Leopold, Altona, Mologo, and everywhere in between.

Ballarat saw the unit heavily invested with approximately four months' worth of interaction with Ballarat City Council to conduct a very special service where Sturt St was blocked to enable the service to be conducted underneath the Avenue of Victory. The Guard Commander, CPL Adam Kelly and the Catafalque Party conducted themselves with aplomb and again, this service featured heavily in national Remembrance Day media coverage. We also had one of Army's most senior WO1 Band Masters and fellow Ballaratian (I think that is the plural of Ballarat People...) in location, WO1 John Franklin, who praised the efforts of the Catafalque Party and unit. This was a common theme across all sub-units.

## National Ex-Prisoner of War Memorial 75th Anniversary



*Honoured: Eric Johnson, Col Hamley, Jim Kerr, Norm Anderton at the 75th anniversary of the completion of the Thai-Burma Railway.*

The National Ex-Prisoner of War Memorial in Ballarat is a special piece of the Australian military story. Servicemen and women who have been captured as part of their war duties have their name immortalised on the simple black granite walls. This simple structure which accords every Ex-POW as being equal by not featuring ranks or decorations but equal in the suffering and separations by captivity. Naturally, the battalion features heavily in services conducted there. On 16 October 2018, the unit again supported the Department of Veterans Affairs,

Australian Federation Guard and politicians from all levels of government, and importantly – Ex-POWs, to commemorate the sacrifices made at the Hellfire Pass and the Thai Burma Railway. This service saw soldiers from Ballarat and also Bendigo act as Flag and Wreath Orderlies and support to individual Ex-POWs. WO2 Bob Creelman supported one of the two survivors of this campaign. The Chief of Army – LTGEN Rick Burr, AO, DSC, MVO and the Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army – WO Grant McFarlane, OAM attended and the interaction with the Chief and RSM-A was welcomed by the battalion members.

I must also give a shout out to the support troops who enable the front of stage to go ahead. Our Q Staff, S1 Cell with Mrs Deanne Saunderson and drivers who support the effort is not forgotten and must be applauded. CPL Edwards, Marty Griggs, Deanne and the S1/4 team are at all times flexible with weapon issues, last minute uniform accoutrement dashes, vehicle manifests, coordination of wreaths, and delivery of service dress uniforms has been first class!

At all stages throughout the year, whether it has been 4 or 40 degrees, you have stood as silent sentinels over remembrance or commemorative services far and wide. The average Australian will only see a soldier once or twice a year. You continually reinforce in their minds through your stoic efforts, what they cannot be or should emulate to be, and just what strength the Australian Soldier has. Be extremely proud of your commitment to your country, community, Army, your family, the unit but mostly to yourself, because I am!

Minister for Veterans Affairs, Darren Chester, said in his speech, "It was a very moving service and it was terrific to see so many people come to Ballarat and pay their respects to the prisoners of war, but to have four of the surviving members here just made it extra special for everyone.

"If you weren't there you couldn't possibly understand what they had been through, but to have them here and to be able to thank them for their service, personally, it was quite moving."

After more than a year in captivity, weakened by starvation, often ill after a grueling journey to the railway, and brutalised by violent guards, the prisoners were ordered to move one and a half square metre of earth per shift, once they exposed the rock this soon increased to two square metres and then to three.

Having exposed the rock they began drilling, with one man holding a metal tap another driving it in with a sledge hammer. Most of the work was done this way.

Digger, Colin Hamley, who was one of the four honoured during the event said, "The reception here today is truly overwhelming the way people have treated us and honoured us, it really is, I mean we are only people.

"We went off to war the same as anybody else, we were sent, today is our day and it is the biggest I have ever had."

Asked whether he had any forgive and forget for the mistreatment he had as a prisoner of war Mr Hamley's response was mixed.

"No, I will never forgive them for what they did to us but I will tell you this, I went to Japan six years ago as a guest with a group and to try and reconcile between Australia and Japan on things which accrued during the war, I found that Japan is quite a different country now and to say I have forgiven them I realise that the people are not the same people now that they were," he said.

Swift and Brave, Yield to None.

**M. Carroll, CSM**

Warrant Officer Class One

Regimental Sergeant Major

## PTE MacGillivray Last Post at Menin Gate

On the 4th of February PTE Matthew MacGillivray organised, in association with the Last Post Association in Belgium, to lay a wreath during the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate.

As you may be aware the Menin Gate contains the names of 54,000 Commonwealth soldiers who have no known grave after perishing in the Ypres area (of which 6191 are Australian). With my wife being Belgian I have visited the Gate and observed the ceremony on several occasions but given my interest in history and strong connection with what the Australian's had gone through in the war I felt compelled to take part in the ceremony. Luckily, I do not have any family members with their names on the wall, as many of them survived the war, but my Great-grandfather was awarded the Military Medal for his actions at Polygon Wood, just up the road from the Menin Gate, during the 3rd Battle of Ypres in 1917.

On the card for the wreath (pictured) I made special note of the 8th and 7th Battalions to acknowledge our current units history, as well as making note of my previous unit (10/27 RSAR) as I had several family members who served with those units and other South Australian raised battalions.

Whilst I thought I would just be laying a wreath I was given the incredible honour of reading the Ode of Remembrance during the ceremony, something I will not soon forget. I was very pleased to be wearing the 8/7 RVR unit badge during the ceremony and had several members of the public ask me which unit it was, so I am sure I did the battalion proud. I was asked if I wanted my wife to join me in laying the wreath, which I was happy to do as I felt it spoke to the connection between Australia and Belgium, and the way our fallen have been honoured by the Belgian people.

## 8224409 Warrant Officer Class Two Robert 'Bob' Creelman

Warrant Officer Class Two Robert Creelman enlisted into the Australian Regular Army September 1970 and was allocated to the Royal Australian Infantry Corps he deployed to Vietnam with 4th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment in 1972. Warrant Officer Creelman has deployed on multiple operations and represented the Australian Army both in Australia and internationally on multiple occasions. He was promoted to Warrant Officer Class Two in July 1989.

Warrant Officer Creelman has provided dedicated and enduring service to the 4th Brigade over five decades serving in a variety of regimental, staff and instructional appointments within multiple units, on Continuous Full Time Service and on operational service including Operation ANODE and contribution to Operation VICTORIA FIRES 2009. On promotion to Warrant Officer Class Two, he completed postings at 3 Training Group as the first Company Sergeant Major to raise the Junior Leader Training Centre, and as the Acting Regimental Sergeant Major of Monash University Regiment in 2007, and the Acting Regimental Sergeant Major of the 8th/7th Battalion, The Royal Victoria Regiment in 2012. He has provided dedicated service displaying an outstanding and sustained work ethic over an extended period of time. On retirement in January 2019 Warrant Officer Creelman has continued to serve the Army through an ongoing Junior Leadership Mentor Program.

Warrant Officer Robert Creelman has provided sustained and enduring service to the Royal Infantry Corps. Through five decades of service to the Infantry Corps across multiple and diverse range of appointments Warrant Officer Creelman has demonstrated significant personal dedication to the Royal Infantry Corps, The Australian Army and the Defence Force. Warrant Officer Creelman's outstanding service epitomises Army's values and is in the finest traditions of the 2nd Division, the Australian Army and the Australian Defence Force.





## 8th/7th Battalion Nominal Roll

Rank	Name	Rank	Name	Rank	Name
LTCOL	Cadogan-Cowper, David Rhys	SGT	Walker, Scott Anthony	LCPL	Callaway, Reece Leigh
MAJ	Armstrong, Shane Adam	CPL	Baker, Daniel Stephen	LCPL	Cameron, Alistair James
MAJ	Beck, Jason Royce	CPL	Beales, Wayne Micheal	LCPL	Campanale, Orazio Victor
MAJ	Carnes, Peter Sean Francis	CPL	Brown, Shaun Christopher	LCPL	Carlisle, Matthew
MAJ	Gowers, Clifton Norman	CPL	Bryant, Benjamin John	LCPL	Fernandez, Stephen Paul
MAJ	McQuilkin, Andrew John	CPL	Butterworth, Thomas Robert John	LCPL	Geddes, Robert John William
MAJ	Runciman, Adam Leigh	CPL	Champion, Christopher Stephen	LCPL	Heaney, Callan Jeremiah
CAPT	Beverly, Samuel Robert	CPL	Collins, Thomas Jason	LCPL	Lourey, Christopher Sean
CAPT	Davis, David Craig	CPL	Coltman, George Campbell	LCPL	Ludeman, Justin Keith
CAPT	Dignam, Francis Thomas	CPL	Connor, Scott William	LCPL	Mahony, Laurence John
CAPT	Dragojlovic, Nikola	CPL	Demasson, Darcy George	LCPL	Marchant, Mitchell Joseph
CAPT	Guinea, Edward Patrick	CPL	Deutscher, Michael Emil	LCPL	Marriner, Nicholas James
CAPT	Holt, Leon Michael	CPL	Dinning, Drew Allan	LCPL	Mottram, Brent
CAPT	Powell, Robert William	CPL	Dvoracek, Bret Krajci	LCPL	Paizis, Graeme James
LT	Arundell, Nicholas Gerard	CPL	Edwards, Vaughn Charles	LCPL	Rohkamper, Dale
LT	Fiocco Wood, Simon Charles	CPL	Gatt, Laurence	LCPL	Russell, Tristan Stewart
LT	Hampson, Simon James	CPL	Hiller, Sarah Faye	LCPL	Siviour, Tyrone James
LT	Kitchen, Nicholas John	CPL	Horgan, Daniel Nicholas	LCPL	Studham, Garth Raymond
LT	Laxton, Matthew James	CPL	Houlden, Jaedyn Westley	LCPL	Sweeney, Callum Francis
LT	Zambrano Perez, Alejandro	CPL	Kelly, Adam Todd	LCPL	Taylor, Daniel Paul
WO1	Carroll, Michael James	CPL	Krupa, Piotr	LCPL	Terrill, Jack Alexander
WO2	Creelman, Robert James	CPL	Lennie, Stewart Colin	LCPL	Walther, Jonathan William
WO2	Dancey, Luke	CPL	Morcombe, Nicholas Stephen	PTE	Abraham-Robertson, Kurk James
WO2	Free, Rohan Roger	CPL	Murray, Sean William	PTE	Abul Waffa, Hisham Hossam
WO2	Hardcastle, Peter John	CPL	Norman, Cameron Winter	PTE	Alderdice, Joshua Blair
WO2	Kirk, Gary Edward	CPL	Otten, Nicholas	PTE	Aulich, Bradley James
WO2	Nielsen, Mitchell Rainer William	CPL	Perrottet, Brendan Mark	PTE(P)	Bailey, Maxwell James
WO2	Payne, Barry Robert John	CPL	Petering, Warrick Joel	PTE(P)	Balshaw, Scott Patrick
WO2	Young, Ryan Thomas	CPL	Pickford, Joshua James	PTE(P)	Barber, Justin Phillip
SSGT	Wakeling, Michael Thomas	CPL	Rawson, Simon Andrew	PTE(P)	Barby, Paul Alexander
SGT	Beales, Trevor Charles	CPL	Sawant, Swapnil	PTE(P)	Batten, Matthew John
SGT	Day, Luke William	CPL	Sims, Andrew Peter	PTE	Becker, Reuben Daniel Zeke
SGT	Derrick, Roger Stuart	CPL	Tilmouth, Matthew Christopher Peter	PTE(P)	Bellefemine, Navarre Cesare
SGT	Fitton, Sean	CPL	Towers, Daniel Robie	PTE	Bisognano, Taylor
SGT	Holl, Jacob William	CPL	Trewartha, Robert Edward	PTE(P)	Bourke, Nicholas Charles
SGT	Kliko, Amir	CPL	Tuck, Raymond Leonard	PTE	Bourne, Grant Allan
SGT	Knight, Timothy Val	CPL	Vidot, Antonius Lee	PTE(P)	Boyd, Scott
SGT	Logan, David John	CPL	Vistarini, Dale Reece	PTE(P)	Boyd, Tom Daniell
SGT	Ludeman, Glenn Andrew	CPL	Walsh, Patrick Thomas	PTE	Breadsell, Blake James
SGT	Marcelino, Aaron Michael Paul	CPL	Wright, Braden Nicholas	PTE(P)	Brown, George Clifford
SGT	McGregor, Luke Stephen	LCPL	Allen, James Peter	PTE(P)	Buchanan, Brayden Albert
SGT	Revett, Adam Christopher	LCPL	Allpress, Michael James	PTE(P)	Celestino, Marion Kesniel
SGT	Short, Geoffrey Stuart	LCPL	Aulich, Patrick Carl Henry	PTE(P)	Chand, Tysheen Junior Shyam
SGT	Turpin, Adam Richard	LCPL	Byrd, Gavin Peter	PTE(P)	Chandler, Jonathan Raymond

Rank	Name
PTE(P)	Chang, Tani
PTE(P)	Chapman, Scott David
PTE(P)	Clark, John Campbell
PTE(P)	Clarke, Todd Jotham Maurice
PTE	Cobden, Steven James
PTE	Convey, Samuel Gerard
PTE(P)	Cook, Liam Francis
PTE	Cooney, Blake Steven
PTE(P)	Crimmin, Samuel Bernard
PTE	Croos Dabrera, Hugh Liam
PTE	Crowe, Nathan Peter
PTE(P)	Cuff, Adrian Ronald
PTE(P)	Currie, Michael John
PTE(P)	Dang, Paul
PTE(P)	De Vos, Peter James
PTE(P)	Deague, Francis Michael
PTE	Deng, Alier
PTE(P)	D'Lima, Raymond Francis William
PTE(P)	Downie, Jacob Elliot
PTE	D'Rosario, Benjamin James
PTE	Dunstan, Timothy Richard
PTE	Durso, Christian
PTE(P)	Elliott, Jacob Brendan
PTE(P)	Ellwood, Cameron Palmer
PTE(P)	El-Maghraby, Bilaal Eldin Abdel Moneim
PTE	Escudero, Paolo James Sarno
PTE(P)	Everton, Stephen James
PTE	Ferretto, Thomas Joseph
PTE(P)	Finlayson, Andrew Paul
PTE	Flynn, Alisha Jayne
PTE(P)	Francis, Michael Howard Futa
PTE(P)	Francis, Michael Patrick
PTE(P)	Gallagher, Byron Thomas
PTE(P)	Garth, Corey James
PTE	Gebert, Terry Lee
PTE	Gill, Jarrah Alan
PTE	Godson, Daniel Alan
PTE(P)	Gouldson, Bryce Elliot
PTE	Grech, Matthew Joseph
PTE(P)	Gregory, Matthew Phillip
PTE(P)	Gulli, Joshua Matthew
PTE(P)	Harcourt, David Andrew
PTE(P)	Hart, Christopher Peter James
PTE(P)	Hauser, Zane Nicholas
PTE	Heffernan, Jesse Daniel
PTE(P)	Hendrickson, Jordan Ivern Douglas

Rank	Name
PTE(P)	Hickey, Michael Patrick
PTE(P)	Ho, Phillip Khiem Duy
PTE(P)	Hore, Tyson Allan
PTE(P)	Howard, Raigan James
PTE	Howison, Shane Gregory
PTE(P)	Hughes, Damian Kay
PTE(P)	Ichim, Samuel
PTE(P)	Inchley, Zachary Arthur Claypole
PTE(P)	Ireland, Brett
PTE(P)	Jackson, Nathan Phillip
PTE(P)	Jaudzemis, Sharon Georgina
PTE(P)	Jennings, Martin Lee
PTE(P)	Jobling, Dahle Matthew
PTE	Juusti, Daniel Kane John
PTE(P)	Karipoglou, Minas Matthew
PTE(P)	Kearney, Matthew George
PTE(P)	Kennedy, Nathan John Francis
PTE(P)	Kirby, Matthew Robert
PTE	Langdon, Chrisanthy Louisa
PTE(P)	Larkins, Dillon John
PTE(P)	Lay, Tony
PTE(P)	Li, Bruce Jiaming
PTE(P)	Linane, Glenn David
PTE(P)	Long, David James
PTE	MacGillivray, Matthew Peter
PTE	MacKenzie, Ryan Trevor
PTE	Marinelli, Ryan Angelo Jack
PTE	Marrs, Daniel Mark
PTE	Matin, Kim Abdul
PTE(P)	Maxwell, Caleb Nicholas
PTE(P)	McGuinness, Brayden Leonard
PTE(P)	McIntosh, Joseph Russell
PTE(P)	McMaster, Madeline May
PTE(P)	McMillan, Scott Michael
PTE(P)	McNamara, Robert Martin
PTE	Mibus, Eric Paul
PTE(P)	Middleton, Stewart Ian
PTE	Mitchell, Caillin Lachlan
PTE(P)	Mortimer, Melissa
PTE	Mullins, Benjamin John
PTE	Mullins, Matthew Jack
PTE(P)	Nguyen, Phillip Minh Khoi
PTE	Northend, George Laurence
PTE(P)	Norwood, Dale Alen
PTE	O'Flaherty, Christopher James
PTE	O'Flynn, Robert Lee
PTE	Oliver, Armando Anthony Rao

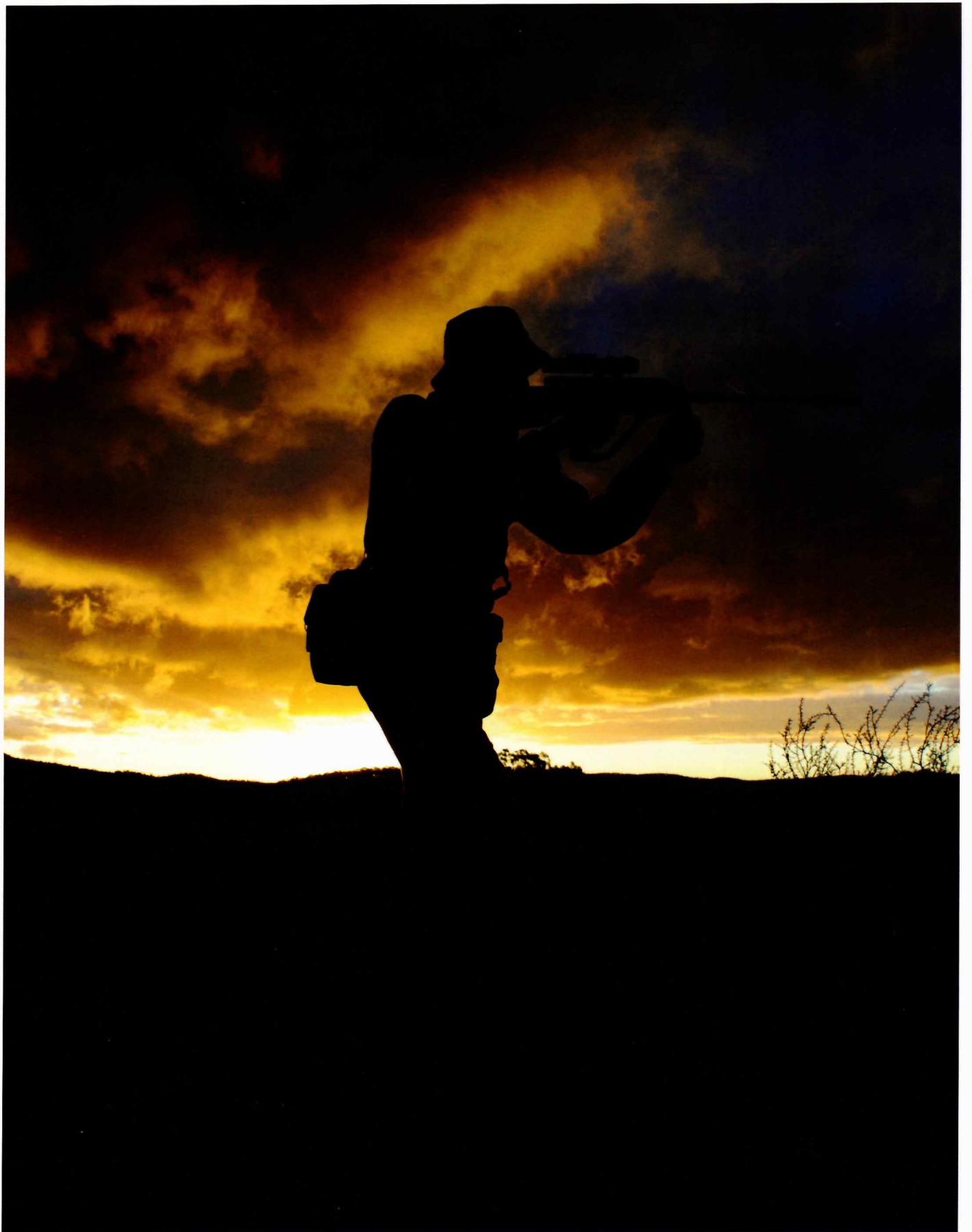
Rank	Name
PTE	Onal, Onur Adem
PTE	O'Neill, Liam Samuel
PTE(P)	Pach, Chol
PTE(P)	Paffrath, William John
PTE(P)	Parsonage, Liam James
PTE	Peters, Ebony Helena
PTE(P)	Peterson, Joel Brian
PTE(P)	Petrie, Zachary Russell
PTE(P)	Phan, Long Hoa
PTE	Piang, Biak Lian Thawng
PTE(P)	Pike, Keegan
PTE	Pineda, Joshua Ferreras
PTE	Ramsay, Andrew John
PTE	Reddy, Vishwa Nadan
PTE	Reed, William Bernard
PTE(P)	Reid, Julien Les Douglas
PTE(P)	Reid, William Angus
PTE(P)	Richardson, Benjamin Harold
PTE	Robinson, David James
PTE(P)	Robinson, Nicholas Peter
PTE	Roper, Andrew Graham
PTE	Ryan, Daniel Aaron
PTE	Said, Paul Matthew
PTE	Sault, Daniel Joseph
PTE(P)	Schenk, Jack Henry
PTE(P)	Schmidt, Benjamin James
PTE(P)	Scott, Alex James
PTE	Sedlins, Eric Karl
PTE	Serdenes, Nicholas
PTE(P)	Shannon, Jason Mark
PTE(P)	Sheppard, Nicholas Joel
PTE(P)	Simpson, Jared Steven
PTE(P)	Sinclair, Jacob Allen
PTE	Skidmore, Elliot
PTE	Smith, Benjamin David
PTE(P)	Smith, James Michael
PTE(P)	Smith, Judd Daniel
PTE(P)	Snook, Darroch William
PTE	Somkiat, Jun Patrick
PTE	Sozanski, Jack Alexander
PTE	Sutcliffe, Ryan Thomas
PTE(P)	Tantaro, Krystian
PTE(P)	Taylor, Sherman Silvestre
PTE	Thomson, Manuel Louis
PTE	Toomey, Corey Aaron
PTE	Treeter, Paul
PTE(P)	Trewella, Daniel Thomas

Rank	Name
PTE(P)	Tsesmetzis, Harris Christopher
PTE(P)	Tulloch, Adam John Allan
PTE(P)	Tyter, Brett Owen John
PTE(P)	Vearing, Julian Lee
PTE	Waddington, Callum Thomas
PTE(P)	Walsh, Andrew John
PTE(P)	Ward, Andrew Paul
PTE(P)	Ward, Trevor Graham
PTE(P)	Watson, Nicholas
PTE(P)	Watts, Jamie Lachlan
PTE(P)	Webb, John Frederick
PTE(P)	White, Craig Edward
PTE(P)	Williams, Jacob Andrew
PTE(P)	Wilson-Rea, Dale Patrick
PTE(P)	Woolley, Justin Robert
PTE	Wright, Matthew Samuel
PTE(P)	Young, Geoffrey
PTE(P)	Zuleta-Arias, Juan Pablo Jose
PTE(T)	Barnes, Jacob Mitchell
PTE(T)	Beardmore, Jack Hilton
PTE(T)	Crowhurst, James Andrew
PTE(T)	Dean, Steven Allanson
PTE(T)	Defina, Matthew Domenic
PTE(T)	Delos Santos, Albert Keison
PTE(T)	Desmarais, Marc Alexander
PTE(T)	Ellis-Gray, Kaya Rama
PTE(T)	Gould, Harrison Bryce
	Griggs, Martin George
PTE(T)	Gunning, Scott Andrew
PTE(T)	Harrison, Angus Buzz
PTE(T)	Hepburn, Nickolas Timothy
PTE(T)	Holmes, Peter John

Rank	Name
PTE(T)	Htoo, Da Wit
PTE(T)	Johnson, Dean Leigh
PTE(T)	Keyte, James David
PTE(T)	Killoran, Joshua Edward
PTE(T)	Kretzschmar, Billy Jacob
PTE(T)	Leger, Michael Anthony
PTE(T)	Marendaz, Nathan John
PTE(T)	McDowell, Lachlan Sean
PTE(T)	McVernon, Sean
PTE(T)	Nguyen, Thien Xuan
PTE(T)	Ollerenshaw, Liam
PTE(T)	Paul, Steven Leslie
PTE(T)	Russell, Jessica May
PTE(T)	Ryan, Jeremy Andrew
PTE(T)	Sahin, Deniz
	Saunderson, Deanne Louise
PTE(T)	Sawhney, Sahil
PTE(T)	Singh, Dalbir
PTE(T)	Singh, Kuldeep
PTE(T)	Steffensen, Daniel James
PTE(T)	Suppiah, Sriananthan
PTE(T)	Todd, Daniel Nicholas
PTE(T)	Toi, Jarom Allan
PTE(T)	Tran, Hoang Phi
PTE(T)	Turner, Oscar Jack
PTE(T)	Verma, Gaurav
PTE(T)	Whitty, Benjamin Steven Moss
PTE(T)	Yang, Chen
REC	Abramovitch, Jack Mitchinson
REC	Armstrong, Jacob Liam
REC	Bell, Lachlan Henry
REC	Bhatia, Arun

Rank	Name
REC	Byers, Gary William
REC	Challis, Lachlan James
REC	Church, Jesse Nathaniel
REC	Damarell, Patrick William
REC	De Lima, Christian Francis
REC	Depalma, Nicholas James
REC	Durante, Eric Robert
REC	Egan, Richard Joseph
REC	Fabbri, Nicholas Alexander
REC	Francise, Dani
REC	Gibson, Lucinda Watt de Castro
REC	Green, Joel Kenneth
REC	Hopkins, Cole Bradley
REC	Horvath, Jacob Francis
REC	Hume, Nicholas Tyler
REC	Iuliani, Luca Dean
REC	Jagannathan, Aditya
REC	Marcon, Troy Anthony
REC	McKnight, Damon Bradley
REC	Nugent, Christopher Bryan
REC	O'Keefe, Simon William
REC	Paoletti, Adrian Christopher
REC	Picken, Christopher Glen
REC	Porteza, Michael
REC	Ritchie, Clarisse Verna
REC	Sharma, Saurabh
REC	Smeaton-Lindsay, Jordan Chris
REC	Smith, Job
REC	Stevens, Edward David George
REC	Thomson, Dylan Brett
REC	Wang, Peng
REC	Wilton, Lachlan Stuart Kean







**Army**