



DEFENCE



A U S T R A L I A N

**DEFENCE**

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**JOURNAL**



JOURNAL OF THE AUSTRALIAN PROFESSION OF ARMS

NO. 154

MAY/JUNE

2002

# Australian Defence Force Journal

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All contributions and correspondence should be addressed to:

The Editor  
Australian Defence Force Journal  
R8-LG-001  
Russell Offices  
CANBERRA ACT 2600  
(02) 6265 1193  
Fax (02) 6265 6972

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© Commonwealth of Australia 2002  
ISSN 1320-2545  
Published by the Department of Defence  
Canberra 2002

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RAAF Roulettes over Sydney Harbour.

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Printed in Australia

by National Capital Printing,

Fyshwick, ACT 2609



*Soldiers from the Townsville based 1 RAR training at the Army's Military Operations in Urban Terrain Facility (MOUT) at Townsville Field Training Area.*

*Photograph by WO2 Gary Ramage*

# Building Better Personnel Policy and Practice for the Australian Army

By Captain D. J. Murray, ARA, Captain L.T. Jones ARA, and  
Rev. Associate Professor P. A. McGavin

*There are many headings under which building better personnel policy and practice for the Australian Army may be considered. In this article we argue for the building-up of trust among Service personnel in the Army organisation and Army objectives; the development of flexible service conditions that ensure that the Army remains competitive in attracting and retaining personnel who strategically serve effective core product delivery; working at developing an organisational culture that provides both stability and adaptability for the organisation; and the reconfiguration of distribution of costs and benefits from skills formation so that key skills are developed, retained, and effectively used for enhanced core product delivery.*

## Introduction

Personnel issues are of fundamental importance to the Australian Army. This article draws on concepts presented in Jones et al. (2000) to show how human resource concepts provide a cogent and coherent platform for the development and leadership management of the Army's greatest asset, Army personnel.

Reviews such as the 1995 *Glenn Review* and the 1997 *Defence Review* present wide-ranging critiques of Army performance with regards to human resource management. There is a need to sustain this momentum for change, but, as we argue, change which builds-up a distinctive Army organisation. Some words of critique are necessary as a precursor to proposals for building better Army personnel policies.

## Critique of Army Personnel Policy

The Army has to reform organisation culture in ways that address the balance of stability and change in organisation culture; the re-building of trust and reputation in the organisation; the strengthening of personnel motivation; and tightening organisational identity with that of its people so that they believe they "belong" not just "occupy" a position on an entitlement document. This

critique gives force and direction to the proposals for building better Army personnel policies as argued in the second part of this article.

## Stability and Instability in Army Organisation Culture

As argued in Jones et al. (2000) and Alexander and McGavin (1989), the Army operates an "internal labour market" that is formed both in formal terms (e.g. *Defence Force Discipline Act*) and informal terms (e.g. recognition given to members with operational experience). Both formal and informal elements form an organisational culture that governs upward movement of personnel from mainly base-level entry points. This culture has positive aspects of fostering the development of skills that are specific to the Army and fostering discipline, loyalty, morale, and *esprit de corps* that are essential for the Army core business of delivering combat capability. Nevertheless, a negative aspect of this inherited culture is organisational resistance to changes that better equip the organisation to fulfil its mission.

Rapid changes over the last decade in an attempt to meet changing social, strategic and political environments (Schmidtchen 2000) have weakened Army organisation culture.

There has been a diminishment in assent by Army personnel to the coherence and credibility of the purpose and identity of Army outcomes (“core products”). There has been a diminishment in trust (some would say a “breakdown”) between the organisation and its people (the Army and Service personnel).

#### Weakening Organisational Trust

Schmidtchen (1999) argues that there has been a breakdown in the “psychological contract” between the Army and Service personnel. This breakdown is not only in “re-writing of the rules”, but in the violation of unwritten expectations and mutual obligations between Service personnel and the organisation. This often has involved the introduction of formal rule structures aimed at the diminishment (and in some cases replacement) of a strong informal culture that throughout our military history has developed to implicitly and at low-cost ease command and operations transaction costs. Anecdotal evidence from areas as diverse as the 1 Brigade Cos hours to the Australian Newspaper (Devine 2001:15) suggests that this formal culture has low bottom-up assent and is relatively costly and inefficient in achieving command and operational outcomes. This weakening of identification between the Army and its people has also fostered an undesirable “what is in it for me?” attitude between the organisation and Service personnel, and has reduced the confidence of Army personnel in their leaders.<sup>1</sup>

#### Weakening Organisational Coherence

A number of authors have highlighted a weakening of organisational coherence and the detrimental effects of vacillation in stakeholder demands upon the organisation (e.g. Watson 1999, Garran and Emerson 2000, Barker 2000). There has been an increased tendency for top-down change processes that have reduced the autonomy of command at all levels in the organisation, and weakened

the assent of Army personnel to the direction of change. Underlying these changes has been a Defence Department driven by an exaggerated and at times immature fear of the media and, by corollary, a corresponding desire to appease – which has contributed to commanders at all levels regurgitating what Barker (2000) calls “fatuous management jargon” (i.e. “warm words” with weak operational significance to the Army’s core mission and its personnel). There is a marked need to regain Army organisational coherence.

#### Weakening Motivation for Personnel

The weakening of trust and of organisational coherence have combined with a weakening of the motivational package for Service personnel. Warn (1994) argues that the Army has historically promoted an organisational culture that emphasises intrinsic rewards over extrinsic gain. In a context where there has been erosion of the culture of intrinsic rewards, the deterioration of extrinsic rewards has greater damaging impact. There has been a deterioration in relative pecuniary and non-pecuniary rewards offered by the Army to high-skilled personnel, and an imbalance in rewards structure between core combat skills and non-combat support skills. The present reward structure poorly matches rewards to the quality and quantity of skills as these relate to the delivery of “core products”.

The limited flexibility of Army leaders to construct a competitive reward structure is becoming more pressing. Army return on human capital formation is falling (Jones et al. 2000). Advancement in Army “knowledge edge” is increasingly becoming hollow rhetoric with the loss of people with strong organisation-specific skills and state-of-art knowledge. This combines with Army’s diminishing share in defence capital budget (Watson 1999, Kelly 2000), and the general deterioration in organisation management

(Schmidtchen 2000, Garren and Emerson 2000).

### Need for Army Regrouping

Some cutting words have been said about this “state of play”. The Executive Director of the Australian Defence Association has argued, “Australia does not have a credible Army” (Michael O’Connor in Farouque 2000). Lieutenant General John Sanderson (ret’d), a former Chief of Army Staff, said before the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, “It may be satisfactory for Australia to lead or participate in an enforcement operation against a confused and lightly armed rabble like the East Timorese militia, or even Somali clans; it would require considerable development of the Army before it could contemplate playing a part in land operations against a well and heavily armed force (Lieutenant General John Sanderson in Garran and Emerson 2000). The Research Officer for the Army Officer Professional Effectiveness Review has written, “... recent publicity regarding sexual harassment, faults in safety and poor leadership have sent the opposite message to the community—essentially, the Army, and Defence in general, are incompetent to the point of being dangerous” (Schmidtchen 2000). This “state of play” indicates a pressing need to regroup skills formation and skills retention in the Army. This calls for a rebuilding of Army culture, and a rebuilding that strongly reinforces personnel management and bottom-up leadership at all levels.

There has been an erosion of Army culture away from vocational service and toward “performance of a job” (Devine 2001); an erosion of the capacity for Army personnel to use initiative to achieve their commander’s intent; a growth in a slow, inflexible, and risk-averse culture, and an increased focus on political issues at the expense of combat effectiveness. These trends call for critical reappraisal of the application of

“management mantras” such as “outsourcing”, “equity”, “occupational health and safety” and a renewed emphasis on “know those under your command and look after their welfare”; a down-playing of undue attention to political issues and negative media reports; avoidance of micro-management that diminishes responsible leadership at all levels; reduced centralisation of senior management and increased use of chain of command and appropriate subsidiarity in unit command; better recognition that core Army activity is inherently risky and that Army “core business” involves risks (i.e. avoid adoption of an imprudent risk-averse culture); and re-assessment of “positive discrimination” that suits political objectives but weakens achievement of core objectives.

The Australian Army has a long history of being “home” to its Service personnel. Army personnel can be made “homeless” by destroying the “homeliness” of the organisation, and this can be achieved simply by making the “home look and feel like everybody else’s home” (i.e. using inappropriate civilian management models for the organisation) (adapting Ezrahi, cited in Friedman 2000). Recent Army promotions even give emphasis to parallels with civilian occupation (e.g. latest newspaper advertisements for the Royal Military College ranked the vague area of “combat” behind communications, aviation, transport, etc. as possible areas open to recruits upon graduation). Building better Army personnel policies are at the forefront of making the Army a “home” for people who perform in the delivery of Army core products. To this building-up we now turn.

### Building Better Army Personnel Policies

Better personnel policies for the Army need first to target four areas: (1) building trust, (2) increasing flexibility of service conditions, (3) developing organisation

culture, and (4) more flexible distribution of costs and returns from organisation human resource development. These are now examined.

### Building Trust

Trust between Service personnel and the Service organisation has to be built and constantly re-built. This involves enhancing a forward-looking confidence in the Army by organisation personnel, and coherence in observed organisational behaviour. The trust literature examines a number of strategies for building trust between parties, this article examines processed-based strategies which the Army may build-up trust and focuses specifically on increasing behavioural transparency between the Army and the Service member, and extending the “shadow of the future” that exists in interactions between the Army and its personnel.

### Behavioural Transparency

Improving the level of behavioural transparency that exists between the Army and its personnel involves an increase in the quality and quantity of information that is exchanged between both parties, with the intent of creating an atmosphere of openness. Parkhe (1998a,b) proposes that alliance members can increase the level of behavioural transparency that exists in their relationship by installing procedures for recognition, verification, and signalling between themselves. Due to the dominance of the Army in its relationship with its personnel it must bear the costs of creating and installing these procedures. Key areas for attention by senior Army managers are as follows:

Recognition that the “psychological contract” has been broken and that there is a need to:

- build a new contract that better suits the needs of the Army and Army personnel; and
- bring about greater congruency between the thoughts and attitudes of Service members and those of higher leaders.

Verification of changed circumstances through formal and informal channels, particularly with regards to:

- “issue spotting”—pro-actively bringing to the attention of Service personnel the matters in which they have a direct interest; and
- being more open about intended reforms, reasons for change as well as the positive and negative effects of such changes—for it is often perceptions and fears of adverse consequences that are the major obstacle to establishing a more stable trust relationship.

Signalling of the new means of doing business, particularly:

- opportunities for Service members to be involved and benefit from changes to the organisational culture,
- instances where the Army has maintained its “psychological contract” with its people, and
- measures that are being developed to cope with changing organisational, demographic and social expectations.

### Extending the Shadow of the Future

The “shadow of the future” refers to a future period over which alliance members are able to envisage, with a high degree of probability, mutual positive net returns from their relationship. For the Army to extend the shadow of the future that exists between itself and its personnel it must focus on increasing:

- the level of behaviour transparency within its organisation (see above);
- the frequency of positive interactions it has with its personnel, with particular emphasis on providing organisational loyalty to those who achieve organisation goals; and
- the length of the time horizon of the relationship between the organisation and its personnel.

Although changes to workforce trends in regards to organisational commitment and career expectations (see Schmidtchen 2000)



make any extension of the shadow of the future by these means difficult, the following issues provide a starting point:

- **Clarifying Army's future plans** with a particular emphasis on building and maintaining a credible and more stable vision for the future.
- **Introducing incremental contract negotiation schemes** that increase the capacity and time period personnel are able to perceive mutual net benefits arising from their service, whilst reducing the time period members are required to wait to receive significant service benefits.
- **Securing Army loyalty to its performing personnel** by specifying organisation on-going commitment to Service personnel who perform, and reducing the prominence of provisions that reduce Army commitment (e.g. clauses outlining complete dissolution of service contract, or requirements for medical discharge brought about by workplace injury).

### Flexible Service Conditions

A given internal labour market structure can work for an organisation where given organisation-specific skills are formed in an upward movement from base-level entry to exit. Organisations that use mixes of general skills as well as skills that are specific to the organisation require more flexible internal labour market arrangements. Building an organisation internal labour market that is responsive to the mix of specific and general skill requirements involves (1) on-going review of the competitiveness of organisation rewards for skills, and (2) levers for increasing internal labour market flexibility.

### Review of Competitive Conditions

How rewards for Army personnel compare with rewards available in the external labour market varies with changes in general external labour market conditions and with changes in the balance of supply and demand for different general and specific skills mixes.

In order to be a credible competitor both in the attraction and retainment of skills, the Army needs on-going review of alternatives available to Service personnel or potential Service personnel. These alternatives need to be assessed both in pecuniary and in non-pecuniary terms. Army leadership needs clearly to establish with the government streamlined provision for flexible organisation response to evolving external conditions so that competitive packages for the attraction and retainment of organisation skills may be achieved. Table 1 outlines some non-pecuniary aspects of flexibility in Service conditions, the costs and benefits of which are amplified below.

Table 1 outlines a number of non-pecuniary measures that would provide greater flexibility and security to the existing conditions of Service packages. Senior managers need to recognise that each measure offers a number of benefits and costs and that their main challenge is evaluating how to integrate these, or similar measures, into the existing Service package so that the highest net benefit is gained for the organisation over time. For example, such evaluation would need to recognise that the main benefit of providing a more secure posting contract is that it acts to increase behaviour transparency for personnel and utilises the different preferences individuals have for geographic location and job characteristics as a motivation for their work performance. The major costs of the measure are greater coordination in terms of negotiating future posting positions and the reduced flexibility the Army is provided in being able to use the member to meet organisational needs. In some instances measuring the costs and benefits of a particular measure become less tangible and more complicated to assess. For example, in the case of greater use of overseas service the main benefits can be seen in terms of providing valuable experience to the

Table 1. *Non-pecuniary rewards and personnel motivation*

Non-pecuniary reward	General description
Postings	Posting positions could be more clearly and securely offered to individuals on the basis of performance or as a trade-off for present job attributes, using a formal contract system
Leave	Additional leave may be offered as a reward to individuals who consistently provide service beyond that of their peers or who undertake additional hardships as a result of posting locality or job requirements
Awards	Make greater use of service medals and awards whilst being careful to avoid their inflation
Skill development	Certain courses could be offered to individuals on the basis of their performance during a particular tasking or posting
Travel	The individual or unit could be sent on some form of base tour or training exercise in different parts of Australia or overseas
Overseas service	Individuals would be posted overseas to operational areas as part of Australian, international or on detachment to the Defence Force of another nation

individual with regards to operating with foreign forces and interacting with other cultures, exposure to technologies and practices not available in Australia and the flow on benefits to Australia from this knowledge base. The most obvious cost of the measure is the significant financial outlay required for moving, housing and paying the individual (including the complication of any dependants). A less obvious cost, but potentially of greater concern, is the political problems generated if these Australian personnel deploy on operations with foreign forces and are unnecessarily endangered or are perceived to be acting in a position outside of Australia's national interest.

#### Levers for Achieving Flexibility

Increasing the flexibility of Army internal labour markets involves a variety of levers that are summarised in Table 2. These range across contract engagement, direct placement, upward placement, limited-term promotions, retention bonuses, part-time engagement, career breaks, long-distance commuting, etc.<sup>2</sup> These should be designed to allow flexibility at whole-organisation level and at organisation-unit levels, so that organisation leaders at the top and at different levels can

respond with competitive Service conditions that attract and retain Service skills that are necessary to the performance of the organisation overall and its component parts. For some organisation components and some skills within organisation components, market-like contract models of personnel engagement are inappropriate. But all personnel are able to assess alternatives, and the attraction and retention of personnel whose skills are more specific to Army core product delivery need clearly to be competitive against the alternatives.

The *Glenn Review* (1995) argued against performance-based rewards on the grounds that they undermine the team-oriented nature of Service work. Stakeholders may however give rank values to Service delivery by organisation components and may identify key performance indicators by organisation component. Organisation units that meet performance objectives can then be rewarded, with performance-based bonuses distributed on the basis of personnel rank. Thereby, unit performance and unit cohesion would be enhanced, with units more directly involved in core product delivery being given priority ranking.

Table 2. Levers for increasing the flexibility of Army internal labour market\*

Lever	General description	Positive aspects	Negative aspects
<b>Contract service engagement</b>	Contracts would be used to employ individuals to perform a specific or finite task, over specific time periods, under an agreed set of conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• useful for hiring specific technical skills when a presence in uniform is required</li> <li>• provide managers with definite periods of personnel availability and provides a definite focus for retention programs</li> <li>• enables incentives to be structured into the contract that extend beyond existing service conditions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creates legal problems for the stipulation of all contractual terms required for combat and military related duties</li> <li>• already in part covered by phased careers</li> </ul>
<b>Direct placement</b>	Personnel are recruited from outside the full-time Army to fulfil existing uniformed positions on short-term contracts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• suited for recruiting personnel from the following sources</li> <li>• the part-time Australian Army, with a particular focus on previous full-time employees</li> <li>• other Armies within our region (eg, New Zealand) or the rest of the world (eg, ABCA nations)</li> <li>• other ADF services or organisations with a similar structure to the Army (eg, the police force or the fire brigade)</li> <li>• retired full-time personnel</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• organisational specific knowledge barriers prevent direct recruitment of personnel with no previous military experience</li> </ul>
<b>Upward placement</b>	Involves allocation of personnel to positions of responsibility within the Australian Army structure where shortages are present. May also be referred to as 'accelerated promotion' as it ignores the rigidity of promotion parameters of time in rank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• has historical precedence in rapid promotion experienced during times of war</li> <li>• provides an incentive for junior ranks to seek and accept additional responsibility.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may lead to inefficiencies where individual fill positions they are not capable of completing to required job standards</li> <li>• would also need to be implemented so the best qualified person is placed into the job and not just the 'nearest on hand'</li> </ul>
<b>Limited tenure promotions</b>	Individuals would be promoted for specific skills, and once their skills had been utilised in this capacity they would retire or return to earlier rank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provides a good separation mechanism</li> <li>• acknowledges and makes use of specific skills individuals may possess</li> <li>• potential to reward superior service</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may be seen as being an option for all personnel and, therefore, discourage voluntary separation</li> <li>• potential for unfair treatment</li> </ul>
<b>Management initiated early retirement</b>	Individuals are offered financial incentives to retire before they previously planned	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• enables specific promotion channels to be opened up and in this manner ensures that stagnation does not occur</li> <li>• provides a direct signal to the individual that their services are no longer desired</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may also be seen as being an option for all personnel and, therefore, discourage voluntary separation</li> </ul>
<b>Retention bonuses</b>	Payments to individuals who are critical to the operational effectiveness of the Army and who but for the application of the bonus would leave	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• useful for retaining specific skills but should be paid over an extended period to ensure the skills remain in the Army for a set period of time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• very difficult to determine an appropriate level of bonus to compensate the individual wishing to exit</li> </ul>
<b>Part time service engagement</b>	Individuals would enter in and out of the full time Army and the part time Army (the Reserves) depending on the individual's preferences and service needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• increases the pool of human capital the Army has access to</li> <li>• extends the pay-off period of skills formation and thereby increases the capability of the Army to gain a return on its human capital investments</li> <li>• provides the individual with greater flexibility and security of employment could occur in periods of days per week, months per year</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• reliance on part-time personnel could create problems in time of deployment or changes in the state of readiness</li> <li>• increases the level of transaction costs involved in management of personnel</li> </ul>
<b>Home based work</b>	An individual would be able to work from home and enter the workplace only when required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• very useful in situations such as maternity leave and child rearing</li> <li>• applicable to staff or project activity</li> <li>• makes use of changing technology</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• may interfere with the 'team' nature of the Army</li> <li>• is not suitable for command positions</li> </ul>
<b>The use of fly in/fly out work practices</b>	Instead of long-term postings to remote areas, individuals fly to and from their work location, on a work to leave ratio (eg, two months on, two weeks off) (McGavin, Jones & Imbun 2001).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• removes the need for constant family movement and enables families to reside in areas where they are able to satisfy their preferences for accommodation, sibling education and spouse work opportunities.</li> <li>• enables an individual to increase the domain separation between their work and personal life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• high pecuniary travel and separation allowance costs</li> </ul>
<b>Flexible hours schemes</b>	Individuals would have greater choice over when they complete their work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• applicable to routine administration and paper tasks</li> <li>• reduces the constraints on peoples freedom</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• could not be applied to environments where team participation was required</li> <li>• low applicability for command positions</li> </ul>

\* Note: This table was developed with reference to Glenn Review (1995).

### Developing Organisation Culture

The Army has been through a process of continuous change that has disturbed its organisation culture. These changes have often been pursued without a sober assessment of the net benefits from change for Service personnel and for the organisation. A perception that costs exceed benefits saps an organisation and a perception of deterioration in Service conditions leads to loss of valuable Service personnel and increases difficulty in recruitment of desirable personnel. Successful change requires a critical mass of bottom-up recognition of the need for change and commitment to the change process. Where top-down changes are necessary, they must be driven by a credible and coherent vision of the net benefits for the organisation and organisation personnel.

This critique and advocacy of change needs to be directed towards Army political stakeholders, as well as Army organisation. Organisation changes need first to be evaluated in terms of net contributions to Army core product—the delivery of an effective combat force. A cost-cutting perspective does not serve this purpose. Legitimisation of reforms involves showing how changes are value-adding for the achievement of Army mission, and building collective recognition through repetitive social interactions that work to build organisation culture for the achievement of organisation objectives.

### Distribution of Costs and Benefits of Army Skills Development

A sharp-line distinction between skills that are exchanged in the external labour market (“general skills”) and skills that are specific to the Army (“specific skills”) is of course simplistic. Service personnel have complex mixes of both general and specific skills. Nevertheless, the balance between general and specific skills mixes vary—so that

some personnel categories can be attracted from the external labour market with some “top-up” of organisation-specific skills—while other Service personnel may have organisation-specific skills that take much time and resources to form within the organisation and whose loss to the external labour market impacts more heavily upon Army performance. Where the skills balance is toward general skills, there is less pressing need for the Army to assume the costs of skills formation, and rewards need only balance the external labour market opportunities in order to achieve Army competitiveness. Where the skills balance is toward specific skills, it is more pressing for the Army to assume the costs of skills formation, and rewards need to exceed external labour market alternatives for personnel who demonstrate needed specific skills performance.

This calls for a prudent flexible distribution of costs and benefits of skills formation between personnel and the organisation. This prudent distribution of costs and benefits of human resource development needs also to be viewed over time, in order that career paths are mapped out—particularly for personnel who demonstrate performance in Army specific skills that are essential for core-product delivery. This of course links with our earlier observations on building trust and extending the “future shadow”. Unless these issues are addressed, the Army will continue to have the “worst of both worlds” (Alexander and McGavin 1989), because it will continue to make large investments by assuming the costs of skills formation of people attracted from the external labour market, and lose those people to the external labour market without achieving an adequate return on Army investment and without a stable building-up of Army skills. A simplified discussion of options available to Army managers for increasing flexibility in the distribution of

costs and benefits of skills development within general service officers is provided below. The discussion examines specific initial military skills formation, general undergraduate tertiary skills formation and general post-graduate study and is divided between the following assessment topics:

- skill requirement and option for the payment of skills formation;
- division of rewards relative to opportunity costs over time; and
- policy applications for ensuring the highest return to the Army from investments.

### A Simplified Assessment of Options for Army Officer Skills Formation

#### Specific military skills formation

The specialists skills provided by the Army training are relatively unique and largely non-transferable, resulting in the organisation bearing the cost of skills formation.<sup>3</sup> This occurs primarily through a commissioning process that sees indirect entrants, through the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA), and direct entrants, graduate from the Royal Military College (RMC) after four and one and a half year training periods respectively.

Specific skills formation prior to commissioning is largely non-transferable, with returns being biased towards the Army. Nevertheless, specific skills formation undertaken post-commissioning does begin to generate a more equal sharing of rewards between the Service member and the Army. This is especially relevant to non-arms corps officers (e.g. Signals officers trained in the management of communications resources). There does not appear to be significant scope for reallocating the specific skills formation conducted prior to commissioning. Key insights here appear to be assessing the manner and time period during which training is provided, with particular emphasis on eliminating duplication and redundant

skills formation. By reducing pre-commissioning skills formation costs, whilst producing a product that is acceptable to stakeholders, additions to the value-added return from specific skills formation appear to be possible. Where post-commissioning courses appear to generate a significant return to the individual, there also appears to be scope for reassessing the distribution of costs of skills formation. Alternately, the Army may wish to capitalise on the general skills formation undertaken by its part-time personnel.

#### General Skills Formation—undergraduate<sup>4</sup>

*Cost of skills formation funded by a party external to the Army.* The main advantages of this option are that it:

- enables access to a diverse range of intellectual and cultural experiences; and
- enables capitalisation on economies of scale in the external schooling market and trend towards higher educational expectations in the wider external labour market.

The main disadvantages of this option are that it:

- requires competition to gain access to potential entrants, with significant possibility of not being able to compete for higher quality graduates; and
- reduces the scope for networking between junior officers in all Services.

*Costs of skills formation funded by the Army through ADFA and existing undergraduate schemes.* The main advantages of this option are that it:

- ensures a minimum standard of education and provides access to relatively high quality graduates;
- acts to ensure a minimum input of trained personnel, particularly engineers; and
- enables early socialisation of members into the organisational culture and extensive inter-Service and intra-Service networking.

The main disadvantages of this option are that it:

- does not capitalise on economies of scale in the external education market; and
- reduces educational and lifestyle diversity of applicants.

Regardless of which party bears the costs of skills formation, rewards predominantly flow to the individual, although the organisation does benefit from higher technical and conceptual capacities. The extent of benefits the organisation receives, of course, depends on the type of skills formed and the job categories into which personnel with specific skills are placed.

There appear to be significant net benefits from structuring incentives so that the load of investment for general undergraduate skills formation is more borne by the individual, while post-skills-formation rewards for individuals are increased. This does not imply that ADFA and existing undergraduate schemes should be terminated. Rather, it indicates that the investment load in these programs should be shifted to the individual, with the incentive for skills formation being postponed to rewards received after commissioning. Alternately, if the Army wishes to maintain its present investment load, it should develop strategies for job placement and contract negotiations which ensure its return on investments in undergraduate skills are maximised.

#### **General skills formation—post graduate and non-tertiary**

*Cost of skills formation funded by party external to the Army.*

The main advantage of this option is that it enables capitalisation on educational expectations in the wider external labour market. The main disadvantage is that it provides little incentive to the Service member to undertake skills formation specifically for enhancing their capacity to contribute to the Army, with the greatest

motivation for the individual to invest in skills that increase their competitiveness in the external labour market.

*Costs of skills formation funded by the Army through ADFA and existing postgraduate schemes.* The main advantages of this option are that it:

- acts as an incentive to Service members to continue skills formation;
- provides a possible means of enhancing separation of personnel from the organisation; and
- it provides the Army access to the skills that senior officers will increasingly require effectively to manage Army resources.

The main disadvantages of this option are that it:

- can be directed towards the formation of skills that appear to have little direct relevance to enhancing Army core product delivery; and
- can generate very low returns to the Army if the trained Service member is not employed in a job category where the skill is used most effectively.

Again regardless of which party bears the load of investment, rewards predominantly flow to the individual. The extent to which the organisation benefits from the skills formation process depends specifically on how the Army uses these skills. This form of skills formation can also be used to achieve other human resource management objectives and, therefore, should be examined from a strategic perspective (e.g. rewarding personnel or bringing about separation).

Due to the bias of returns towards the individual, they should be expected to bear a significant cost in relation to general skills formation. Nevertheless, the organisational requirement for such skills suggests that adequate incentives be provided for the individual to undertake such investments. There is a definite need for returns on investments of this nature to be generated as

quickly as possible after the investment outlay.

### Conclusions

People are the first asset of the Army, and building better personnel policies is the first priority for better achievement of Army strategic objectives. The reform of Army personnel policies needs to be conducted within an overall framework that provides a coherent and cogent basis for Army personnel policies that improve core-product delivery. There are many headings under which this reform may be considered. We have chosen the building-up of trust among Service personnel in Army organisation and Army objectives; the development of flexible service conditions that ensure that the Army remains competitive in attracting and retaining personnel who strategically serve effective core product delivery; working at developing an organisational culture that provides both stability and adaptability for the organisation; and the reconfiguration of distribution of costs and benefits of skills formation so that key skills are developed, retained, and effectively used for enhanced core product delivery. These reforms need to be pursued in a coherent and stable way that over time builds and re-builds the credibility of the Army for its personnel and its stakeholders.

This is a follow-up to the article “Improving the Development and Use of Human Resources in the Australian Defence Force: Key Concepts for Strategic Management” published in the *Australian Defence Force Journal* No.142 May/June 2000.

### NOTES

1. For the concept of “trust” we draw upon Parkhe 1998a,b, but also on Sabel 1993, Thompson 1995, Klein 1997, and Nootboom et al. 1997; for “reputation”, see also Dasgupta 1988, Landa 1996, and Kumar 1996.
2. On long-distance commuting, see McGavin et al. (2001).

3. Although there appears to be scope for outsourcing of some of the specific skills formation undertaken by non-combat corps (e.g. transport and ordnance), the scope of the article precludes investigation of these options.
4. Similar reasoning can be applied to the formation of tertiary entrance qualifications.

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*Captain Luke Trebor Jones and Captain Daniel Jeffrey Murray entered the Australian Defence Force Academy and graduated in the 1997 class. After a year at the Royal Australian Military College they were commissioned at end-1998 to the Signals Corps, and returned to undertake Honours at University College ADFA in 1999, graduating with BA (Hons.) UNSW in Economics.*

*Captains Jones and Murray are at present respectively posted to Darwin and Canberra. In September 2002, Captain Jones, with Army support, is to commence doctoral studies at the University of Oxford on international peacekeeping forces as a Rhodes Scholar for Australia.*

*Reverend Associate Professor Paul Anthony McGavin was appointed to the School of Economics and Management in 1986 and has been Head of School and Presiding Member of the University College Academic Board. Father McGavin is at present working as a priest in a Catholic parish and maintains a research association with the School.*



# The Role of Defence Health in Military Operations Other than War – A Research Proposal.

By Brigadier Rob Atkinson

*This research proposal is to consider mutual support between humanitarian aid and legitimate military force and its place in the escalation along the path to conflict. The issue to be explored is the mechanism by which humanity and legitimate force can be applied in obedience with international humanitarian law as a preventative measure. How can this be achieved in a manner that is in accordance with sovereignty but still be applicable to intra-state conflict? How can this be applied in a timely manner with lasting benefit? The 1994 genocide in Rwanda will be the central theme, with a proposal to develop a mechanism that is universally applicable.*

Humanity has trod a long and difficult path in regard to International Humanitarian Law and the Laws of Armed Conflict, particularly in the 20th century.<sup>1</sup>

The foundation of International Humanitarian Law (IHL) is in history and comes from religion, chivalry, morality and all aspect of human endeavour that leads to honour in dealings.<sup>2</sup> The landmark contribution was by Henry Dunant in 1859, noting the appalling carnage at the battle of Solferino and the subsequent suffering of the wounded in his book, *A Memory of Solferino*.

Nations, in general terms, are progressing from chaos to order in their relationships and in regard to modern conflict,<sup>3</sup> and International Humanitarian Law is a facet of this behaviour.

From the 1864 “Geneva Convention”, 16 countries agreed to the non-discriminatory management of the wounded and the neutrality of those who rendered aid. The International Committee of the Red Cross evolved and expanded the terms to include not only war but also disaster relief in its broader sense to bring aid and relief from human suffering. The Red Crescent was used in Muslim countries, bringing a non-sectarian dimension, and this was demonstrated in Muslim religious writings and contributions to International Humanitarian Law.<sup>4</sup>

The 20th century subsequently had an element of discipline in armed conflict by those combatants who had been given legitimate and lethal force by their sovereign governments. The Red Cross gave a degree of protection for the neutrality of those delivering care.

What was the bigger picture in armed conflict? Not all countries and not all soldiers, “played the game”, respecting IHL (e.g. the Japanese “Bushido” code).<sup>5</sup>

Was a fluke of historical evolution in human behaviour occurring or was communication in the democracies regarding human rights making steady progress? Otto von Bismarck (1898) was quoted as saying that “the most decisive event – in modern history was the fact that North Americans spoke English”. Not all North Americans are from English-speaking origins!

Was the continuance of developing democratic structures in the English-speaking and associated world empowering ordinary people to develop their economic muscle in line with individual human rights and values to win in war?

“Remember the Alamo” was the battle cry when Sam Houston defeated the Mexican dictator, General Santa Anna, in 1836 and Texas became an independent republic before

joining the United States. Previously that year, 189 men died at the Alamo, including an ex-US Senator (Davy Crockett) who ostensibly had come down from Tennessee to fight for “liberty”. The defenders of the Alamo came from all parts of the world, in fact; mostly English-speaking and most having lived less than seven years in the area that was to become Texas.<sup>6</sup>

The battle cry was for “liberty or death” at the Alamo, from dictator Santa Anna. From the French and American revolutions that cry has echoed through to the 20th century – in Tiananmen Square and in East Timor! People seemed to want liberty, democratic values and rule of law.

Thus with roots in history and in the 18th and 19th centuries, “democracy” in all its forms has been the success story for the 20th century. It seems to have provided the economic muscle and the human motivation to win the major conflicts of World War I and World War II. This form of government enabled the most powerful democracy to leave the conflict in South Vietnam by 1975.

Against this background of people giving their rights over to democratic government, the ability to wage war with rules – that is, International Humanitarian Law – has developed. Treaties and agreements were between states; that is, people with rights in democracies but also between governments who had taken rights from people to control the state.<sup>8</sup>

The winning of World War II led to the Nuremberg trials. The appalling revelations of the Holocaust demonstrated the total abuse of one section of the community by the sovereign Nazi Government. Article 6(c) of the Nuremberg Charter defined “crimes against humanity” as opposed to “war crimes” committed against serving members of the Allied armed forces.

This progressed to Genocide Law which theoretically allowed for the trial and punishment of the perpetrators of such crimes,

notwithstanding their position in a sovereign state. Individual human rights were beginning to be seen to be above sovereign state rights.<sup>9</sup>

Catching criminals in civilised society requires the police and the cooperation of law-abiding citizens. Countries, in essence, would seem to be no different, and unless they abide by International Humanitarian Law and cooperate, this law cannot be enforced. The “Cold War” prevented progress, with diplomats paying lip service to the law to achieve their own political ends.

Nonetheless, with the breaches of International Humanitarian Law highlighted by the media, the US was obliged to commit to trial, with success, its own serving members of the armed forces (Lieutenant William Calley, South Vietnam, 1968).<sup>10</sup>

In 1989 the Cold War was won, essentially in favour of democracies, and this process of democracy and human rights gained momentum in Eastern Europe and the former USSR, when human rights in Western Europe, as extrapolated by the European Convention and its Strasbourg Court, were transported.<sup>11</sup>

Following the Gulf War in 1991, President George Bush of the US proclaimed, “a New World Order” and in 1993 all 185 member countries of the United Nations (UN) signed on to ratify the United Nations Covenant of Civil and Political Rights and accepted the jurisdiction of the UN Human Rights Committee, a fledgling body with no significant authority but which was nonetheless a step forward.<sup>12</sup>

There had been little progress from 1948, when Dr H.V. Evatt – President of the United Nations General Assembly and Australian Foreign Affairs Minister at the time – had announced the new international law on human rights, to 1993. Here was, at last, the legal structure and political will to apply this law.

International tribunals were set up in The Hague for crimes against humanity in Yugoslavia and in Arusha to try and punish

those responsible for genocide in Rwanda in 1994. In 1998, 20 nations in Rome voted to support a statute establishing an International Criminal Court,<sup>13</sup> which has proved to have problems which may be helped by cooperating with National bodies.<sup>14</sup> Now almost 130 countries have signed up, with 27 having ratified the treaty – the US President having just signed although ratification by the Senate will take time because of US misgivings in regard to “a profound distrust of the abuse of power” (Senator Helms).<sup>15</sup> Remember the Alamo! The US will have a profound influence on the effectiveness of the Court.

On 24 March 1999 the English Law Lords ruled that the Torture Convention had overruled General Pinochet of Chile’s sovereign immunity. On the same day, the NATO air war against the sovereign state of Yugoslavia began in response to allegations of atrocities by the Serbs against the Muslim Kosovars. A war against human rights violation seemed to be the main driver, as opposed to oil, land or a perceived threat, which have been major historical reasons for going to war.

The media had played a significant role (the “CNN factor”),<sup>16</sup> raising public awareness and opinion to a level where democratically elected governments were under considerable pressure to act.

So now the picture of suffering humanity on television screens was a major motivator, with the appropriate legal structures in place to attempt to prosecute and punish the guilty. Enforcement of International Humanitarian Law by a legitimate military, under a democratic government, seemed to be the means of catching the alleged criminals, particularly if their bank balances were no longer sacrosanct, e.g. President Estrada of the Philippines.<sup>17</sup>

*This recent use of force, ostensibly for human rights, sends a clear message that it may well be used again. Does this have a preventative value in regard to conflict?*<sup>18</sup>

This is very hard to measure at this stage. Does the capture and punishment of so-called war criminals, or those guilty of crimes against humanity, have a deterrent effect? Time will tell.

What we do know, however, from recent experience in Rwanda particularly, is that large numbers of people have died before an international response occurred. Intervention has in fact been too late many times.<sup>19</sup> Rwanda as a case history demonstrates a number of these points.

Rwanda has historically been populated by two major ethnic groups. Essentially, the minority Tutsis, the cattle herders, made up the ruling caste; and the majority Hutus, the cultivators of the fields, were the great bulk of the population.<sup>20</sup> The Colonial powers of Germany and Belgium used this ethnic division for political control, enhancing traditional animosities; and on independence, when the majority of the Hutus gained power, the exiled Tutsis (the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF)) pursued a guerrilla war mainly from Uganda.

From 1990 onwards the UN sought to facilitate and broker a solution, leading to the Arusha Peace Talks, with progress on an intermittent basis leading to the deployment of UNAMIR I (United Nations Assistance Mission in Rwanda) under the command of Canadian Brigadier General Romeo A. Dallaire. In spite of good intelligence information predicting a major conflict, presented to the UN in early 1994,<sup>21</sup> the assassination of the presidents of Burundi and Rwanda occurred in a plane crash on 6 April 1994. A massacre of 800,000 Tutsis and sympathetic Hutus ensued.

Considerable vacillation by the UN and the international community occurred. African states wished to intervene but were prevented by the lack of heavy military equipment and US support, which was probably influenced by the 18 Ranger (US military) deaths that occurred in Somalia in the previous year. France was significantly involved as a previous supporter of the Hutu regime and, given her

national interest in Francophone Africa, became militarily involved with a UN Mandate protecting a safe area in the south-west of Rwanda. This was after the massacres.

The Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) attacked from Uganda and was spectacularly successful in defeating the majority government and armed forces of the Hutus. A massive refugee problem arose as the perpetrators of the genocide moved their population and power ahead of the successful RPF, with the French essentially providing sanctuary for them.<sup>22</sup> On 13 May 1994 the UN Secretary-General recommended a new mandate for UNAMIR II to include 5000 troops and this proposal was endorsed by the Security Council on 8 June 1994, with deployment on approximately 10 August.

The Australian contingent advance party arrived in Kigali on 7 August and formally took over and utilised the section of the Kigali Central Hospital. They provided medical support to the UN force and NGO (Non-Government Organisation) groups, with a large effort directed towards humanitarian relief.

Gradually stability was returned to Rwanda, with the people returning to the towns and a vestige of normal life returning. An element of goodwill and cooperation was developed between the UN and the RPF, which had now become the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) although distrust remained because of the delayed response at the time of the massacres. This new climate, with the UN present, enabled normal life to evolve in a steady but not problem-free manner (personal experience 1994).

On initial deployment the RPA, manning the roadblocks throughout the country, particularly in Kigali, presented an aggressive stance, sighting their weapons on the Australian LIN personnel present. In a matter of days following the surgical management by Australians of injured RPA soldiers, the attitude changed at the roadblocks, with the weapons pointed up and ready smiles and the

occasional wave. In a microcosm, this change in behaviour so quickly was most noticeable.

Prizing impartiality, the UN had managed to gain approval from the General Assembly and the legitimate Government of Rwanda to deploy UNAMIR I under Brigadier General Romeo Dallaire. There was a window of opportunity to “spotlight” the encroaching massacre. The UN forces had no legitimate right to intervene politically and subsequently did not. Citizens of Rwanda were killed in front of UN soldiers, leaving a personal burden for them to carry all their lives, particularly their Brigadier General.<sup>23, 24</sup>

The UN Brigadier “on the spot” had good and timely intelligence but no enforcement occurred as he had no force or power in International Humanitarian Law. Nobody could have believed what could and subsequently did happen.<sup>25</sup>

International Humanitarian Law provided no deterrent. The UN forces provided no protection or sanctuary. The rules of engagement changed with the UNAMIR II as UN forces now could use legitimate lethal force to protect citizens and themselves<sup>26</sup> – a lesson not lost on Major General Peter Cosgrove, the Commander of INTERFET (International Force in East Timor) with a UN mandate in 1999.

The French became involved after the massacres in Rwanda, and the driver there seemed to be the resuscitation of as much French influence in Africa as possible; the driver was national will and not human rights abuses.

The UNAMIR II finally provided a calm after the event to enable nation-building – not enough strength to prevent the massacre at Kibeyo in 1995 although the UN military and medical elements prevented an escalation of the deaths from 5,000 to 50,000. The RPA attempted to hide a large number of the bodies, even then, down to an “acceptable” 300! demonstrating their sensitivity to international opinion.<sup>27</sup>

So how could the UN present legitimate force early in a potential conflict in a manner that was non-threatening – relatively – to a sovereign state such as Rwanda? What new International Humanitarian Law could be developed to enable this acceptance, encouraging deterrence, enforcement of law and the collection of evidence for future Tribunals and Courts? The UN military medical assets seemed to have been effective in preventing escalation.

International Humanitarian Law needs to advance to facilitate proper policing in an acceptable manner. In the end, the idea is to prevent war. Thus war on war is the strategy. Clausewitz said that “war was diplomacy carried on by other means”. Maybe the reverse is true, and if International Humanitarian Law facilitates this diplomacy, could that be preventative? “Walk softly and carry a big stick” Theodore Roosevelt. The “Conventions” are silent on weapons and it thus appears to be no proscription to the type held by military medical personnel as long as the intent is to protect their patients and themselves.<sup>28</sup> This applies in a declared war and so there maybe more possibility for appropriate weapons in communal conflict such as Rwanda or East Timor.

The final key to success is deceiving the enemy.<sup>29</sup> We need thus to see what is acceptable to the perpetrators of the violations of human rights without them realising the full implications. The NGO groups have been accepted but they are obliged to comply with the force on the ground and may become part of the problem<sup>30,31</sup> – but they get in and provide information.

What about the drivers on the UN’s interventionist side? Even if the UN is in a legal position to intervene in a preventative or early reactive way, it still requires force to achieve this “Coalition of the Willing”<sup>32</sup>. This falls back on national interest and what energises this; plus the question of UN impartiality is raised, with a subsequent

alteration of the original political balance.<sup>33</sup> To prize this impartiality as a unique feature of the UN leads to the concept of a UN independent force or “fire brigade”.<sup>34</sup> Much talk but it has not happened!

History may provide a lesson – as in the days of the Crusades, Christians and Muslims were enemies and the countries of Europe united, as did the Arab world. This was a trans-national conflict, and the Crusaders developed Orders of Knights, with different areas of expertise. Of particular relevance are the Knights Hospitaller.<sup>35</sup>

This military Order, as far as is known, began as a force to protect pilgrims as well as to provide for their sustenance and medical care. From their inception in the 12th century the Order became a fighting force in the Holy Land and in the Mediterranean. These were initially known as the Hospitallers of Jerusalem, then as the Knights of Rhodes and, after 1530, the direct Order of St John of Jerusalem is now called the Knights of Malta and is based in Rome and enjoys ambassadorial status. There are a number of derivatives, however, with similar claims to this heritage with similar prestige. They last bore arms in the early 18th century and now are prestigious non-government organisations (NGOs) devoted to humanitarian causes.

To modernise the concept of a super-national force, the “UN Protectors” need to be a non-sectarian, non-religious force, beholding to no nation, ethnic group or race. They would have no geographical bounds or territorial ambitions,<sup>36</sup> and would have to be an elite, technically advanced military force emphasising defence more than attack in order to prize impartiality. Should they be police or combat troops? – bearing in mind past failures.<sup>37</sup>

Under the Geneva Conventions, legitimate military medical assets can bear arms to protect themselves and those under their care. The type of weapon is not prescriptive as long as the intent is defensive, and therein lies a



*A nurse with 1 Field Hospital, Holsworthy (NSW) checks on an antibiotic drip for a burns victim at the military hospital in Dili, East Timor, which was part of INTERFET's presence in the region.*

*Photograph by Darren Hilder*

way forward for the development of an independent force. The defence could focus on safe areas for the protection of civilians.<sup>38</sup> They could use this protection for the media, allowing full development of the “CNN factor” and galvanising world opinion.<sup>39</sup> Using new technology for example video surveillance could be developed as a larger version of any security system, gathering evidence. Even giving “handy cams” to civilians with the ability to record and transmit real-time violence and intimidation,<sup>40</sup> would add another dimension to documenting evidence for the prosecution of crimes against humanity later. (“This is me getting killed!”).

Military medical assets present a unique combination of legitimate force and humanity. They could be “lead-in” or “ice-breaker” for conflict intervention. New International Humanitarian Law is required to provide the framework for their deployment. International Humanitarian Law is steadily moving forward but still seems to be behind the play, as evidenced by the fact that human rights abuses in Rwanda, Kosovo and East Timor etc. have occurred and that the law is trying to prosecute the perpetrators. Catching criminals after the event is good but to facilitate prevention is better. A new law - a new International Humanitarian Law - a convention on military medical intervention, could possibly achieve this.

Ostensibly non-threatening to the sovereign state involved and palatable to the states delivering the asset - a good “CNN factor” - encouraging for political will in democracies and building on existing International Humanitarian Law. Medical teams gather evidence both from patients and forensic examination. They provide health care, which gains them support from the persecuted and persecutors. As a combination of legitimate lethal or non-lethal force and humanity, military medical assets are not a soft target, such as NGO groups that are an intimate part of the problem.<sup>41</sup> The asset could

be national or supernational under the legitimacy of the UN. It could utilise new technology as part of the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA) in communications, surveillance, active and passive defence including stand-off and guided non-lethal weapons systems used in accordance with IHL.<sup>42</sup>

In his book *On Killing*, Lieutenant Colonel David Grossman considers there are people who are like wolves, they run countries and perpetuate violence that kills ordinary people, who are like sheep. He emphasises the concept that we require sheepdogs, who are just like wolves but in fact look after the sheep and protect them against wolves. Here are new sheepdogs.

In conclusion, with due regard for the historical evolution of individual liberty, human and sovereign state rights interwoven with International Humanitarian Law, the time would seem ripe for a new law to facilitate timely and appropriate intervention in humanitarian disaster.

As an “ice-breaker or lead-in” the new doctor-soldiers, like the Knights Hospitaller of old, could rise again, armed with new International Humanitarian Law in a non-sectarian campaign against conflict itself.

*There are wolves out there,  
That kill and make wars,  
And we need sheepdogs for the good cause.*

*History implores,  
Strengthen their paws, claws and jaws  
And provide them with good laws,  
To prevent new wars!*

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Brigadier Robert Neville Atkinson graduated in Medicine from University of Adelaide in 1970, completed his residency in Adelaide, and then saw active service with the Australian Regular Army in South Vietnam. He trained in Orthopaedics in Adelaide, completing this in 1980 with a Fellowship overseas in the United Kingdom including a Trauma Fellowship in Germany.

His military service continued with Command of two units and active service in the Gulf War, Rwanda, Bougainville, and recently East Timor. He has completed the position of Assistant Surgeon General and is now Emeritus Consultant in Military Surgery.

He is a Councillor of the Royal Australasian College of Surgeons and Asia-Pacific Orthopaedic Association and gained a Master of Defence Studies in 2001. He has just completed three years as Chairman of the Military Section of the College.

He is the Head of the Department of Orthopaedics and Trauma at the Modbury Public Teaching Hospital, holding Visiting positions at the Royal Adelaide Hospital and Adelaide Women’s and Children’s Hospital as part of the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery of the University of Adelaide. His particular civilian area of interest is knee and shoulder surgery as well as joint arthroplasty work for both hip and knee.



# The Australian Army and the Vietnam War 1962-1972

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# The Transformation – Strategic Change within the South African National Defence Force

By Lieutenant Colonel Murray Davies

## *Once We Were Enemies*

*At the best of times major structural change within any large organisation is difficult if not traumatic. Picture, however, a circumstance where an entire defence force must undergo major strategic, structural, and cultural change as a result of a shift in the political make-up of the country. From the highest to the lowest levels of the force new leadership structures and approaches must be accommodated and new teams built within units. Men and women, who only a few short years before were literally facing each other with weapons as enemies, must be blended together and must be taught to replace long standing hatreds with trust and cooperation. Because this blended force is too big for the economic and financial constraints of the newly re-emerged country it must be pared back, however, this must be done in such a way as to still be reflective of the social circumstances of the new environment. Of course this organisation is a defence force not a social experiment and as such, at the end of this period of change it must still be a capable and dynamic force able to protect the country and foster its continued security.*

This is exactly the situation faced by the South African Defence Force (SADF) during its Transformation into the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) during the period 1990-2000. Do not be tempted to assume that this was merely a simple name change. This process of *Transformation* as it was called was a “fundamental, complete and drastic make-over of the process” and the very fabric of South Africa’s military organisation.<sup>1</sup> As such, it is a very good example of strategic organisational change. To examine this process of Transformation this article will consider the events in South Africa in terms of the Transition Path Change Model developed in *Commanding Change – War Winning Strategies for Managing Organizational Change*.<sup>2</sup> Essentially the model plots the positions, progress and future of change in an organisation by examining its previous and current *change waves*.

While it is unlikely that Australia’s defence organisations will ever undergo change quite at this scale, the events in South Africa

between 1990 and 2000 provide important insights into how a defence organisation passes through such a dramatic and all-encompassing strategic change. As such, these insights are valuable lessons for Australia’s Defence Organisation to understand in terms of its own change management planning for the future.

## Background to Transformation

The first *Change Point* for South Africa’s current Revolutionary Change Wave was the release of Nelson Mandela in 1990. With his release the way was opened for multi-party, all-race elections in 1994. Between 1993 and 1994 a series of constitutional conventions were held at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park near Pretoria to produce an interim constitution and discuss the broader changes that were anticipated as a result of the election process. There were also committees and groups meeting to discuss the future of South Africa’s military organisation. In particular, a Joint Military Coordination

Committee (JMCC) conducted a series of meetings to determine the future of SADF, its former enemies including the military arm of the African National Congress, the MK (Umkhonto we Sizwe), APLA (Azanian Peoples Liberation Army) and the smaller homeland forces that had been established by the SADF during the apartheid era.<sup>3</sup>

The meetings at Kempton Park determined that Transformation had an overall aim of providing “appropriate, adequate, affordable and accountable defence for the RSA”.<sup>4</sup> This aim translated into five main goals. The first, and perhaps most overwhelming was the integration of the SADF, the MK, the APLA and five homeland forces into one unified national defence force. The second goal was the stabilisation of the country’s civil and military relations, in particular the passing of internal security duties to the South African Police. The development of defence policy was also to be made more open and consultative and the SANDF was to be made “right sized and cost effective”. Finally a “new” Ministry of Defence comprising both military and civilian personnel had to be established and the concept of civilian oversight of the military introduced and embedded.<sup>5</sup>

Although the integration of the forces was only one of five Transformation goals, it has been the most demanding and complex. It commenced on 27 April 1994 and was initially thought to have created an integrated SANDF of some 139,000 personnel. This was based on an assessment that saw approximately 90,000 former SADF, 32,000 former MK, 6,000 former APLA and 11,000 former members of the homeland armies being brought into the force. At the height of process, however, only 101,000 were actually integrated as only 15,000 former MK and APLA members chose to make the transition.<sup>6</sup> Integration was not simply a matter of absorbing extra personnel but rather establishing accepted competencies and standards of training, equivalencies of rank and a balance of conditions of service.

Against all of this there was also a clear expectation that South Africa neither needed nor could maintain a defence force of this size and as such there would inevitably have to be a program of demobilisation or downsizing. In 2001 the SANDF had a total strength of approximately 78,000 although the target figure still to be reached by 2002 is between 65,000 and 70,000.<sup>7</sup>

### Change Management Planning

There were a number of areas of the SANDF’s change management planning that were highly effective. The first was the establishment of a special staff within the SANDF to manage the process. In July 1995, Major General Oelschig was appointed as the Chief Director of Transformation Management. Oelschig’s task was to get the Transformation process “irreversibly on track by 31 May 1999”.<sup>8</sup> The directorate was responsible for managing the structure and conduct of the Transformation process initially within SANDF, although its role was eventually broadened to include the Defence Secretariat and aspects of the wider Department of Defence. The directorate existed under various names and command arrangements until 1 April 1999 when the Directorate of Integrated Management Systems absorbed its functions.<sup>9</sup>

Another of the great strengths of the Transformation process was that its goals, directions and objectives were communicated to all members of the new SANDF. This communication involved a range of change management activities to encourage and support personnel and make them more aware or “sensitised” to the new environment. “Critical Mass Training” was also provided to those members of the organisation who would lead the change and was designed to orientate leaders to the aim and goals of the Transformation.<sup>10</sup>

Critically, there was also a clear break between the end of the SADF and the start of the SANDF. On 27 April 1994 the SADF ceased

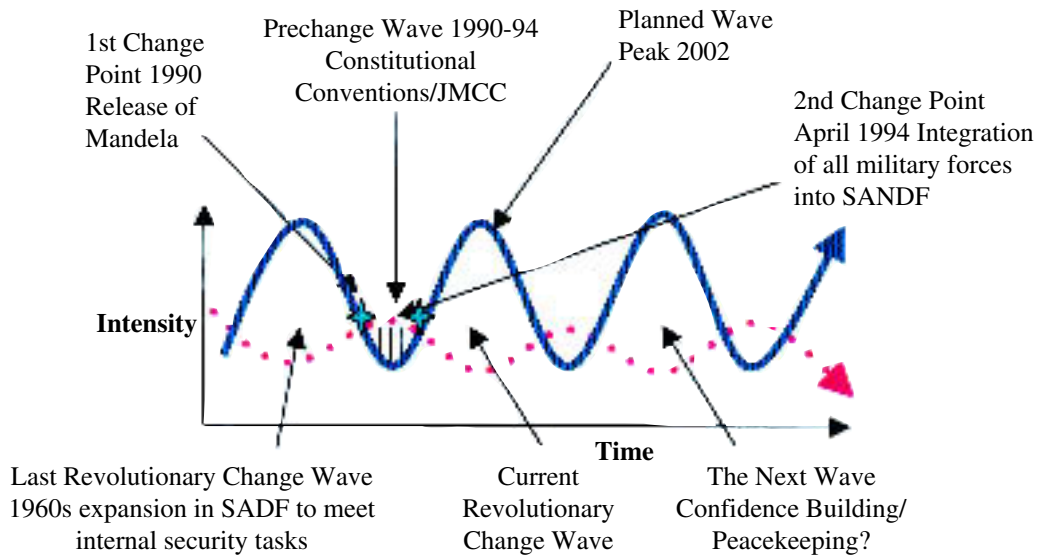


Figure 1. Transition Path Change Model – SANDF. Source: *Commanding Change*.

to exist. At that time all members of the SADF, APLA, MK, and the homeland forces were awarded a medal to recognise their service to date and formally brought into the new SANDF. The medal they were issued was the last of the old series of medals. From that date onward only SANDF medals would be issued. Likewise this date also saw the introduction of new elements to SANDF uniforms such as a new rank badges.<sup>11</sup> Within any organisation such “rituals of transition” are very important as they mark the passing of an event or a change in an organisation and provide a tangible demonstration of the continuity of values within the organisation as it moves between states.<sup>12</sup> The US Army recently underwent a similar process when it adopted the black beret as its universal headdress as it was intended that the beret would be the symbol of “the Army’s commitment to transforming itself into the Objective Force”.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, the approach taken during Transformation to dealing with potential sources of resistance to change is worth noting. While there were some notable and isolated incidents of resistance to change at unit or

base level where former “enemies” sought to continue the fight or settle old scores, the process of Transformation was widely accepted. Part of the reason for this is that the Transformation process was a consultative process from the very beginning. Although multi-racial democratic rule was inevitable for South Africa, all of the key players and major groups were not only consulted but also given an opportunity to contribute to the shape of the new SANDF. Another reason is that very early in the integration process there was a program of voluntary redundancies for all members of the SADF, MK, APLA and the smaller homeland forces. Between May 1996 and 1 April 1998 over 7,238 former members of the SADF, MK, and APLA took this voluntary retirement package at a total cost to the Government of 168 million Rand.<sup>14</sup> Interestingly, the highest pay out figures were allocated to those senior members of the forces (between 18 to 23 years of service) who it was thought may have had the greatest difficulties with the new environment.<sup>15</sup> Although a voluntary redundancy package of this size would have been a significant hit to any

defence budget, it helped to “remove painlessly” personnel in any of the military organisations who may have been prone toward opposing or resisting the change.

Perhaps the greatest weakness in the planning and conduct of the Transformation can be seen in the failure to plan *through* change rather than *to* change. Certainly there was a very clear sense that the SADF had to be changed. Likewise, the areas of this change were well recognised and the goals of Transformation widely stated. What was missing, however, was a common or even stated understanding of what the SANDF would look like once it had completed the Transformation process. In other words the paramount goal was to create the SANDF although there was no clear view of what the SANDF would look like or what it would be able to do when it was finished. It is important to understand that for many South Africans the single most important issue was that the SANDF would not be the SADF of the apartheid era. While this is understandable such sentiment does not provide a pathway *through* the change to develop a well-balanced and flexible force able to meet South Africa’s strategic needs.

#### Transformation – Success or Failure?

Can we say that Transformation achieved its stated aim of providing “*appropriate, adequate, affordable and accountable* defence for the RSA”(my italics)?<sup>16</sup> It is certainly true that the SANDF’s command structure and ethos and manning is more *appropriate* to the racial, ethnic, cultural and political circumstances of the new South Africa. The *adequacy* of the force is, however, a difficult issue to judge. There were claims by some that the SANDF’s deployment to Lesotho in September 1998 was nothing more than a demonstration of its weakness post-Transformation. At the same time, however, there is equally valid criticism that the South African Department of Foreign Affairs and

intelligence services failed to provide an accurate view of the situation and the opposition to the SANDF and this contributed to a below average showing.<sup>17</sup> Whether or not the force is adequate to meet South Africa’s broader or future needs is not clear as there has been limited strategic or force structure consideration in this area as Transformation planning occurred to and not through the SADF to SANDF change.

It is unlikely that the SANDF could be considered *affordable* yet although steps are being taken to reduce its size through continued demobilisation steps and with the rationalisation of logistic and material processes. As to the *accountability* of the forces there are undoubtedly some problems relating to change fatigue although the SANDF is now firmly under civilian oversight and its planning and acquisition processes are subject to a high degree of oversight.

How effectively this aim is fixed within the SANDF will depend on how they deal with *tensions* about the process of Transformation that are starting to develop. One recent study has pointed to a growing sense of tension between the “technocrats” who introduced and are seeking to maintain accounting, management and control procedures and behaviouralists who are more concerned with behavioural change issues related to the integration process such as the introduction and implementation of equality policies and procedures.<sup>18</sup> At the same time the increasing “jointness” of the SANDF remains a sense of tension for some Army, Navy, Air Force and Medical Service personnel.

Another concern is a growing sense of change fatigue that is becoming apparent within the uniformed and civilian members of the Department of Defence and the SANDF. This is now starting to be reflected in areas of discipline, morale, performance and quality of work life. An internal SANDF review of the Transformation process in June 2001 summarised this by saying that, “Too many

changes in concept without realigning internal control measures have also seen the increase of reported fraudulent and criminal behaviours costing the DOD valuable capital”.<sup>19</sup> Not surprisingly then, this same report also noted “implementation thereof proved far more difficult due to different perceptions, value systems, cultural diversity and language preferences.” It also noted, however, that “The signing of new codes (of conduct) for military as well as civilian personnel made the road to a transformed DOD much easier to travel.”<sup>20</sup>

### Strategic Change Lessons

While it seems unlikely that Australia’s Defence Organisation will ever experience a change process as extensive or dramatic as the SANDF, it is nevertheless a valuable exercise to draw some lessons from the South African experience. This is principally because strategic change of this scope and over such a period touches every aspect of the structure, philosophy, personnel and materiel issues of an organisation. The strengths and weakness of the SANDF approach can provide examples of successful and unsuccessful change approaches and pathways that other organisations may consider in the implementation of their more modest change agendas. To that end there are four lessons we can take from the SADF to SANDF Transformation.

**Lesson 1 – Communications;** One of the great strengths of the Transformation process was that its goals, directions and objectives were communicated to all members of the new SANDF. This communication involved a range of change management activities, including “Critical Mass Training”, that were designed to encourage and support personnel and make them more aware or “sensitised” to the new environment. Also by communicating the reasons for a change to personnel it headed off some unsubstantiated criticisms, reduced the impact of rumours, educated participants, and created a sense of ownership of the change within the organisation.

**Lesson 2 – *Through* and Not *To* Change;** A very common failing of much military change management planning is a convergence on the immediate change objective. This occurs when the dates and targets of a plan take on an unnecessary and unrealistic importance all of their own. This was perhaps the greatest weakness in the planning and conduct of the Transformation. Although there was a very clear sense that the SADF had to be changed and the areas of this change were well recognised and widely stated, there was no common or even stated understanding of what the SANDF would be like once it had completed the Transformation process. Many of the misinterpretations, tensions and resistance to Transformation were a direct result of this. Likewise, much of the change fatigue being experienced by the members of the South African Department of Defence in general can be linked back to this. The important thing for change leaders to remember is that they must look forward to the shape or state they want the organisation to be in the future *after* the change. They must select an aim that sees through turmoil and confusion of the impending or current wave to the time after the wave.

**Lesson 3 – Dealing with Opposing or Resisting Forces;** In any change environment there will always be groups or individuals, both inside and outside the organisation, that will seek to delay, impede, or even attempt to stop the process of change. In the case of Transformation we have seen that there were tensions between “technocrats” and behaviouralists, military and civilian personnel and between the four Services that has and are likely to continue to influence the conduct of change processes. There were some isolated incidents of a more extreme nature although these were local and small scale in nature. The fact that there were not more significant sources or incidents of opposition is a compliment to the success of Transformation. Clearly there were two factors that contributed

to this success. The first was communication, as discussed previously goals, directions and objectives were communicated to all members of the new SANDF. The second was a program of well-managed redundancies that offered potential sources of resistance or opposition to the change to depart the Service.

**Lesson 4 – Military Uniqueness;** There is sometimes a danger within military organisations that the uniqueness of their circumstances is not recognised and that change procedures, often imperfectly copied from the civilian world, are applied arbitrarily. In doing so many important aspects of military culture, issues of tradition and the rituals and familiar facets of military life are sacrificed to meet the “business plan” or the “customer” needs. The inherent danger in this is that aspects of internal culture which show critical parameters and lines of persuasion that the military change management planner will need when implementing the change will be lost. Despite the broad nature of the South African change they recognised the importance of such issues. As we saw between the end of the SADF and the start of the SANDF there was in effect a military “ritual of transition” that saw the SADF, MK, APLA and the homeland armies being awarded a medal to recognise their service to date and formally brought into the new SANDF. The medal they were issued was the last of the old series of medals. From that date onward only SANDF medals as well as other accoutrements would be issued. Such “rituals of transition” for military organisations are very important as they mark the passing of an event or a change in an organisation and provide a tangible demonstration of the continuity of values within the organisation as it moves between states.

### Conclusion

There can be few harder circumstances under which to manage a major strategic change than those faced by the SADF, MK, APLA and the homeland armies in their

Transformation into the SANDF. As we have seen this was clearly far more significant than just a simple name change, rather it was a major strategic realignment of forces, agencies and people that completely renewed and reorganised that very fabric of the South African military apparatus. It seems a fair assessment to say that Transformation achieved its stated goal of providing “appropriate, adequate, affordable and accountable defence for the RSA”. In doing so the SANDF was a good example of “best practice” strategic change management within a large organisation. I am not suggesting that it was perfect, rather that it demonstrated all the components of a cogent change strategy. Their strategy for change was based on a clear understanding of where the organisation was within its change environment. This superior situational awareness gave the organisation a good opportunity to plan change within their specific circumstances. The level of consultation and communication was also very high and this contributed to the effective implementation of the plans. Although few “civilian” change circumstances are ever likely to be as dramatic, there are a number of valuable lessons in areas of communication, looking through change, and managing those elements of the organisation who seek to disrupt or resist change that should be remembered.

This article is a condensed version of a working paper produced while the author was Chief of Defence Force Scholar at the Australian Defence Studies Centre.

### NOTES

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3. Wessels interview. Dr Wessels was a partner for a three-year project to re-engineer the South



- African DoD. This was an extremely complex project dealing with many change imperatives, such as the new constitutional dispensation and severe cuts in the defence budget (60% in real terms since 1989).
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  5. Integration Briefing, Rear Admiral J.G. Lukas M. Bakkes, given at HQ SANDF Pretoria, 16 Oct 01. Copies of notes held by author.
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  19. *ibid.*, pp 7-9.
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*Murray Davies joined the Australian Army in 1981 through the Royal Military College (RMC) Duntroon and has served in a number of communications and intelligence related postings Lieutenant Colonel Murray Davies has written widely on military affairs, international relations and organisational management subjects. His articles have been published in the Australian Defence Force Journal, the British Army Review, the Combat Arms Journal and others. His first book, Commanding Change a study of change management practices in military organisations, was published by Praeger Publishing USA in 2001. He has just completed a second book, A Souvenir from Sebastopol a historical narrative surrounding the Crimean War.*



*"A sound approach to training"  
Troops training in the Shoalwater Bay Training Area.*

Photograph by Corporal R. Donahoo

# General Sir John Monash: What Relevance to Command in the 21st Century?

By Major Dominic Nicholl

*I would name Sir John Monash as the best general on the western front in Europe; he possessed real creative originality ...*

Field Marshal Montgomery<sup>1</sup>

*Throughout the last two centuries Australia frequently contributed forces to allied war efforts. While these contributions were nationally significant, they were generally small in relation to the size of the combined allied forces.<sup>2</sup> However, Australian forces have engendered a reputation far in excess of their numbers in many theatres of war. While the characteristics of the individuals who comprised Australia's soldiery were important factors in the development of this reputation, the qualities of their commanders were of greater significance. The effective command of all resources, including personnel, is paramount to the successful conduct of war. Australia has produced a number of outstanding commanders who have led her forces to success in a wide range of operational theatres.*

*General Sir John Monash was one such commander. He came from obscurity at the beginning of the First World War to reach the appointment of commander of the Australian Corps in Europe less than four years later. What qualities of command did this Australian commander display that identified him for such rapid advancement, and are there lessons that can be learnt from his performance that are appropriate to command in the 21st century?*

*This article will analyse General Monash's command performance with a view to relevance to modern day command. Firstly, Monash's development and career will be briefly described after which a number of factors for success will be developed. These factors will then be used to analyse Monash's performance as a senior commander. Discussion will then identify lessons that may be applicable to the conduct of command in the 21st century.*

## Background

**J**ohn Monash was a part-time citizen soldier prior to the First World War. He was a civil engineer by profession but held other degrees in the Arts and Law. Monash was widely read and had an ability to grasp the essence of a wide range of issues. He was not only:

*a great soldier and a masterly engineer, but also a tireless student in many branches of knowledge... (He) could have sustained an argument with any musical expert on the interpretation of the symphonies of Beethoven, but he knew those works as well as he knew the strategic doctrines of*

*Gneisenau or the tactical methods of Moltke.<sup>3</sup>*

Monash's pre-war military experience included service in the Artillery, Intelligence and Infantry. Soon after the outbreak of the First World War, he was appointed to command the 4th Brigade and departed for Egypt. After training in Egypt, Monash deployed with his brigade to Gallipoli. C.E.W. Bean, the Australian official historian, recorded that the holding of Monash's Valley was "one of the finest feats of the war".<sup>4</sup>

After the withdrawal from Gallipoli, Monash's 4th Brigade underwent training and

reconstitution in Egypt in preparation for deployment to the Western Front. Soon after his arrival in France, Monash was appointed General Officer Commanding (GOC) 3rd Division. He trained his new formation in England prior to deploying to the Western Front in late 1916. During his command, the 3rd Division was involved in a number of major battles including the Third Battle of Ypres in August 1917 and the great Ludendorff offensive of March 1918. In June (May) 1918, Monash was appointed commander of the Australian Corps. His significant successes in this appointment included the Battle of Hamel and the offensive on the Hindenburg Line.

### Command Factors

Any lessons learnt from the analysis of a commander's performance will be relative to his success. Success, put simply, is the accomplishment of the commander's aim or objective. In the case of military commanders, success could be considered to be the effective completion of their mission or achievement of the desired end-state.

What then is the essence of the success of great military commanders? Dunnigan and Masterson,<sup>5</sup> in their study of 12 of history's greatest generals, argue that the basic techniques of successful commanders have been essentially the same throughout history. They further explain the interrelated nature of management and leadership in the successful conduct of campaigns. This view is supported by Australian military doctrine where leadership and management can be seen to be sub-sets of the function of command.<sup>6</sup> Command, therefore, includes application of a rational process that involves analysis of the environment, formulation of strategies, development of structures and processes, and subsequent implementation and control.

These stages of the management process form the factors by which a military commander's performance may be analysed. While success is not assured, it is more likely

when there is alignment between these interrelated elements. Therefore, effective command involves four broad stages without which the opportunity for success is significantly reduced. These stages are, in a military sense:

1. situational awareness
2. planning
3. organisation and doctrine, and
4. execution.

They will be used as the framework to analyse General Sir John Monash's performance as a military commander.

### Analysis of Command Performance Situational Awareness

Success in battle is dependent on the exploitation of information and knowledge-in-general to gain a decisive advantage over the enemy. Situational awareness is the process whereby commanders develop as complete an understanding as possible of their operational environment in order to achieve their objectives. This involves not only obtaining operational information but also information about developments and technological advances relative to the mission.

Monash generally did not attempt to gain much information about his operational situation. While Monash undertook to observe from the sea the country through which his troops would move for the attack on Sari Bair, he failed to conduct a more detailed route reconnaissance.<sup>7</sup> This contributed to the failure of the battle with significant losses to the Australian force. As one of his officers at the time observed, it was an "object lesson on the necessity for personal reconnaissance".<sup>8</sup> During the same battle, Monash delegated command of his brigade to one of the battalion commanders while he remained to the rear of the force with no communications.<sup>9</sup> He consequently lost situational awareness and, subsequently, control of his brigade.

On the Western Front, as GOC 3rd Division, General Monash rarely made an effort to

reconnoitre the battlefield and often ignored patrol reports.<sup>10</sup> This resulted in an incomplete understanding of the battlefield that contributed to massive casualties during the First Battle of Passchendaele. Again during the Battle of the Hindenburg Line, at Gillemont Farm, Monash failed to ensure he had a reasonable picture of the situation before ordering an attack.<sup>11</sup> It failed with heavy casualties.

While the use of reconnaissance was a significant limitation in Monash's method of command, one of his greatest strengths was an awareness of developments in doctrine and technology that could be utilised to enhance the success of his battles.<sup>12</sup> During the Battle of Hamel he employed radios to enhance communications, and aircraft to provide reconnaissance reports.<sup>13</sup> Consequently, Monash and his commanders maintained good situational awareness during the battle giving them a decisive advantage over the enemy.

### Planning

The decisive advantage that is offered by development of sound situational awareness is of little effect if it is not used to develop strategies and plans to solve problems, or to exploit opportunities on the battlefield. The effectiveness of those plans, and the communication of them to subordinates, will have a profound influence on the outcome of planned activities. Monash's greatest strength lay in his ability to produce effective and comprehensive plans. By painstaking analyses of problems he reduced the probabilities of error. In contrast to the "romantic" views of his peers, Monash saw the conduct of war as a business, "differing in no way from the problems of a civil life, except that they are governed by a special technique".<sup>14</sup>

A particular technique used by General Monash was that of "conferencing". In these conferences he drew on the combined knowledge of his subordinate commanders. They analysed his plans in conference "so that

all possible problems could be foreseen and all possible solutions considered."<sup>15</sup> Everyone present was encouraged to give their opinion.<sup>16</sup> Monash explained every detail of his plans and ensured that all participants applied an identical interpretation as himself. Further, once the plans had been disseminated he would allow no fundamental alterations as he saw that this only served to introduce an element of confusion that "sapped the confidence of subordinates".<sup>17</sup>

While planning was one of Monash's greatest strengths, it was also one of his greatest weaknesses. He often overreached himself by performing tasks more appropriately undertaken by his staff and often encroached on the responsibilities of his subordinate commanders.<sup>18</sup> As a divisional commander he told his brigade commanders how they were to employ their battalions rather than allowing them to prepare their own plans within the divisional concept.<sup>19</sup> Interestingly, this was at odds with his own guidance in "100 Hints for Company Commanders" that advised superiors not to impinge on their subordinates' responsibilities.<sup>20</sup>

### Organisation and Doctrine

Effective planning alone will not bring about a successful outcome. Sound plans must be backed by appropriate organisational structures, training, doctrine, and quality resources. In this area Monash again excelled. As a militia brigade commander prior to the war he was complimented for his sound approach to training. This experience stood him well when appointed GOC 3rd Division. General Monash was responsible for the training of his new division. This he did with great effectiveness. To ensure that his troops were trained for the task that was expected of them, he had a trench system dug and rotated the training force through this to acclimatise them to the rigours of trench life. Further, he ensured that the best NCOs and officers, with

battle experience, were allocated to the Australian training units.<sup>21</sup> Through this he ensured the quality of Australian soldier deployed to the front.

As a corps commander, Monash conducted fortnightly conferences with his divisional commanders to create “a unity of thought and policy and a unity of tactical methods throughout the whole corps”.<sup>22</sup> He ensured the interoperability of forces assigned to him by standardising training and doctrine. When United States forces were allocated to his command, General Monash assigned Australians to conduct their training.<sup>23</sup> Similarly, prior to the Battle of Hamel, Monash had the men from different tank and infantry units mix and form friendships. Familiarisation training was conducted at all levels.<sup>24</sup>

During his most well known action at Hamel, Monash developed the concept for employment of firepower in place of manpower. He reduced the number of infantry and incorporated the use of combined arms in his battle plan. By employing new technology and by synthesising into a cohesive plan battle methods used previously by other commanders, General Monash produced an overwhelming victory. His use of tanks, infantry, artillery and aviation in the preliminary actions and in the attack brought about a synergy of effort previously not seen on the battlefield. It became the model of future British battle plans.<sup>25</sup> By developing a well trained force, formulating sound doctrine and organising his force to make best use of resources, Monash established the foundation for the sound execution of his plans.

### Execution

While commanders may have well trained and organised forces and a plan to commit them to battle, it should be remembered that no plan survives h-hour. Good commanders will be able to execute their plan, maintain sound awareness of the situation, and control their forces so that they can react as changes

develop. More particularly, good commanders will plan their operations so that there is sufficient capacity in their forces to react to unforeseen situations. Monash consistently ensured that his troops were as well rested as he could achieve by rotating them between positions. This worked well in Gallipoli with an under strength brigade and formed the basis of his plans on the Western Front. By setting limited objectives and by “leap-frogging” his formations, he husbanded the strength of the infantry for future action.<sup>26</sup>

During the Battle of Hamel and in subsequent actions, General Monash used aerial observation fitted with radios to keep abreast of the battle and issued radios down to battalion and some company headquarters. Further, he developed the use of standard message formats for runners to “produce clarity of communication”.<sup>27</sup> These measures assisted Monash in maintaining control of his forces and provided him a decisive edge over the enemy. During the Battle of the Hindenburg Line, General Monash clearly demonstrated his ability to control his forces and achieve his aim. C.E.W. Bean observed that the operation stood out “as one of movement rather than set-piece ... in which quick, free, manoeuvre played a decisive part”.<sup>28</sup>

However, it is in the area of control that General Monash again shows a significant limitation in his method of command. In an issue related to maintenance of situational awareness, he often made poor decisions or vacillated before making decisions.<sup>29</sup> As Monash never went forward to the trenches, nor conducted ground reconnaissance, he was often unaware of the true nature of the operational situation. He often rejected the situational advice of his subordinate commanders.<sup>30</sup> This attitude towards situational awareness often limited the success of his operations. However, Monash suffered few losses in battles that he planned and executed. While he could have achieved greater successes, his achievements were the result of

detailed planning and the use of control measures such as limited objectives. In this way he was better able to control his forces and react to unforeseen situations.

### Key Lessons

While the methods and means of war have changed since the trench warfare of Monash's day, its general nature has remained the same. War and conflict continue to contain chaos and confusion that often obscure predictability and outcome.<sup>31</sup> Successful commanders will attempt to reduce this uncertainty through effective and comprehensive planning, and implementation of control measures. General Monash's performance in command provides a number of lessons that are applicable to the conduct of command in the modern era.

The overarching lesson that may be identified is that military operations should be conducted as a business. This involves the application of a rational management process that guides analysis of the environment, formulation of strategies, development of structures and processes, and subsequent implementation and control. Monash achieved a higher level of success than many of his contemporaries, in part, because of his ability to develop alignment between these interconnected factors. Applied effectively, adoption of such an approach will assist commanders to identify changes in the operating environment and develop appropriate responses to them.

Implicit in a rational management process is the necessity for development and maintenance of situational awareness in the conduct of planning, execution and control of operations. Monash's ineffective decisions and unsuccessful operations were, in large measure, the result of poor reconnaissance and rejection of advice from subordinates – overall, insufficient awareness of the operational situation. His most effective battles were those where he obtained a sound understanding of the operational environment. Further,

awareness of the broader military environment is essential to the maintenance of professional mastery. By keeping abreast of technological advances relevant to the conduct of military activities, ensuring currency in doctrinal developments, and incorporating these into the planning process, greater opportunity will be provided to commanders to more effectively plan and prosecute operations. Again, Monash's most effective actions drew on advances in military technology and doctrine, and inclusion of these into his plans.

This analysis of Monash's command performance further illustrates the need for effective planning and subsequent communication to force element commanders. His method of conferencing provided a mechanism to develop and analyse proposed courses of action and establish comprehensive plans that incorporated input from specialist arms and services. It further ensured that his subordinate commanders were aware of the concept of operations and scheme of manoeuvre. Present day commanders will improve the effectiveness of their plans and subsequent execution by conducting planning in a multi-disciplinary environment and by "wargaming" courses of action to identify opportunities for improvement. Subsequent awareness within the force of the concept of operations and intent will increase the likelihood of success of the commander's mission.

As previously stated, General Monash maintained sound awareness of new developments in technology and doctrine. Similarly, he had a good understanding of the capabilities of his force elements. Through influencing the training of his personnel and by task organising his forces, Monash aligned the available resources to effectively implement his battle plans. A sound understanding of the capabilities and principles of employment of assigned resources will allow commanders to exploit synergies developed through the grouping of force elements for

particular tasks. Such considerations are essential to the effective conduct of military operations.

### Conclusion

This analysis of General Monash's performance in command provides an insight into some of the personal qualities required to effectively command military operations. While it has focussed on the management aspects of command, the influence of leadership qualities should not be discounted. Each of these two interrelated functions of command, however, will be emphasised in a commander's approach to dealing with the circumstances of individual situations as they arise. In Monash's case, management qualities were pre-eminent in his approach to command. He illustrated the necessity of a rational approach to planning and subsequent execution that enhanced the probability of his success on the battlefield.

Modern day commanders should seek to disperse the "fog of war" through, amongst other considerations, adherence to processes that align force structure and doctrine with strategies designed to deal with situations arising in the operational environment. Critical to this is comprehensive situational awareness of all issues affecting the potential employment of the force. This should include awareness of the operational and strategic geo-political environments as well as emerging technology, equipment and procedures that may enhance force capability through the innovative use of resources to achieve mission success. Further, by conducting planning in a collaborative, multi-disciplinary environment, present day commanders will reduce the risk associated with the execution of plans by ensuring consideration of all relevant factors. Ultimately, only through maintaining a high level of professional mastery will military commanders be able to establish a decisive advantage over their enemy and thereby set the formwork for their success.

General Sir John Monash was an effective and successful commander. While at times he displayed limitations in his method of command that affected his operational performance, overall he used his civilian business experience to effectively plan and conduct successful operations. By taking a business approach to the conduct of war, Monash applied a rational management process that contributed to his command success. His performance provides a number of lessons relevant to commanders in the 21st century. For his overall achievements, General Sir John Monash deserves his reputation as a great Australian commander. "He was lucky, he wasn't infallible and he didn't lead from the front, but he was one of the most skilful and effective commanders on the Western Front..."<sup>32</sup>

### NOTES

1. Quoted in G. Serle, *John Monash, A Biography*, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, 1982, p. 379.
2. P. Pedersen, "Master at Arms", in *The Australian Magazine*, 1-8 Aug 1993, p. 40. In 1918, Australians comprised 9% of the British Expeditionary Force.
3. Sir Ernest Scott quoted in M. Falkus, "General Sir John Monash", in Carver, M. (ed), *The War Lords*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London, 1976, p. 135.
4. *ibid.*, p. 41
5. J. Dunnigan & D. Masterson, *The Way of the Warrior, Business Tactics and Techniques from History's Twelve Greatest Generals*, St Martin's Griffin, New York, 1997, pp. 1-9.
6. Australian Defence Force Publication, *ADFP 101, Glossary*, ed. 1, 1994, Director Publishing, Defence Centre - Canberra, p. C - 10. Command is "the authority which a commander in the military Service lawfully exercises over subordinates by virtue of rank or assignment. Command includes the authority and responsibility for effectively using available resources and for planning the employment of, organising, directing, coordinating and controlling military forces for the accomplishment of assigned missions. It also includes responsibility for health, welfare, morale and discipline of assigned personnel."
7. *ibid.*, p.232.



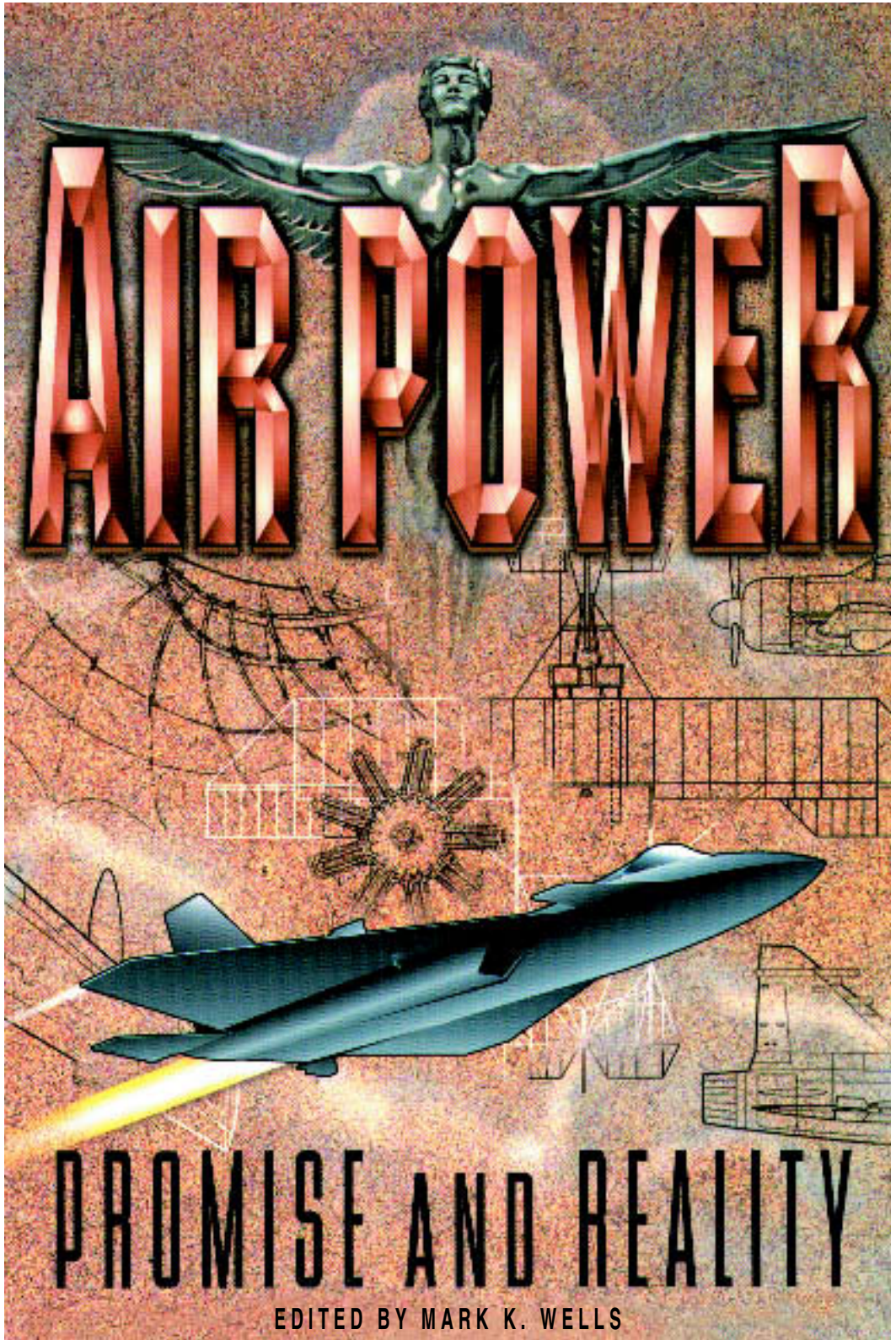
8. J. Crumlin, "In the steps of the 4th Brigade" in *Journal of the Australian War Memorial*, Apr 1990, p. 42.
9. P. Pedersen, "General Sir John Monash: Corps Commander on the Western Front", in Horner, D.M. (ed), *The Commanders*, Allen & Unwin, Sydney, 1984, p. 96.
10. *ibid.*, p.101.
11. R. Prior & T. Wilson, *Command on the Western Front – The Military Career of Sir Henry Rawlinson, 1914-18*, Blackwell, Oxford, 1992, pp. 370-371.
12. E. Andrews & B.G. Jordan, "Hamel, winning a battle" in *Journal of the Australian War Memorial*, Apr 1991, pp. 6-7.
13. Australian War Memorial, "1918 – Hamel", [Online] Available <http://www.awm.gov.au/1918/battles/hamel.htm>, retrieved 15 Feb 2001.
14. General Sir John Monash quoted in M. Falkus, *op. cit.*, p.140.
15. E. Andrews & B.G. Jordan, *op. cit.*, p. 6.
16. This "conferencing" produced similar outcomes to those achieved through "wargaming".
17. "Sir John Monash – a great Australian general" in *Australia's Heritage vol. 5, no. 11 (part 71)*, p. 1689.
18. P. Pedersen, 1984, *op. cit.*, p. 122.
19. *ibid.*, p. 99.
20. *ibid.*, p. 189.
21. *ibid.*, p. 124
22. *ibid.*, p. 104.
23. G. Searle, *op. cit.*, p. 364.
24. Australian War Memorial, *loc. cit.*
25. E. Andrews & B.G. Jordan, *op. cit.*, p. 7.
26. P. Pedersen, 1993, pp. 41-42. See also P. Pedersen, 1984, p. 114.
27. E. Andrews & B.G. Jordan, *loc. cit.*
28. P. Pedersen, 1984, p. 117.
29. P. Pedersen, 1993, p. 42.
30. *ibid.*
31. Australian Defence Force Publication, 1998, *ADFP 6, Operations*, ed. 2, Defence Publishing Service, Canberra, p. 1-1.
32. P. Pedersen, 1993, p. 40.

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Major Dominic Nicholl is a graduate of the Royal Military College, Duntroon and the Australian Command and Staff Course. He holds a Master of Management Defence Studies and a Graduate Certificate in Management with a specialisation in Marketing. Dominic's service has included a range of regimental and staff and command postings in the areas of health support, combat service support, personnel and capability development. He is currently the J075 (Health Plans) at the Deployable Joint Force Headquarters (Land).



## Reviews

**AIR POWER: PROMISE AND REALITY** by Mark K. Wells, Imprint Publications

*Reviewed by Group Captain Mark Lax*

There can be no denying that air power has changed the nature of modern military warfare. Its influence was first felt before World War I when an Italian aircraft was used to bomb warring factions during their Libyan campaign in 1911, 2lb grenades though these bombs were. Air power was used throughout World War I and offered the promise of a quick and painless victory – above the mire and stench of death that was the trenches. So too did that other new invention, the tank. Outrageous claims were made between the wars about air power's utility and an almost religious fervour by theorists and politicians for this new technology added fuel. The arguments over air power's promises and its record on delivery have continued unabated ever since. The aerial bombing of British, German and Japanese cities between 1939 and 1945 may have helped win the war but did little to bring the belligerents to their knees as was expected. Morale of the populace may have been battered, but they never besieged their governments to sue for peace – the first promise of air power remained unfulfilled. Why then should this of all new weapons create such acrimony and at times, continue to do so? Part of the answer lies in the selling, part in the way air power was used in war and the subsequent legal constraints placed upon it, and part because everyone wanted to own it and use it for their own purpose.

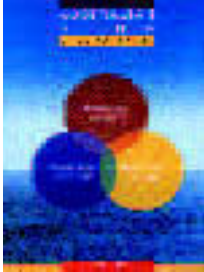
This book is sure to contribute to the debate. *Air Power: Promise and Reality* is an edited collection of essays compiled by Colonel Mark Wells of the USAF Academy. The 16

independent papers present the historical development of air power over the last 100 years in convenient if perhaps unusual blocks; 1903-1941, World War II, 1945-53, and the Cold War and beyond. However, only the last five essays are new. The remainder first appeared in 1978 as the USAF Academy's Annual History Symposium proceedings. The US Armed Services found these essays so useful for education, this updated collection has been released to ensure the study of air power remains contemporary and relevant. The contributors are all world-renowned experts and hail from several Air Forces, the US Army and academia. The book is a small paperback with 318 pages of text without illustrations, however, it is well endnoted and indexed. I am sure it will make the USAF Chief's reading list for air power studies.

While the overall thrust considers the global implications of air power and its application, the papers are worthy of consideration here in Australia even though we may not be a world air power as such. The lessons remain universal and we, as the profession of arms, must understand the US way of war if we are to interoperate successfully. Nevertheless, the papers also present a very strong US-NATO centric view, particularly in the last section, but arguably being the world's superpower gives them that prerogative. While Australia may not be an America or Britain, we too make best use of the air medium when and where we can. For those who enjoy the study of strategy and the application of military power, this publication provides a good collection of essays worthy of further consideration.

**AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE PREPAREDNESS: PRINCIPLES, PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS**  
by Alan Hinge, Australian Defence Studies Centre, Canberra, 2000, 303pp.

*Reviewed by Wing Commander John Steinbach*



Alan Hinge has long been involved with Defence and Australian defence studies, long enough to gain insight into the way Defence operates, in this case, preparing for the varied missions the Government could assign. Recent experience had shown the ADF not always up to the task, so improve preparedness, something no one could really disagree with. *Australian Defence Preparedness* is a definitive and much expanded statement of what the ADF should be doing to be trained to undertake a range of missions in a spectrum of contingencies. These range from “Invasion of Australia” at the very serious end; through to “Coalition Operations (war fighting)”, “Harassment of shipping, fishing, or off-shore assets”, in the middle; down to “Sanctions against Australia” and “Economic/Political Competition” at the low end. The author’s approach is encapsulated in a term of his making, *ROMINS*, (with allusions to the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus’s descriptions of how the Roman Army trained to achieve excellence), a syllabic acronym for “Repertoire of Missions”.

*ROMINS* is stood up as a new strategic preparedness concept simpler than existing arrangements, yet systematic and affordable, and most importantly, mission-oriented, to sharpen the capabilities the ADF really needs. The book is an elaboration of how to achieve that, begun by asking three basic questions: preparedness for what, preparedness for when and preparedness of what. Looking for answers takes us down a path to just about

everything that has gone wrong (and occasionally right) in the last few years for the ADF.

*ROMINS* has been around for a few years and was the subject of a symposium organised by the Australian Defence Studies Centre (ADSC) on the subject. This book brings together in detail, all the arguments, rationale and justification for the proposition that the right training will give the ADF the edge, and an analysis of what is the right way to go about it. Hinge has presented his ideas at three levels: the one-minute nutshell, the one-hour overview and the one-week brimming whole. A User’s Guide suggests the book is not for defence professionals, yet unavoidably it is. The stylistics are not for the general reader (it’s more like an extended staff paper) whereas books written by Americans criticising the US military or out to promote reform, such as J.G. Burton with *The Pentagon Wars*, which the author frequently cites, generally are. I even got the impression Hinge might have wanted to emulate Burton, because there is a need for a critique of Defence, preferably by a journalist with the skills to enliven the tribulations at Russell Hill, in scope well beyond what this nation’s major dailies’ defence reporters push out once a month or so. (In fact, I cannot recall any credible full-length *exposé* of Defence’s troubles written by a journalist—readability being the essence, recently published that parallels Burton’s book in an Australian context.) With a bit of editing *Defence Preparedness* could have been that book, had it been a bit less polemical. Whether or not a treatise about preparedness needed to revisit all the procurement cock-ups is also debatable. These have previously been well documented elsewhere, even by the author’s colleagues at the ADSC, and apart from reinforcing the point of a much broader malaise of which poor preparedness may be only one symptom, do not support the general thrust of the book. Whilst on editing,

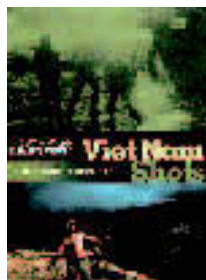
and this is not one of ADSC publishing's strengths, it is inexcusable to misspell a former Defence Minister's name repeatedly, and also come up with "psuedo-honest" (p.228).

Apart from all that, Hinge has written quite passionately about a concept of refreshing originality. Whether his claim stands up, that had Defence adopted *ROMINS* a few years ago, the East Timor deployment may have run more smoothly, is arguable.

One thing I liked about *Preparedness* was the many "lessons learnt" and "rules" peppered throughout. The list of invalid strategic planning assumptions at p.153 is my clear favourite, particularly the quip "Strategic Guidance guides". Now well in the post-DRP era, and with an increasingly effective system of governance introduced by Secretary Hawke, will Defence finally deliver the level of preparedness expected in the 2000 Defence White Paper? If not, *ROMINS* might be worth another look.

**VIET NAM SHOTS** by Gary McKay and Elizabeth Stewart; Published by Allen and Unwin, 5 April 2002; 224 pp, 208 b & w photographs, Hardcover, AUD\$45.00.

*Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Craig Johnston.*



*Viet Nam Shots* is a photographic coverage of Australia's involvement in the Viet Nam War, on the battlefield and on the home front, backed up by explanatory text and captions.

Thirty years after the last Australian troops left Viet Nam, *Viet Nam Shots* provides a compelling and comprehensive illustrated history of Australia's involvement in the war that divided a nation.

Featuring dramatic photographs, some never before published, as well as detailed

text from one of Australia's leading writers on Viet Nam, this book covers all aspects of the war—from the battlefields to the home front. These evocative and sometimes confronting photographs portray the difficult conditions under which Australians served and fought. And the images of moratoriums, the Welcome Parade and the unveiling of the Viet Nam Forces Memorial also reflect the feelings of everyday Australians in this controversial and unpopular war.

Whilst some critics may consider this to be McKay's first venture into a more general coverage of Australia's involvement in the Viet Nam conflict, *Viet Nam Shots* continues this author's portrayal of aspects of the conflict rarely found in Australian literature. McKay and Stewart have provided a unique insight into a conflict often seen as divisive. They have selected a unique balance of photographs to portray Australian involvement, some rarely seen before and others synonymous with the era. Accompanied by McKay's compelling text, this book continues a first class series of "at the coal-face" accounts of Australians at war. One of the most striking aspects of this book is the significant effort that has gone into providing detailed captions for each photograph. Too often in military books today the authors pay scant service to recording the details of the photographs they select to accompany their text.

Gary McKay's second book *Vietnam Fragments* (re-released as *Bullets, Beans & Bandages*) is still the largest and by all accounts the most significant oral history of the Viet Nam War to be found in the southern hemisphere. *Viet Nam Shots* is a logical next-step for this author by taking the oral history medium into a pictorial regime.

**ONE WAY FLIGHT TO MUNICH** by Assheton F. Taylor in soft attractive colour of 270 pp plus general index and names index and available from The War Book Shop, 13 Veronica Place, LOFTUS, 2332. Price \$33.00 including postage.

*Reviewed by Flight Lieutenant H.S. Brennan (Retd).*

This book is virtually the personal Service history of the author who, after a short spell in the Sydney University Regiment, joined the RAAF and trained both here in Australia and England as a Navigator. His style of writing does not leave very much for the reader to imagine. Each section of the book is written in great detail from the time they left Australia by ship and travelled across to Fremantle and on to South Africa. At this stage the transport by ship was so poor that all the members of the RAAF and others were transferred to something better for their last leg to England.

While being attached to various Training Schools it would appear that members of the RAAF could move about when on leave. In this way they met various civilian residents who were only too pleased to show the "Aussies" just what it was like in England during the war despite the destruction of towns and buildings due to German air raids and the consequent loss of life among residents.

After considerable training as individual members of bomber crews training became more specialised and the group of which the author was a member was transferred to 460 RAAF Squadron flying Lancaster Bombers. It was on their first operational flight that their plane was shot down, hence the title of this book. They were fortunate to only lose the rear gunner who was trapped in the aircraft, the rest of the crew were taken prisoner by the Germans and after considerable interrogation, were transferred to Stalag IVb, a POW Camp which at this

stage of the war contained not only British and Australians, but quite a lot of Russians.

The British and Australians managed to maintain quite a high level of morale and were largely responsible for their own welfare and entertainment. At infrequent intervals the POW's received food parcels from the Red Cross which helped supplement basic rations. It was not until the Americans took over the camp that food was always short.

On cessation of hostilities the RAAF members were initially returned to England and finally shipped to Australia via the Panama Canal and New Zealand. The book contains so much detail that it was difficult to condense for this review. I enjoyed reading about the exploits of the author and his friends but it is not an easy read, however that may be the coming pattern, masses of detail but quite enjoyable. A word of advice should you purchase the book, seek a quiet place to fully comprehend the author's adventures.

**BEHIND ENEMY LINES** by Terry O'Farrell, Allen & Unwin 2001; 250 pages; soft cover; photos; index; RRP \$29.95

*Reviewed by Lex McAulay*



This is another in the continuing contribution by Australian publishers Allen & Unwin in placing on record Australian military history in a format readily available to the public. In this instance, it is an account by Terry O'Farrell of his Army career from 1966 to 2001, much of it in the SASR or Commandos.

This is one of the all too few personal accounts by Australians, regardless of rank, of their experiences and feelings in military service in peace and war. One refreshing aspect of this book is that the author admits

that in the SAS things did not always go as planned, some people did not always perform up to the expected standard, and that mistakes were made. This is far more honest than the unmarked-stainless-steel exterior, always-gold-medal-winning image projected by some other members of SASR – and other units, of course.

Terry O'Farrell also shows that some opinions of youth beloved of certain people in our society do not always apply. He had a less than happy childhood, narrowly escaped being murdered, spent time in a cheerless orphanage, was not a good student, was a product of a broken home, and probably would have been assumed to be headed for a life as an uneducated layabout and petty criminal. But, sadly for the social workers and counsellors who plague the Western democracies in these times, as soon as he was old enough, he joined the Army and steadily advanced on merit through the ranks, ending his service as a Major, with five overseas deployments.

Private O'Farrell, not yet having joined a battalion, was called for an interview, much to his mystification, and found it was for something called the Special Air Service, of which he knew nothing, and later realised that his name had been put on the orderly room list as a joke by a mate. So started a 35-year career as a soldier, instructor and officer.

Terry O'Farrell writes simply and in the easy to read style of, as he put it, "in a bar, perhaps with a few beers under the belt". This makes for a flowing read and the pages go by unnoticed as we follow O'Farrell through training, selection, training and operations, with service with some Allies thrown in. I have to say that I do not recall the constant abuse and swearing directed at recruits and trainees which apparently was inflicted on the young O'Farrell. The SAS operations are well described and give a clear image of the life and times of a member of a patrol at two stages of the war in Vietnam, 1968 and 1971. There is

little about the wider scene at troop, squadron or task force, but O'Farrell is writing at a personal level.

This is a book that will sit well alongside those earlier accounts of the SAS by David Horner and Gary McKay and is well worth the price.

**THE STRATEGISTS** by Hugh Smith (ed)  
published by Australian Defence Studies Centre

Reviewed by Group Captain Mark Lax



How many Staff College students have had to wade through numerous tomes to create a 20 minute presentation on a hitherto obscure strategist from the annals of history? How many others wished there was a neat introduction to the subject with enough intellectual rigor to meet the needs of a serious researcher? If you have had to rely on Parret's *Makers of Modern Strategy* and found it heavy going, then this book may prove a Godsend. As its title would suggest, it is an introduction to the major strategists divided into their conventionally organised schools of thought – Classical, Modern (including the Revolutionary), and Contemporary. The latter section also includes a chapter on the RMA. Rounding off the publication are an introduction and an interesting conclusion by Martin van Creveld.

Hugh Smith introduces the subject asking: what is strategy? And why study what has gone before? He attempts to place the subject in broad context and introduces the main strategic streams, which later appear in essentially a chronological order. Strategy, he states, "grew out of a single land construct" and is a "supremely practical activity". It is therefore worthy of study by all professional military officer – no doubt the prime target of this work.

Smith asserts the strategists are like “drama critics” – they are troublesome characters that buck the system. They are proselytisers; they offer new and sometimes radical perspectives on war. Those covered in later chapters are example of this pronouncement. The Strategists worthy of inclusion are a dozen or so in number. Sun Zi (deferring to the closer phonetic spelling of the more common “Sun Tsu”) and Clausewitz appear from the Classical world. The Moderns are the Maritime strategists Mahan and Corbett, Fuller and Liddell Hart, Douhet and Mao. Contemporary are the rising nuclear strategists (Brodie, Khan) and there are several who now preach the RMA.

The chapter on the nuclear strategists is pleasingly current – President George W. Bush’s National Missile Defence program being the latest move in this complex chess game. Paul Kal, the author of this chapter, argues although the Cold War was won, nuclear strategy and its inherent concept of deterrence has continuing application. We cannot “unlearn” how to construct nuclear weapons, yet we are now faced the ultimate strategic dilemma – keep or dispose? What about proliferation? And how do we consider the other weapons of mass destruction? All vexing issues.

The final chapter examines the Revolution in Military Affairs or RMA. Steven Metz is forced to ask: is it a revolution or an evolution? Has warfare really changed or has technology made stealth, precision and lethality the more expedient means? The growing number of RMA proponents now include Lutwak, the Tofflers, Mazerr, Krepinevich and Libiki to name the more prominent – notably, all are American. Have things changed or is the RMA a new bandwagon? Readers will have to make up their own minds on this one, but where do we go from here? What of strategy post-Cold War? Is terrorism a strategy? If the RMA

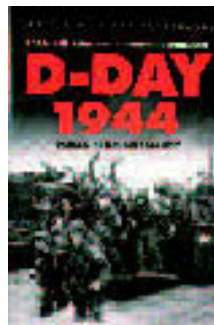
offers “war without fighting”, how do we define victory? What strategic theories come next?

I do not intend to summarise the book’s contents further, nor consider the ideas each strategist developed, suffice to say that some of the more prominent and widely recognised strategic thinkers have been omitted – Jomini and Machiavelli are barely mentioned. Von Moltke, Trenchard and Mitchell and their independent thinking are not discussed at all.

Van Creveld’s endnote is not surprisingly a counter view about the relevance and nature of strategy. He is somewhat provocative and declares conventional strategy has “made no progress and undergone no radical change” since 1945. Even the so-called RMA offers only new ways of integrating new technology and advanced weapons, and only strategic though on the nuclear option continues to develop. According to van Creveld, it is time to go back to the drawing board if strategic studies are to progress. He may well be right. Recommended.

**D-DAY 1944: VOICES FROM NORMANDY** by Robin Neillands and Roderick De Normann, published by Cassell & Co. London: Price \$19.95

*Reviewed by Dr Hank Prunckun*



*D-Day 1944* is a book about the military events that took place on that historic day almost sixty years ago – 6 June 1944 – from the point of view of the troops that “hit the beach.”

The D-Day invasion is still intensely interesting despite occurring so long ago. Whether this is because readers had family or friends who fought along the French coast, or purely from an academic point of view – analysing the strategy and logistics of mounting such a



massive air and sea operation. So, it was with great expectation that I reviewed this book.

However, I found the book somewhat disappointing but recommended it with a couple of caveats. As I rarely find myself in this situation, I feel uncomfortable having to make this finding. Nevertheless, after several examinations of the book I have come to the same conclusion. I will be honest and outline my reasons, which are two-fold; firstly, because of the poor quality of the book's physical presentation; and the second, from the presentation of the intellectual material by the authors. Each of these points needs elaboration and I will start with the book's appearance.

This is a re-release of Neillands and De Normann's first edition, which was published in 1993 by Weidenfeld & Nicholson, in hardbound format. This is however a softcover version published by Cassell Military Paperbacks. Generally, I find softcover books less attractive than hardbound versions anyway, but I found this one particularly uninspiring. It is a well-known fact that paperbacks are less expensive to produce than their hardcover cousins and therefore are more affordable to a majority of readers. However, some softcover publishers recognise that durability and robustness of a book's binding suffers, and to compensate for this, they use other techniques to offset this drawback. But sadly, this book did not receive this treatment.

As there is a direct relationship between the usefulness of the book's intellectual content and the way a book is bound, one would have thought that this would have been a consideration before Cassell & Co went to print. For instance, if a book is prone to have its pages fall out because they were glued in rather than sewn in "signatures" and over time the paper fades, yellows or becomes brittle because it is of inferior stock, it will be of little value to a reader no matter how cheap its retail price. This is what my view is of *D-Day 1944*. It presents as an inexpensive paperback, printed on an inferior paper stock and bound

in a very rudimentary way that will not withstand the demands of a researcher, student, lecturer or library collection.

Secondly, I found the presentation of what I expected to be an astonishing collection of *Voices from Normandy* below par. Unlike Tom Brokaw's wonderful collection of cameos about the Second World War (*The Greatest Generation*, New York: Random House, 1998) Neillands and De Dormann have fallen short of the mark. What they call "voices" are in fact short quotation by a (large) number of participants of the invasion. On the surface one would have to say, "so what's wrong with that?" And I agree. Nothing. But my disappointment is in the way the authors brought these quotations together; it leaves the reader (this reader anyway) with a feeling that they were trying, with some difficulty, to create the impression that their story had authenticity. For example I estimate on average there are about three or four paragraphs to a page and in each of these pages a reader will find references to around three or four (sometimes more) people who give short accounts (several lines to a few paragraphs) of their observations of feelings on the day. The effect of this is not to demonstrate that the authors have written from a position of authority (clearly they have), but that they were lacking the confidence to write a history of the events without referring to the source.

Compare Brokaw's account of the War (including the Normandy invasion) to Neillands and De Normann's *D-Day 1944* and one sees a completely different picture. Brokaw's use of eyewitnesses was to talk at some length about each of them, and the historical events, in short chapters – not a paragraph or two. Therefore, the choice of the subtitle, *Voices from Normandy*, is a debatable point; I see *D-Day 1944* more as an historical account (using the stories of those who were there to add weight to the account) rather than the personal accounts of the participants as Brokaw has.

In fairness to Neillands and Normann, they may have inadvertently created this expectation by selecting this particular subtitle. Perhaps renaming the book might have overcome the problem, but the issue of chopping from one person's recollection to another's so often, in my view, would remain. Having said that, one cannot dispute the fact that there is a wealth of interesting personal accounts interspersed amongst the historical detail, but in either case ("voices" v history), the presentation form does not do the subject justice.

These are my chief concerns in making a wholehearted recommendation. Nevertheless, as critical as my assessment might appear, I need to balance what I've said by pointing out the good aspect of the book, and there are several. For example, the book is clearly the result of years of painstaking work and research by two accomplished authors (Neillands has written eight military related texts and De Normann has written two others). Hundreds of personal interviews took place in order to deliver the rich anecdotal information contained in *D-Day 1944*.

As I have stated above, there is a richness of information that the contributors have shared with the reader. It captures details that

would have otherwise been lost with the eventual passing of these valiant warriors – people I believe the world still owes so much. As testimony to the hard work of the authors, there is an acknowledgement list that spans a number of pages listing hundreds of interviewees. The book contains numerous maps of the invasion, and these are first-class. There are also a number of pages containing photographs of the invasion and of those who took part – excellent. Finally, from a practical point of view, there is a useful bibliography at the end as well as a very handy subject index.

Overall, Niellands and De Normann's book *D-Day 1944* is an above average book written by two talented authors, and as such, I would have expected them to deliver far more. Unfortunately, it is presented in a softcover binding by the publisher which greatly detracts from the usefulness of the books' intellectual content. Given these (correctable) drawbacks, I found it disappointing that so much work went into what could have been a sterling reference book.

Regardless, I recommend the book as it has some redeeming content.



