



A U S T R A L I A N

DEFENCE

Force

JOURNAL



JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN PROFESSION OF ARMS

NO. 149

JULY/AUGUST

2001

Australian Defence Force Journal

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www.defence.gov.au/pacc/dfj/

© Commonwealth of Australia 2001
ISSN 1444-7150
Published by the Department of Defence
Canberra 2001

A U S T R A L I A N
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NO. 149 CONTENTS

JULY/AUGUST

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3. **Letters to Editor**
5. **US-Australian Defence Cooperation**
Major Jonathan O. Gackle, US Marine Corps
15. **Joint Warfare – Australia’s Approach to Joint Operations**
A. Behm, R. Allen, Colonel M. Goodyer and J. Tregurtha
27. **Accidental Discharges**
Dr Bob Hall, ADSC, ADFA
35. **Is Increasing Gender Equity in the ADF Improving Operational Capability?**
Major L. Nemitschenko, ARES
45. **The Blamey Oration**
Hon Peter Reith, Minister for Defence
53. **Soldiers of The Anzac Mounted Division and Nurses of the 14th Australian General Hospital – Desert Correspondence in WWI**
Ruth Rae, RN
59. **Reviews**

Editor

Irene M. Coombes

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Front Cover Members of the 12/16 Hunter River Lancers marching in the Reserve Forces Day Parade. Sydney 1 July 2001. Photographer: Bill Cuneen.

Printed in Australia
by National Capital Printing,
Fyshwick, ACT 2609



Working together – This year marks the Centenary of the Australian Public Service.



Letters to the Editor

Sectarianism's Last Stand?

Dear Editor,

There was, however, another bump on the road before the acceptable, revised ceremony took place in 1956 as described by Wing Commander John Steinback in his article "Sectarianism's Last Stand" in the Jan/Feb 2001 *Australian Defence Force Journal*.

In 1955 during the preparations for the Presentation of Colours to 2RAR (the first Australian regular battalion to receive Colours) in Brisbane by the Governor-General, Field Marshal Viscount Slim, on 28 September 1955, our senior RC officer in the battalion came to me (as adjutant) to tell me that the RC soldiers would not be able to participate. This resulted in signals flying to and from Canberra at the highest level both civil and military. Eventually I suggested that our RC soldiers HOLD GROUND (stationed at intervals around the parade ground). This was accepted by all concerned and a memorable and unique parade took place.

About the same time before 2RAR embarked for Penang in October 1955 the new style 24-hour combat ration packs were distributed for acceptability. It was suggested that the "C" pack (from memory) be issued on Fridays, as the contents would be particularly acceptable to soldiers who might not normally eat meat products on a Friday. The controlled wastage rate of the "C" pack was nearly 100 *per cent* and caused considerable unfavourable comment amongst the Diggers, to say the least. The pack consisted of tins of fish paste and a tasty nut cutlet. This type of "C" pack was withdrawn promptly.

Colonel Donald Ramsay, OAM (RL)

Call for Assistance from former CMF Personnel

Dear Editor,

I would like to get in contact with former Citizen Military Forces (CMF) or Regular Army cadre staff who served between 1947 and 1974. I am in the process of converting my Ph.D thesis, which dealt with organisational, political and social aspects of the CMF, into a manuscript due for general publication in 2002. As part of this conversion, I wish to complement the text with some "colour" in the form of anecdotes and reminiscences from former personnel.

I would like to hear from anyone who served in the CMF (including National Service) or served as a Regular Army cadre staff in this period, regardless of rank, corps or period served. I have prepared a questionnaire that I will send to you (electronically or via mail) that would take about an hour to fill out. The questionnaire will ask about your experiences, the reasons why you joined and left the CMF, your opinions on the quality of training and a number of other topics that will help me paint a more authentic picture of the CMF during this period. You can choose to remain anonymous if you so wish.

Therefore I would request that you write, e-mail or ring me on the contact details below and I will send a questionnaire along with a stamped self-addressed envelope for you to return the completed questionnaire. All assistance given will be gratefully appreciated.

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Improving Defence Review 2000 – Our Strategy

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the March/April *Journal* focusing on the *White Paper* and do congratulate those with vision on at least mapping a strategic way ahead for the ADF. After borrowing some thoughts from Gary Hamel, I conclude that the espoused *White Paper's* “evolutionary/incremental” approach is not enough to meet the stringent asymmetries that we will face as a nation in the 21st century. The *White Paper* perhaps simply enhances the chimera that all will be well. My fear is that those with only a casual understanding of the revolutionary/incremental imperative may inadvertently forget the case for radical innovation in one of several ways.

Distortion 1. A Defence force must choose between radical innovation and incrementalism. Since most militaries have more experience with continuous improvement than with radical innovation, pursuing the former is probably a safer bet. Radical innovation must go hand in hand. Each is valuable in its own right. I see the *White Paper's* incrementalist approach as a potential problem when it prevents the ADF from considering more radical shifts in strategy and embracing entirely new military models.

Distortion 2. Radical innovation implies jettisoning the past; for that reason, it should be embraced gingerly, if at all, by the ADF that has spent decades building competencies, reputation and a robust military infrastructure. Again this is a misconception. The central challenge of radical innovation is to learn how to escape the orthodoxies and

dogmas that blind a defence force to new opportunities while at the same time leveraging the people, resources, assets and competencies it has built up over time. Radical innovation does not imply that the ADF must abandon a hundred-year-old tradition or throw out carefully nurtured military practices. It does imply that the ADF must be willing to reinterpret and reapply people, resources, assets and competencies in new ways if it hopes to create military and strategic advantage.

Distortion 3. Since radical innovation is by definition disruptive, a defence force can tolerate only so much revolutionary thinking. To the uninitiated, radical innovation sounds like a recipe for chaos. But a commitment to radical innovation does not constitute a free pass for every crazy idea with the ADF. Radical innovation is not a substitute for a coherent ADF corporate strategy. The choice is not between chaos on one hand and stifling orthodoxy on the other. Radical innovation must happen within a context – within some broad rules that define both what is in-bounds and what is out-of-bounds (espoused already in the *White Paper*). The question for our strategists is not whether there should be boundaries, but how those boundaries get set and how they get changed.

To conclude, I believe Australia's national security will only be assured in the coming decades if our strategists embrace both incrementalism and radical innovation. Remember that enough small innovations can reorder a nation's military competitiveness in radical ways (as history has proved).

Sheldon Kidd
Major

US – Australian Defence Cooperation: A Model for 21st Century Security Arrangements

By Major Jonathan O. Gackle, US Marine Corps

Notwithstanding America's position as a global power with global responsibilities, the degree to which Washington and Canberra rely on each other in matters of national security cannot be overstated. Likewise, to a relative degree, the burdens of peacekeeping and humanitarian missions, and declining defence budgets, have taken a heavy toll on the US military and the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Because these circumstances are not unique to the US and Australia, a new approach to security arrangements could well serve all. While nations struggle to come to grips with a dramatically changing world where economic and national security issues are now inextricably linked, military services must come to grips with how to provide forces and combat capabilities to meet the strategic vision in a resource constrained environment.

Deployment Integration: A New Approach to Security Challenges

Built on the foundation of common security interests and objectives, *deployment integration* is introduced as a cooperative framework through which the US and its closest allies are better able to achieve political goals with limited resources. Defined, it is a framework that allows groups of nations to assume shared responsibility for security objectives in an area of common strategic interest by joining allied military units in a forward-deployed arrangement of limited duration. At the strategic level, the mature concept is seen as a multilateral security arrangement that transcends the traditional definition of collective defence (presupposing the existence of alliances) and collective security (detering aggression between principal state actors in a region). At the operational and tactical level, mature deployment integration is seen as a forward-deployed arrangement that fully integrates – from command and control to operational employment – a subordinate allied component into the organisational structure of a larger allied command for limited periods. The conceptual model used to illustrate deployment

integration is US Marine Corps (USMC) and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) fighter attack aviation, framed in the context of a standing US commitment to maintain the forward-deployed presence of three operational USMC F/A-18 squadrons (36 aircraft) in host nation Japan.

The Strategic Setting

The US Secretary of Defense, Donald H. Rumsfeld, recently signalled his intention to pursue major changes in US strategic thinking that would include a reorientation of defence policy that has been geared toward keeping the peace in Europe and deterring the Soviet Union since World War II. With China becoming more powerful and Russia less so, the Asia Pacific region is now the most likely theatre of major US military operations.¹ Chief among US security concerns is China's intentions as a 21st century military and economic power. Other Asia Pacific flash points include the Korean Peninsula, Taiwan, and the South China Sea where historical distrust and territorial disputes linger. Separatist movements across the Indonesia archipelago also undermine stability in the region and pose a threat to the vital flow of world commerce

through strategic chokepoints. These are some of the major crises that concern the US as principal guarantor of regional peace. They are of proportionate concern to Australia where growing economic links and increased stake in Asian security issues are more fully realised.²

Beyond Asia, the US has a global responsibility where, for example, the length and extent of the air war over Kosovo was not expected. This started out as a small-scale contingency that was supposed to be over in 72 hours. Instead, it was a wake-up call for Washington. After 78 days, more air assets had been employed than in a major theatre war (MTW) scenario – in a battlespace the size of Connecticut. The lesson from ALLIED FORCE is that America may no longer have a two-war military. Three of the four Service chiefs who testified before the House Armed Services Committee spoke of the two-MTW policy outlined in the *US National Security Strategy* and each of them concluded that US forces are not equipped to meet the two-war standard.³

East Timor demonstrated there was a limit to American intervention around the globe. Although Washington responded with essential diplomatic and military support, the contingency did not fall into the category of “vital” or “important” national interest. Viewed in terms of future security structures in the Asia Pacific, East Timor was a defining event. Besides lifting Canberra’s prestige in the Asia Pacific region and throughout the larger world community, the lessons that the ADF takes away from its Timor experience will prove fundamental in its ability to contribute to future contingencies. Like Kosovo was for Washington, East Timor was a dose of realism for defence planners in Canberra. It was Australia’s wake-up call to what the demands and burdens are for strategic and operational leadership in the 21st century.

Australia’s Military Strategy

Australia’s incentive to pursue USMC-RAAF F/A-18 deployment integration is

framed in the context of its position as a developed middle power and the resulting dilemma: How does a middle power, with limited military capability and fiscal constraints, better protect its vulnerability and at the same time exert sufficient influence to shape the wider strategic environment?

In December 2000, the Coalition Government released a new Defence White Paper abandoning the so-called “fortress Australia” mentality in recognition of the need to become a partner in the broader span of Asia Pacific regional affairs. In reassessing Australia’s strategic policy for the coming decade and beyond, the Government made formal its determination to take a more active security role in the Asia Pacific region. Validating a shift in policy that was initially laid out in the 1997 strategic review, the new defence posture makes it a priority for the ADF to support the nation’s “wider interests and objectives by being able to contribute effectively to international coalitions of forces to meet crises beyond the immediate neighbourhood”.⁴ Herein lies the genesis of USMC-RAAF F/A-18 deployment integration – an idea that grows out of the mutual benefit derived from increased defence cooperation and improved allied interoperability.

The notion of USMC-RAAF F/A-18 deployment integration would have been a non-starter four years ago, but today the reasons why it may be in Australia’s national interest are compelling. On the one hand, there is the Government’s legitimate concern about changing strategic relativities, a realistic perspective on its strategic credentials, and the nation’s fiscal constraints. On the other hand, there is the ADF’s emphasis on objectives such as preservation of core skills and proficiency in combat operations, short-notice response capability, and interoperability with American forces—including tactics, techniques, procedures, doctrine, protocols, and communication links.⁵

In view of these strategic and operational realities, it may be wise to consider new alternatives outside the paradigm of traditional US–Australian defence cooperation. Deployment integration is one such alternative, and while there would be obstacles to overcome, the integrative trends of globalisation and the corollaries to this offer unique opportunities for success.

From Balance of Power to Security Pluralism

At the strategic level, deployment integration parallels 21st century *security pluralism*. Through this parallel relationship, it is conceivable that political obstacles can be transformed to practical opportunities. Defined in the 1998 *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia Pacific Region*, security pluralism refers to an array of cooperative and complementary frameworks in which nations seek to address their security concerns through the establishment of bilateral and multilateral relationships and dialogue.⁶ Accordingly, Admiral Dennis Blair, Commander-in-Chief, US Pacific Command (USCINCPAC), is committed to developing a more effective security structure in the Asia Pacific region; one that is grounded in a network of overlapping and interlocking security relationships. The collective approach to regional security has at its root the ability for non-bilateral treaty partners to work together (e.g., Japan/Australia). According to Admiral Blair, the key to this development lies in leveraging bilateral relationships (e.g., US–Japan/US–AUS) into multilateral relationships (e.g., US–Japan–AUS).

In the span of one year, events in the Asia Pacific region effected a change in attitudes that ten years of diplomacy could not. In the early 1990s, the US tried to encourage a shift from bilateral to multilateral military exercises, but this was always met with Asian resistance. Then came East Timor. Admiral Blair contends that the crisis in East Timor made countries in the region increasingly receptive to multilateral

military exercises. The policy brakes that prevented a more collective security approach came off after that crisis provided military officers in the region rationale to better argue the case with their ministers. Today USCINCPAC is on track to achieving a major milestone that effects a more collective, integrated approach to security in the Asia Pacific region. This will be accomplished through a new generation of regional exercises called *Team Challenge*, commenced this year.⁷

In the context of increased interdependence and globalisation, there is growing consensus that a more integrated approach may be the most propitious road to take in attaining common political and security objectives in the Asia Pacific region. Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister and Defence Minister Dr. Tony Tan characterised this sentiment in a security conference speech during January 2000. Dr. Tan noted that while Asian policies had previously focused on economic issues, future economic development is unable to function independent of an adequate security framework. He emphasised the need to strengthen the “nexus” between economics and security, in order to enhance multilateral and bilateral cooperation between regional countries to tackle problems concerning security.⁸

The USMC–RAAF model of deployment integration offers a viable mechanism by which the larger concept of security pluralism can be advanced. The subtle shift from a balance of power mindset to security pluralism – from an attitude of confrontation to an attitude of cooperation – is already underway. As security pluralism gains momentum in the region, the political constraints associated with deployment integration should diminish proportionately.

China Politics

While some political constraints to USMC–RAAF deployment integration will centre on the ASEAN states, policy makers are likely to

be most sensitive to the public perceptions of Chinese officials. Washington and Canberra are acutely aware that while China's economic and military stature grows, so will its impact on the security and politics of the region and the world.

That said, no matter how deployment integration is packaged, it is certain to provoke China's real or feigned concerns about containment and force Beijing to take countermeasures. At work would be the fear that America is trying to contain China through military alliances - that Washington is bent on maintaining its hegemonic balance of power under the subterfuge of security pluralism. The Chinese reaction would be similar to that in 1996, when strengthened US ties with Japan and Australia were announced through separate Joint Security Declarations. These reaffirmed defence ties were deemed a threat to the People's Republic of China. The state-run media in Beijing described it as the US "using these two anchors [Japan and Australia] as the claws of a crab in a strategic pincer movement aimed at China from the north and the south".⁹

Contrary to Beijing's declared perceptions, the US and Australia rejected the old balance of power mentality and welcomed China taking its rightful place as a world power. Even so, there continues to be conflicting evidence as to Beijing's intent (e.g., Taiwan), but "intent" does not necessarily equate to "threat" unless it is backed up by "capability". Following this line of reasoning, if Washington and Canberra have the benefit of knowing their own intent (regardless of capability) - and if that intent is to take the lead in building multilateral security structures that are in the collective interest - then officials ought to recognise the greater good and act accordingly.

If there were any risk in pursuing deployment integration, the risk would be in missing the opportunity to proceed now. To illustrate, consider the following scenarios played out to their logical conclusions: (1) If

Beijing's intentions were benign, it would denounce any US-Japan-Australia multilateral arrangement publicly while conceding privately that a multilateral security structure guards against the remilitarisation of Japan; but still continue to build its military. (2) If Beijing's intentions were less than benign, it would denounce any multilateral arrangement publicly; but still continue to build its military. (3) On the other hand, if the US and Australia take no action in pursuing deployment integration, Beijing will denounce nothing; but still continue to build its military. The common denominator in each scenario is that China will continue to expand its military capability. Meanwhile, Washington and Canberra will have done nothing to mitigate risk.

Whether China's intentions are benign or otherwise, its military and economic influence will grow in the region. As Chinese influence grows, so will its menu of countermeasures to perceived threats. In 15 years Beijing's countermeasures will carry considerably more weight and therefore, could be more threatening than the mere rhetoric that is heard today. The takeaway is this: policy making in Washington and Canberra is guided best by doing that which is in the collective interest, rather than being thwarted by the verbal manifestations of a strategic competitor or potential adversary.

The Japan Factor

Besides the common security linkage to America, Australia and Japan are natural trans-Pacific friends and thereby, feasible partners in deployment integration. With foreign and trade policies that are closely aligned, each country welcomes the other's playing a more active regional and international role. Indeed, the 1997 *Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade White Paper* states that Japan is likely to become a more important defence partner of Australia as it works, within the framework of the US alliance, to assume greater responsibility for

her own security and to develop closer defence links within the region.¹⁰ It is in this context that deployment integration is presented as a US-Japan-Australia multilateral security arrangement; however, there are political constraints.

Boiled down, the complexities associated with USMC-RAAF F/A-18 deployment integration in host nation Japan centre on Asia's historical distrust and the Japanese Constitution. The memory of Japanese aggression in the first half of the 20th century was the basis for the Article 9 clause in Japan's Constitution renouncing the right to *collective* self-defence (except under strict constraints of the *US-Japan Mutual Security Treaty*). The impact, in terms of deployment integration, is that foreign military aircraft are not permitted on Japanese soil. It also means that foreign exchange personnel do not qualify as members of the US force when deployed to Japan. Because the US has no power to grant status of forces agreement (SOFA) status and thus authorise entry to Japan, the critical first step in progressing toward deployment integration is to reach some agreement by which RAAF exchange personnel are granted special status akin to SOFA status.

Since 1992 there has been an incremental dilution of Article 9. Tokyo accelerated its move away from the unilateral pacifism contained in Article 9 after it was shocked by North Korea's launch of a ballistic missile into Japanese airspace during August 1998. The dramatic security policy changes that have occurred since then set precedents that offer promise to future deployment of foreign exchange personnel to Japan. Notwithstanding short-term resolution of this issue, "legal" change to Tokyo's security policy may be imminent. On 21 January 2000, the Japanese Parliament announced that it was set to begin a formal review of its Constitution.¹¹ The fact that constitutional research councils are now underway is a remarkable development that may have implications in terms of Tokyo

potentially amending its security policy to allow future deployment integration in Japan.

Another development that policy makers should note occurred during July 1998 when six RAAF F/A-18s remained overnight at Yakota Air Base, Japan, *en route* to Alaska for Exercise *Cope Thunder*. This was the first time that Australian fighter aircraft had landed in Japan since the Korean War. Although the entry of Australian Hornets into Yakota was conducted under UN Command procedures, and while it required a great deal of groundwork to allay Japanese concerns over incorrect assumptions that might have been drawn by regional observers, this should not diminish the importance of the event. The fact that it happened and it happened without incident or any negative publicity is significant in terms of progress made toward deployment integration. What it showed is that there were no repercussions to Australian F/A-18s on Japanese soil in terms of the wartime legacy. This should provide policy makers in the US and Australia a solid point of departure for progressing toward deployment integration.

Implementation Strategy/Financial Considerations

USMC-RAAF F/A-18 deployment integration is not an arrangement that can be implemented quickly. Fundamental to its success is an incremental confidence-building process, executed through a crawl-walk-run implementation strategy. Presupposing a crawl-walk-run implementation strategy, the financial aspect of USMC-RAAF F/A-18 deployment integration is discussed in terms of what's required during each phase of the process. It is noteworthy that the most costly investment toward deployment integration has already occurred. In 1998 the Australian Government approved funding for the Hornet Upgrade (HUG) program. HUG is synonymous with Engineering Change Proposal 583 (ECP-583), which bridges the modernisation gap to the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF) for Marine F/A-

18 "A" model aircraft. HUG will ensure that Australian F/A-18As are relevant and capable in the full spectrum of operations through the remaining life of the weapons system.

Crawl Phase (1–3 Years). To advance the process of deployment integration a letter of agreement or something akin to a SOFA that allows RAAF exchange personnel to forward-deploy with Marine F/A-18 squadrons is required. Whether organised under the auspices of the existing guidelines for US–Japan Defence Cooperation or some type of UN SOFA arrangement, it should be a US-sponsored/Australian-supported diplomatic initiative with Japan. The forum for any US–Australian discussion related to the SOFA issue already exists in the Australia–US Ministerial (AUSMIN) Consultations that occur each year.

By granting SOFA status to RAAF exchange personnel and thus qualifying them as members of the Marine F/A-18 units that deploy in country, the Government of Japan would be taking a logical and benign step toward normalising its security policy. The experience that RAAF pilots gain from operating with forward-deployed Marine units would be a vital building block to any future integration of Australian tactical aviation (TACAIR) into the Pacific Theatre of operation. Likewise, an exchange of USMC and RAAF technical personnel would also help facilitate future deployment integration. The technical exchange could be modelled after the ADF's *Long Look* exchange that occurs with enlisted members of the Royal Air Force and Royal New Zealand Air Force.

Walk Phase (4–8 Years). The intermediate objective in developing an integrated deployment capability is the establishment of a functional USMC–RAAF F/A-18 unit exchange program. Before that can feasibly happen, Australian F/A-18s must establish a suitable level of flight activity from US air bases in Japan. Because Australia is a UN Command member country, this could occur under the auspices of UN Command-sanctioned activity.

Yakota Air Base and Kadena Air Base are possible locations for such activity to occur since Australian C-130, P-3, and KB-707 aircraft already conduct UN Command-related familiarisation training from these bases. The introduction of limited F/A-18 flight activity could legitimately coincide with RAAF transits to and from Alaska where the *Cope Thunder* exercise series occurs annually.

After Australian F/A-18s have established a suitable level of flight activity from bases in Japan, the door is opened to further confidence-building measures. At such time that it is deemed appropriate, the USMC's unilateral *Southern Frontier* exercise at RAAF Base Tindal may be leveraged into a reciprocal unit exchange between elements of Iwakuni-based Marine Aircraft Group 12 (MAG-12) and elements of the RAAF's Tactical Fighter Group (TFG). *Southern Frontier* is an annual exercise during which each of the three F/A-18 squadrons from MCAS Iwakuni rotate through RAAF Base Tindal for three to four weeks of low altitude training. The exchange could develop annually, from a two to four-week arrangement, to a more robust exchange that spans the entire three-month period during which MAG-12's air-to-ground training exercise is conducted in Northern Australia. The USMC–RAAF F/A-18 exchange could be modelled after *Gold Eagle* – a functioning infantry company unit exchange that is hosted annually in Hawaii by the 3rd Marines and in Queensland by the Australian Army's 3rd Brigade.

Run (9 Years – JSF Introduction). After transition from the Walk Phase to the Run Phase, mature USMC–RAAF F/A-18 deployment integration becomes a viable consideration. At this stage in the process, US responsibility sharing policy may be applied. Articulated in the 1998 *Defence Authorisation Act*, this policy states that the cornerstone of effective alliance relationships is the fair and equitable sharing of mutual security responsibilities, and the proper balancing of

costs and benefits. The 1998 legislation acknowledged that each country's contribution to security is a mix of political, military, and economic elements.¹² It is this type of *quid pro quo* logic that underlies the financial dimension of deployment integration. For example: (1) Japan, as host nation, absorbs basing and utility costs; (2) the US underwrites cost associated with on-base services, logistic supply, maintenance, and operational support infrastructure, and (3) Australia underwrites cost incurred by the deployment of one, twelve-aircraft F/A-18 squadron.

Total defence expenditure in supporting Australia's wider interests through a periodic forward presence would be approximated to the following costs: (1) The standard flight hour operating cost of the F/A-18 (an expense appropriated for in the defence budget and then allocated to individual squadrons in the form of "flight hours" that are to be expended during the fiscal year). (2) Travel and subsistence expense for a standard overseas deployment (cost mitigated by use of on-base lodging, dining, and motor pool services).

Deployment Integration Beyond the F/A-18

USMC-RAAF deployment integration is advanced as a 21st century multilateral security arrangement that would take a minimum of eight to ten years to implement. Therefore, it has implications beyond the life of the F/A-18. It is in the context of Australia's long-term planning and new defence acquisitions that key linkages emerge. Specifically, the links are between Dr. Alan Stephens' theory of a "niche" air force and the ADF's focus on integration of Service capabilities, both of which intersect with USMC-RAAF deployment integration.

Given the variance between what the Defence *White Paper* advances in the way of an expanded ADF focus and defence cooperation with the US military on one hand and a limited Australian defence budget on the other hand, the approach offered by Dr.

Stephens should have broad appeal. Because it is no longer financially feasible for the middle power to build a balanced air force to "first-tier" US standards, he advocates that a single niche capability be selected, developed, and maintained to those standards.¹³ The *White Paper* notes that the best option for future strike capability after the F-111 leaves service may be specialised variants of air combat aircraft. To that end, the Government made provision for the acquisition of up to 25 aircraft of the same type as the follow-on for the F/A-18.¹⁴

In the context of future US-Australian defence cooperation, there is merit to a single weapons system replacement for the F/A-18 and F-111 – a weapons system that can integrate and interoperate with US capabilities that will be forward-deployed to the Asia Pacific region. The US Marine Corps has decided to replace its AV-8B Harrier and F/A-18 platforms with a single weapons system – the JSF. This means that Marine squadrons could be operating the JSF at MCAS Iwakuni as early as 2012 to 2015 – a timeframe that coincides with the RAAF's projected replacement of its F/A-18 fleet.

The suggestion here is that the JSF may be the common denominator in formulating a long-term plan for USMC-RAAF deployment integration. From an ADF perspective, the overriding appeal would be in the larger contribution that JSF could bring to the Australian Army as it moves to integrate other Service capabilities. In response to demands of the changing strategic environment, the Australian Army's draft document, *Future Land Warfare: Land Warfare Concepts 2030*, foreshadows a combined arms package similar to the versatile task force structure of the Marines. The Army's draft document introduces the concept-manoeuvre operations in the littoral environment – or MOLE. Defined, MOLE are integrated sea, air, and land operations involving forced entry from the sea, undertaken in the littoral region – similar to

amphibious task force operations conducted by the Marine Expeditionary Unit.¹⁵

The ADF's recognition of the need for closer integration of Service capabilities, the Army's focus on MOLE, and the Navy's shift toward amphibious capabilities (evidenced by the conversion of HMAS *Kanimbla* and HMAS *Manoora*) are key developments in the Australian defence community. These developments should help to define what RAAF TACAIR can best offer in supporting an ADF force structure more suited to meet operational demands of the 21st century. Inactive in real-world contingencies since the Korean War, Australia's TACAIR will be more difficult to justify during the next 50 years if only used for homeland defence – against a threat that many experts say does not exist. Therefore, if the “littorals” are where experts say the ADF is most likely to operate, and if well-integrated sea, air, and land operations are what is required in that environment, then JSF makes sense.

Australia's choice of the JSF as a replacement platform for the F/A-18 and F-111 would not only enhance the long-term prospect for USMC-RAAF deployment integration, but would increase the opportunity for future ADF integration and/or interoperability with Marine amphibious task forces. In other words, an Australian combined arms force – equipped with a JSF TACAIR component – could well serve the holistic approach to coalition warfare.

Conclusion

Some might contend that political barriers to any degree of Service integration are too great. To them, the suggestion is that alternative ways to achieve similar objectives be considered. Several alternative basing arrangements could counter political objections raised by Japan and other Asian countries. For example, US trust territories represent potential basing flexibility that would reduce hostility from some political

quarters to the presence of Australian F/A-18 squadrons in Japan. Such alternatives could serve US forces seeking an optimal forward deployment posture that permits training and engagement opportunities with the ADF. A USMC- RAAF F/A-18 unit exchange, hosted from a US military base in Guam, is one such alternative that could provide the opportunity for multiple Services to benefit from joint and combined training in the Pacific Theatre.

Notwithstanding the varied training options that alternative basing could offer our tactical forces, the vision for deployment integration should remain fixed on the strategic objective. Ultimately, deployment integration is about small and medium powers – Western and Asian-extending the geographic reach of their armed forces to participate as partners in maintaining regional security. While the American military may still be required to provide the infrastructure and core force structure at forward-deployed sites, allied nations with similar weapons systems may be called on to provide a fair share of equipment and personnel to augment overseas deployment schedules.

With only three operating squadrons and one training squadron available to meet the wide range of ADF requirements, it's questionable whether the TFG could sustain a permanent unit deployment schedule in Northeast Asia (six-month deployed period/18-month rotation) without compromising the Five Power Defence Arrangements (FPDA) exercise commitments. In view of this limitation, USMC-RAAF deployment integration may be advanced as critical “contingency” capability to be derived from a functioning unit exchange program.

At the end of the day, USMC-RAAF deployment integration is an operational-level concept that coincides with strategic trends in the Asia Pacific region – both political and economic. From the political perspective, it is a military innovation that supports security

pluralism, not balance of power or containment strategy. It is a non-threatening defence measure designed to promote stability. From the economic perspective, deployment integration is a practical innovation that requires no expenditure for procurement of an increasingly lethal capability. It does not perpetuate a destabilising conventional arms race in the region.

When USMC-RAAF F/A-18 deployment integration is studied in the context of rising security pluralism in the Asia Pacific, the art of the possible unfolds. When it is deliberated in terms of how allied partners Prepare Now for an uncertain future, it is a plan to avoid strategic surprise.

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A4 Skyhawk (foreground), FA18, and F111 fly over HMAS Anzac.

Joint Warfare – Australia’s Approach to Joint Operations

By Mr A. Behm, Mr R. Allen, Colonel M. Goodyer and Mr J. Tregurtha.¹

Joint and coalition operations are now defining features of the way the Australian Defence Force (ADF) conducts military operations.² We say they are “now” defining features because this was not always the case.

This article traces the development of what is now called the ADF from a collection of three largely separate and distinct Services (Royal Australian Navy, Australian Army, and Royal Australian Air Force) into an integrated Australian Defence Force. The ADF now has a very high level of “jointness” in its thinking, organisational structures, doctrine, and operational planning and execution. The present level of “jointness” is high both by comparison with Australian historical experience, and also by the contemporary standards of defence forces in advanced countries around the world.

This article considers why and how the ADF achieved the strongly joint ethos and structures that it has today, and the ADF’s application of this joint approach to war-fighting concepts and styles. A key conclusion of this article is that joint operations are central to the conduct of operations by the ADF, giving the various elements of the ADF a synergy that would not be possible otherwise. Similarly, coalition operations are also very important to the ADF, with our experience in East Timor being the most recent example. This focus on coalition and joint operations also maximises the potential synergy from operations involving both the ADF and the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF).

The Factors Steering the ADF to “Jointness”

The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) were originally established as the Australian squadrons of the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force respectively. The Australian Army was not formally linked to the British Army, but had strong informal links with it. Thus, in the early years of their existence, the identity and sense of identity of all three Australian armed Services were linked more closely to their respective “parent” Services than they were to each other.

Moreover, the roles of all three Services in war reinforced that particular sense of identity. Australian forces were employed in war as (junior) participants in large-scale coalition operations with little, and largely incidental, joint Australian operations. This situation prevailed to a greater or lesser extent until the end of World War II.

The history of Australia’s armed Services since the end of World War II is one of the progressive, if at times fitful, transformation from a collection of three Services each with its own strong environmental focus to a genuine tri-Service entity with an integrated environmental focus. It is significant that the term “Australian Defence Force” only began to be used in Australia around the late 1970s/early 1980s.

A major catalyst to the development of joint approaches in the conduct of military operations for Australia in the post-World War II era was the Vietnam War. In this war, the Australian Army, the RAAF and the RAN operated in a joint mode with, for example, RAAF and RAN helicopters providing critical support at the tactical level to the Army’s operations. The Vietnam War was a watershed for the ADF in that it forced the ADF to adopt a much stronger joint approach to the conduct

of military operations than had hitherto been the case.

Another outcome of the Vietnam War was the so-called "Guam Doctrine" of 1969, in which the then President of the United States, Richard Nixon, announced that the United States henceforth expected regional countries to shoulder the main burden of their own security and defence. A consequence of this doctrine was that Australia moved to greater emphasis on self-reliant defence which, in practical terms, meant placing greater emphasis on joint operations.

A further catalyst was Australia's involvement in a number of United Nations – mandated peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations. An excellent example of this was the deployment of an integrated battalion group to Somalia at the end of 1992 as part of an international coalition to restore order and facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance, in that country. All three Services participated in this operation and this experience, and other peacekeeping experiences like it, helped cultivate processes and habits of joint activities. In this way, the peacekeeping operations of the 1990s helped reinforce the trend to greater "jointness" that had begun with the Vietnam War.

Most recently, Australia's involvement in responding to the crisis in East Timor has further reinforced joint practices in the ADF. The International Force East Timor (INTERFET) was an *ad hoc* coalition led by Australia. Australia had often been a junior member of an international coalition but had never before led an international coalition. The ADF's success in putting together and leading this coalition was made possible by the maturity of its structures, practices and processes for conducting joint operations. Among these was the existence of joint structures at the strategic and operational levels, a deployable joint force headquarters, joint warfare doctrine, years of joint training and exercising, and emphasis on staff training at staff colleges.

Working hand in hand with the influences of higher defence policy – especially the emphasis on self-reliance – was the impact of changes in technology. Some key areas of technology, especially those relating to command, control, communications and computers (C4), and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR), have accentuated the trend towards joint approaches to warfare. Technology changes in the C4 and ISR areas have opened up enormous possibilities for more efficient and effective application of armed force. But these possibilities can only be exploited fully in a joint operational environment that allows commanders to orchestrate the application of disparate force elements from all three Services to maximum effect.

One undoubted factor in the progressive incorporation of joint approaches in the ADF has been financial pressures. Several of the organisational reviews that led to greater "jointness" in the ADF in the past few decades were driven by the requirement to cut costs.

Typically, the line of reasoning was that there were economies to be made through the amalgamation of single Service structures into a joint structure and – no less important – the dismantling of single Service structures that the joint structures replaced. Thus, there has been a progressive "feeding" of joint force structures and a corresponding "starving" of single Service structures. This reallocation of resources has both sped and consolidated the trend towards joint structures.

The ADF continually faces the problem of rapidly increasing costs of recruiting and retaining trained personnel in a competitive Australian labour market. The ADF also is under pressure to contain personnel costs so as to allow more room in a constrained Defence budget to provide for acquisition of new equipment. Together, these cost pressures have spurred efforts in the ADF to maximise joint approaches so as to minimise duplication of costs and effort in the three single Services.

The joint thinking has not been confined to the question of operational headquarters but has extended into numerous other areas – all in search of cost savings through co-location, integration and rationalisation. Such areas include logistics, intelligence, corporate support, legal, personnel, training, health, acquisition of equipment, and contract and property management.

Finally, in its approach to war-fighting, the ADF has increasingly become an effects-based, outcomes-focussed organisation. The approach has shifted from emphasis on process (individual platforms, capabilities and Services) to effects (achievement of certain specific objectives or outcomes). By focussing on effects, the ADF thus thinks in terms of what “package” of capabilities will best deliver the desired effects, and this way of thinking inevitably encourages a joint approach to warfare.

How the ADF Became a Joint Force

The transition of the ADF from a collection of single Services to a joint force occurred over a period of about half a century from the end of World War II. This process of change normally involved internal or public reviews of higher defence arrangements, leading to incremental changes in these arrangements in ways that reinforced joint structures and approaches. The process of change is also associated with the lead given by some individual CDF’s, notably General Peter Gration (1987-1993) and General John Baker (1995-1998).

The transition to a joint force was also held back at times by a combination of managerial inertia, especially with regard to the rationalisation of property necessary to give full effect to changes aimed at promoting “jointness”. There was also resistance from certain quarters in the single Services and the civilian bureaucracy, whose influence was perceived to be threatened by the emergence of

a well-staffed and empowered joint force headquarters.

Some of the key milestones in the early decades after World War II were:

- A review of the structure of the Defence establishment in 1957 (the Moreshead Review) recommended the amalgamation of the existing Defence-related departments into a single Department of Defence. The Government did not follow this recommendation, but did assert the primacy of the Department of Defence through the creation of a new position of the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee. However, this position could not establish effective overall coordination of Defence operations, through a lack of sufficient resources and organisational machinery.
- In 1968 the Government established the Joint Staff Organisation in the Department of Defence. This change enabled the Department (through the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee) to conduct joint operational planning and concept development, but operational control of forces remained with the individual Service Departments.
- In 1973, the then Secretary of the Department of Defence, Sir Arthur Tange, reviewed the Defence organisational arrangements, and recommended that all existing Defence-related Departments be amalgamated into a single Department of Defence. In 1976, legislation was passed giving effect to this recommendation. The Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee became the Chief of the Defence Force Staff (CDFS).
- In 1984, Headquarters, Australian Defence Force (HQADF) was established out of the previous joint military staff. HQADF was to be tasked by the CDFS in his role as commander of the ADF. CDFS’s title was changed to CDF at that time to reflect the military operational and advisory

pre-eminence of this position. In hindsight, the decision to create the position of CDFS (later CDF) went a long way to entrenching joint approaches in the ADF. The appointment of General Sir Phillip Bennett in 1984 gave the ADF, for the first time, a single tri-Service commander.

- Also, in 1984, a parliamentary committee report, *The Australian Defence Force: its Structure and Capabilities*, recommended a reorganisation along functional joint Service lines and removal of the Service Chiefs from the operational chain of command. The latter recommendation was not achieved until the late 1980s, but the former was put into practice by the initial establishment of Maritime Headquarters at Navy's Fleet Headquarters in 1985, including appropriate Air Force personnel. Subsequently, Land Headquarters and Air Headquarters were also created, drawing staff and assets from the operational commands of the respective Services. Also at this time the position of Vice Chief of the Defence Force was created, at the same rank as the Service Chiefs.

The organisational changes to the mid 1980s constituted an important shift towards instituting a joint approach to the conduct of military operations. Nevertheless, this shift was still limited by the fact that joint force commanders (usually the respective Service operational commanders) remained responsive to their parent Service Chiefs, and the operational forces and assets remained under the control of the individual Services.

In 1987, the then CDF, General Peter Gratton, effectively removed the Service Chiefs of Staff from the operational command chain by merging the single Service operational headquarters into a new set of joint operations headquarters each of which reported directly to him. He also established a joint development and planning branch in HQADF to centralise some of the strategic policy functions, and directed a further review of ADF command

structures and the role of HQADF.³ That review recommended that the joint force headquarters eventually be collocated and a Commander Joint Forces Australia appointed to coordinate these commands and, during times of war, command all ADF operations on the CDF's behalf.

In June/July 1988, a very significant step along Australia's path to an effective joint operational command structure was taken, through the raising of a joint force: Northern Command Australia or NORCOM. NORCOM's brief included planning and administration for low-level contingencies in its area of operations and it constituted the first joint theatre headquarters established in Australia. The new Command would also provide much-needed means of promotion and development of joint war-fighting concepts and exercises. Initially created as a subordinate of Land Headquarters, NORCOM reported directly to HQADF after 1993.

The end of the decade also saw a further consolidation of joint structures in HQADF. *The Sanderson Report* of 1989,⁴ which was undertaken largely because of perceived functional duplications and overstaffing in the higher ADF staff arrangements, recommended a major transfer of staff and functions from the single Service Offices into a newly restructured HQADF. These transfers, effected by the CDF in 1990, included roles in development, operations, personnel and logistics, all of which became functional areas within HQADF.

Also in 1990, the Joint Intelligence Organisation, which had been formed in 1970, merged with the intelligence staff from HQADF and became the Defence Intelligence Organisation. This new organisation included staff from all the Services and was to be responsive to the CDF for provision of intelligence to the joint commanders.



Army vehicle driving off HMAS Jervis Bay onto wharf in Dili.

Photograph: ABPH D. Pawlenko

Organisational Changes to the ADF in the Last Decade

Although there had been substantial progress in the development of joint structures and the cultivation of a “joint” culture – especially through the establishment of HQADF and of NORCOM – there were still areas where further development was both possible and desirable. The joint operational commands retained an environmental focus and as such remained largely captive to the respective Services. Additionally, the Service Chiefs remained in control of most assets, and personnel were still firmly indoctrinated into their parent Service in the early years of their careers.

Other potential areas of concern included ongoing budgetary pressure to collocate the currently separate joint force headquarters and the realisation that if the Commander of Joint Forces Australia (CJFA) (at that time a wartime position only) was activated in peacetime, then Australia would effectively have five distinct operational commands. Lieutenant General Sanderson served in this position (as

designate), from 1993 to 1995, which was significant in terms of a focus by the ADF on joint command, but this focus fell short of the establishment of the proposed permanent joint operational headquarters.

Some of the key milestones in the 1990s were:

- In 1990, the Australian Defence Force Warfare Centre (ADFWC) was established as a centre for the development of joint warfare concepts and training, and the delivery of joint warfare training.
- In 1991, a Government review of the ADF’s force structure resulted in a commitment to eventual collocation of the existing three joint forces later in the decade, and continued deployment of forces to northern Australia, the latter forces then falling under administrative direction of NORCOM.
- Also in 1991, the ADF deployed forces to the Persian Gulf as part of the international Gulf War coalition. This deployment represented a major test of Australia’s pursuit of a joint operational command system, and served to allay the concerns of

many who continued to question the absence of the Service Chiefs from the operational chain of command. The 1991 Gulf War also demonstrated the impact that technological advances could have on war-fighting, and the imperative for the combination of information and other technology with joint command and control concepts.

- In 1992, a post-implementation review and evaluation of Sanderson's 1989 report found that single Service Office resistance to an entirely joint operational concept remained considerable, and in doing so reinforced the need to continue along the course Sanderson had charted.
- The Government's Strategic Review of 1993 stated that joint operations would be a key principle in the overall development of the ADF:

"To optimise the ADF's effectiveness in the defence of Australia, the first priority is for the ADF to develop and exercise joint capabilities, and to plan and conduct joint ADF activities."⁵

- The 1994 Defence White Paper reinforced the policy to continue development of the ADF as an integrated whole, to establish a joint operational headquarters by 2000, under a joint force commander.⁶
- In 1996, the then CDF, General John Baker, announced the establishment of Headquarters Australian Theatre (HQAST) as a single, theatre-based, joint command, under the newly established two-star position of the Commander, Australian Theatre (COMAST). The CDF also confirmed creation of an Australian Theatre Joint Intelligence Centre (ASTJIC) to provide operational intelligence for theatre-level campaigns, and that an automated command support and management system (CSS) would be used by the ADF for increased effectiveness.

Under the new arrangement of a theatre command, COMAST assumed overall command of the three existing joint "environmental" commands, reorienting them as components of HQAST, and with a longer-term strategy to complete their collocation within a few years. Command of NORCOM, ASTJIC, ADFWC and the tactical-level Deployable Joint Force Headquarters (DJFHQ), also passed to COMAST. COMAST was tasked to develop operational and tactical level joint and combined doctrine, including doctrine applicable to operating with New Zealand. Collectively, these arrangements were designed to embed firmly the concepts and structures of joint operations as the ADF moved into the 21st century.

- In 1997, the last major changes in the ADF in the 1990s came as a result of the Defence Efficiency Review. This review reiterated previous recommendations that "the number of headquarters and personnel employed at the operational level of command should be reduced".⁷ The review also resulted in new Defence organisational arrangements, including the creation of a joint logistics support function (Support Command Australia) and joint personnel (Defence Personnel Executive) and education programs especially for in-service officer training (Joint Education and Training). The report fully endorsed the move of the ADF toward a fully joint operational structure, stating:

"... we need to organise our forces to exploit our geography and technology as effectively as possible and we are convinced that this will be by operating as a single, joint force. This is already an important doctrine of the ADF. We believe joint forces will be fundamental if the ADF is to meet the demands of the next century, and believe the issue cannot be overemphasised."⁸

The review also consolidated the role of COMAST recommending that further operational controls be delivered to this position, COMAST’s rank be eventually increased, and that the component command’s operational resource teams be consolidated (and reduced) under his command at HQAST.⁹

Thus, at the end of the 1990s, the ADF had in place structures and a culture that reinforced “joint” thinking and action. The process of putting joint structures in place remained incomplete however; since the three environmentally-based component commands are not yet collocated, and thus not fully integrated.

Nevertheless, these organisational and cultural changes, combined with the particular way that the ADF approaches war-fighting (see below), have produced a distinctive ADF approach to the conduct of joint operations.

The ADF Approach to War-fighting

The ADF has developed an approach to war-fighting that reflects the interplay of geo-strategic, cultural and doctrinal influences.

The main geo-strategic factors for the ADF are:

- Australia is not directly threatened by anyone (and we have minimal direct experience of conflict).
- Australia shares no land borders with any other country.
- The approaches to Australia are through the archipelagos to Australia’s north (especially with those connecting us with the Asian mainland).
- Demographics. Australia has an enormous landmass, with a comparatively small population that is largely concentrated on the eastern seaboard.
- Our military history is largely an “expeditionary” one, with a history of fighting “over there” rather than close to home.

- Although increasingly multicultural, Australia still has a predominantly Western culture and orientation. This is demonstrated by Australia’s military alliance with the United States and New Zealand, and its close links with other Western-oriented defence forces.
- Australia has a modern industrial economy, high levels of education, reasonably good infrastructure, and well-developed commercial and governmental institutions.

There are certain cultural values that are either part of the ADF culture, the Australian culture, or both. These cultural factors also influence the ADF approach to war-fighting. Among these cultural values or traits are:

- Emphasis on economy. Since resources are limited, the conduct of military operations by the ADF emphasises economy of effort, and the need for ingenuity and resourcefulness. Australians have a long tradition of “making do” with whatever is available, and improvising with or adapting available resources in creative ways to achieve particular purposes. Ingenuity is something that deeply informs the Anzac tradition.
- Australia’s European roots as a dumping ground for the British criminal classes and as a land of opportunity for free settlers have left a strongly egalitarian streak in the Australian psyche, that often questions authority.
- There is a strong emphasis on equity in Australian society, often expressed in terms of “a fair go”.
- Related to the value placed on economy, the ADF prizes flexibility and adaptability in its approaches to dealing with problems.
- In keeping with the Australian attitude of “have a go”, the ADF has a “can do” mentality about tasks that it is given to do by government.

- The concept of “mateship” is deeply rooted in Australian social and military history and in the Australian psyche, and this affects ADF attitudes to conducting operations so as to emphasise team work, caring for personnel, and minimising casualties.

These geo-strategic and cultural factors link in with military doctrine to produce approaches that define the Australian way of war-fighting. These approaches can be summarised as:

- **Manoeuvre warfare.** The Australian war-fighting style is strongly manoeuvrist. This reflects the ADF’s limited personnel resources and firepower, the very large land and maritime areas that need to be protected in and around Australia, and the advantages of flexibility and adaptability that are part of the ADF value system. These factors are strongly suited to manoeuvre warfare. Australia’s strategic circumstances do not lend themselves to an attritional approach to war-fighting.
- **Knowledge edge.** The emphasis on having a “knowledge edge” is tied to Australia’s geo-strategic circumstances of having large areas to defend with small forces, and the ADF’s manoeuvrist approach to war-fighting generally. The “knowledge edge” approach aims to maximise the military benefits of having a well-educated population and a highly trained defence force. It is also about having “quality” to compensate for a comparative lack of quantity, particularly with regard to military personnel.
- **Cooperation in military operations.** As previously indicated, Australia’s military operations have generally been conducted as part of some form of international coalition of forces. There are thus strong habits in the ADF of

cooperation with other forces. This is part of the ADF war-fighting style, and emphasises the need in the ADF to have appropriate levels of interoperability with potential partners.

- **Versatility and flexibility in military operations.** The ADF is a comparatively small force with a very broad range of potential tasking. In the areas of training and equipment acquisition especially, the ADF aims to be versatile and flexible so that it can respond in a timely and effective manner to the demands that may be placed on it from time to time by government. The ADF therefore aims to instil and reward initiative, ingenuity, resourcefulness and devolution of authority in the conduct of operations.
- **Justifiable action.** The ADF has a well-earned reputation for being used only for purposes that are morally justifiable and for operating in a professionally competent way. This reputation is a large part of the reason the ADF enjoys a high level of respect in the Australian community and within the Asia Pacific region. The credibility that the ADF presently enjoys can only be maintained so long as the ADF continues to be used only in ways that are morally and legally defensible.

Future Approaches to War-fighting

The ADF’s approaches to war-fighting in the future will inevitably be influenced strongly by its present approaches to war-fighting. As already shown, the present approaches reflect cultural values that are part of Australia’s history and Australians’ sense of identity. The present approaches also reflect the enduring geo-strategic considerations that face Australian defence planners.

But it would be a serious mistake for the ADF to allow its approaches to war-fighting

to remain unchanging. This is because the global and regional environments within which the ADF may be called upon to operate are changing dramatically. For example, the weapons of war are constantly adapting to changes in technology. The global “information revolution” has transformed life in industrially advanced and less developed economies alike. And the international system has witnessed the rising influence of transnational, non-government actors and, certainly within Australia’s immediate region, the fragmentation or attempted fragmentation of political entities.

All of these (and other) changes need to be considered as part of the process of determining the ADF’s approaches to war-fighting in the future. The development of these approaches is an ongoing activity. Nevertheless, a number of likely approaches are emerging from this process. Among them are:

- **Effects-based operations.** This approach emphasises the massing and orchestration of effects rather than of physical forces through a “network enabled” or “network-centric” approach to operations. Another way of expressing this is that it focuses on capabilities and outcomes rather than platforms and processes. The emphasis on outcomes also reflects the political imperative in the “information age” for military forces to tailor the application of armed force in ways that meet both the military end-state requirements and the political imperatives of the Government.
- **“Information Warfare”.** This approach is an extension into the information domain of operations in the physical domain. As the “information age” extends its influence in societies and they become increasingly dependent on information technologies and systems, so future warfare may well increasingly

be conducted in the information domain through information warfare. The objective will be to cripple the adversary through a process of destroying, disabling, removing or corrupting the information and information systems on which the adversary relies (particularly C2), while at the same time protecting one’s own information from attack. These information systems include both military and civil systems, thus blurring even more the traditional distinction between combatants and non-combatants.

- **Operations against non-state actors.** Traditionally, military operations have been conducted in the context of state-on-state conflict pursued and resolved by the contending states’ respective military forces. In future, the situation will be more complex. While states will remain the principal actors in the international system, threats to a state’s security can come from a range of sources including terrorist groups, computer hackers, smugglers and transnational criminal groups.

Although use of the military will be only a part of a state’s responses to these security challenges, military forces including the ADF may well find themselves dealing with a range of non-traditional activities as a means of responding to a wider range of national security threats. The CDF, Admiral Chris Barrie, addressing a Crawford Fund conference in Australia in 2000 said:

“... while there is no doubt that our core business is to provide traditional military options to Government, the Defence Force has also become an important resource which provides Government with a range of options not associated with

force-on-force considerations. In short, we have a dual role: we must actively work for peace, as well as prepare for war.”¹⁰

Admiral Barrie’s comments echo the Government’s revised Defence outcome, which is now expressed as; “The Defence of Australia and its national interests.”¹¹ The previous Defence outcome was expressed as; “To prevent or defeat the use of armed force against Australia and its interests”.¹²

- **Integration.** In keeping with the notions of effects-based operations and operations against non-state actors, the ADF will approach future war-fighting tasks with a view to being more “integrated”. By “integration” in this context is meant making the ADF an integral part of a national solution to security challenges, rather than being something of a separate compartment of a national response to security threats.

Greater integration would mean, for example, that the ADF would operate more closely with the national support base, other law enforcement agencies, civil authorities that manage and control the civil infrastructure, and regional friends and allies. The aim would be to achieve greater connectivity between the various elements of national security as part of providing a total solution.

Australia and New Zealand

The foregoing discussion about “jointness” has relevance for the ongoing Australia-New Zealand defence relationship. That relationship has strong historical roots, is formalised in a long-standing military alliance, and is of great contemporary relevance to both countries. The recent experiences of the ADF and the New Zealand

Defence Force (NZDF) in working closely together in multinational peacekeeping and peace enforcement operations in Bougainville and East Timor respectively, are testimony to the ongoing strength and vitality of this military relationship.

Increasingly, there is commonality in the two forces of communications systems, equipment, military doctrine and training. There are also regular combined exercises involving elements of both forces. The two forces are effectively integrated in a functional sense, while each at the same time retains national command. A good example is provided by the deployment of ADF and NZDF personnel to Bougainville. In Bougainville, there have been times when ADF personnel have been under the operational control of a NZDF officer, and also when NZDF personnel have been under the operational control of an ADF officer.

Conclusion

In the ADF, the move to “jointness” has achieved a high level of maturity and will continue even further. Evidence of a high level maturity can be seen in organisational structures, doctrine and operational planning and execution. The influence of future war-fighting concepts for the ADF will further entrench and intensify the process of achieving greater “jointness” in the planning and conduct of military operations.

For the ADF the 20th century ended on a high note with the successful deployment of an Australian-led international coalition (INTERFET) into East Timor. Such a deployment would not have been possible without the progressive move to “jointness” in the ADF and more particularly the development of static and deployable joint headquarters (at the operational level) in the mid 1990s.

NOTES

1. This article was written collaboratively by Mr Allan Behm, Head, Strategy and Ministerial Services, Colonel Michael Goodyer, Acting Director-General, Military Strategy Branch, Mr Ross Allen, Director, Policy and Doctrine, and Mr James Tregurtha, Research Officer, all in the Strategy and Ministerial Services Division, Australian Defence Headquarters, Department of Defence, Canberra ACT. The article was revised and updated by Colonel Goodyer in June 2001.
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This article was first presented as a Paper by Mr Allan Behm at the Third Annual Conference hosted by the New Zealand Army's Military Studies Institute and Massey University's Defence and Strategic Studies Program, Massey University, 26-27 August 2000.

Mr Allan Behm retired as Head, Strategy and Ministerial Services in April 2001.

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Accidental Discharges – The Soldier’s Industrial Accident in Vietnam and East Timor

Dr Bob Hall, Australian Defence Studies Centre, Australian Defence Force Academy

On 11 August 2000 several newspapers reported the accidental shooting of an Australian soldier in East Timor and announced that the ADF had launched an inquiry into the incident.¹ While riding in an armoured vehicle over rough terrain, the soldier had been killed when a Steyr rifle was discharged in a vehicle. This soldier was the second to have been killed by an accidental discharge of the Steyr rifle. In 1993, a soldier was killed when a fellow soldier’s Steyr accidentally discharged during peacekeeping operations in Somalia. As a result of the 1993 death, weapons handling procedures were reviewed in an attempt to avoid further accidental discharges.

The death last year has rekindled concern about the number of accidental discharges occurring among Australian troops deployed on operations. *The Age* newspaper quoted a military source as saying:

There have been so many instances [in East Timor] where people have nearly been capped (shot dead) that there has been a certain inevitability about this case, as tragic as it is.²

According to *The Age*, about 8000 ADF members had served in East Timor between the initial deployment in late September 1999 and August 2000 and there had been about 80 accidental discharges in that time.³ However, *The Australian* noted that according to an Army report, there were 69 accidental discharges by ADF members deployed to East Timor in the four months between September and December 1999.⁴ Concerns about the Steyr rifle and the number of accidental discharges among Australian troops in East Timor were initially raised publicly in *The Sunday Times* in April 2000.⁵

A Military Board of Inquiry into the latest death handed down its findings on 14 June 2001.⁶ The Board’s key determinations were that a malfunction of a weapon or ammunition

had not contributed to the incident and that the factors which *had* contributed were primarily related to human failure. They included poor definition and understanding of orders and SOP (Standard Operating Procedures) for weapon readiness states, lack of supervision and failure to follow “understood” SOP, failure to regularly reinforce weapon control and safety awareness in task orders and the failure of one individual to maintain close personal control of his weapon. The Board found that in this particular case, the weapon probably discharged as a result of “the trigger being pulled or snagged while the weapon was being handled, moved, or caused to move while resting, uncontrolled, on ration boxes in the armoured vehicle”.⁷

While the Board of Inquiry findings have resolved the issue in this specific case, broader questions about the causes and patterns of accidental discharges are yet to be resolved. Most accidental discharges do not cause death or injury and are therefore not subject to the intense scrutiny of a Board of Inquiry. Yet non-injurious accidental discharges are still worthy of study if the general causes and patterns of accidental discharge are to be understood.

This article uses records from the Australian Army's involvement in the Vietnam War to shed some light on the nature and cause of accidental discharges of small arms in an operational setting. In doing so it illustrates the wealth of as yet untapped information that is available to the Army in its Vietnam records and how this can be applied to today's operational problems to overcome the loss of corporate memory.

Accidental Discharge Rates in the Vietnam War

As today, during the Vietnam War accidental (and unauthorised) discharges were a chargeable offence.⁸ The charge reports from that period therefore provide some information about the frequency of the offence and the sanctions taken against those who committed it. The charge reports of four infantry battalions were examined.⁹ Table 1 shows the following number of charges for each battalion.

There is a wide discrepancy between the numbers of charges resulting from accidental discharges in each of the battalions. It is likely that in 7RAR, 8RAR and to a lesser extent 5RAR, many accidental discharges went uncharged. In 1971 the Australian Army Operational Research Group published a report into accidental casualties among Australian personnel serving in 1ATF and 1ALSG.¹⁰ The study noted that:

For every person injured through an Accidental Discharge, there are probably a considerably larger number of Accidental Discharges than [those that]

result in injury. There does not appear to be any objective method of tapping this source of information. The importance of it, of course, is that if incidents not resulting in accidents can be assessed and counter measures devised, the number of men effectively lost through accidents could be reduced.¹¹

Accidental discharges might not result in a charge being laid for a number of reasons. In the right circumstances, quick-thinking soldiers could claim that they had seen an enemy and engaged him thereby converting an accidental discharge into a contact and avoiding punishment. But more commonly, NCOs and junior officers sometimes preferred to reprimand offenders on the spot rather than go through the slow and formal process of a charge. Most soldiers on operations aspired to high standards of professional competence and having an accidental discharge caused them deep embarrassment. This, together with the disapproval of their peers, was usually sufficient to discourage them from repeating the offence. Furthermore, the dynamics of small group cohesion in infantry battalions on operations provides a strong incentive to keep such incidents within the section or platoon unless they resulted in death, injury or damage to equipment. The style of operations in Vietnam in which platoons often operated widely dispersed from their parent company headquarters tended to encourage this. Operations in East Timor are also widely dispersed and small group cohesion continues

Table 1. Accidental discharges – Four Infantry Battalions in Vietnam

Unit	Number of accidental discharges leading to a charge being laid.
5RAR (February 69 to February 70)	26
7RAR (February 70 to February 71)	13
8RAR (November 69 to November 70)	9
9RAR (November 68 to November 69)	56

to be a hallmark of the Australian infantry, armoured and other units. It is likely that many accidental discharges there also go unreported.

Anecdotal evidence from the Vietnam War supports this reluctance to formally charge soldiers who had had an accidental discharge, at least in the case of 8RAR. During interviews with 8RAR ex-soldiers and junior NCOs I was told of numerous cases of accidental discharge which went unreported and uncharged. For example, a section commander recalled that one of his soldiers, armed with an M79 as well as an SLR, had carried the M79 loaded, cocked and slung over his shoulder, contrary to orders. In thick bamboo the M79 had accidentally discharged narrowly missing him. Reflecting a desire to deal with the issue within his section, the section commander recalled "I wouldn't do him in but it was so stupid".¹²

However, while many accidental discharges might have been unreported, the figures in table 1 and for 9RAR in particular, show that

accidental discharges for units deployed to Vietnam reached numbers not dissimilar to those reported for the INTERFET deployment to East Timor. The average number of charges for accidental discharges for each of the four battalions was 25.5 over the course of a one-year deployment to Vietnam.

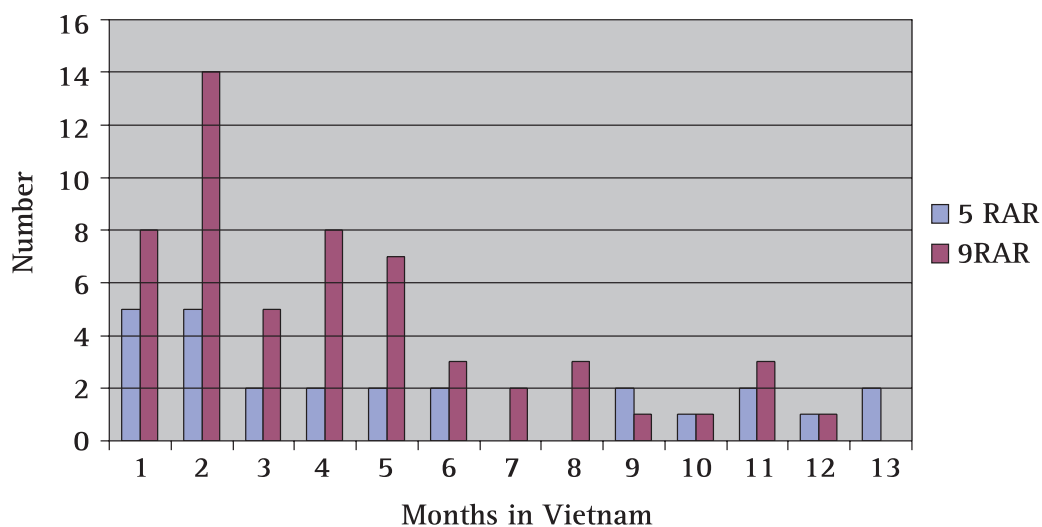
A three battalion deployment, like that for INTERFET, would therefore be expected to produce approximately 75 accidental discharges during a one year deployment.

However, additional analysis of the 5RAR and 9RAR figures shows that accidental discharges were sensitive to time on operations; most occurred in the first four months of the units' deployment to Vietnam. Graph 1 shows the 5RAR and 9RAR accidental discharges plotted by month on operations.¹³

Graph 1 shows that most accidental discharges occurred in the first four months of each battalion's deployment to Vietnam. In fact, 14 of 5RAR's 26 accidental discharges (over half) and 42 of 9RAR's 56 accidental discharges

Graph 1

5RAR and 9RAR: Accidental Discharges by month in Vietnam



(over two-thirds) occurred in the first four months of each unit's deployment. For the remainder of both battalions' tours, accidental discharges became a much less common, almost negligible, occurrence. This suggests that it took the soldiers of both battalions about four months to develop sufficient savvy with weapons safety to significantly reduce the rate of accidental discharges. It also suggests that the number of accidental discharges is not closely related to a safety design problem of a particular weapon. If it were, one would expect to see a much more even distribution of accidental discharges over the battalion tours since the cause of the accidents was constant. To put this another way, the graph suggests that the rate of accidental discharges is more closely related to personal familiarity with weapons and live ammunition, than with other possible factors such as inherent design features of particular weapons.

It would be interesting to know the extent to which reinforcements contributed to the ongoing, "background" level of accidental discharges. New men drafted into battalions to replace those killed, wounded or returned to Australia on the completion of their tour, may have been responsible for the low but steady level of "background" accidents as they passed through the peak of their personal "accident susceptibility curve". Detailed analysis of the charge reports could potentially shed some light on this possibility but that analysis is beyond the capabilities of this study.

In its study of accidents in 1ATF, the Australian Army Operational Research Group (AAORG) report of 1971 found that there was a characteristic, bimodal distribution of accidents (of all sorts) over the twelve-month period of a unit deployment.¹⁴ The report found that most accidents occurred in the first three months of a deployment. However, there was a second period of heightened likelihood of accidents in months eight and nine. The report noted of this phenomenon:

That whilst soldiers are acclimatizing and adjusting to their new environment during the initial stages they are more accident-prone, and during the 8-9 month period in-theatre, ... they reach an emotional low which makes them more susceptible to accidents. ... If these high peaks can be recognized by individual units and provision made to counter the expected upsurge, the number of accidental casualties could be greatly reduced.¹⁵

The AAORG report analysed 230 1ATF accidents (including accidental discharges) where the time-in-theatre was known. Graph 2 shows the results.¹⁶

Graph 2 clearly shows the high rate of accidents of all sorts during the first three to four months of deployment. The deployment of the Australian force to INTERFET lasted just four months. Therefore, assuming that a similar "accident susceptibility curve" applied to the INTERFET force, every Australian unit deployed there was going through its first four months of peak susceptibility to accidents. This could account for the apparently high rate of accidental discharges there.

Sanctions

In the four infantry battalions studied in this article, accidental discharges were regarded as serious offences and attracted significant penalties. However, these varied from battalion to battalion. In 9RAR, an accidental discharge offence of any sort - whether with a weapon or a flare - received 21 days field punishment and 21 days forfeiture of pay. In 7RAR, punishments varied. Some accidental discharges attracted fines of \$40 while other, apparently similar offences attracted fines of only \$10. Interestingly, in 7RAR there was one case of a soldier being charged for failing to report an accidental discharge. In 8RAR there was a standard punishment for the offence. It was a \$40 fine plus 14 days confinement to barracks.

From the evidence, it is not possible to determine whether more severe punishments led to reduced incidence of accidental discharge, or whether they helped to shorten the “accident susceptibility curve”. With the largest number of charges relating to accidental discharges in 9RAR, and 8RAR with the smallest number, both imposed quite severe sanctions on offenders. This suggests that the severity of sanctions against accidental discharges had no impact on the rate at which they occurred. However, further study of this issue is required before that conclusion can be drawn with certainty.

However, it is possible that harsher penalties discouraged reporting of accidental discharges. First, harsh penalties provide a strong disincentive for soldiers to own up to having had an accidental discharge. Second, harsher penalties exceeded the company

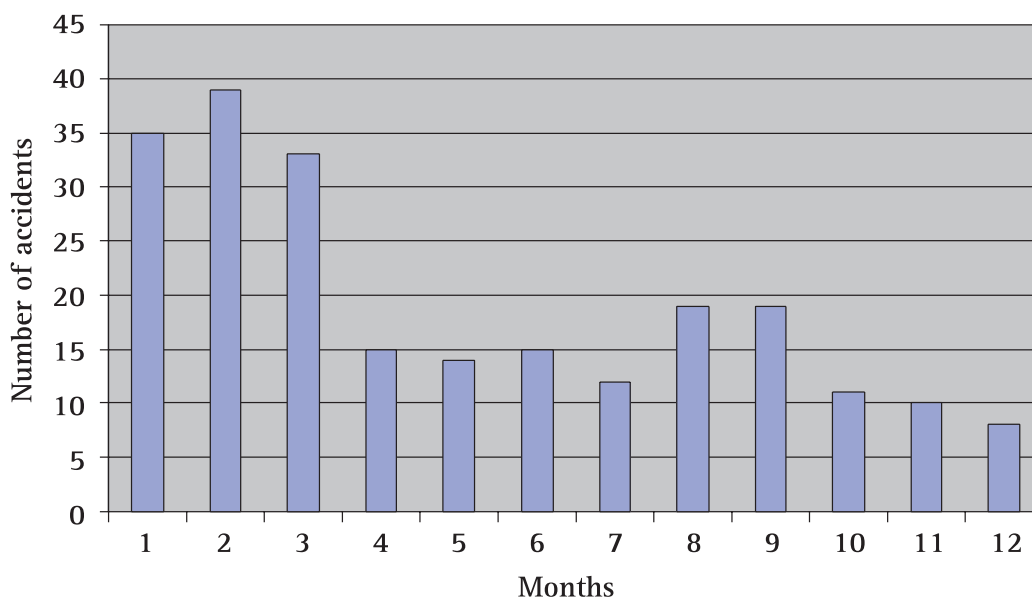
commanders’ powers of punishment resulting in the charges being heard at Battalion level. As we have seen, the pressures of sub-unit cohesion were such that most NCOs and junior officers (and soldiers) preferred that offences be dealt with within the sub-unit. Thus, offences that may otherwise have led to a charge, may have been dealt with informally to keep the issue in-house. This too cannot be determined from the information available to this brief study.

Weapons Involved in Accidental Discharges

The analysis of the Vietnam data above shows that in the first three to four months of an operational deployment, units are particularly susceptible to a high rate of accidents of all sorts including accidental discharges. But there is more. Conveniently, charge reports raised in Vietnam often also recorded the particular variety of weapon

Graph 2

Distribution of accidents over a twelve month period in-theatre



involved in the incident. The weapons involved in 5RAR and 9RAR accidental discharges are shown in Table 2.

The “other weapons” involved in accidental discharges were a 9mm pistol, a signal flare, a CS gas grenade and two claymore mines. Although the figures for 5RAR are small and the number of unidentified weapons relatively large, the figures for both battalions show that the susceptibility to accidental discharge does not appear to have been related to a particular weapon or weapons. Particularly in the 9RAR figures, the weapons involved appear to be represented in approximate proportion to their representation within the battalion. This again suggests that a design feature of a particular weapon was not the cause of the accidental discharge problem.

Conclusions

The Vietnam records show that although many may have gone unreported, the number of accidents (including accidental discharges) were high during the first three to four months of deployment on operations as soldiers familiarised themselves with their weapons and environment. The ability to detect patterns in the incidence of accidental discharges would be improved if all such accidents were reported. However, given the severity of the formal sanctions against those who committed the offence, it is not surprising that many soldiers may have failed to report accidental discharges. The dynamics of small group cohesion also probably discouraged the reporting of some cases of accidental

discharge. No single weapon seems to have been responsible for a disproportionate number of accidental discharges. This suggests that the design of particular weapons or their safety features were not important factors in contributing to accidental discharges.

What does this information mean for the INTERFET deployment? *Operation Warden*, the Australian component of *Operation Stabilise* – the peace support operation to secure East Timor – involved the insertion of three infantry battalions plus other units into East Timor beginning on 20 September 1999. Unlike the unit by unit deployment to Vietnam, *Operation Warden* resulted in several major units arriving in an operational setting at approximately the same time. Thus, each unit was passing through its period of peak susceptibility to accidental discharges at the same time, compounding the effect and probably leading to higher numbers of accidental discharges than might have been expected. There were other factors that might also have contributed to an unknown degree to high rates of accidental discharge in the East Timor deployment. First, unlike operations in the Vietnam War, the nature of *Operation Warden* meant that units had to frequently adjust to changing weapons readiness states. Second, some troops, fresh from Initial Employment Training, were deployed with their infantry battalions on the operation. The lack of depth in their training may have contributed to higher rates of accidental discharge among them.¹⁷ Third, the reservists deployed on the

Table 2 Weapons involved in accidental discharge offences

Weapons	5RAR	9RAR
M60	5	11
SLR	3	20
M16	2	17
M79	1	2
Other weapons	2	3
Unidentified weapons	13	3
Total	26	56

operation (about 3 *per cent* of the force¹⁸) may also have lacked depth in their training and hence, contributed to larger numbers of accidental discharges.

Since the rate of accidental discharge in East Timor appears to have been roughly the same as the rate of accidental discharge in Vietnam, where a completely different set of small arms were used, the design of any particular weapon seems unlikely to be the cause in either case.

While these issues require further study to determine the extent (if any) to which they contributed to accidents, it may be that the accidental discharge rate is entirely explainable as a function of the “accident susceptibility curve” that can be seen in the Vietnam records.

Lessons for Application to Future Deployments

Although there may be other factors at work in causing high levels of accidental discharge, the following lessons seem to present themselves:

The high rate of accidental discharges in INTERFET and in other recent deployments is cause for concern but it should not be unexpected. There was also a high rate of accidental discharge in Vietnam.

The design of the Steyr is probably not the cause of the problem. There were similar patterns of accidental discharge in Vietnam, but with different sorts of weapons. The criticism of the Steyr in regard to accidental discharges probably merely relates to the propensity to blame technology for human faults. Efforts should be made to restore the soldiers' confidence in the Steyr. This lesson is supported by the findings of the recent Board of Inquiry which found the design of the Steyr “not guilty” of contributing to the death.

The bimodal pattern of accidents should be emphasised to soldiers. They should be warned to be extra vigilant against all accidents (including accidental discharges) in the first three to four months of an operational

deployment. They should also be warned about the second peak of susceptibility to accidents in months eight and nine of longer deployments. This lesson is supported by the Board of Inquiry finding that failure to maintain a high awareness of safety had contributed to the soldier's death.

In the period pre-deployment, soldiers should be issued with blank ammunition to allow them to begin their familiarisation with handling loaded weapons as soon as possible and to have their accidental discharges before they get to their area of operations and start using ball ammunition. In this way, the three or four months of high accident susceptibility should be pulled forward into the pre-deployment phase. Also, soldiers should handle live ammunition, of all sorts, as frequently as possible in the pre-deployment phase so that they familiarise themselves with it.

It may be more useful to punish only those accidental discharges that result in death, injury or damage to property. Rather than face punishment, offenders could be counselled that accidental discharges are highly unprofessional and on operations could risk the lives and safety of their mates. Soldiers could be encouraged to report all accidents and since accidental discharge would no longer be a chargeable offence there should be less resistance to doing so. This would provide more information about the pattern of accidents and enable the better monitoring of the “accident susceptibility curve”. Thus soldiers could maintain their vigilance at the appropriate level and the Army would be better able to identify any emerging patterns.

A final lesson of this brief study is that in its Vietnam records now held by the Australian War Memorial, the ADF has access to a wealth of data about the nature of low-level, asymmetric operations. With systematic analysis, this material can help to cut through the loss of corporate memory and operational experience that can bedevil the ADF from time

to time. Careful analysis of this material could help the ADF to avoid re-inventing the wheel every time a problem, like an apparently high rate of accidental discharge, comes along.

NOTES

1. Robert Garran, *The Australian*, 11 August 2000, "Corporal's death triggers query on army rifle safety", Paul Daley and Mark Dodd, *The Age*, 11 August 2000, "Questions over Timor death", and Karen Middleton, the *West Australian*, 11 August 2000, "Soldier death sparks probe".
2. *The Age*, 11 August 2000.
3. *The Age*, 11 August 2000.
4. *The Australian*, 11 August 2000.
5. M. Horan, *The Sunday Times*, 30 April 2000, "Australian rifles miss the mark".
6. Department of Defence Media Release, Military Board of Inquiry Findings - Death of Corporal Stuart Jones, 14 June 2001.
7. *ibid.*
8. The term accidental discharge is self-explanatory. "Unauthorised discharge" refers to the deliberate firing of a weapon for unauthorised reasons.
9. The following Australian War Memorial files were examined: AWM103, R271-1-67; HQ 1ATF Discipline - General, 5RAR: R271 - 1 - 34 (Parts 1 to 3); HQ 1ATF, Discipline - General, AAF A4's 7RAR: R271 - 1 - 35; HQ 1ATF, Discipline - General, AAF A4's 8RAR and R271 - 1 - 78; HQ 1ATF, Discipline - General, 9RAR.
10. Australian Army Operational Research Group, AAORG Report 1/71 - Accidental Casualty Study South Vietnam, February 1971.
11. *ibid.*, p. 13.
12. Robert A. Hall, *Combat Battalion: The Eighth Battalion in Vietnam*, Allen and Unwin, 2000, p. 251.
13. Note that for both battalions, the first month of deployment to Vietnam was a part month. 5RAR arrived in Vietnam on 3 February 1969. 9RAR arrived in Vietnam on 15 November 1969.
14. Australian Army Operational Research Group, Report 1/71, Accidental Casualty Study - South Vietnam, February 1971, p. 21.
15. *ibid.*
16. *ibid.*, p. 65.
17. Ian Bostock, "By the book", *Janes Defence Weekly*, 3 May 2000, p. 25.
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Is Increasing Gender Equity in the ADF Improving Operational Capability?

By Major L. Nemitschenko, ARES

I don't think the process (of getting women into combat units like the infantry) is gender related myself...But I think what we have to focus on is, are the individuals capable of doing the job?'

Admiral C. Barrie

When the Australian Women's Army Service (AWAS) was formed in 1939, women were allowed entry to only a restricted range of duties. In the years following, the ADF steadily expanded opportunities for women. In 1990 the decision was made to allow female Service personnel into combat related jobs. For women Service members, currently comprising 14 *per cent* of the ADF (Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women), the right to serve in combat positions remains as the final barrier to full gender equity.

Increasing gender equity in the ADF, then, means opening to women those areas of Service from which they are excluded at present: serving on submarines in the Navy; in armoured, artillery infantry and combat engineers units in the Army; and operating combat aircraft and duties as airfield defence guards.² It is also likely to mean that selection will be based not on gender, but, in Chief Admiral Barrie's words, on the "...ability to do the job".

While a number of countries including the Netherlands, Canada, Belgium and Norway already allow women to serve in combat roles, the issue is still being hotly debated in Australia, the UK and the United States. Arguments, many of them statements of attitude and bias, have been put forward on both sides of the debate concerning the consequences of such a change for the combat effectiveness of the armed services.

The aim of this article is to present available historical evidence of women in active combat; to outline the arguments

commonly advanced by both sides of the debate; and on the basis of evidence and arguments presented, to consider what effect increasing gender equity by allowing women into combat roles, is likely to have on the operational capability of Australia's defence forces. In examining this question, it is necessary first to provide a definition that will help to discriminate between combat-related and combat roles.

Definition of Combat and Combat-related Jobs

Technological advances have increased the reach and power of weapons and "most killing is effected by remote means".³ It is no longer easy to define the distinction between combat-related and combat duties. The 1984 Sex Discrimination Regulations define combat duties as: "Duties requiring a person to commit, or participate directly in the commission of, an act of violence against an adversary in time of war."⁴ It defines combat-related duties as: "Duties requiring a person to work in support of, and in close proximity to, a person performing combat duties, being work performed in circumstances in which the person performing the work may be killed or injured by an act of violence committed by an adversary."⁵ Deployment of female medical personnel in combat zones is combat-related duty. US servicewomen flying aircraft and helicopters far forward of the front line of battle is combat duty. In this article, the definitions in the Regulations will be applied.

Historical Perspective

Historical records show evidence of women soldiers, dating back to Boadicea, queen of the Icenii in Britain, who led her troops in battle against the occupying Roman forces. In medieval times the list of women commanding armies includes Eleanor of Aquitaine; Jane of Flanders; Elizabeth I of England; Queen Margaret of Denmark; Catherine the Great; Isabella of Spain; and Joan of Arc. The female regiments of Dahomey in the 19th century had a reputation for fierceness, won in close hand-to-hand combat. Our knowledge of the conditions under which these women warriors trained, lived and fought is scant and the relevance of these historical examples to our own situation is therefore limited.

More relevant to the contemporary situation, however, are the accounts of women soldiers in the Second World War. British women members of the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) served in mixed gender anti-aircraft (AA) batteries, carrying out all operations with the exception of actually engaging the firing mechanism of the machine-guns. By September 1943, over 56,000 women were working for AA Command. In terms of our definition of combat duties, these women served in "the situation where an enemy is directly engaged over long distances and can retaliate..." that is to say, they were serving in a combat role. A total of 389 ATS women were either killed or wounded.⁶

Concerns about the women's ability to carry out the tasks required, about effects on unit bonding and morale and the potential for sexual scandals, proved groundless. General Sir Frederick Arthur Pile, the commanding officer who had first proposed that women should be employed in the anti-aircraft batteries, in his 1949 account of the AA batteries, concluded that "the experiment had exceeded even my more sanguine hopes."⁷ Battery commanders reported that bonding between fellow workers, male and female, in the mixed batteries was close, morale was high and the standard of drill and turn-out achieved was "better than in

any male unit..."⁸ An AA corps commander told Pile that the women "...learn quickly, and once having mastered the subject very seldom make mistakes...Contrary to expectations, their voices carry well and can be clearly heard in the din of gunfire."⁹ Comparing how women and men performed in identical jobs, British AA leaders found that the women excelled in some areas, were comparable in others and were inferior in a few.

These findings were consistent with the results of an American experiment carried out by General George Marshall in 1943. Members of the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAAC) were trained on two composite anti-aircraft gun batteries and the nearby searchlight units, and worked in mixed gender units. The results indicated that mixed gender units performed better than all-male units. Despite these findings the Marshall experiment was terminated and American servicewomen were not used in combat. This decision was based not on the combat effectiveness of the mixed units, but on the hostility of public opinion at that time toward women in non-traditional gender roles.

At least 800,000 women served in Soviet forces during the Second World War. Over half of these were in frontline duty units and thousands helped to defend Stalingrad. The commander of the Soviet 62nd Army in Stalingrad, General Colonel Vasily Chuikov, known as a ruthless and competent leader, said of women soldiers, "You can trust something to a woman. You feel confident that your order will be fulfilled at any cost."¹⁰

For the BBC's documentary on the war on the Eastern Front, Laurence Rees interviewed a number of women who had fought in the war. Their accounts indicate that women in the front line of battle fought no less effectively than men, were as capable of killing the enemy as were men, and showed as much aggression and determination in battle as men. No accounts suggested that men in battle were distracted from fighting the enemy by instincts

to protect women soldiers. There were no accounts of women soldiers becoming pregnant. Russian women also served in ground combat operations, in infantry and command positions, and in air regiments, flying combat missions, including night bomber missions. More than 1000 women graduated from a special sniper school.¹¹

Czechoslovakian, Yugoslavian and Polish women took part in active combat in resistance and partisan groups during the Nazi occupation of their countries. A Lieutenant V. Rennel flew armed missions for the French Air Service; Alma Allen led missions against Nazis occupying Denmark; and Ruth Weber, another Dane, served as a machine-gunner aboard a merchant ship running the Nazi blockade under allied flags.¹²

During the War of Liberation, in 1948, Israeli women soldiers comprised about 20 *per cent* of the combat force and successfully took part in both offensive and defensive actions. There are reports of Israeli women fighting in 1956 and 1960, and of armed female commandos as late as 1966. The post-1948 restrictions on Israeli women soldiers are based on negative reactions of male soldiers and negative public opinion, rather than on lack of combat effectiveness of the women.

In Cuba, Korea and Vietnam, women fought alongside men in wars and revolutions. The “Tiger Lady of the Delta”, adjutant of the 44th Rangers, was described as “formidable and ruthless”. Under her command, 40 South Vietnamese women engaged the Viet Cong, killing 22 of the enemy. The Tiger Lady, who was decorated for bravery several times, was killed in action in 1965.¹³

More recently, in the Gulf War, US servicewomen operated Patriot anti-missile batteries and flew aircraft and helicopters over the front line.¹⁴ The combat effectiveness of these women was not affected by physiological factors such as menstruation or female hygiene. In terms of physical strength, they were able to carry out whatever was required of them. Psychologically,

they showed high levels of emotional resistance during and after the fighting.

Issues in Debate

Arguments put forward by both sides in the debate about women in combat roles include myth and reality, the factual and the emotional. The issue of women as warriors seems to tap into deeply held and emotionally loaded attitudes and values about gender roles. Perhaps this explains the intense reactions generated by any discussion of the issue. In this debate, arguments fall into three main categories; biological; psychological; and sociological.¹⁵

Men generally have greater physical strength and bigger hearts and lungs than women. This gives the advantage over women in speed, throwing and jumping ability and cardio-respiratory factors. However, differences in strength exist within as well as between genders. Some men do not have the strength to carry out certain tasks, just as some women do. Ability to do the job, rather than gender, may, therefore, be the more relevant criterion for job selection.

Technological advances have reduced the importance of physical strength. The relevant consideration may no longer be how strong women are but how strong they need to be to perform the tasks required of them. Since “(m)ost modern military weapons are crew-serviced...” individual levels of physical strength have become less important.¹⁶ Other factors, such as fitness, agility and technical competence, are also important and should not be overlooked.¹⁷

Menstruation, personal hygiene needs associated with menstruation, and pregnancy are seen as presenting problems in combat units. Menstruation is seen as likely to restrict women’s physical capabilities and result in decreased efficiency due to sick leave. It has also been suggested that the tendency for synchronisation of menstrual cycles of women living together could have negative physical and psychological effects on military units with a high proportion of women.

Research studies looking at the number of sick days taken by men and women show, however, that there are no significant differences. Moreover, many women lead physically active lives with no interference from their menstrual cycle. Personal hygiene associated with menstruation only “marginally increases the logistic support required” in the field.¹⁸

US women soldiers serving in the Gulf considered that menstruation and female hygiene were “...relative trivialities”.¹⁹ Time lost through pregnancy is, on average, “no greater than lost time for men due to injury or disciplinary problems”.²⁰ The incidence of unplanned pregnancies should not be high, given effective education and the availability of contraception.

Psychological arguments focus on gender role identity, women’s emotionality and lower aggressiveness. Combat is seen by some as a way for males to reaffirm their maleness. Men are said to see military service as “a validation of their own virility and a certificate of manhood”.²¹ Traditionally, men’s role is to protect women and children, while women’s is to nurture and support. Men’s masculinity is challenged by having women perform traditionally male jobs. Simply put, women soldiers deprive men of their masculinity thus weakening their motivation and will to fight.

Another, related argument is that soldiers are able to survive the psychological stresses of combat by preserving the image of the normal world of mothers, wives and sweethearts, back home. If women participate in combat, the soldier cannot maintain this psychologically protective image, and loses a sense of what he is fighting for, with negative consequences for morale.²²

The presence of women fighting beside men may distract men from the task at hand. In battle men will instinctively protect women, to the detriment of combat effectiveness and their own safety. The one example quoted in support of this is the experience in Israel during the War of Independence. However, there is no evidence of such behaviour in

Soviet mixed combat units or among partisans in the Ukraine, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia during the Second World War.

The presence of women in combat roles weakens not only the way male soldiers experience their masculinity, but also the image of the defence force as a whole in the eyes of the enemy. A strong military image acts as a deterrent against outside aggression, and weakening the image weakens the deterrent value. On the other hand, it is possible that a nation’s determination to defend itself may be seen as particularly strong, if it is prepared to use even its women in defence.

Women’s lack of emotional stability is sometimes put forward as an argument against their participation in combat. Empirical evidence to support this is lacking. On the other hand, women are generally better able to express emotions and to deal openly with emotional stress, whereas men tend to repress and internalise emotions, with detrimental longer-term effects on their psychological and physical health. Women are said to lack the killer instinct required for soldiering. Aggression in men is linked to their higher levels of testosterone. Women, with their lower levels of testosterone, are said to be less capable of aggression. Certainly, crime statistics show that men commit substantially more crimes of violence than do women.

However, the assumption that more aggressive individuals are likely to be more effective soldiers is not proven. It may also be that men’s willingness to kill is over-estimated. Statistics on firing rates in the Civil War and later wars indicate that a relatively low 15-20 *per cent* of soldiers were willing to kill the enemy.²³ In any case, training can overcome reluctance to kill. The US was able to raise firing rates to over 95 *per cent* in Vietnam by modifying training procedures.

As far as women’s killer instinct is concerned, evidence from the Second World War shows that women soldiers fighting on the Eastern Front did not lack the

aggressiveness and killer instinct required to make them effective soldiers nor did US servicewomen in the Gulf War.

Sociological arguments include behaviours as well as attitudes and beliefs. The presence of women in combat units, it is argued, will prevent bonding and *esprit de corps* within the unit because of sexual liaisons and sexual tensions. In POW situations, where group cohesiveness is especially important, sexual liaisons are likely to lead to dissension, fights and low morale, and to provide the enemy with opportunities to exploit the situation.²⁴

Currently, most civilian workplaces are mixed gender, as are many military units. There is much evidence that close working relationships of a non-sexual nature are the rule where men and women work together. One example, previously discussed, was the experience in mixed gender AA batteries in Britain during the Second World War, where morale, bonding and unit cohesiveness were, if anything, better than in segregated units.

Traditionally, women have been expected to bear and raise children and to perform nurturing and caring functions while men protected women and the community and fought wars away from home. However, warfare now is not contained as it was in the past, and civilian women and children are no longer protected by their civilian status and distance from the battleground. "The combat zone can no longer be defined within easy parameters."²⁵

From the pragmatic point of view of maintaining population levels, the loss of numbers of males is less damaging than the loss of equal number of females. However, given the problems of global overpopulation, maintaining population levels may not be an issue.

Substantial changes occurred in the 20th century in female roles, largely as a result of the feminist movement. Despite, or perhaps because of, the substantial widening of the role of women, some men feel resentment and hostility towards women, whom they perceive as encroaching on what were traditionally

male domains, increasing the competition in those domains, and diminishing masculine power and masculinity. Male hostility can be particularly strong towards women with power and authority, and for some men, their discomfort with the power relationship between the sexes appears to be adequate reasons for excluding women from combat roles. This attitude is encapsulated in a comment made by an Australian soldier in East Timor to a reporter interviewing soldiers about their views on British Army trials of women in combat. "...I couldn't stand the thought of having a sheila screaming orders at me," he is quoted as saying.²⁶

Existing problems of sexual discrimination and sexual harassment are seen as likely to increase if women take on combat roles. As the perpetrators of sexual harassment and discrimination are very largely males, denying opportunities to women on this basis, instead of making efforts to change male behaviour, may be seen as a further instance of sex discrimination.

"The military does not belong to men. It belongs to the citizens of the country, over half of whom are women".²⁷ Some proponents of women in combat roles see the issue as mainly a civil rights one, similar to women's right to vote. Those who are in opposition argue that the presence of women in fighting units will decrease fighting effectiveness and that the issue of citizen rights should be secondary to the issue of national safety.

Politicians and military leaders often assert that society at large is not ready to accept women in combat roles. The few indicators of public opinion that exist on this issue do not support these assertions. In Australia, community attitudes on this issue have not been tested by opinion polls but in New Zealand, public opinion was polled in 1986. The results indicated that 48 *per cent* of the population believed women should be able to take part in combat. There were no significant differences between male and female responses. Among those under 35 years, 59 *per*



Women Service members currently comprise 14 per cent of the ADF.

Photograph: W02 A. Green.

cent responded favourably, compared with only 31 *per cent* of those over 55 years.²⁸

Within the ADF itself, a 1987 study of women in the armed services found that “...fifty seven *per cent* thought properly trained women should be allowed to serve in combat positions...” and “...forty five *per cent* said they would be willing to serve in combat positions...”.²⁹ Younger servicewomen responded more favourably than older ones.

Effects on Operational Capability

Historical evidence, presented above, suggests that women in combat roles do not decrease military effectiveness. Commanders in the Gulf War said they were “...convinced of women’s efficacy in the front line”.³⁰ Will women in combat roles increase operational capability? This question needs to be considered in the context of demographic, technological and societal changes.

In Australia, as in many Western countries, traditional values of service are declining, as are the proportions of young males in the population. “The proportion of 15–24 year old males in the Australian population... will decline from 16.6 *per cent* in 1990 to between 12.2 *per cent* and 13.2 *per cent* over the next 30 years”.³¹ These two factors, together with the absence of compulsory national service in Australia, are resulting in a shortfall of young male volunteers entering military service. At the same time, societal approval is growing for greater equality and increased participation by women, and more women are moving into non-traditional jobs, including ADF jobs. Making up the shortfall in male numbers by recruiting women may be an advantage. “The women who do enlist are likely to be more highly qualified and more committed than the males who would otherwise be recruited.”³²

The nature of warfare has undergone enormous change in the last half-century and the pace of technological change has not halted. “The era of hand-to-hand combat is in the process of being replaced by computer

guided techno-weapons.”³³ The combat zone is no longer contained. It is likely that future technological advances will further blur the distinctions between combat-related and combat duties. In 1990, Hugh Smith wrote, “The greater the proportion of women in the ADF, the more likely they are to be involved in combat, whatever government policy may prescribe.”³⁴ This is exactly what happened in the Gulf War. The participation of servicewomen in combat roles resulted not from changes in US military policy, but because “(p)lans on paper to keep female soldiers out of the combat zone were unworkable in a war of long-distance missiles rather than trenches”.³⁵

Attempts to extract servicewomen from situations that become combat, not just combat-related, are unlikely to be viable and would be detrimental to military effectiveness. Such problems would not arise with gender-integrated units in which servicemen and servicewomen had equal roles.

In the decades since Vietnam, the ADF has been involved mainly in peacekeeping missions. The skills required to deal with civilians in crisis are very different from skills of war fighting. Skills and abilities other than physical strength and aggressiveness are called for. Women possess these skills in equal, if not in greater, measure than do men.

We are moving into a future where our defence force will rely more heavily on female recruits to make up shortfalls in numbers of male recruits, and where the conditions of war will no longer permit clear delineation into combat and non-combat zones. Policy distinctions will not prevent women soldiers finding themselves in combat roles. Whether the participation of women in combat roles will increase the future operational capability of the ADF will depend on policies and actions taken now. For example, in combat, a diversity of skills is needed and the diverse complementary capabilities of men and women can be used

to advantage to extend and improve the operational capability of our defence force.

If the different capabilities of women are to be exploited to advantage, changes will need to be made in some areas. It is already the case that modern weapons do not rely on brute strength. For example, "...the nuclear-armed ICBM functions regardless of gender altogether".³⁶ Equipment which currently is physically difficult for women (and incidentally for those male soldiers who are smaller and more lightly built) to handle could be modified to make it easier for everyone to use.

The present approach to training, which is based on male physique, can be adapted to make it more appropriate to female physiques. Currently, for example, physical training at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, results in a disproportionate number of injuries among female officer cadets. Instead of improving human resources, this kind of training is actually disabling them, and ultimately decreasing the operational effectiveness of the defence forces. In 1995, then Federal Government Minister Gary Punch, asked a pertinent question in relation to training women to the necessary level of fitness when he said, "The question is, can we do it differently and get the same results?".³⁷

While changes to equipment design and training will be a significant challenge, the greater challenge will be changing hostile attitudes towards women in the military in general and in combat roles in particular. These attitudes appear to be based in great part on men's fears. Cheeseman suggests that "(t)he presence of women in the military may serve to legitimise their place in society... but it threatens also to undermine men's privileged position within both the military and the state".³⁸ Deep-seated fears leading to hostile attitudes and to sexual harassment and associated discriminatory practices are not easily changed by policies and punitive measures.

As attitudes toward women change in society at large, so they will change within the armed forces. However, attitude change can be actively promoted. Research findings show that women are better accepted by male peers and perform better in units where commanders actively support their presence.³⁹

Conclusion

This article has presented evidence of women in combat roles. Historical accounts show that women have fought affectively in combat situations alongside men, with no detrimental effects on the operational capability of their units.

Despite the empirical evidence of history, debate on the issue of women in combat roles continues in all but a handful of Western countries. This article has summarised the arguments most commonly put by opponents and proponents in the debate.

Taking into account historical evidence and the various arguments from both sides of the debate, this article draws the conclusion that increasing gender equity can increase the human resource available to the military and provide a more diverse set of skills and capabilities which can be used to advantage. However, unless negative and hostile attitudes, which undermine morale and affect performance, can be turned around, only limited benefits to operational capability will accrue from increasing gender equity.

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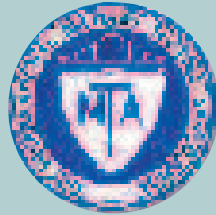
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**The 43rd annual conference of the
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- Human factors
- Occupational analysis
- Training technology and methodology
- Leadership and organisational behaviour
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The conference will be held at the National Convention Centre, Canberra. The conference registration fee is \$400, which includes a reception and banquet.

As this is an international event attracting visitors from overseas, registration for the conference is encouraged as early as possible.

**Further details on the conference, including registration and paper/symposium proposal forms, can be found at
<http://internationalmta.org>.**

The Blamey Oration

By The Hon Peter Reith, Minister for Defence

An edited address to the Royal United Service Institute of Queensland, Brisbane on 16 May 2001.

If it was good enough to name a university after Monash then we should do more to honour Thomas Blamey's name and memory. He was, undoubtedly, a great Australian and a great soldier. He is indeed one of our two greatest soldiers, the other being Monash.

But I don't want to diminish the importance of the Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey Square, it is in the middle of the Defence Headquarters in Canberra to demonstrate the central role Blamey has in Australian military tradition.

And this speech – the Blamey Oration – has become a significant event, thanks to my many distinguished predecessors on the platform and as a tribute to the importance of Blamey to strategic thinking. I am therefore honoured to have been invited to deliver this year's oration. And I am delighted that it gives me the opportunity to set out my thinking on the historical context of our new Defence White Paper.

The strategic policy that the Government has set out in the *White Paper* is of course carefully tuned to the challenges and uncertainties of Australia's strategic future, and to the ever-changing potential of new technologies. But it also reflects and draws upon deep continuities in our national strategic history. Those continuities spring from the enduring fundamentals of our strategic geography, and from the inherent characteristics of our society.

I think it is very important for us to explain how our policy today stands in relation to those deep continuities.

Our understanding of Australia's strategic history must never circumscribe our policy, but

it must always inform our thinking and nourish our judgements.

Today I want to sketch a few important aspects of the historical context of this Government's strategic policy. There could be no better occasion to do this than the Blamey Oration – honouring as we do the memory of a man who is arguably Australia's greatest *strategic* commander.

The contrast between Monash and Blamey is instructive – and may go some way to explain their different treatment by history. Monash, of course, was a fighting commander – a leader of troops in battle. He was certainly one of the best tactical commanders of the First World War, and has some claim to be among the great tacticians of the century. He richly deserves his place in our national pantheon.

Blamey too saw a lot of action in the First World War. He was there at the beginning, going ashore at Gallipoli on 25 April. And he was there at the culmination, at Monash's side as his Chief of Staff at Hamel – the high point of Australia's war and of Monash's career. But Blamey's place in Australia's history does not rest on his achievements in the First World War. Nor do they rest on his achievements as a tactical commander of troops in battle.

For Blamey was not a tactician; he was a strategist. As a strategist, he did perhaps more than any other person to guide Australia through the dark days of the Pacific War. It was Monash's lot to command some of the finest troops the world has ever seen in some of the greatest battles in history.

Blamey's lot was in some ways tougher – to try to steer an ill-prepared and dispirited

country through what was then, and remains today, its greatest crisis.

Squeezed between the wilful MacArthur and the Australian political leadership under Curtin, Blamey made the most of our pitifully sparse military resources to defend Australia, and to promote Australia's strategic interests as the war progressed. He was, as one historian has said, careful of Australian lives, and even more protective of Australian interests.

Nothing he did had the luminous success of Hamel. But much of what he did was, ultimately, more important to Australia.

There is no doubt he was a complex man, and in some ways a difficult one. But he deserves a bigger place in our national pantheon than he now occupies. He should be up there closer to Monash.

In a sense, the careers and achievements of Blamey and Monash encapsulate the two sides of the big question that has dominated Australia's strategic policy debate since Federation. That debate has been conducted in different terms at different times. Before and after the First World War, it was Imperial Defence versus Home Defence. In the 1950s and 60s, it was Forward Defence versus Fortress Australia. In more recent times, it has been Regional Engagement versus Defence of Australia. But the issues have been surprisingly consistent.

At the heart of the debate has lain this simple question: should we build our armed forces to defend our own territory, or should we give priority to working, with others, to defeat more distant threats before they get close to Australia?

This question has drawn in its wake a number of smaller but still significant ones: what relative priority should we give to land forces and maritime forces? What reliance can we place in great and powerful friends? And how can we tell when and where in the world a crisis may threaten Australia's longer-term interests.

These questions have been argued over for a century now. Partly those arguments have addressed the merits of the issues and the impact of changing circumstances. Often, too, they have reflected the ideological predilections of the contending parties. And among uniformed circles the debates have always been conducted at least partly with an eye to the consequences of different positions for the interests of the Services themselves in the relentless competition with one another for slices of the budget.

Monash's achievements in France in 1918 mark in some ways the high water mark of "forward defence".

The critical role he and his troops played in stopping the great German Spring offensive of that year constitutes probably the most momentous single contribution Australia has made to international strategic affairs in our 100 years of national history.

Blamey's tribulations in 1942 mark, by contrast, the supreme crisis in Australia's strategic history, in which the need to defend our own territory from direct attack became the overriding concern of every Australian.

The contest between these two views of Australia's strategic destiny was framed even before Federation, but it matured and deepened in the robust and surprisingly sophisticated debates that surrounded the establishment and development of Australia's armed forces under the new Commonwealth in the first years of the century.

The quality of those debates does great credit to the Commonwealth's first leaders. They took the momentous decision to establish an Australian Navy, and conducted a robust debate about the proper roles and functions of Australia's Army. Many contributed, but the towering figure is that of Alfred Deakin.

Deakin has a respectable claim to be the finest strategic thinker ever to be elected to public office in Australia. He understood well the central dilemma of Australian strategic policy at the turn of the century.

Britain's power was waning relative to its European neighbours, and so it had to focus more and more on the security of its own islands. This led inexorably to divergences in strategic interests and outlook between London and the colonies. But at the same time, Australia had no option but to rely primarily on Britain for its defence.

As early as 1887, when Deakin went to London for the first Colonial Conference, he expressed in robust terms that British policy must take full account of the strategic interests of its self-governing colonies. His contribution was the highlight of the Conference, and made a huge impression in London.

But Deakin did more than argue in Whitehall. He also argued strongly that Australia must be prepared to help itself, and be able actively to support the Empire if the Empire was to support Australia. The separate colonies were too small to have an effective voice in London, and too small to maintain effective armed forces. So his solution to Australia's strategic dilemma was, of course, Federation.

After Federation, Deakin led the way in forging links with the US, and in analysing the importance of strategic developments in Asia to our future security. And he took the leading role, often in fierce debates, in arguing that we needed to build our own navy.

Revisiting those early defence debates today, we find echoes of many of the issues raised in last year's public consultation program on the *White Paper*, led by Andrew Peacock.

Could Australia afford a viable navy of its own, and did we have the technical skills to operate one? Or were we better off relying on the might of the Royal Navy for maritime defence, and concentrate our resources on land forces? Did we have any doubts that our imperial allies would be there to help when we needed them, or might we need to defend our own territory ourselves? Who could possibly be the threat?

In relation to the Army, should we build our forces to defend Australia's own territory, or should we optimise our forces for what we would now call coalition operations abroad? What role do our land forces have in the defence of Australia? What premium should we place on interoperability with allies?

Students of politics, or indeed of human nature, would not be surprised to learn that the decisions finally made represented a compromise between the competing views.

It was decided that we did need a navy of our own, but it would be closely linked to the Royal Navy, and available to support it in our region in the event of major conflict.

And it was agreed that Australia's Army should be raised primarily for home defence, but that efforts would be made to ensure interoperability with other Empire forces, so that we could work with them in combined operations if necessary.

On two things there was clear agreement. First, that Australia did have a distinct set of strategic interests of its own, sometimes different from Britain's, and it was the Australian Government's responsibility to look after them. Second, that this would cost money. It has been noted that before the First World War, Australia had the fourth highest defence spending *per capita* in the world. Our founding fathers took defence very seriously.

This intense and impressive strategic debate in the first years of the Commonwealth has been to some extent shrouded by the disasters of World War I. One can argue at length about the rights and wrongs of Australia's involvement in that terrible conflict. For a long time it was fashionable to see Australia as a victim. According to this version, we were swept into a conflict that had nothing to do with us, motivated not by national self-interest but by a spirit of naive and sentimental imperial enthusiasm, cynically exploited by the hard men of Whitehall.

I think that view is now being overtaken by a more mature understanding whatever the



General Sir Thomas Blamey (who signed for Australia), centre front, with the other Australian Delegates at the Japanese surrender ceremony on board USS Missouri, Tokyo Bay, Japan, 2 September 1945. AWM Neg. 019136

arguments about the origins and military blunders of the war.

Australia's leaders did understand that, once it had broken out, our strategic interests were deeply engaged in the struggle in Europe. Its outcome would critically affect the balance of power in Asia, where Japan's rising power was already seen as a threat.

After the armistice, Australians like almost everyone else, tried to forget about war. We joined with enthusiasm in the efforts to remake world affairs through the League of Nations, and to promote disarmament. Under the terms of the *Washington Naval Treaty*, our finest warship, the battlecruiser HMAS *Australia*, was sailed out of Sydney Heads one day in 1924 and scuttled.

We did less to guard against the possibility that the optimism of the early 1920s would prove misplaced. Our response to the gathering

clouds of the 1930s was inadequate. Despite impressive efforts in some areas in the late 1930s, when war came again in 1939 Australia was ill prepared either for home defence or to support our allies.

After the war, the key lesson of Munich was well and truly learned. Australians recognised that we could not be secure in an insecure region, and that events around the world could influence our security directly as well. The Cold War affected us all. We prepared to fight in the Middle East, and did indeed fight in Korea, Malaya, in Borneo and of course in Vietnam.

The dominant figure of this time was of course Bob Menzies. Much has been made by later critics of his strong sense of Empire. Less attention is paid to the fact that it was his Labor predecessors who were determined to

rebuild the strategic links with Britain after World War II.

It was Menzies and his ministers who really set the new framework for Australia's post-war strategic posture. They built the ANZUS alliance, established the first strategic links with the emerging new nations of post-colonial Asia, and started the task of building the military foundations of Australia's self-reliant defence posture. Much of the ADF of today was shaped by decisions made by Menzies in the 1960s.

Recently there was an outcry over a letter he wrote early in World War II, in which he expressed support for the idea of a negotiated peace with Hitler. How easy is the luxury of hindsight to those who have never faced a tough decision. How lacking in imagination not to see how, in 1939, a negotiated peace might have seemed worth pursuing. Knowing what we know now, there was almost no chance for a negotiated peace in 1939. But knowing what he knew then, how can he be criticised for trying to make sure that every avenue for peace was exhausted?

Likewise it is easy now to deride the Domino Theory of the 1950s and 1960s. How many of us today can claim we would have seen things differently? The time has come for a new appreciation of Menzies and his era, particularly his strategic achievements. He brought Australia safely through one of the most difficult and turbulent periods of our history. That was indeed one of his lasting achievements.

By the time Menzies retired, even as our Vietnam commitment was approaching its peak, the underlying trends were starting to change.

When our Vietnam commitment drew to a close in the early 1970s, Australia's strategic circumstances had altered profoundly. The early post-colonial turbulence in South-East Asia was coming to an end, as a fledgling ASEAN reflected the will and ability of its members to get their houses in order and build

a stable and prosperous region. Indonesia in particular, under Suharto, was seen as moving from being a strategic problem for its neighbours to being an important pillar of regional security.

Over the same years, relations were opened with China, the British withdrew east of Suez, and Nixon's Guam Doctrine redrew America's expectations of, and undertakings to, its allies. And of course the experience of Vietnam produced a change in outlook towards foreign interventions that shaped attitudes for 20 years.

All these changes produced a major revolution in Australian strategic policy. Since 1939, most Australians had accepted the pre-eminence of the "Forward Defence" element of our national strategic position. Australia was aligned globally with the Western Alliance in the Cold War, deeply engaged in the strategic affairs of our region, and maintained well-respected capabilities to contribute to alliance operations far from our shores. We were not well equipped to undertake the defence of our own territory even against minor attacks.

As the world changed around us, it was clear that we needed to rethink. This began in the late 1960s and early 1970s when my predecessors as Minister of Defence, Malcolm Fraser and John Gorton, started to look anew at the foundations of our policy. A major departure was marked by the publication in 1972 of a review of our strategic policy that foreshadowed much of what was to come.

But it was not until the *Defence White Paper* of 1976 that the new direction was clearly set down. In that document, the Fraser Government established the primary place of the self-reliant defence of Australia in our national strategic posture. The pendulum had swung from Forward Defence to Continental Defence.

Over the subsequent 15 years, the basic policies of the 1976 *White Paper* set the key directions for Australian strategic policy. But with the end of the Cold War, new challenges

started to emerge. Four trends in particular have driven significant revision in strategic policy over the past decade, and especially under the Howard Government, culminating in our new Defence White Paper.

The first of these trends has been the way the relative strategic certainties of the later decades of the Cold War in Asia have given way to an increasingly complex and fluid regional strategic environment, in which Australia's strategic interests are deeply engaged. There are new uncertainties about future relations between the region's great powers. In the 1980s it was possible for Australia to limit its strategic horizons to what was called its "area of broad strategic interest", which covered only South-East Asia and the Southwest Pacific. Over the 1990s we have had to recognise that our strategic interests are closely engaged throughout the Asia Pacific region, and to think about how those interests can best be supported.

The second trend has been the growth in military capabilities, especially air and naval capabilities, in many countries in the Asia Pacific.

In the 1980s, Australia's defence policy spoke rather smugly of our enduring technological edge over other countries in the Asia Pacific region. That smugness now looks misguided. Australia can no longer take for granted that our forces will retain a decisive superiority over others in the region. We will have to work to retain our place.

The third of these trends has been the increased willingness of national communities, including Australia's, to deploy forces to support a wide range of operations overseas, ranging from full scale peace-enforcement such as the 1991 Gulf War to peacekeeping operations like INTERFET and humanitarian relief. These operations place real demands on our defence forces and they must be trained, equipped and prepared to meet those demands.

Fourth, over the past decade a series of problems in our own region has undermined

the easy assumptions about our immediate strategic environment that guided much of our policy making in the 80s and early 90s. Current situations in the Solomons, PNG, East Timor and Indonesia show how widespread and persistent these problems now are.

Taken together, I believe historians will see these developments as the biggest set of changes to our strategic situation since the late 1960s. They have required an equivalent scale of response. The Howard Government has worked hard and consistently to fashion that response. In 1997 the Government released a review of Australia's strategic policy which for the first time drew attention to the long-term consequences for Australia of the trends outlined above.

In particular, it set out a clear statement of Australia's strategic interests, and articulated the long-term strategic challenge for Australia to maintain its place among the region's major military powers. In doing so it laid an essential foundation for the new *White Paper*.

It is only in this light that the full significance of the *White Paper* can be appreciated.

In the 1970s, Australia moved the emphasis of our policy decisively away from what was then called Forward Defence to the defence of Australia. At that time, and for many years after, these were seen as alternatives, just as they were seen in our first decade a century ago. We had to do one or the other, but not both. Some still see the issue in those terms. For too long, defence debate in Australia has been stuck in this groove – Imperial Defence or Home Defence, Forward Defence or Fortress Australia.

After 100 years, it is time we grew out of this intellectual straitjacket. The defence of our own territory, *and* active engagement in the strategic affairs of our region, are not alternatives between which we have to choose. They are both essential.

This may not be understood by all of the experts, but it is clearly understood by the

people of Australia. This was shown in the response to the public consultation process last year, which overwhelmingly supported the idea that Australia must not choose one role or the other – we must do both.

This is what the new *White Paper* is all about. As the Prime Minister said in his statement to Parliament in tabling the *White Paper* “...while the self-reliant defence of Australia remains the basis of our defence policy, it is not the limit of that policy. Our security equally depends on developments in our neighbourhood and beyond”.

The process undertaken in the development of last years’ Defence White Paper, involving as it did an unprecedented level of public consultation and detailed Ministerial attention shows the Government has taken Australia’s defence needs seriously.

But even more, it was shown in the decisions made - decisions about Australia’s future strategic objectives, the defence forces we need to achieve those objectives, and the resources we need to build and sustain those

forces. The Government had the courage to follow the logic of the argument all the way to the conclusion.

The unprecedented step was taken of committing to a ten-year defence development program - the Defence Capability Plan. And the even more radical step of committing to a ten-year defence-funding program involving sustained real increases in Defence spending averaging 3 *per cent* per annum. This gives Defence a more robust basis for its future development than it has ever had before, perhaps in the whole century since federation.

But perhaps most importantly, the old mould of the defence debate in Australia was broken. As a bit of an iconoclast, I like to think Thomas Blamey would have approved of that. As an Army man through and through. And I think we have taken an important step to ensure that if anyone again has to face the awful responsibilities that Blamey shouldered in 1942, they will have a lot more to work with than he did.



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Soldiers of the Anzac Mounted Division and Nurses of the 14th Australian General Hospital – Desert Correspondents in WWI

By Ruth Rae, RN

Analysis of the letters written by soldiers and nurses during World War One (WWI) reveals that Australian nurses who were assigned to the 14th Australian General Hospital (14th AGH) in Egypt were an important social and cultural link for the soldiers of the Anzac Mounted Division.¹ The Anzac Mounted Division was reformed in 1916 and was constituted of many of the soldiers who had been part of the Australian Light Horse (ALH) regiment who had dismounted for the Gallipoli campaign.² Research into the contribution of members of the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS) who were assigned to the 14th AGH during 1916-18 clearly demonstrates that the soldiers, who were making their way through the Sinai Desert, made frequent references to the nurses of the 14th AGH.³ The nurses often became correspondents to their soldier patients following discharge from hospital or they simply wrote to the young men who they had known and often grown up with in Australia.⁴ As this practice had a significant impact upon the morale of the troops and placed an additional, albeit unrecognised, responsibility upon the nurses it deserves further scrutiny.

Background

The role of letter writer, letter reader and letter recipient was often a complex one for the AANS nurses during WWI. History clearly demonstrates that women did not have equal political, employment or legal rights with men at the beginning of the 20th century.⁵ However when the composition of the male dominated Australian Imperial Force (AIF) and the female AANS is considered the recruitment requirements varied greatly. For instance the so-called ... *1914 men* ... who were the first to enlist from the general populace had to attain extremely high entry standards as this assisted the authorities in culling the high numbers of volunteers.⁶ These requirements centred upon physical fitness and for those who wanted to join the elite ALH, excellent horsemanship was considered more essential than a specified level of literacy.⁷ However, it is fair to surmise that given the large collection of diaries, letters, photographs and postcards relevant to the Australian WWI soldier held in museums and libraries around the country many of the

soldiers who enlisted in 1914 were literate.⁸ While a level of literacy was not a requirement for admission to the AIF it was essential that nurses who joined the AANS were competent readers and writers thereby creating a disparity between the nurses and the soldiers.

There was a variation in the level of literacy among the Australian population during the early 20th century. While recruitment to the AIF was via the general population to be eligible to join the AANS the recruits had to first qualify as nursing sisters, as they were then referred to, before they could enlist.⁹ The Australasian Trained Nurses' Association (ATNA) was founded in December 1899 and the aim of ATNA was to promote the interests of nurses. This was primarily achieved by establishing a minimum standard of training for nurses; recognising certain hospitals as appropriate training hospitals; approving the nomination of matrons to hospitals that received a government subsidy and, finally, scrutinising the qualifications of

applicants to be placed on a register of trained nurses.¹⁰

Those wishing to become registered nurses were required to undertake a training program at a recognised hospital. This program was of a pre-determined length, up to four years in a city hospital, and included clinical experience within specified clinical areas such as medical and surgical wards as well as the operating theatre.¹¹ There was also a requirement that the nurses attend and satisfactorily complete a series of prescribed lectures and examinations.¹² A state-wide examination was introduced and nurses who wanted to join the AANS and participate in WWI would have passed the ATNA examination so they could qualify to register and practice as a trained nurse.¹³ Despite these requirements for nurse training being in place for a number of years prior to WWI some Australian soldiers who were nursed by members of the AANS had a very limited understanding of the level of training that was required to become a nurse. When one nurse met up with a patient who came from her home town *...He told me that Mabel [his sister] was disappointed that she could not get to Egypt. He seemed surprised when I told him one had to do four years hard graft at the game first!!*¹⁴

Given the low level of literacy in Australia, the inability to write letters to a soldier son or for soldiers to be unable to communicate with their families would have created a substantial hardship. The educational level of the nurses enabled them to read letters to and write letters on behalf of their soldier patients. Not only did the nurses write letters home to their own loved ones they also wrote many letters for the soldiers they cared for and would read to the soldiers their letters from home.¹⁵ All too often the nurses had to relate to the mothers and fathers of soldiers how their sons had died.¹⁶ While at Anzac Cove one Lighthorseman claimed that the soldiers considered mail day *...causes as much excitement as a charge...*

*providing some indication of the impact mail had on morale.*¹⁷ Occasionally new friendships, founded upon the battlefield, ended abruptly when a wounded soldier left the regiment. The remaining men would reflect that they *...have had no letter ... but hardly expected one as he never wrote to anyone.*¹⁸ Given the emphasis upon the mail it is surprising that a soldier would not write either to his family or to his mates unless he did not have the literacy skills to do so.

Those who could read and write, soldiers and nurses alike, were often desperate for news about family members and the events occurring in Australia. Events that impacted directly upon themselves such as the conscription referenda. Prior to the onset of WWI Australian women were of a select group globally who had gained the right to vote at a political election. The first opportunity to vote, given to all non-indigenous Australian women, was the 1916 and 1917 conscription question.¹⁹ South Australian women were among the first in the world to be given the right to vote in 1894 with Western Australia following in 1899. At the time of national federation, the ground rules for the electoral system included the voting rights of Australian women; one vote for every man and from 1902 one vote for every woman.²⁰ This is in stark contrast to Britain where it was not until 1918 that women over 30 years of age were able to vote and it was not until 1928 that they had equal voting rights with men.²¹ Therefore members of the AANS not only had a sound education they also enjoyed a level of political autonomy that was not usually offered to women of this time. The first conscription question was put to the Lighthorsemen in October 1916 when they were preparing for an assault on el Arish. A soldier who had been one of the last to leave Gallipoli noted that *...Men going on leave tomorrow had to record their vote this afternoon to decide whether we are in favour of conscription or*

*not. An appeal from the Premier (Hughes) was also distributed.*²² He later affirms that many battles had been lost due to the lack of good men to back up the troops indicating his support for conscription at the time of the first referendum.²³ This soldier's mother wrote to her son with advice about the political issues surrounding the conscription question but the lag in mail deliveries meant that her ... *advice on how to vote came too late as the election is over long ago.*²⁴ By the time the first national referendum on conscription occurred, many soldiers had endured the consequences of political decisions and some were beginning to doubt the legitimacy of the early propaganda.²⁵ Needless to say those who were not in a position to read accounts of the information for and against the referendum question would be in a disadvantaged position when casting their vote.

Furthermore, the political players in Australia were ever changing and without the benefit of what is now considered basic information technology, soldiers and nurses depended upon letters from home. Censored newspapers, which were usually months old before they reached their destination in the middle of the desert, were often the only vehicle for receiving news about Australia and they were often devoid of any reference to policies. Information about the outcome of the first conscription referendum, which occurred on the 28th October 1916, was not available to the troops until 11th December 1916.²⁶ By 15th November 1916 the troops in the desert of the Middle East had had varying reports ranging from the referendum being defeated one day to receiving a semi-official report that it had been carried the next day.²⁷

While letter writing was important to ascertain political information it was also essential to keep in contact with changes in family dynamics. Considering that WWI lasted for four years it was essentially correspondence from home that enable nurses and soldiers to continue to feel part of the family.²⁸ Soldiers

and nurses who were a sibling of large families often found their younger sisters and brothers had left school, married and even had children during their wartime absence. One nurse from the 14th AGH who had been away from Australia and her large family for a number of years finished one of her many letters with ... *My love to all the families and I hope soon to be one of you again.*²⁹

The reasons why nurses wrote many letters but did not record their personal perceptions about their war experience in a diary may be due to the different demands placed upon them while on active service. For example, one nurse's diary writing was well intentioned when she first left Australia as she optimistically writes ... *I am trying to keep a good record in my diary and may soon be on my way back.*³⁰ However she soon replaced diary writing with writing to the boys in the desert in a bid to boost their morale.³¹ She noted that:

*... his [her brother] letters are always so cheerful and not a word mentioned of the hardships of camplife {sic}, I know from the other boys' letters that they do without a wash for days at a time. Water is so hard to get out there and indeed one man had said that he had not had his boots off for 15 days. I send little things out as often as I can because they are not close to a canteen even – and they love getting even a note. Poor kids, they have to make their own fun and we write a lot of rot backwards and forwards.*³²

It is apparent that this practice of sending and receiving letters and notes from the soldiers in the desert was important because the Australian nurses could appreciate the hardships the soldiers faced because they were experiencing their own hardships.³³ Considering the logistics of letter writing at the time it is amazing that soldiers or nurses persevered with the practice. For example, soldiers were pleased to receive a mail parcel

if it contained writing material such as ... 2 writing pads (200 pages in each), two notebooks that suited us to a T. and a large bottle of ink... while at the front.³⁴ They persisted with letter writing to the nurses because they were Australian, were women and unlike their families who were a six-week voyage away, were also living in Egypt. The nurses were able to respond to their letters *post haste*.

Furthermore, soldiers may have found it preferable not to share some of their experiences with their family as it may have caused those at home further anxiety. Instead they could write to a sympathetic nurse. One such case occurred on Christmas Eve 1917 when a soldier wrote to a nurse from the 14th AGH because:

*... it was the only thing he could do. It was pouring rain and he wanted to tell someone about it all. He said looking out of his "bivvy" reminded him of only one thing, and that was a pigsty excepting that if there were any pigs about they would bog in the slush. He had all the clothes he possessed on to keep warm and even then he was shivering.*³⁵

The correspondence between the nurses and the soldiers indicates that the nurses were not only caring for the wounded soldiers in their wards but were also caring for the physically well soldiers who were in need of emotional support under trying circumstances. It is easy to imagine the tired nurses hurriedly writing letters of reassurance to these Australian soldiers with *...a pig of a pen... before trying to get to bed.*³⁶

While the construct of the conscription referenda and subsequent results has attracted widespread analysis the reaction of the soldier, nurse and civilian to the declaration of peace has attracted scant scrutiny in comparison. Surprisingly the news of peace caused little reaction from the men of the Anzac Mounted Division. One soldier who

was in Amman when peace was declared simply records *...a message came through at 9 o'clock this morning saying that on account of an Armistice being concluded with Turkey, hostilities will cease at 12 midday today. The news caused no excitement.*³⁷

Unfortunately there is only a sketchy record of how the nurses of the 14th AGH reacted to the news but it is fair to assert that they, like the soldiers in the desert, were circumspect.³⁸ The need for nurses continued long after the armistice as the soldiers required rehabilitation and the influenza pandemic was about to create a global health crisis.³⁹

Many nurses who were only in their early twenties had grown old and their physical and mental well-being would never recover from their wartime ordeal. One Australian nurse cared for a young English nurse who had been taken on board at Egypt and remarked that *...She was quite mental [for] she had seen sights no girl should ever see.*⁴⁰ Unfortunately the sights she had seen and the impact that they had upon her, as a nurse, are lost to history. An analysis of letters she may have written or received from soldiers may uncover some of the contributing factors that led to her breakdown.

Conclusion

A brief analysis of the correspondence between the nurses of the 14th AGH and the soldiers of the Anzac Mounted Division indicates that the nurses provided an important element of emotional support to the soldiers via the written word. Not only do their letters, diaries and postcards outline the historical facts of the time but they also express the human subtleties of the individual soldiers and nurses. Further analysis and critique of the correspondence and diaries of the nurses will not only inform researchers about the nurses' experiences in war but also the private concerns of the soldier.

NOTES

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Ruth Rae recently completed her PhD at the University of Sydney where she submitted her thesis entitled "Jessie Tomlins: An Australian Army Nurse – World War One". Her research in the area has extended over 15 years when she began to review the 14 diaries of her maternal grandfather who was an Intelligence Officer with the 1st Australian Light Horse Regiment. His sister, Jessie Tomlins, completed her training at the Sydney Hospital in 1916 and enlisted with the Australian Army Nursing Service (AANS). Ruth has placed their experiences, through their diaries and letters, within an historical context. The lack of information about Jessie Tomlins and her colleagues within the AANS and the vast amount of information about the soldiers and especially the Australian Light Horsemen provided the impetus for the thesis. Ruth completed her nurse training at the Parramatta Hospital in 1978, Bachelor of Arts (human bio-science and politics) in 1993 and Master of Letters (politics) in 1994 – University of New England.



Reviews

Books

THE FIFTY-YEAR WAR: CONFLICT AND STRATEGY IN THE COLD WAR, by Norman Friedman, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland, 1999. 640 pages. 26 photographs. 6 maps. Notes. Bibliography. Index. \$38.95.

Reviewed by Bruce Davey

It's much easier to describe a war when the conflict is confined to a single type of battleground with few protagonists directing the energies of just two easily discernible sides occurring within a short span of years. Norman Friedman's, *The Fifty-Year War: Conflict and Strategy in the Cold War*, tackles a subject that has none of these features. The author of several books about naval weapon systems, Mr Friedman was employed at the Hudson Institute in New York City for ten years, in an advisory role for the US Government. This establishes both his credentials for an assessment of the new evidence from Russia (especially concerning the "arms race") and his point of view as a strategic level participant.

Amongst several themes and hypotheses introduced by the author is an analogy drawn between WWI and the Cold War, stating that both wars started, "with a massive direct assault". He argues that, "WWI had taught Lenin and Stalin that it took war or comparable disaster to break societies open so that revolution could triumph". Material from ex-Soviet archives is acknowledged, "... this history is probably the first to integrate what we now know of the diplomatic and economic record". Yet there are also appraisals of well known causative factors. The author asks the question, "Was the Cold War then, about Communism versus capitalism?" Further he poses the view that Lenin and Stalin made the war inevitable. He

responds to the dimensions of the subject and its impact upon us all when he writes, "... (t)he War shaped our lives and indeed our world ... the aftermath of the Cold War is likely to shape the world for many decades to come". That strategy in the Cold War was directed by people, is a fact never far from the author's focus. This is what he means when he writes that it is a book about the connections between the views of individual leaders on their colleagues and adversaries.

The author divides his study of the Cold War into six chronological divisions. Commencing with a lean preamble to cover the period from the beginning of the Soviet state up until the Spanish Civil War, which he uses as the start date for the fifty years of the title, we're into the Cold War "proper" by page 41. He covers WWII and the advent of nuclear weaponry. Post-WWII nationalist movements and the Soviet military build-up in Europe and consequent threat to the West and how both superpowers negotiated the nuclear stalemate, the rise of Mao Zedong, the Korean War and crisis in the Middle-East – are all dealt with, followed by sections dealing in detail with the missile race, Cuban crisis and the Vietnam War. Further parts round out the Vietnam War and Western decline in the face of a resurgent "Stalinist" foreign policy under Brezhnev. The final part explains the revival of the West and the delivery of a computer enhanced victory. The author concludes his coverage with a perspective on the post-Cold War future.

There are many parts that deserve examination in some detail since the subject area covers such a large slice of modern history. This analysis of the Cold War deals with some of the key theoretical concerns in the recording of the events under discussion

and employs new evidence in this single volume narrative history.

The Cold War strategies of various leaders are under the microscope. There is a good explanation of the problems encountered by the Truman administration in the nuclear environment of the Cold War throughout the late 40s. For example, a better understanding is provided here about the significance of the Gouzenko defection than is advanced by other books of a more specialist nature. The book includes good detail about post-war loans to the European allies, a concise discussion of the turmoil created by US budget deficits; Soviet post-war stockpiling of war materials and their increased military spending and an explanation of the fiscal troubles related to implementing global scale defence plans against a powerful enemy and overcoming the internal wrangles of Service rivalry to provide for a unified approach to the conduct of the Cold War.

There is a very good discussion of the development of nuclear capability and the rationale behind a nuclear defence of NATO nations in Europe. The author acclaims Eisenhower for this strategy and if there is a favoured Western leader in this narrative then it must be Dwight D. Eisenhower as President and in the author's view, Cold War strategist *par excellence*. By adopting an approach, which presented any potential Soviet invasion of Western Europe with the sure and certain result of nuclear war, Eisenhower kept the Cold War cold, since not even the Soviets would risk massive nuclear retaliation.

The changes in the nature of the conflict occasioned by new leaders and conditions are explained as the scene of the narrative shifts methodically over the global Cold War political landscape of the post-Stalin years and beyond. The prosecution of the Cold War, on the periphery of Europe, the Third World and throughout the entire globe is recounted with deep knowledge of each level and location of the conflict and a tremendous wealth of detail.

The convergence of religious antipathies, Middle-Eastern nationalism and the overarching Bi-Polar conflict, is one aspect of the complexity of the Cold War that is well explained as the author's description shows the emergence of changing strategic circumstances and the advent of new leaders. Mao and Khrushchev and the hostility of the two heavyweights in the communist world; the Nixon era, *detente* and the emergence of treaties seeking to limit nuclear weapons all feature appropriately in the author's treatment.

The disastrous years for the West culminating in the Vietnam War are discussed soberly and with great insight and authority. The failure of the United States to implement a winning strategy in Vietnam that would stand the tests of time and earn broad domestic approval, was by no means overshadowed by the failure to understand the fundamental difference in the acceptable "social contract" obtaining to power sharing amongst the Vietnamese leaders and their people and those of other Third World nations. Friedman describes it eloquently and comprehensively.

A good example is the material on Mao's fight with Khrushchev; "(Mao) backed Khrushchev's enemies on the Soviet Central Committee during the 1957 fight. He later said that, had Khrushchev had the sense to create a cult of personality around himself, he would not have been overthrown. As for his own cult, Mao said that it was too soon for China to discard a thousand years of imperial tradition."

The narrative explains how the Western revival of the 80s coincided with the capacity of Western leaders and foreign policy makers to understand the difference between totalitarian regimes and those who were merely apparently authoritarian when seen through culturally alien eyes.

This narrative addresses the Reagan, Thatcher, Gorbachev era as the final act of the Cold War and the original assessment the author provides of the Cold War winning weapon is a key element in his analysis. The

author identifies the computer as the weapon that won the Cold War for the West. The computer - as data sorter and its application in the role of Air Defence; the computer - essential in the management and deployment of electronic sensors and an increasing number of electronically dependent weapon systems; and the computer as the repository of tactical information and therefore of enemy target acquisition on the increasingly automated battlefield. "Microcomputers brought a new revolution in weaponry."

Alternatively in the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact alliance, no comparable demand for computers was evident, ". . . some Soviet economists were arguing that an ongoing scientific-technological revolution would have enormous consequences for the Soviet economy".

He finally directs his thoughts to the future, advocating that the post-Cold War world will still move to a *realpolitik* rhythm just as in the 70s and 80s. Although the scope of the coverage must be selective the author does not avoid referring to populist icons and popular fiction which he introduces into the narrative, twice using illustrations from the excellent English espionage novelist, Eric Ambler. Even a cult movie such as "Dr Strangelove", essentially a piece of Hollywood entertainment, earns a mention but there are not too many concessions to any modernist approach in this realist paradigm.

Some questions arise from this work. Identifying the start point is one. Although the onset of warring Cold War ideologies can be traced to the Bolshevik seizure of power and in their withdrawal from the prosecution of WWI in 1917, the author advocates a start point for the outbreak of the Cold War - the practical struggle - at a far earlier point than many others. His own title cries out that the start date has to be 1941 because he dates the end of the struggle as 25/12/1991. Indeed on page one he goes as far as to cite Raack's key new

evaluation of 1941 in this traditional problem for Cold War historians.

Unfortunately the author doesn't attempt any analysis of this point nor is there sufficient space to refer to corroborative assessments but instead begins by informing the reader that the Cold War began in 1937 with the attempt by Stalin to hi-jack the Spanish Government during the Spanish Civil War, but doesn't recognise the prior activities of the Soviets in Europe i.e., their offensive war against Poland during the 20s. Why shouldn't that be counted as the start date for the outbreak?

The book has a paucity of maps, some of which don't really contain the information the text requires. This is balanced by the fact that there are some great photographs backed by captions presenting some sharp summaries of the events in the conflict. Much data on missile production or force strengths is presented textually. It could have been presented diagrammatically to greater effect. With such a complex topic more sophisticated means of presenting the information would have helped. Few quibbles can be lodged with respect to the author's analysis of the material presented. It would be unfair to criticise for not addressing the widest scope possible and enlarging more on the human level because one of the difficulties to be overcome is in adopting the right balance between a description of the events and their effects.

The assertion of victory and collapse of the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact Empire is the least well covered aspect of the book. The reader has the sense that there have to be other critical factors in this victory that are yet to emerge.

The Soviet Union is identified clearly as the enemy and therefore with its collapse victory follows. The enemy was not the Second World according to this author or the specific brand of communism espoused by the leading Second World power but Stalin's "evil empire" and its heirs, to the extent that they followed Stalin's model. The reader can only guess why

a broader assessment of the post-Gorbachev world communist leadership was not attempted. The assertion of victory at least, draws a temporal boundary around the subject.

Although it cannot be a criticism, there is a strong Eurocentric approach and the Northern geographical bias of the work is evident. This is only reasonable since the crucial potential battlefield was always Europe. This was where any conventional military attack would have invited nuclear exchange. But those of us who live outside Europe experienced a different Cold War. In the South-East Asian “theatre” the war was conventionally hot although fortunately, not in a nuclear sense. Some may look with a sense of incompleteness at works such as this.

The author’s achievement is such that the positives overwhelm the negatives. His method follows the Realist model and the weight of evidence available now significantly enhances that particular device for understanding the topic. Fairly reasoning from the evidence the prominence of Stalin’s strategic “vision” as a dynamic force in the Cold War, the author allows it a significant place in the narrative, deducing that despite the catch-cry of “building socialism in one country (that) Stalin had never abandoned expansionism, he was merely reviving an abortive campaign begun during the Russian Civil War”. Thereby astutely determining paternity of the Cold War.

When he poses the question, “. . . could the Cold War have been avoided?” The answer is that, “. . . the basic struggle could not end, as Lenin said, until one side or the other collapsed”. Was it an ideological struggle or simply disguised Russian imperialism? If the former then it can never return and if the latter, “. . . resurgent Russian nationalism may eventually bring another round”.

The author succeeds in identifying the essence of the complex intermingling of events and processes that make up the “Cold War”. *The Fifty-Year War*, even at first glance demands acclaim for the scope of the narrative

and its capacity to incorporate conflicting modern evidence with traditional elements. The aims of the book, as described in the introduction, are achieved with great success.

There is a brilliant concise account of the “Arms Race” from the records of both sides which is without comparison. Likewise, the author produces a deft and dispassionate account of Vietnam, which is enthralling, and ultimately one of the most rewarding descriptions amongst all the events under discussion. The reader gains a full understanding of the difference between this historical assessment and spur of the moment reportage. It is uncommon to find a single work, which can deliver such an informed and detailed assessment of the strategies adopted by so many leaders in such a complex and long war. *The Fifty-Year War* contains a massive amount of detail for a single volume study and is an outstanding achievement of organisation of material. The author describes the action in a highly informed and easily readable way.

With the scope of the subject it’s no surprise that single volume treatments are rare. In size, Desmond Donnelly’s 1963 work, *The Struggle for the World*, is comparable. The scope of the treatment in *The Fifty-Year War*, approaches that of *Armed Truce* by Hugh Thomas. But the Donnelly book is written amidst the unfinished conflict (in fact it was written during one of the real flashpoints of the Cold War) and Hugh Thomas’ work, despite the brilliance of its discussion of the fundamental themes of the Cold War only discusses a calendar year of events starting in 1945.

So what can this book be compared to? The series of periodicals that were published in magazine format called *War In Peace* was one work dealing with the latter part of the Cold War sometimes held to be the best but it features the diverse opinions of multiple authors. This is however so different in format as to be entirely outside the bounds of a fair

comparison. Other possible candidates for a comparison are harder to find. There is the *Encyclopaedia of the Cold War*, by Thomas Arms but this is a reference work.

There just isn't a comparable single volume study of the Cold War that comes remotely close to the standard that this work sets. *The Fifty-Year War* fulfills the need for an authoritative, single volume history of the Cold War. It is an excellent general reference and a more than worthy companion to the specialist historical works on the subject written and or edited by LaFeber and Gaddis. This book is essential reading for anyone studying the Cold War era and for those involved in the issues of force planning, capital procurement and strategy within the Defence establishment. Civilian and uniformed leaders, members of the public and naturally historians, could all greatly benefit from reading this excellent work.

AUSTRALIANS AT WAR by Peter Cochrane, ABC Books, 25 April 2001; 272 pp, 27 Colour Plates, 400 Half Tones, Hardcover.

Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Craig Johnston



The *Australians at War* project began some two and a half years ago under the guidance of the Department of Veterans' Affairs to provide a tangible record of the contribution of ordinary Australians to our country's call to arms, in defence of the Empire and our own land.

Peter Cochrane is a freelance writer based in Sydney. He has been a senior lecturer in History at the University of Sydney, and his publications include *Simpson and the Donkey: The Making of a Legend*.

Whilst this significant literary work has been publicised as a companion volume to the ABC-TV documentary series, its true value as a contribution to recording our military history through the 20th century is at risk of being vastly undervalued and understated.

Cochrane's work brings to us a "people's history", with stories that transcend the often jargonistic military histories written during the 1980s and 90s and bring to the everyday Australian home examples of ordinary Australians' commitment to sacrifice and preserving peace.

Australians at War is populated with dozens of our most famous military photographic images of our people at war, and just as vivid, but much less famous, the personal photographs of soldiers, sailors and airmen, of their families and of the stresses and horrors they experienced in war. The personal touch presented in the TV documentary by the use of literally hundreds of diaries, photos and letters has not been lost on Cochrane. He recreates the same personal touch by using photos and quotes from letters and books in side-bars on each page. He has also added a variety of text boxes where he sidetracks the story at hand to bring to the reader a closeness and quality usually only experienced in films and documentaries.

Disappointingly, the immense effort presented in the graphic design of this book is not supported by the design presented in the accompanying maps. They are perhaps a little too abstract, the "wrinkled paper" design presented as the backdrop to each map makes them difficult to follow and cluttered. The book would have benefited greatly from a simple, clear design.

As well, some of Australia's most recent commitments to conflicts and operations receive only scant mention. There is no mention of the role played by Australians during the Gulf War, either as individuals serving on exchange with the UK, US and other forces, or of the RAN Ships deployed in support of Coalition Forces. Nor has there been any mention of the 1 RAR Bn Gp deployment to Somalia, and INTERFET receives only a fleeting mention. These commitments have been no less arduous, no less difficult, any less dangerous and Australian servicemen

and servicewomen faced the same perils of operational service in the same exemplary manner as their forbears. Given the current public feeling towards the ADF's commitment to peace operations worldwide, this is a significant omission.

These minor criticisms aside, Peter Cochrane has produced a tremendous record of Australia's wartime service. This book will become one of the cornerstones of Australian military history.

SLEEPING WITH YOUR EARS OPEN, On Patrol with the Australian SAS, by Gary McKay, Allen & Unwin, Crows Nest, NSW, illustrated, 307 pages, soft cover, \$22.95.

Reviewed by A. Argent



The author, who served in Vietnam in an infantry battalion and who has written about that war, now tells the story of the Australian SAS at the sharp end. He has done this by interviewing 15 officers, NCOs and troopers and letting them speak as they saw things. Included in these 15 are two former members of the RAAF who were involved in inserting and extracting SAS patrols.

The narratives of those interviewed are spun into a very enjoyable read by the explanations and comments of the author who obviously knows soldiers and soldiering. Chapters deal

with selection for the SAS, training, the makeup of patrols, Borneo operations in 1965 and 1966, training in Papua New Guinea and, of course, operations in Vietnam. In both Borneo and Vietnam, the SAS squadron commanders had New Zealand SAS soldiers under command.

Like many others, I had dealings with the SAS. I recommended NCOs and soldiers to SAS selection boards somewhat reluctantly because no one wants to give up good men. In Borneo in 1965 British SAS patrols crossed the border from our battalion bases and to this day I marvel at the load they carried on their backs. In Vietnam the helicopters I flew did not have winches so of necessity we sometimes used the McGuire rig to extract the US Army's rather pale equivalents of our SAS patrols and I can only agree with the graphic account given by the RAAF's 9 Squadron pilot who roped out patrols in Phuoc Tuy Province.

There could have been a more rigorous proof reading of this paperback edition e.g. DOBOPS is Director of Borneo Operations, FARELF is Far East Land Forces, the Australian Army hasn't had brigadier-generals since the Great War days and the 1920s, the RAAF have never flown the Wessex Whirlwind, the British Army has an Army Air Corps.

However, despite these lapses and the inclusion of foul language which, in my opinion, has never added to the study or enjoyment of any publication, I recommend this book.

