

AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES

6 RAR
ENOCGERA
27 Feb 66

PRESENTATION : STATE OF THE BATTALION

6 JUN - 6 DEC 65

AT 2 RAR THEATRE 10 DEC 65

1.

COMMANDING OFFICER

- a. Introduction 6th Bn The Royal Australian Regiment is 6 months old. The idea of this presentation is to get the battalion together to let everyone know what has happened during the first 6 months of 6th Battalion training and to let you know what the battalion has done, its present training and possible future commitments.
- b. Future

The future is uncertain. We are under no state of warning however. We are to be ready as soon as possible. We should be able to achieve this by the end of May. In March with another 100 reinforcements we will be brought to full strength less the Surveillance Platoon. My own personal opinion only:-

"We will be given some task, some where, next year".
- c. Training Activities

When formed on 6 Jun we were very much organized on a skeleton form. A Coy and D Coy were very much in skeleton form and virtually only officers and NCOs existed. Their tasks were to prepare for reinforcements in Sept from selective service trainees call ups. B Coy and C Coy were substantially complete companies which had been transferred as a whole from 2 RAR. Sp Coy existed but was very weak. Adm Coy was fairly strong on the ground. Bn HQ was very weak on the ground.
- d. Aims

We set out to establish Sp Coy first, because of the requirement for specialists within the battalion and also because it takes longer to train Sp Coy than any other company. Adm Coy and Bn HQ were also established as they had to provide the necessary administrative basis for the subsequent expansion of the battalion. To do this it was necessary to decimate B Coy and C Coy. If this had not been done 6th Battalion would not be in the state that it is today. Besides this we had to build up a rifle company at full strength. This company was C Coy. To do this B Coy was further "hacked about".
- e. Training Cycle

This was in two parts.

PART A

The time between June and August was purely an organising period for the battalion and an administration period for the companies.

PART B

In the period Sep - Dec we set out to do a period of consolidation, which included corps training. Platoons were then recognizable on the ground and could function as platoons. However a lot more training is required to operate efficiently.

To complete the necessary training we set ourselves a series of courses which started in June; the first being a first promotion course to bring ourselves up to junior NCO requirements with a small reserve. This was followed by a Promotion to Sergeants Course. Other courses were RP's Course, Intelligence Course, 3in Mortar Course, Basic Radio Operators Course, Assault Pioneers Course and Drivers Course. Later it was found necessary to run a Morse Course also. This course was not completed because of unit training commitments. However all members are able to converse in morse, and at present they are still practising. An 81mm Mortar Course was also run but firing has not yet taken place. A First Aid Course was also run by B Coy and a Storemans Course. We were then forced to run a second First Promotion Course.

There will be no opportunity to run any more First Promotion Courses until next June or July.

f. Activities Done

From June - August there was only one exercise by C Coy - exercise SPRINGBOARD ONE. B Coy was enemy. September - December was devoted mainly to corps training. During this period Bn HQ went into the field four times. It is now capable of operating in the field as a Battalion Headquarters. With more training it will be proficient. Helicopter training was also included in the training. B and C Coys using helicopters moved to the Mt BYRON Area and did a company attack exercise. EXERCISES SPRINGBOARD 2, 3, 4 and 5 were also carried out. These were very realistic and valuable exercises.

g. Things Not Done

Officer training was carried out for about two months; however training commitments did not permit this to continue and it was stopped. NCO training was also to be carried out but this too was abandoned. TEWTs were also to be carried out but these were not done. Night training was not carried out either on the scale envisaged. B and C Coys did a week each which proved very successful; however this was far too short to be really effective.

h. Programme for 1966

The time will be devoted to company training as well as getting the Battalion prepared to go overseas. Every company will also go through JTC for 4 weeks. This will be individual training within the company and will include a company exercise. The Battalion exercise is now in May and not March, at SHOALWATER BAY.

j. Proposed Courses for 1966

A Platoon Commanders Minor Tactics Course of a weeks duration. A Flame Warfare Course first for the pioneers for 1 week then a course to train groups from rifle companies. The A tk Pl will also do a course on the 106mm RCL. When the Carl Gustav arrives all those required to use it will be trained in the use of this weapon. Company Operators Courses will be carried out by companies. An Air Mobility Exercise will be conducted in May to become familiar with the Caribou. Our SOPs will be published in pocket size form early in '66.

k. Summing Up

We have achieved a lot however because of a lack of time some things were not successful. There is a need to do a great amount of bush work. Concerning the future, there is nothing definite at this precise time.

2. ADJT ADDRESS

Strength

- a. Of a battalion strength of 792 restricted by AHQ by 56, on organization our strength was 477.

Offrs 19 out of 37

WO's 5 " " 10

S/Sgt 3 " " 10

Sgts 10 " " 37

Cpls 57 " " 93

ORs 383 " " 547

At present we are about 600 strong. Sp Coy includes Bn HQ making it slightly overstrength. Adm Coy is full strength.

b. March in March Outs

149 marched out. The major units that 6 RAR members marched out to were:-

- (1) 2 Bn received 38
- (2) 8 RAR " 12
- (3) Inf Centre received 12
- (4) 28 Brigade received 7
- (5) RTBs received 15
- (6) NCPD discharged 16
- (7) Other march outs -
 - 1 Armoured Regt
 - 1 Ordnance
 - 2 Lcpls - 9 Dental Unit
 - 6 RAASC
 - 1 Cpl-Cadet Brigade
 - 4 RAEME
 - 6 SAS
 - 2 Arty
 - 2-16 LAS
 - 2 School of Sigs

373 March ins for 6 months period

Offrs - sufficient to bring us up to strength
 Sgts and Cpls R Aust Infantry 14
 Other Services Sgts 4
 Cpls 8
 Selective Servicemen 253
 ORs from other sources 87

c. Promotions

Internally ranging from WO to Cpl. This includes one day where a total of 45 (not including L/Cpls) were promoted.

WO	4	
S/Sgt	5	
Sgts	24	Total 170
Cpls	66	
L/Cpls	71	

d. Commitments

- (1) Assistance to school cadets - (40 members)
- (2) Security party for HMAS Sydney.
- (3) Load ships with ammo and stores work party
- (4) Work party for Miss Aust Barbeque Quest.
- (5) 2 funerals (27 members)
- (6) Guard for Gov General
- (7) Beating the retreat ceremonial guard
- (8) School cadets - (14 members as instructors)

e. 6 RAR Standing Orders

- e. New set of Standing Orders are being reproduced to cover all phases - Peace and War, and also different localities - effective as from 17 Jan 66.

Khaki Beret

- d. Application has been made to the dress committee at AHQ for 6 RAR to be issued with a khaki beret in place of the present blue one. To date no answer.

3.

2IC ADDRESS

a. Operational Readiness

To move a battalion we must be on 21 days to move. An individual needs only to be on 7 days within Australia or overseas. The individual requirement for a soldier is that all of his kit is correct, and up to date with his weapons. The whole battalion requires that all members are up to date with dental and needles. This is an individual requirement. It is necessary to ensure that we know how to pack vehicles and to pack equipment into boxes if we are travelling in other means than vehicles. Move on light scale in helicopters and minimum on our backs. Time is short so it is necessary that everyone be prepared to move. This includes families knowing and prepared for this.

b. Equipment State of Battalion

(1) Generally Speaking

We are not short much on war stores. We are short of:-

- (a) PD Greens and hats.
- (b) Gaiters and boots.
- (c) Summer dress (special sizes)

(2) Equipment Side

Trying to get two additional items to make carrying our loads more comfortable. The first is a bigger pack similar to the 37 Web pack but larger. The second is a larger basic pouch to make the carrying of ammo much easier. The green bush jungle hat is still arriving from overseas. Not known when it will arrive. Very short of compasses and protractors at section level.

Radio Sets:- (1) 10 sets just about had it.

(2) 510 and 9 sets still usable but almost worn out.

(3) 6 x 25 sets should arrive about March 1966.

Other sets could replace the 510 and 9 sets but this is in the far future.

Flamethrowers : still not here but should arrive in 1 week or so. 81mm Mortars Ammo should arrive in January which will allow the mortar platoon its first live firing.

Carl Gustav should be available about March 66.

The Armilite 233 rifle will not replace the 7.62 SLR. However if we go into a war area these could be held in bulk for special mission but will not become general issue within Australia.

OMCs about to go out of service and are to be replaced by FI which should be available about July 66.

Vehicles - own about 35 - Some vehicles about to be replaced which takes place at 30,000 miles.

c. Regimental Funds

Started off receiving a grant from Central Amenities Organization Melbourne of £1,295. A large amount was spent on sporting equipment, about £643. Spent another £190 on flags, photographic equipment, etc. Received 2 rebates from ASCO for £164 and £473. Yearly average about £150. The current balance is £1232. Large expenditure - Christmas party and drinks for soldiers on Christmas Day living in. Athletics and football equipment. Canteen hours have now been improved.

Question

Why is everything so expensive in canteen?

Answer

All things bought in the canteen are at retail price. The battalion buys all their requirements wholesale. We get about £140 back from canteen. We can do nothing about the prices.

4.

IO ADDRESS

- a. When battalion was raised the intelligence section was very much understrength. A course was run which brought the section up to a strength of Int Cpl 1

Lt Col 2

Int Dutymen Pte 5

This course also provided each company with a rep. At present an Int Course is been run at Mosiman in Sydney for further training.

Work done:

- (1) Constant records of world interest.
- (2) Record of marked maps showing forces throughout world.
- (3) Reference library on any country.
- (4) Records of enemy.
- (5) Maps of units and training area.
- (6) Air photographs.
- (7) Any draftsman type work.

b. Unit Activities

The section does administrative side of schools and courses except movement. The section bids for courses on returns submitted by companies and approved by the commanding officer. Policy of Battalion so far is to get as many as possible on these courses. Section also responsible for range booking and close training areas.

Question

Any chance of getting pamphlets for reference.

Answer

We have put in a request and they are being printed. We just have to wait until they arrive.

c. Athletics

Requirement is for a concrete training programme however because of training commitments this is not possible. Instructors will be put out in late January to form the 6 RAR athletic team with as many inter unit games as possible.

Major Competitions: (1) Northern command championships early April.
(2) Inter service probably Lang Park on 8 April.

Athletic equipment - companies held some stores but do not hold sufficient to train a team. It will rely to a great deal on an individual doing his own individual training. The team will try to train together as often as possible.

5.

RSM ADDRESS

(a) Ceremonial

- (1) Battalion parade split with 2 Battalion on 6 Jun 65.
- (2) The state funeral for VC winner DALZIEL 27 Jul 65

- (3) Guard of honour opening of parliament.
- (4) Funeral of Major Leech. 4 Oct 65
- (5) Beating of the Retreat. 4 Nov 65
- (6) Guard of honour for Governor General. 15 Nov 65.
- (7) Funeral for dental corps NCO. Cpl TOMICKI 30 Nov 65
- (8) Battalion parade for Brig GRAHAM in combat order. 17 Nov 65

So far there have been good reports. We must remember that all of our ceremonial whether it is a large guard or breaking the flag, we represent the Battalion and therefore it must be done correctly.

b. Future Parades

- (1) Another combat parade for GOC
- (2) A company beating the retreat
- (3) Receiving our colours.

e. Daily Ceremonial

Guard mount will be a standard procedure and will be done correctly with bugle and finally a band when effective. We must remember the drummers in Adm Company who have worked with other units, yet, have not received any credit for it, well done. Our ceremonial must retain a high standard for this is how our unit is judged in the public eye.

d. Discipline

In this unit fair to good. The present trouble is not been handled at section or platoon level and higher officers are spending a great deal of time hearing unnecessary charges. However, there are cases when it is necessary. Do not hesitate to do this. Saluting around the camp is not bad. However it is very slack and sloppy. The way to rectify this is through platoon and company training on the parade ground.

e. Dress

On ceremonials dress is good. Our normal dress around camp however leaves something to be desired. Hats are particularly bad, including chin straps and badges. Boots also must be in good shape. They generally are not even bush boots. Those going on leave will wear the correct clothes as laid down. If you go into town in uniform do the right thing and live up to the required standard. Wearing of Greens to and from work is permitted providing you do not stop at stops, hotel etc it is allright.

f. Cars

Use the correct car parks and all vehicles are to be registered with the RP Section. Keep to the speed limit of 15 mph in the unit area and also when you are in Engineers or NCPD area.

g. Alcohol

Do not bring any into the area. If you return from a party etc, you can leave it at the duty room with the RP Section and pick it up on next departing. The RP office is not a hotel bottle department.

h. Duties

Must look after our own areas. Duties are currently:-

- (1) Guard 2 Cpls 11 ORs
- (2) 2 for area command swimming pool
- (3) Fire watchmen 1
- (4) Mess duties 8 for 2 Bn
11 for 6 Bn

Officers Mess 5

Sgts Mess 5

Over Christmas duties will be composite. Batman and RP's are not used for duties.

j. Ammunition

Grant to unit from 1 Jan to 31 Dec of a yearly allocation

- (1) Attractive ammo stores all used.
- (2) Small arms ammo have not used $\frac{1}{4}$ of grants.
- (3) Requirements for ammunition must be in 30 days before they are wanted.

k. Information

Individual responsibility to read standing orders and unit routine orders. This is not being done. The chain of command is not working either.

6. A Company Commanders Address

- a. Organisation: Formed from B Coy 2 RAR.
Strength of 2 and 40 mainly NCOs on formation. Period of 6 June to 10 Sept training of NCOs and preparation for selected trainees and coys training. The training consists of an exercise at Greenbank and Tin Can Bay. B Coy and other companies to reinforcement them on 15 Nov. Strength at the present moment:

Offrs 2

OR's 94

The company requires a lot more practical training.

7. B Company Commanders Address

- a. Posted Strength 69
after reinforcements - 98
Offrs - 4
ORs - 94

b. Training

- Exercises at (1) Mt Byron
(2) Springboard 1
(3) " 2
(4) " 3
(5) Tin Can Bay (Ex Gunsmoke) with C Coy.

All of these exercises bought out valuable points.

- (6) Exercise Tasman 1V. Detachment of CHQ and 1 platoon.

c. Operational Readiness

The company was very unstable. However the influx of trainees stablized the company as far as DPI standard. We are almost ready however B company needs a lot more training.

8. C Company commanders address

- a. Since 6th June marched in 82 (35 trainees from D Coy)
" out 111 (20 to Sp Coy 1 Bn HQ)
(34 to 2 RAR Vietnam)
consequently difficult for training.

b. Courses Run

- (1) MG teams course
- (2) scouting course
- (3) first aid
- (4) method of instruction
- (5) sigs

c. Exercises

- (1) Patrolling/Fieldcraft - CABRITA 9-14 Aug
- (2) Ex Spring board 1 - LEAVERS PLATEAU 23-28 Aug
- (3) Night firing - GREENBANK 20-25 Sep
- (4) 1 Platoon on Tasman 1V - NEW ZEALAND Sep
- (5) Ex "Gunsmoke" - TIN CAN BAY 18-23 Oct
- (6) Ex Intruder at - MT BYRON 25-28 Oct
- (7) At JLC provided Demonstration with company 22-27 Nov
- (8) Company involved in 4 operation contingency plans.

d. Sport

Sporting shield presented to 6 Battalion for Rugby Union. The Cpl Frank Smith shield who was of the first killed in 1 RAR in Vietnam but was an ex C Coy member. Large numbers from company in all Battalion sporting teams.

c. Weaknesses

Section drill very weak. Map Reading poor, weapon handling poor, team work very poor.

f. Weapon Shooting Competition

- (1) Royal ULSTERS RIFLE SHOOTING TROPHY got to final but did not win but 6 RAR came second, after 3 RAR.
- (2) Queen's Medal Shoot
Shot at Amberley Range, won by trainee. Sent 6 people to command shot. Won by Cpl DRIES 6 RAR Sp Coy. Sent team to Adelaide but unsuccessful.

8. D Companies Commanding Officer

- (a) Trainee company finished training trainees on 15 Nov. However training was poor.

Strength 10 Dec.

Offrs - 3

ORs - 103 (incl 70 trainees)

- b. Had to do Guard of Honour for Governor General and did exercise at Levers Plateau. D Coy is untrained and is nowhere near ready to go overseas.

9. SP Company Commanding Officer

- a. Strength Offrs 5
 ORs 96

Slightly under strength bought up to strength by B and C companies from specialist platoon courses.

b. Courses Run

- (1) Short courses for all specialist platoons except Atk platoon.
- (2) Ran first promotion course to Sgt.

c. Training

Sep - Dec 65. A lot of training but not enough. Also did first ceremonial parade for 6 RAR a funeral
Future intentions are to continue training until Battalion exercises commence.

10. Mortar Platoon

- a. Strength Offrs 1
 ORs 20

Started 3 inch mortar course.

b. Courses

- (1) During August all NCOs attended 81mm course.
- (2) September, practice firing with 81mm.
- (3) Since end of September series of shooting at Tin Can Bay with 3 inch mortar.

c. Exercises

- (1) First deployment with 81mm mortars was with C Coy at Mt Byron and C Company at JTC.
- (2) Early this month we completed 3 inch mortar firing. When 81mm mortar ammo arrives all efforts will be towards this.

11. Pioneer Platoon

- a. Very understrength when formed. Reinforced by B and C company.
- b. 15 Aug 16 Sept a watermanships course at SME was conducted. Platoon also constructed an obstacle course, a sneaker course, and snap firing ranges.
- c. Future intentions : to use training time for furthur of Battalion training in all stages for practical experience.

12. Signal Platoon

- a. Original strength 6 trained sigs from 2 RAR.
A course was run of which 35 were kept for the signal platoon. 20 members of the signals platoon did a Morse Course. 16 passed.

b. Intentions

Furthur training in all signals duties including giving all of the companies a chance to train their own signalers/orderlies.

13. Adm Company commanding officers

- a. Strength Offrs 3
ORs 72 (35 extras)
about all of these are DPI standard.

b. Future Intentions

Develop a band, and gain more cooks.
Adm Company is fairly well prepared to move overseas. There is a number of things that we are short but we should be able to get those early in the new year.

14. Commanding Officer

- a. There is a possibility that we can move into our new messes about July next year. This includes accommodation. This will be 6 RAR living area in Australia and becomes 6 RAR base on returning from any overseas tours in the future.

15. Cricket Representative

This will be dealt with in 2 parts.

- a. (1) Northern Command knock out competition was won by 6 RAR which won the battalion its first trophy.
(2) The second competition was Northern Command premiership cup. 6 RAR is running a close second to JTC. The competition is to be finalized by next March. The success of the team is due to the CO and 2IC who have put a great deal of work into it and for this I thank them.
- b. Inter company cricket competition commenced in April. Due to training commitments the companies have played an uneven number of games. The scores to date are:-

A Coy	played	2	games	for	10	points
B "	"	3	"		7	"
C "	"	3	"		9	"
D "	"	2	"		10	"
Adm"	"	5	"		13	"
Sp "	"	1	"		5	"

16.

TENNIS REPRESENTATIVE

- a. The battalion has 3 teams in the competition so far we have played 4 matches. 2 wins and 2 losses. After the summer competition there will be a unit competition for unit players.

17.

SPORTS OFFICER

- a. The battalion should hold a swimming competition about 4 March from which competitors will be picked for the command competition.
- b. The battalion had 3 members in the interservice hockey team.
- c. Golf was commenced however, had to be stopped. A new competition will be started in the new year.
- d. Rugby team was very successful and almost all of the command team was comprised of 6 RAR members. Some members were in the interservice team and some representatives in the combined service team. The outstanding players were:

Lt Mansford
 Lcpl Stephens
 Cpl Turner
 Cpl Murphy
 2Lt Andrews
 Sgt Fielding
 Cpl Raper
 Cpl Mason
 2Lt O'Sullivan

18.

COMMANDING OFFICERS ADDRESS

a. Charities Funds

We had a commitment to Northern Command charities funds to contribute towards it. Our goal was £500. We now have £495.

b. Unit History

The unit history will be kept mainly concerning major events concerning the Battalion.

19.

PRESENTATIONS

- a. Lt Parsons was presented with his award of the "Meritorious Service Medal" for 22 years undetected crime.
- b. There is also another thing which was not done on the last Battalion parade was formally and publically congratulate the RSM on the award of the "Distinguished Conduct Medal" which he won in Vietnam. This is a very well earned declaration anytime. The citation was then read publically.
- c. The RSM then called the Battalion to attention while commanding officer and fellow officers left.