



Australian Government
Department of Defence

Australia-Singapore Military Training Initiative

Newsletter | January 2025 Update

A message from Brigadier Michael Say DSC, Program Manager

As we settle into 2025, I reflect on 2024 and the milestones we achieved under the Australia-Singapore Military Training Initiative (ASMTI).

The Singapore Armed Forces increased their unilateral training in Australia from 45 days to nine weeks, a key commitment under the *Treaty on Military Training and Training Area Development in Australia*. Personnel used the new facilities at Shoalwater Bay Training Area for the first time, during Singapore's signature Exercise WALLABY, and we commemorated the completion of the expanded Shoalwater Bay Training Area with a ceremony in November.

This year will be another significant year for the ASMTI. As we farewell some good friends, and welcome some new faces, the main effort will continue to be the certification of the two Urban Operations Live-fire Facilities at Shoalwater Bay Training Area, and the development of the Greenvale Training Area Environmental Impact Statement. I look forward to continued collaboration and strengthening of the bilateral relationship between Australia and Singapore.



Brigadier Michael Say, DSC
Director General Force Posture
Initiatives

Shoalwater Bay Training Area Update

Commemorative Ceremony

On 13 November 2024, Australia and Singapore celebrated the completion of the Shoalwater Bay Training Area expansion and development with a commemorative ceremony at Camp Tilpal. This saw the opening of new and expanded facilities, delivered under the ASMTI, as part of the broader Australia-Singapore Comprehensive Strategic Partnership.

Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Defence, Mr Heng Chee How, and the Secretary of Australia's Department of Defence, Mr Greg Moriarty AO graced the commemorative ceremony at Camp Tilpal.

Joining the celebrations were Singapore High Commissioner to Australia, His Excellency Anil Kumar Nayar; Australian High Commissioner to Singapore, His Excellency Allaster Cox; Federal Member for Capricornia, the Honourable Michelle Landry MP; Singapore's Vice Admiral Aaron Beng, Chief of Defence Force; Australia's Head Land Capability, Major General Richard Vagg; state and local government representatives; as well as Australian Defence Force, Defence and industry representatives.

Darumbal Elder Aunty Nicky Hatfield commenced proceedings by providing a Welcome to Country, sharing with the group the cultural significance of the Tilpal region to the Darumbal people. Elder Uncle Wade Mann performed a Smoking Ceremony at the Dyura Garumi sign and cultural garden, and Darumbal Traditional Dancers performed a 'Welcome Dance' and a 'Brolga Dance' choreographed especially for Camp Tilpal, referencing the pair of local Brolgas residing at the entrance to the camp.



Above: Representative of the Darumbal Traditional Dancers



Above: Uncle Wade Mann performing a Smoking Ceremony

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Shoalwater Bay Training Area Update (Continued)

Commemorative Ceremony (Continued)

In his speech, Secretary for the Department of Defence, Mr Greg Moriarty said *“while the ceremony marks the formal opening of the facilities, I understand they were put to good use during Exercise WALLABY... and it was terrific to hear that the facilities passed that rigorous test with flying colours... this is now a world-class military training facility”*.

Senior Minister of State for Defence, Mr Heng Chee How reflected on the ‘ambitious and unique project’ embarked upon eight years ago, noting, *“With the global disruptions caused by an unforeseen global pandemic, we saw delays across many construction projects around the world. Yet, the Shoalwater Bay Training Area project team, co-led by the ASMTI Program Office from Australia and the Australia Training Area Development Office from Singapore, managed against all odds, to complete all works on schedule, overcoming challenges posed by border closures and supply chain disruptions. This amazing feat is testament to the resilience and dedication of everyone involved in this project to bring this project to fruition”*.



Above: Secretary for Defence, Mr Greg Moriarty viewing the Urban Operations Live-fire Facilities from a Republic of Singapore Air Force CH-47



Read more about the event here: [Australia and Singapore deliver new Defence training facilities and strengthen training ties](#)



Above: Mr Heng Chee How, Singapore's Senior Minister of State for Defence giving a speech at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area commemorative ceremony

Following the formal proceedings, attendees toured Camp Tilpal, which can accommodate up to 2,000 personnel and comprises permanent accommodation blocks, tent slabs, a field kitchen and two outdoor dining halls, ablutions and laundry facilities, a medical centre, exercise control facilities, administration and supporting infrastructure.

The senior dignitaries also viewed from a Republic of Singapore Air Force CH-47 helicopter, the new Urban Operations Live-fire Facilities delivered under the ASMTI. These facilities are the first of their type in Australia, and allow realistic live-fire training scenarios to equip personnel with the skills and mindset necessary for operations in densely populated cities and urban centres.

The event concluded with a celebratory lunch of Singaporean fare, catered by SATS Food Services, putting the new Camp Tilpal field kitchen facilities to good use.



Read more about the meals prepared for Singapore Armed Forces troops training at Shoalwater Bay Training Area, external link: ['Wallaby nasi lemak': How an Australian military camp kitchen whips up Singapore fare](#)



Above: The Australian and Singaporean flags flying high at Shoalwater Bay Training Area during the commemorative ceremony

Shoalwater Bay Training Area Update (Continued)

Commemorative Ceremony (Continued)



Above: Team members from the ASMTI Program Office, Singapore's Defence Science and Technology Agency and Australian Training Area Development Office at the Australia-Singapore commemorative plaque, Camp Tilpal

'Commemorating the opening of Shoalwater Bay Training Area facilities jointly developed under the Comprehensive Strategic Partnership between Australia and Singapore, Camp Tilpal, November 2024'

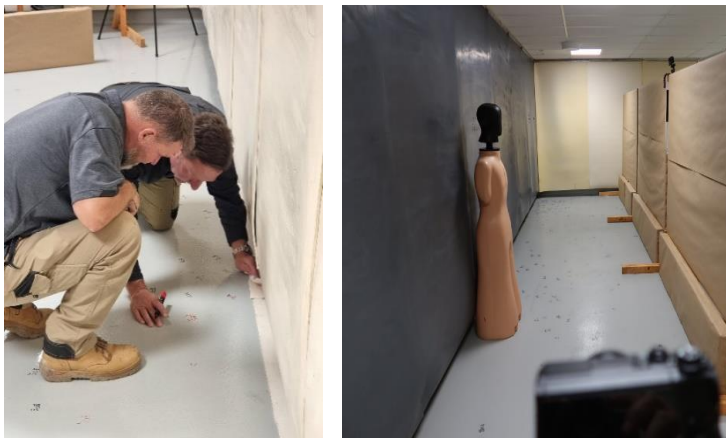


Above: ADF and Singapore Armed Forces personnel at a military display at the Maintenance Facility, Camp Tilpal

Test and Evaluation

Test and evaluation of the first of type Urban Operations Live-fire Facilities at Shoalwater Bay Training Area has progressed significantly during 2024 and is now in acceptance test and evaluation phase, with trials underway to ensure the facilities are compliant with design and suitable for operation.

The Australian Army will lead operational test and evaluation later this year, as we work toward certification of the facilities as safe and suitable for use by the Australian Defence Force, Singapore Armed Forces, and other partner nations.



Above: Team members from the ASMTI Program Office, Singapore's Defence Science and Technology Agency and Australia Training Area Development Office during live-fire testing at Shoalwater Bay Training Area

Greenvale Training Area Update

Environmental Assessment and Approval

The development and operation of the Greenvale Training Area requires assessment and approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. Work is well underway on the development of the Environmental Impact Statement for the assessment. Defence is working with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) to develop and plan required surveys and define the scope of the action.

Defence continues to engage with stakeholders including Traditional Owners and the local community as the environmental assessment progresses.

The public will have further opportunity to formally comment on the project once the Environmental Impact Statement has been completed.

We encourage you to keep an eye on the ASMTI Newsletter and [Website](#) for updates.

Airspace Change Proposal

In October 2022, Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) approved an initial proposal to establish restricted airspace for airspace directly over the Greenvale Training Area (designator R732), this was included in Aeronautical Information Publications in June 2023. Defence has prepared a second proposal for airspace outside and adjacent to the Defence boundary, above 7,000 feet. The proposal is expected to be published on the [Queensland Aviation State Engagement Forum](#) in coming months for a period of public consultation.



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Farewells

It is at this juncture, that we farewell two of our longstanding Singaporean team members, both of who will be familiar faces, given their significant contributions to the successful outcomes of the ASMTI to date.

COL Alan Yeoh commenced in 2017 as Head Australia Training Area Development Office (ATADO), working alongside Australia's Director ASMTI, previously COL Kev Packham and more recently Mr Matt Gallagher. COL Alan Yeoh will retire from the Singapore Armed Forces early this year. He reflected recently on the last time he would step foot on Shoalwater Bay Training Area in uniform, noting that "Shoalwater Bay Training Area was the location of (his) first major overseas military training exercise" at the beginning of his military career. COL Alan expressed that he was proud of what ASMTI had achieved to date, "paving the way for the new and future generations of Singapore Armed Forces and ADF personnel".



Above: COL Alan Yeoh conducting media interviews at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area commemorative ceremony



Above: Director ASMTI, Mr Matt Gallagher, farewelling COL Alan Yeoh at the 30th Training Area Joint Development Working Group



Left: Former Director ASMTI, COL Kev Packham, and COL Alan Yeoh at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area commemorative ceremony

COL Eric Gooi commenced in 2020 as Deputy Head ATADO, living in Canberra and working closely with the ASMTI Program Office. COL Eric is a familiar face to many, having worked closely with stakeholders across Defence, with Defence's industry partners, and having been significantly involved in community engagement activities for the past four years.



Above: COL Eric Gooi on commencement as Deputy Head Australia Training Area Development Office in 2020



Above: Director ASMTI, Matt Gallagher, farewelling COL Eric Gooi at the 30th Training Area Joint Development Working Group

We wish COL Alan and COL Eric all the very best for their future endeavours, and welcome ME7 Benny Yong –Head ATADO designate who will commence in Quarter 1, and COL Sze Chun Ang who took over as Deputy Head ATADO on 20 December 2024.

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Above: Members of Singapore's Australian Training Area Development Office and Australia's ASMTI Program Office celebrating great bilateral working relationships



Have your say!

Is the ASMTI Newsletter useful for you? Is there something you'd like us to include? We'd love to hear from you so we can make sure we're hitting the mark.

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W: <https://www.defence.gov.au/programs-initiatives/australia-singapore-military-training-initiative>