



Australian Government
Department of Defence

Australia-Singapore Military Training Initiative

Newsletter | November 2023 Update

A message from Air Commodore Sandy Turner CSC, Program Manager

I recently had the pleasure of welcoming Singapore's Permanent Secretary for Defence to Rockhampton, briefing him on the progress of ASMTI and joining him on a flyover of Shoalwater Bay Training Area. From the air we viewed the Raspberry Creek Urban Operations Live Fire facility and Camp Tilpal. This visit was one of a number of Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) and Ministry of Defence senior leadership visits that occurred during Singapore's Exercise Wallaby 2023.

Whilst at Shoalwater Bay, I was invited to visit SAF's Motorised Infantry Live Firing exercise involving the SAF's Terrex Infantry Carrier Vehicles at one of the Combined Arms Air-Land Ranges built by this initiative. Under the ASMTI, from next year SAF training during Exercise Wallaby is anticipated to increase from the current 45-days, to 9 weeks a year.

Finally, I would like to express my appreciation for the efforts of 2 ASMTI stalwarts we recently farewelled from the ASMTI, each having made significant personal contributions to progressing the initiative. James Foreman, Laing O'Rourke Project Director has overseen the development of facilities at Shoalwater Bay Training Area, from design, to the impressive facilities they are today. Colonel Kevin (Kev) Packham, is a familiar face to many, having been involved in the initiative almost since inception. Kev, as Director ASMTI, has worked closely with Singapore's Australia Training Area Development Office, project stakeholders and the community throughout land acquisition, Treaty negotiations and subsequent ratification in 2020, delivery of Shoalwater Bay Training Area facilities and design of Greenvale Training Area. I wish James and Kev the very best in their next endeavours.



Air Commodore Sandy Turner, CSC
Director General Force Posture Initiatives



Above: Head Australia Training Area Development Office, COL Alan Yeoh, and Director General Force Posture Initiatives, AIRCDRE Sandy Turner in front of SAF's Terrex Infantry Carrier Vehicle, Shoalwater Bay Training Area



Above: James Foreman briefing Defence representatives on the Shoalwater Bay Training Area development, 2020



Above: COL Kev Packham with Singapore and Aurecon representatives at Greenvale Training Area, 2022

Shoalwater Bay Training Area Construction Update

Two major construction milestones have been achieved over the last couple of months. Both Raspberry Creek and Oakleigh Urban Operations Live Fire facilities are now complete, with permanent power source connected and the facilities handed over to Defence. The Australian Defence Force (ADF) and SAF will plan to undertake a program of test and evaluation activities prior to certification as safe and suitable for use, in advance of SAF's first use during Exercise Wallaby 24. Camp Tilpal and the logistics facilities at Precinct B are also nearing completion, and Defence's Managing Contractor, Laing O'Rourke, are progressively demobilising through to the end of the year.



Above: Oakleigh Urban Operations Live Fire facility



Above: SAF Chief of Army visit to Camp Tilpal



Above: Camp Logistics and Support – Mains power on



Above: ASMTI Program Office and Australia Training Area Development Office representatives undertaking 28 day inspections at Camp Tilpal



Above: Camp Tilpal Water Treatment Plant mechanical, electrical and piping works completed



Above: SAF Chief of Defence Force visit to the Raspberry Creek Urban Operations Live Fire facility



Above: Aerial view of Raspberry Creek Urban Operations Live Fire / Training facility

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Shoalwater Bay Training Area (Continued) Singapore VIP Visits

With construction of facilities and infrastructure at Shoalwater Bay Training Area nearing completion, Singapore's Exercise Wallaby 23 provided the opportunity for Singapore Armed Forces and Ministry of Defence senior personnel to visit the new facilities in anticipation for their use next year. Over the 45-day training window, the new facilities were visited by:

- Senior Minister of State, Mr Zaqy Mohamad;
- Permanent Secretary for Defence, Mr Chan Heng Kee;
- Chief of Defence Force, VADM Aaron Beng;
- Chief of Army, MG David Neo;
- Commander Training and Doctrine Command, BG Andrew Lim;
- Director Joint Operations, BG Goh Pei Ming;
- Commander Combat Service Support Command, ME7 Tan Mu Yen;
- Commander 3rd Division, BG Cai Dexian;
- Chief Infantry Officer, COL Wong Shi Ming; and
- Chief Armour Officer, COL Lim Han Yong.



Above: SAF Chief of Army visit to Shoalwater Bay Training Area



Above: Permanent Secretary for Defence visit to Shoalwater Bay Training Area

While in Rockhampton, Senior Minister of State, Mr Zaqy Mohamad, hosted an Exercise Wallaby 23 appreciation dinner on 10 October 2023. The event brought together Singapore's Deputy High Commissioner and Counsellor, Mr Winston Yien; the Assistant Minister for Defence, the Hon Matt Thistlethwaite MP; Federal and State Members of Parliament and representatives from the Rockhampton, Livingstone Shire, Gladstone Regional Councils, Rockhampton Airport, representatives of Darumbal Traditional Owners and Department of Defence.

At the event, Assistant Minister for Defence reflected on Australia's close and enduring relationship with Singapore. Minister Thistlethwaite referenced Singapore's very welcome and valued support to Australia during recent flood and bushfire emergencies, and added that Australia warmly welcomed the increase in the scale of Singapore's force generation training in coming years.



Assistant Minister for Defence and Singapore's Senior Minister of State



Singapore Merlion cake, crafted by Rockhampton Regional Councillor Drew Wickerson



Assistant Minister for Defence

Shoalwater Bay Training Area (Continued) Airspace Change Proposal

Defence has submitted a proposal to the Civil Aviation Safety Authority's (CASA) Office of Airspace Regulation and Approval for consideration of the establishment of restricted airspace over the expanded Shoalwater Bay Training Area. A revised proposal has been published on the [Queensland Aviation State Engagement Forum](#) for stakeholder awareness, with an outcome expected from CASA by the end of the year.

Greenvale Training Area Environmental Approvals

Since 2017, Defence has conducted detailed environmental studies on the land acquired for the establishment of the Greenvale Training Area, to understand its biodiversity, heritage and natural and cultural values. Those studies will enable Defence to sustainably manage the training area, by protecting and improving native vegetation, habitat and the survival prospects of native species by minimising access to sensitive areas, and actively managing threats such as pests, weeds, pathogens and bushfire.

Through the completion of those studies, Matters of National Environmental Significance were identified. Earlier this year, Defence referred the development and future use of the training area to the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) for consideration under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)*.

In August 2023, the Minister for the Environment and Water determined that the off-site works to support the training area do not require approval under the EPBC Act. DCCEEW is currently considering the onsite development and future use of the training area. Once DCCEEW has validated the submission documentation, the referral will be publically accessible on the [EPBC Act public portal](#). Upon completion of the environmental assessment and approval, works will commence on the delivery of facilities and infrastructure, including in accordance with any approval conditions stipulated by the Minister for the Environment and Water. Given the EPBC Act assessment process remains underway, we are unable to confirm the development schedule at this time.

We understand that this schedule uncertainty affects project stakeholders who are anticipating opportunities as part of this exciting development, and we will continue to provide updates and closely engage with stakeholders and community members. We encourage you to keep an eye on the [ASMTI website](#) and the ASMTI Newsletter for updates.

Greenvale Training Area (Continued) Airspace Change Proposal

In October 2022, CASA approved an initial proposal to establish restricted airspace for airspace directly over the Greenvale Training Area (designator R732). Defence is now preparing a second proposal for airspace outside and adjacent to the Defence boundary. The proposal is still being prepared, but will be published on the Queensland Aviation State Engagement Forum for a period of consultation prior to submission to CASA. This is expected to occur in Quarter 1 2024.



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