

Journal of the Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association NSW Inc
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ARMOUR

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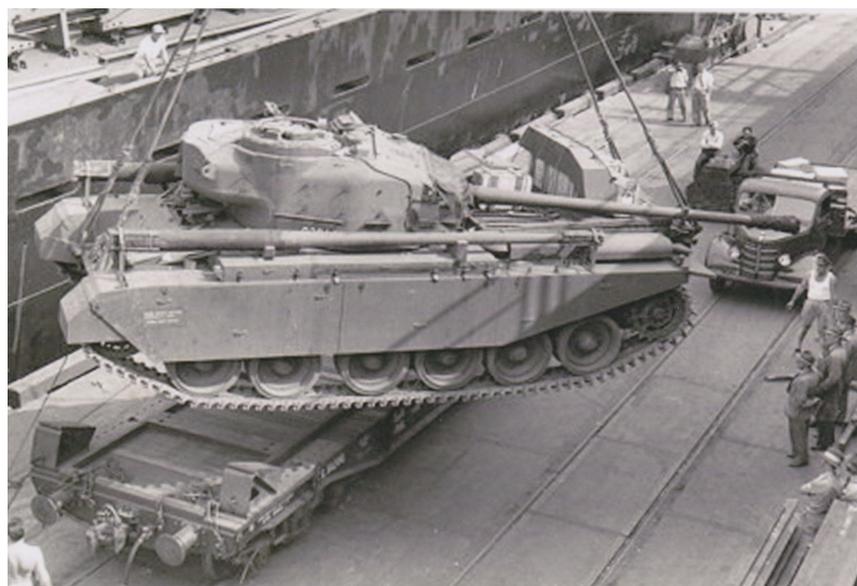
October 2019
Issue No. 482

Patron: Major General Dave Chalmers, AO CSC
President: COL Rob Lording . Editor George Baczocha

THE LONG JOURNEY - Part 1



*From the atomic desert site Emu Field 1952
To the jungle and paddy fields of South Vietnam 1969
And eventually, holding ground within 1st Armoured Regiment lines 2018
This is the profile of Centurion 169041 - The Atomic Tank
4 Troop, B Squadron, Call Sign 24C (Two-Four-Charlie), 1969
Known to her crew as "Sweet Fanny"*



The Centurion Mk III design was first developed in 1948 and improvements over previous versions included an automated gun stabilisation system, more powerful engines and improved gun sights.

169041 was built in 1951, to the Mk III standard, as number 39/190 at the Royal Ordnance Factory, Barnbow, UK. She was assigned the British Army number 06 BA 16 and supplied to the Australian Commonwealth Government in late May 1952 under Contract 2843. On arrival in Australia, 169041 was off-loaded at Sydney and delivered by train to Puckapunyal, Victoria, where she spent some time allocated to the

School of Armour and training tank crews.

In 1953, 169041 was transferred to Woomera test range to participate in the British atomic testing referred to as Operation Totem.

In a period where there were plenty of obsolete WWII tanks available, the British built Centurion tank represented top of the line, cutting edge military hardware. With less than 500 miles on the odometer, there was every expectation that she would be destroyed as part of the Totem I detonation. Simply getting the tank to the test site was an adventure which marked the beginning of her amazing operational life.

On 18th July 1953, a party led by CAPT J.G Monaghan transported 169041 from Puckapunyal to the Totem test site. Initially moved a short distance to Dysart railway siding by road, she was then loaded on to a flat car for the journey via Melbourne to Port Pirie in South Australia, where she arrived on 23rd July.

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Coming Events

16th November 2019

BEERSHEBA / CAMBRAI DINNER

Royal Automobile Club, Sydney

25th April 2020

ANZAC DAY PARADE

To be advised

WARNING ORDER

BEERSHEBA / CAMBRAI DINNER INVITATION

Saturday 16th November, 2019 ~ Royal Automobile Club, Sydney

COL Rob Lording , President of the RAAC Association (NSW) cordially invites all fellow Black Hats to the annual Cambrai Dinner, to be held in conjunction with the annual Beersheba Dinner.

Guest Speaker will be COL Anthony Duus, Director Armoured Fighting Vehicle System at Army Headquarters, who will speak on “Current and Forthcoming AFV – the Recent Journey and Future Opportunities”.

Pre-dinner drinks from 1830 hrs for Dinner & Drinks at 1900 hrs The Royal Automobile Club, 89 Macquarie Street, Sydney on Saturday 16th November, 2019.

Dress: Black Tie, Mess Dress or Coat & Tie, Miniatures to be worn.

RSVP NLT by post: 31 OCT 19 to RAACA, Building 96, Victoria Barracks, Locked Bag 7005 Liverpool NSW 1871 or Email: raacansw@defence.gov.au

As this is a pre-paid function, please include your payment of \$99 per head with your RSVP. Please make your Electronic Funds Transfer to Def Bank: BSB 833205, A/c No 20539747 indicating your Name and ‘Dinner payment’. For anyone who does not have access to the internet to make an on line payment, just go to your local bank branch and use the BSB and Account number above, to make a deposit into the RAACA account. Your bank teller will allow you to transfer from your own account or alternatively take cash for the transaction. Do not forget to add your Name and “Dinner Payment”.

As a last resort if you are still on paper, please make your cheque payable to RAACA and sent it to: The Treasurer RAACA, Building 96, Victoria Barracks, Locked Bag 7005 Liverpool NSW 1871

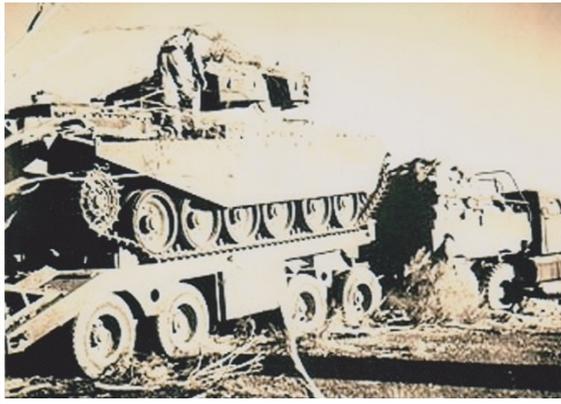
Payment MUST be made by NLT 5th November, 2019 as no monies will be handled at the dinner and financial commitments are made quite early.

Some limited parking may be available in the RACA car park after making arrangements with the Club. Trains to Circular Quay will take you within 100m of the Club. Generally, taxis are readily available outside the club in Macquarie Street after the dinner.

On Patrol Afghanistan 2011 Source: Danny Brooks Facebook post



During this time, a tractor-trailer combination provided by the School of Armour made a road journey to Port Pirie to meet the train and then transported the tank to Woomera.



With a 1/4 ton jeep as escort, and three other vehicles (two 3 ton trucks and another 1/4 ton jeep) carrying fuel, water, rations, cooking equipment, spare parts and sleeping gear for the party of ten 1st Armoured Regiment personnel, the 200 mile journey from Port Pirie to Woomera took three days. Accompanying CAPT Monaghan in the escort party were a crew from 1st Armoured Regiment comprising SGT Jones and TPRs King, Cross and Fahey, and a prime mover/trailer team of SGT Auchatel and CPL Harris from the School of Armour.

From Woomera, the 169041 was moved through the sparse desert of South Australia to Emu Field. The test site was so remote that the last few hundred miles were essentially made overland. 169041 had to be unloaded periodically to tow the trailer and truck across particularly rough stretches, then reloading before continuing on. For the final 170 miles, the trailer was abandoned entirely, and she was

driven straight to the test site under her own power.

At the test site, 169041 was loaded with ammunition, sensors and a mannequin crew. She was positioned about 350 yards from the epicentre of the Totem I detonation.

On 15th October 1953, 169041 was started up (both the main engine and the aux generator), all her systems were activated and the hatches were closed.

Totem I was a 9.1 kiloton atomic weapon which was detonated as part of a trial to determine the acceptable limit on the amount of plutonium-240 which could be present in a bomb. The Totem I detonation took place at 0700h on 15 October 1953. What happened to 169041 as a result of the Totem I detonation? According to Cecil's account, she only rolled back 5 feet. The side plates that covered the tracks were torn off, some plating and compartments on outside of the tank were bent and battered, and anything small and light, like antennas, were blown completely off. Some canvas coverings burned away altogether, and all the hatches were blown open. Anything facing the blast was literally sand blasted, which ruined the optics. When she was inspected, it revealed the engines had shut down, but only because they had run out of fuel.



When started three days later by CAPT Monaghan and his recovery party, she ran smoothly and was driven from the site towards Woomera. A laden 5 ton trailer was towed by 169041 for the first 31 miles of the journey, and then a 3 ton trailer was added as well for the next 109 miles. During this time, a 1 ton 4x4 truck was assisted over the sand hills on several occasions. For the next 120 miles, the going was better and the 5 ton trailer was transferred to the truck, leaving the tank towing only the 3 ton trailer. At a point near Twins Homestead, 130 miles short of the destination, the engine had enough, throwing a connecting rod out through the side of the crank case.



The concerns relating to the exposure of CAPT Monaghan and the recovery party are set out in the 1983-5 McClelland Royal Commission report, which examined British nuclear testing in Australia. The dead tank was recovered some weeks later in mid-December by a RAEME crew using a Rogers Bros M9 trailer, rated to carry 90,000 pounds.

After experiencing a number of tyre blow-outs, the recovery crew arrived back at Woomera on Christmas Eve for some well earned rest and recreation. Decontamination of 169041 was carried out at Woomera during early 1954 in preparation for transport to Puckapunyal. 169041 began the journey back to Puckapunyal, initially by road to the Port of Whyalla where she was loaded aboard a ship to Melbourne, and then by rail to Dysart Siding.

The recovery team was led by SSGT S.V. Phillips. The final journey to Puckapunyal was by road transporter, where she arrived around 21st July 1954.

There were concerns about the degree of radioactive contamination so the Commonwealth X-ray and Radium Laboratory conducted tests at Puckapunyal on 26th July 1954. The result led the testing officer to conclude the tank was not severely contaminated, but that the turret ring should be tested again once the turret was lifted off. This was carried out sometime shortly afterwards, and the conclusion was the same.

By 11th September 1956 a new main engine had been installed and 169041, less turret, had become the 1st Armoured Regiment's tow tug. She remained in this role for the next couple of years, until sent for base overhaul in 1958. After the overhaul and an upgrade to the Mk V standard in 1960, 169041 was placed in storage.

Late 1962 saw her again issued to the 1st Armoured Regiment at Puckapunyal, where she was used for training until late 1966, when she went for a second base overhaul. The overhaul would bring 169041 up to what was commonly referred to as the Mk V/1 (Aust) standard, and included the addition of .50 calibre ranging machine gun, the addition of appliqué armour on the glacis plate (on the front of the tank), an additional 100-gallon fuel tank and infra-red night fighting equipment for the commander, gunner and driver.

Lessons from the operational commitment of 1st Australian Task Force over the years 1966 and 1967 prompted the decision to deploy a Squadron of Mk V/1 Centurions, in an Infantry support role, to South Vietnam. At the time this decision was met with considerable scepticism, with concerns about the ability of the Centurion to operate the monsoonal and jungle conditions present in South Vietnam. However, history would show that the decision was sound and demonstrate the effectiveness of the Centurion in a range of roles in this theatre, particularly when supporting infantry in dealing with prepared enemy defensive positions (i.e. bunker systems):



‘When Australian infantry used armour support with (or without) artillery to attack prepared defensive positions, their casualties fell further and those of the enemy rose higher. Tanks were versatile in that they could clear jungle cover away from bunkers, destroy bunkers with gunfire, crush them and give a large amount of protection to accompanying infantry....

....The addition of tanks to the Australian order of battle in Vietnam made a major contribution to the problem of fighting the enemy in his bunker systems. Tanks are likely to remain an important means of attacking prepared defensive positions in any future low-level war. Their continuing effectiveness derives from a combination of their armour protection (particularly against hand-held anti-armour weapons), and their heavy-calibre armament. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that, given the ease with which bunker systems can be constructed, heavy armour should continue to be part of the Australian order of battle.’

From the infantry perspective, LTCOL Fairhead states, in *A duty done: a summary of operations by the Royal Australian Regiment in the Vietnam war*, that: “Indeed, the longer the war went, the clearer it became that unless tanks were available attacks against bunker systems should be avoided.”

The psychological impact on the enemy was also significant, with reports that 90% of the time the Viet Cong would break contact in a fight when they heard the tanks coming. The infantry being supported also were far more comfortable when supported by the Centurions.

The first vehicles to be deployed to South Vietnam were two Armoured Recovery Vehicles (ARVs) and two bridge layers. The ARVs were moved by rail to Pyrmont Pier in Sydney, and loaded aboard AV1356 Clive Steele, an Australian Army Landing Ship of the 32nd Small Ship Squadron, Royal Australian Engineers. The Clive Steele then moved to the Port of Melbourne to load the bridge layers, which could not be transported by rail, before embarking via Darwin to South Vietnam. The ARVs and bridge layers were driven off the Clive Steele at the Song Dinh Hard, near Baria, on 12th February 1968.

The first element of C Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment (which included a half squadron of 9 Centurions, plus 6 additional Centurions for Forward Delivery Troop) arrived in Vung Tau on 24th February 1968 on MV Jeparit, and was deployed forward to Nui Dat on 28th February 1968.

The Centurions were lifted off the MV Jeparit onto American LCU's (landing craft) by a huge American floating crane (known as “Big John”) which was floated down to Vung Tau from Saigon. The LCUs transported the tanks up river to the Song Dinh Hard (named for being on the Dinh river), which was located at a point midway between Vung Tau and Nui Dat. This became a regular disembarkation point for the Centurions as the bridges between Vung Tau and Baria could not cope with the weight of the 52 ton vehicles.

The MV Jeparit had a mixed crew of both mixed crew of RAN sailors and merchant seamen, with the latter, as a result of union intervention, refusing to load or unload the cargo. The Department of Army refused to bow to union demands, and in December 1969 Jeparit was commissioned by the Navy as a HMA ship in order to solve the problem.

In future deployments Centurions (including 169041) would be offloaded by the large wharf cranes at Cam Ranh Bay, as “Big

John" was not available for use by the Australians at Vung Tau. It was not until August 1968 that C Squadron reached full strength and was able to field 4 troops.



In 4th September 1968, 169041 was deployed to South Vietnam as part of a new consignment of Centurions, where she served as the troop corporal's tank with C Squadron, before they were relieved by B Squadron in early 1969. Officer Commanding B Squadron, MAJ Alex Smith, assumed operational command on 11th February 1969. MAJ Smith had completed a familiarisation trip to South Vietnam in October 1968, after he had been recalled from his posting Fort Knox USA.

In all 58 Centurion tanks, three bridge layers, and four armoured recovery vehicles were deployed to South Vietnam, and all played a very important role in the Australian campaign in that theatre of war.

On operation in South Vietnam 169041 was commanded for the majority of her service in South Vietnam by 217980 CPL Graham Munsell. CPL Munsell and his crew, as part of

4 Troop, B Squadron fought in Phuoc Tuy Province and other out of province locations in 1969. This is his account and reflections from that period of time.

In early April 1969 I was choppered out from Nui Dat to Fire Support Base (FSB) Mardi and on landing the departing crew commander threw his gear aboard, shook my hand and departed. Standing a short distance away was a tank with the call sign 24C and the name Sweet Fanny painted on the barrel of the main gun. This was the first occasion that I laid eyes on her and she looked impressive. I introduced myself to the crew and just stood back to admire my new beast.

During the nights the enemy circled the FSB, periodically ringing a cow bell till an hour before dawn. During daylight hours the troop would push through the heavy growth looking for bunkers and occasionally spotting caves in the nearby hills. Quite a few caves were engaged with High Explosive (HE) rounds, and I was able to gage that Fanny's main armament was well zeroed in and very accurate. Towards the end of the month the bell ringing ceased and signs of the enemy were rarely sighted, so FSB Mardi was vacated and we returned to Nui Dat for resupply.

*On the 23rd of April, our troop left Nui Dat to take up a position in **FSB Bruiser**, which turned out to be the best base in South Vietnam because Bruiser was situated on a dry sandy lake bed with only light scrub growing on it. Bogging was not a problem and the more we drove on the sand it became so refined that it was as soft as a mattress, which made sleeping very comfy when not on picket duty. During the days our job was to participate in search and destroy missions; on several occasions we were engaged by RPGs, which we thought were aimed too high. Later Intelligence discovered that it was enemy tactics to aim high into trees so the explosion would disable crews of armoured vehicles. The month passed with no casualties.*

EXTRACTION OF BOGGED VEHICLES

Our next mission was protection of D8 dozers doing land clearing exercises. During bulldozing of creeks and wet areas some became bogged and the tanks were used as recovery vehicles utilising the steel tow rope that was carried on each tank. On one occasion the recovery tank also became bogged and Sweet Fanny, being on higher dry ground, was able to extricate both bogged vehicles in the one pull.

PENETRATION OF RPG 7

On 7th May, our troop leader LT Chris Sweeney was called into task force HQ for the latest intelligence reports, but the troop was also required to recce an area around the Long Hai hills due to increased enemy movement. As only three tanks could respond, SGT Robert Browning of 24A took over as troop leader and we set out with Sweet Fanny leading the push.

Around midday we stopped to examine many foot prints on the dirt road way, which were leading into the jungle. After an "O" group SGT Browning decided we needed infantry for flank protection because of the limited ability to traverse the main barrel in dense vegetation. SGT Browning relieved Sweet Fanny of the lead and ordered 24B (CPL Joe Dziedzic) to speed back to the FSB for infantry support. As she came around Sweet Fanny and began accelerating 24B triggered a mine, considered 12 - 20kg, which blew the front road wheels off, cracked the idler wheel, broke the track and damaged the suspension station. Sweet Fanny had been spared this damage.

After half tracking 24B, we noticed a bridge over a creek two hundred meters ahead. Thinking the approach or indeed the bridge itself being mined, SGT Browning instructed me to try and find the easiest crossing for the half tracked 24B. As I followed the creek bank an RPG 7 was fired at us from an ambush position in a clump of bamboo on the opposite bank. The war head hit the hull between the track and the running board and the molten jet penetrated the compartment and travelled between the two ready round bins (one holding two HE and the other two canister rounds). A few inches either side and the ammunition would have been ignited... again Sweet Fanny's luck held. However, the fragments of flame and molten metal travelled across the hull and severely lacerating the operator TPR Robert (Woofa) Carter's lower legs and feet. The gunner, TPR Stuart Clements, also received small shrapnel wounds to his buttocks and right shin. All power stopped to the turret due to the severing and shorting out of the electrical harness. Because of the power failure we had no comms, and no power traverse for the turret or for the firing pin of the main gun. During this commotion 24A and 24B tried to react to my position and in doing so 24B threw the remaining half track and became immobile. I immediately trained the commander's .30 calibre machine gun on the spot where the RPG 7 was fired from and I was able to get the driver, TPR David (Rommel) Smith to jump in and manually operate the .50 calibre machine gun,

Technical Notes & News

Blog post for information...
Best, Bruce

The Importance of Tanks in the Australian Army

Recent Blog posts have related to the continuing challenge faced by those serving today to convince those who wield the power of approval for financial outlays, of the essential role played by tanks in the Australian Army. On 30 August, a recent paper by the RAAC Head of Corps was quoted ... a much earlier paper (2007) is at:
<https://www.ada.asn.au> › commentary › issues-index › tank-myths

Extracts from (the now) Professor David Kilcullen's conclusion:

“Contrary to mythology, tanks are not old, expensive, technology only intended for killing other tanks in high-intensity warfare. Nor have they been supplanted by attack helicopters or infantry bunker-busting weapons. Moreover, contrary to the claims of some armchair commentators, tanks do not send an unacceptable political message, nor are they are unsuited to Asia–Pacific terrain and they are certainly not difficult to deploy outside Australia. Modern tanks are flexible, high-technology weapon systems that provide an enormous tactical advantage and can also reduce casualties by a factor of six in close battle. In the Australian context they operate primarily as part of a combined-arms team with artillery, light forces and air power.”

Our new tanks are ... agile, well-armed, well-protected additions essential to the effective manoeuvre of a balanced joint team. This applies at every level of intensity because of the universal need to cross ‘the last three hundred metres’.

“We will win our wars only by considered and diligent development of integrated joint capabilities that include air and maritime power and, in the land forces projected and supported by such power, balanced combined arms combat teams of infantry, tanks, armed helicopters and artillery.” □

I find it hard to understand why links to the above article, as well as that of the Head of Corps, are not included on the websites of the RAAC Corporation and IAR Assn. From my understanding of the situation, there is a real need to help change the prevailing attitude towards tanks; one that revolves around the ‘myths’ addressed in the article above.

Professor Kilcullen's biographical details can be found at: <https://unsw.adfa.edu.au/our-people/professor-david-kilcullen>

Editor: Regret article is a bit to long for inclusion in this edition but for those interested in armoured warfare it is a must read.

The full article can be found at <https://www.australiandefence.com.au/land/fighting-to-win-the-importance-of-the-tank-to-the-adf-in-the-21st-century#BGt5qr88q75BRuL2.99>

“We will win our wars only by considered and diligent development of integrated joint capabilities that include air and maritime power and, in the land forces projected and supported by such power, balanced combined arms combat teams of infantry, tanks, armed helicopters and artillery.”



1st Australian Armoured Division M3 Grant tanks - June 1942. Source: AWM Photo 025479

Land 400 Phase 3 update

By Julian Kerr

Rheinmetall Defence's KF41 Lynx Infantry Fighting Vehicle (IFV) and Hanwha Defense's AS21 Redback IFV have been shortlisted to compete against each other for the opportunity to provide Army with up to 450 tracked IFVs and 17 manoeuvre support vehicles.



Announcing the shortlist for Land 400 Phase 3, Defence Minister Linda Reynolds said the \$10-15 billion project would provide Army with world-class levels of protection, firepower, mobility and enhanced communications.

"When fully developed the Land 400 program will allow Army to successfully sustain mounted close combat operations against emerging and future threats as part of an integrated ADF," she said. The IFVs will replace obsolescent M113AS4 Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs) that were upgraded in recent years but date from the mid-1960s.

The German and South Korean contenders defeated proposals by General Dynamics Land Systems, which pitched its AJAX armoured fighting vehicle, and BAE Systems Hägglunds, which proposed its CV90 IFV, in a Request for Tender (RfT) that closed in March.

AJAX is entering service with the British Army while the CV90 is in service with seven user nations, four of them NATO members. According to informed sources, the AJAX was regarded as not fit for purpose, and the BAE Systems-Hägglunds CV90 was assessed as too expensive.

The Phase 3 RfT listed only three essential requirements. These were the ability to carry six dismounts, the ability to be strategically deployed by the RAN's two Canberra-class Landing Helicopter Dock (LHD) amphibious ships, and the ability to be carried by RAAF C-17A Globemaster III strategic airlifters.



Minister for Defence Industry Melissa Price commented in a statement that Rheinmetall and Hanwha had been assessed as offering vehicles that were best able to meet Army requirements while offering value for money.

A key part of potential cost efficiency could be commonality with Project Land 400 Phase 2, under which Rheinmetall was contracted in August 2018 to supply Army with 211 8x8 Boxer combat reconnaissance vehicles (CRVs), the RfT stated.

Although the Lynx has yet to enter service, it deploys the same Lance 30mm digital turret as the Boxer. All but 25 CRVs will be manufactured at the Military Centre of Excellence being constructed by Rheinmetall at Ipswich as will the full production run of Lynx, should the type be selected.

Hanwha's AS21 Redback is a heavily-upgraded version of the KT21 IFV that has been in service with the South Korean army since 2009. The platform is being offered with a new two-man T2000 30mm turret developed by Canberra company Electro-Optic Systems, and will benefit from close collaboration with Israel's Elbit Systems on C4I systems integration.

Hanwha has undertaken to establish a self-reliant manufacturing base at Geelong for the Redback. This facility would also be used to manufacture the company's K9 155mm self-propelled howitzer (SPH) that is believed to be under consideration for a sole-source acquisition of 30 SPH for the recently-revived and renamed Land 8116 Protected Mobility Fires Requirement. In welcoming the Lynx' shortlisting, Rheinmetall stressed the type's significant commonality with Boxer and the vehicles' modularity, allowing the reconfiguration of both fleets for emergent operational needs.

For its part, Hanwha emphasised the Redback's integrated active protection systems, comfortable space for eight dismounts, and the origin of its technologies "from countries where capabilities are needed to defeat constant real-world threats."

Other companies involved have also made statements emphasising their potential contributions.

"EOS Defence Systems is exhilarated by this announcement and the opportunity it provides to demonstrate to our home customer the advanced technology and skills that Australian industry can deliver," Grant Sanderson, EOS' CEO of Defence

(Continued on page 8)

(Continued from page 5)

because TPR Carter was slumped on the floor. Shortly after, all enemy activity ceased.

TPR Carter was extricated from the turret and placed on the engine decks until he was dusted off to 1 Australian Field Hospital, and days later repatriated to Australia. Waiting for dust off Woofa asked me to take a photo of him in his wounded state, but because of heavy censorship at the time, the only photo in the whole roll blacked out was of Woofa's injuries! Shortly after the enemy engagement, TPR Clements (gunner) repaired wires and changed fuses and sometime later had electrics operating normally in the turret. 24A then had to tow and drag 24B back to the FSPB; during this arduous trip the exhaust mufflers on 24A were glowing bright red. Upon arrival at the FSPB the motor in 24A seized, which left Sweet Fanny the only tank in mobile fighting condition. Work commenced on 24A and 24B by RAEME in the FSPB. For the remainder of May, 4 Troop took up the roll of dozer protection and on occasions did sweeps and ambushes with elements of 6RAR.

To be continued

Editor: This article is taken from a document published for the 1 Armoured Regiment by Barry Hodges and Graham Munsell. For those interested in reading the full story of the Atomic Tank/Sweet Fanny I would thoroughly recommend that you obtain a copy. There is enough material there to turn it into an excellent movie.

(Continued from page 7)



Systems, said. Meanwhile the vehicle mobilisation element of a Risk Mitigation Activity (RMA) that will begin later this year had been

extended from six to 12 months, Defence stated. This would provide the shortlisted tenderers with a more reasonable timeline in which to manufacture and prepare test vehicles to the configuration required.

Each contender will be funded to provide three platforms for the RMA. One of each will be tested to destruction to assess survivability. "Concurrent activities and workshops will also be undertaken in order to clarify and refine the offers to mitigate risk to the Commonwealth

(and) Stage 2 is anticipated to conclude around the end of 2021," Defence said. Submission of best and final offers would be followed by final evaluation, with a full contract award expected in 2022. Initial operating capability is anticipated in 2024-25 and final operating capability is planned for 2030-31.

Read more at <https://www.australiandefence.com.au/news/the-reasons-behind-the-land-400-phase-3-decision#hZtRZjsZjFr2WbDL.99>



HEARTY WELCOME TO THESE NEW MEMBERS SINCE OUR LAST ISSUE

Mr. Don Mountain 20 NST Bn, POWLH

Mr. Christopher R White

Hawkei program approaches full-rate production

By: Louis Dillon

Following final testing of the first 100 Hawkei Protected Mobility Vehicles-Light (PMV-L), the Australian Defence Force is closing in on Stage Three of the program.

Defence Connect can confirm that the ADF has successfully completed a series of trials in Stage Two of the Hawkei program, with full-rate production due to start at Thales' Bendigo facility later this year.

A defence spokesperson told Defence Connect that the Hawkei has completed several "key elements of the testing regime", including:

A blast test of the two-door vehicle was undertaken on 2 March 2017 at Proof and Experimental Establishment Graytown,

followed by the blast test for the four-door vehicle on 17 March 2017. Both tests were successful. A two-door vehicle successfully underwent additional blast testing on 17 May 2018.



A two-week user trial with Army and Accredited Test Services was conducted at Townsville Field Training Area from 6-17 February 2017 employing prototype Hawkei vehicles.

A second user trial, employing low-rate initial production Hawkei vehicles that are more representative of the final build state, was also conducted with the 3rd Brigade in Townsville from 8-25 October 2018. Feedback from the user trials is being incorporated into the vehicle design.

A successful external air lift trial was conducted over June-July 2017 in Townsville on both the two-door and four-door vehicles in various load states.

Defence conducted a formal trial involving the deployment of two Hawkei vehicles to Iraq and Afghanistan from December 2017 to August 2018. The key trial objectives included the identification of operations and support issues and evaluating the deployment considerations for the Hawkei capability.

Stage Three of the program is "full-rate production", with the remaining 1,000 vehicles and 958 trailers to be delivered to Defence by 2022.

The government signed an agreement with Thales Australia in October 2015 for the acquisition and support of 1,100 Hawkei vehicles and 1,058 companion trailers, for use in "command, liaison, utility and reconnaissance roles".

The vehicles are being specifically developed to meet the ADF's requirements for survivability, mobility, payload, communications, useability and sustainability.

"The Hawkei delivers an entirely new capability for the ADF, providing a level of protection comparable to the Thales Bushmaster at around half the weight. These vehicles can be utilised independently or as part of a combat team and in co-operation with existing Bushmaster and Medium Heavy Capability vehicles in combat, combat support and combat service support missions," the defence spokesperson said.

"The Hawkei will provide a high level of protection for soldiers against blast and ballistic threats, with superior off-road mobility to enable it to operate in high-risk areas. It will pioneer a next-generation, open-architecture Integral Computing System so the battle management system, radios, sensors and weapon systems can all be managed through a common Interface."

Final tests are still being carried out on the vehicles, but are due to enter full-rate production later in 2019.

<https://www.defenceconnect.com.au> LAND & AMPHIBIOUS|14 FEBRUARY 2019

RAACA Memorabilia for sale,

AFV Crewman's Badge		\$20
Pocket Badges		\$40
Lapel Badges		\$20
Armoured Antics		\$ 20
Vietnam Video		\$20
Boer War Lapel		\$ 20
Army combat badge	Large	\$30
	Small	\$20

Attention all service and ex-service people

The Royal Automobile Club of Australia has recently introduced a very special membership for service and ex service people, for example;

The entry fee of \$250 is waived; and The annual Subscription of \$1365 is halved to \$683.

The Club has a superb position at the Circular Quay, 24/7 access to the gymnasium at no extra cost, valet parking (the only club in Sydney to have this), and a wide range of Club facilities and activities including bridge and snooker.

Further, here's a special plus, you can cancel your NRMA road service because RACA membership gives you personal NRMA Service free, no matter what car you are driving or even if you are just a passenger in any vehicle!

You can access the Club's over 200 reciprocal private members clubs around the world. You can save your annual subs in a couple of days by using these clubs when travelling.

Call the RACA on (02) 82732300 for an application form or just pop in for a look at 89 Macquarie St.

A seven day free trial membership is available.

The Veteran web Network providing information to Australian veterans, ex-service and service personnel.
Reaching more than 12,400 readers daily and growing.

All service and ex-service personnel can subscribe to the Veteran web Network cost free. Information is provided via email from various reliable sources. Veteran web is an information service, while is not a forum you are welcome to contribute.

Some interesting statistics of veterans by electorate can be found at:

http://www.dva.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/publications/datastatistical/fedprofile/Electorates_Mar2016.pdf

Dinsor, Somalia. 1993-03-23. Members of 'B' Squadron, 3/4 Cavalry Regiment at work on the overhaul of an armoured personnel carrier (APC). They are serving with the Australian contingent to the Unified Task Force in Somalia (UNITAF).
Source: Danny Brookes fb page,
Photo AWM P01735.463



Lest we Forget
We regret to advise the passing of the following members

Mrs	M	Margaret	Long	Wife and partner Honorary Colonel, Colonel Lee Long RFD
Mr.	DW	Douglas	Pollard	1/15 RNSWL
Mrs	A	Amy	Stackman	2/6 AR (Widow)
Mr.	CB	Cedric	Wells	
Mr.	AR	Alan	Baker	2/9 Aust Armd Regt Gp
Mr.	SK	Stan	Porto	6 NSWMR
Mr.	RD	Raymond	Wilson	
Mr.	T		Tout	2/7 AR



Vale

Captain David Housego

A Memorial Service was held for David Housego's family, friends and colleagues on Tuesday , 4 June at the Long Reef Golf Club, Anzac Avenue Collaroy.

Looking out over the Pacific Ocean, this site is a couple of blocks from the house where David lived and died. It commands the spectacular views David loved so much, watching the waves roll in along Fisherman's and Collaroy beach.



Vale

Tim Fischer

Tim Fischer sadly passed away today. He had battled cancer for 10 years. He was a man generous with his time and friendship. He was the patron of the NBWMA Fund committee and was always prepared to come to functions and support us out of his own pocket. Apart from his achievement as a politician he continued to be involved in causes to the end, even though he would never live to see their fruition. These included the World Seed bank, interests in Rail Trails and railway development, Posthumous promotion of Monash and Reserve Forces Day. Since completion of our memorial I have been involved with him on another project and was only in contact with him via email a few weeks go while others in the group were talking with him only a few days ago. It is only just over a week that he had a special train from Junee to his old home at Boree Creek. As always he was always charting the future for us again knowing that his time was nigh. He will be sadly missed. I count it a great privilege to call him a friend over the last 7 years. Vale Tim.

Regards
 David Deasey <david.deasey@bigpond.com>

Vale

John Worrall

It is with sadness that we note the passing of our colleague Captain John Worrall Ret'd. John was OC Tech Support Squadron in the 1980s. John died on Friday from brain cancer and his funeral was held at the Christ Church Bong Bong Church on the 21st of September 2019.

John Howells
Hon Secretary
Royal New South Wales Lancers Association



DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

NATIONAL OFFICE

Patron-in-Chief: His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd)

A member of the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations

26 March 2019

MEDIA STATEMENT

INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO DFRDB COMMUTATION ARRANGEMENTS WELCOMED

The Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA) welcomes the Government's announcement yesterday that it would finally commission an independent inquiry into the commutation arrangements of the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) superannuation scheme.

In commenting on the announcement, the National President of DFWA, Kel Ryan, stated that he particularly welcomed the Government emphasising the importance of open and transparent discussion around veteran concerns, and that it would consult with the ex-service community about the Terms of Reference for the inquiry.

As for the commutation arrangements, Kel Ryan stated that DFWA and the veterans community as a whole had long sought redress of varying grievances relating to DFRDB, not the least of which included the continued application in 2019 of out-of-date 1962 life tables for calculating both commutation entitlements and fortnightly superannuation payments made to veterans subject to the DFRDB scheme.

Hopefully, the proposed inquiry will uncover the serious financial injustices that those out-dated life tables have caused to DFRDB superannuants. Life expectancies have markedly increased from the time since the DFRDB scheme was introduced in 1973. Those increases have meant that the amount of permanent pension reduction calculated using old tables is far higher than they should be if current tables applied.

The Defence Force Welfare Association, along with its partners in the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations, will be making written submissions to the inquiry and looks forward to actively participating in drafting the Terms of Reference.

Contacts

Executive Director: Alf Jaugietis (0438) 282 284	www.dfwa.org.au	National President: Kel Ryan (0418) 759 120
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DFWA – Voice of the Defence Community