

TIGER TAILS



Message from the Commanding Officer 5 RAR (Mech), Lt Col Andrew Forbes

As this is the first and only edition of Tiger Tales for 2011 there is a lot of ground that needs to be covered. For all members of the Battalion who deployed on MTF-2 and represented 5 RAR (Mech) please accept my heartfelt congratulations for your efforts.

You all contributed to MTF-2's mission in a dangerous, hostile and uncertain environment and performed to a very high standard. My thanks also to the former Commanding Officer, Darren Huxley, for his dedication to the Battalion and MTF-2 missions. Darren has left an outstanding foundation that we can all build on as the Battalion focuses on new challenges.

To those who didn't deploy and ensured essential Rear Details functions continued I owe you a debt of gratitude. I shared your frustrations at being a LOB but the work that was conducted during this period has also contributed to the Battalion's current healthy position.

The MTF-2 Memorial Service and Welcome Home activities were a fitting tribute to the men and women of the 1st Brigade who contributed to the MTF-2 mission.

These activities, conducted after the bulk of the Battalion's return from post-operational leave, allowed our WIA to return to Darwin and catch up with their mates for the first time since they sustained their wounds.

The Battalion conducted a detailed manning conference that has prepared us well for the remainder of 2011 and 2012. We deliberately conducted this reorganisation to best capture our collective experiences and to grow and develop our senior soldiers and JNCOs. This activity was essential to us continuing to develop as a Battalion.

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5 RAR News guide

Ex ANZAC

Hear from our Tiger in action in the New Zealand exchange for 2011.

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Exclusive coverage on the highlights of the 5 RAR Blood Week.

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Unveiling of the Tiger

The unveiling of the 5 RAR Tiger Painting.

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Message from OPSO

An update directly from the OPSO Major Roy Henry and about the Battalion's upcoming movements and the OPS cell.

5 RAR Company update

Hear exclusively from the soldiers of the Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Support and Battalion Headquarter and Logistics.

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"We Are the Tiger Battalion"

Message from the Commanding Officer 5 RAR (Mech), Lt Col Andrew Forbes

NOTICE TO TIGER MEMBERS

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Late September and early October saw us lead the BDE Open Day with our Beating the Retreat Parade as well as the Battalion's first "Blood Week" in a number of years.

Having witnessed the dedication of all who participated in the parade, so soon after returning from an operational deployment, only reinforced in my mind that I am privileged to serve you as your Commanding Officer.

"Blood Week" was an enjoyable and tough competition played in hot and difficult conditions. Congratulations to the Battalion's senior Company for winning the competition.

Well done to CPL Solis for being named the Champion Athlete for the week. His performance embodied the qualities of fitness, endurance and physical courage that we all aspire to.

The Battalion courses period is in full swing and as a result many of our soldiers are spread between Cultana, Robertson Barracks and KFTA on one of the nine courses we are conducting.

Our preparation for these courses has been first class and I know all soldiers attending a course will strive to produce their best performance. This course period will prepare us well for a busy and demanding 2012.

As the end of the year is fast approaching I would like to thank all of those Tigers posted out or separating from the Army at the end of 2011. Only those who serve in Infantry Battalions can fully understand the demands that have been placed upon you and your families.

When you post out, leave us knowing that you have contributed to the Battalion's legacy and invested in its future. Though your career may take you away from us know that you will always have a home here.

To all Tigers returning to or joining the Battalion in 2012 I wish you a safe and restful Christmas and New Year period.

Cherish your family and friends during this time because, as always, we will rely heavily on their support to complete our training and operational objectives in 2012.

DUTY FIRST

Ex ANZAC Experience



Ex ANZAC Experience has seen CPL Hayden and his section attached to the 1st Battalion, The Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment. This unit shares many similarities with our beloved 5 RAR with only minor differences, namely that they are a Mounted Cavalry / Mechanized Infantry unit which operate in ASLAV vehicles. During the time that we have been in New Zealand we have competed in their Skill At Arms activities which have including a Best chef cooking test with 3 rat packs, changing a tyre and packing stores onto a Pinzgaur vehicle, the NZ Battle fitness test, a 25km pack march along a mountainous ridgeline starting at 2000h, fired the NZ Annual Weapon Qualification which started from the kneeling at 300m, and finished in the standing at 25m on a below ground class range on base!

This practice is everything that a Rifleman should want to be able to do and a real test of the firer's ability. There was a full navigation week with Recon Platoon, advanced signals, various weapons TOET's and we even learnt how to run a line for an IV bag as combat medics. All this and more was completed in just the first month and a half! Since then we've conducted a large amount of ASLAV familiarization training and have conducted some limited urban patrolling with the support of armour. Amongst all the training we have still been welcomed to several cultural activities, the most notable being a traditional Maori hangi feast we shared with our brothers at arms.



Back Row (L/R) PTE Kingi, PTE Morrisey, PTE Pratt, CPL Hayden, Pte Hogwood, PTE Axelson
Front Row (L/R) PTE Dav, PTE Hart and PTE Mirco

Throughout our short period working with 1 RNZIR we have learnt a lot and were possible we have introduced the NZ Defence Force to the ways of 5 RAR.

The way they operate with their vehicles and how we do things are very similar and there will be many things that I hope to bring back to 5RAR and add into how we work with the new M113AS4.

Obviously it has not all been work during our time here and we have had the chance to tour the north island and enjoy the experience of the Rugby World Cup matches played around the country.

For the next 6 or so weeks we'll complete a full live fire week starting from light section in close country which will culminate in a Cavalry Platoon assault. We are also looking forward to a short respite down in the southern island, after which time we will then be detached to work with 2/1 RNZIR for Exercise Southern Reaper.

As much as we have enjoyed our time in New Zealand we are eagerly looking forward to reuniting with our partners and the Battalion in the next coming weeks.

Written by CPL Hayden



5 RAR Blood Week



The Battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment each have their own sports week, in the 5th Battalion it's known as Blood Week. It's a tradition that hasn't been held for a number of years but after 5RAR's recent deployment to Afghanistan and the Battalion reshuffle there was no better time for its return.

Blood Week consists of four days of four different sports in which each Company battles it out against each other with the goal of finishing the week with the highest amount of points. The idea behind blood week was to build camaraderie amongst the newly reshuffled sub-units and display each Company's prowess on the sporting field or pool. This year's sports consisted of Soccer, Aussie Rules, Water Polo and Rugby.

The 5th Battalion were grouped into a mixture of companies that contested in all events; the 5 companies were broken into BHQ / Log Coy, B Coy, C Coy, D Coy, and SPT coy. Each team had its strengths and weaknesses which led to some very interesting and highly competitive games.

Throughout the week though it seemed as if Support Coy would go undefeated until late on the third day when C Coy scored a win in Water Polo. The overall score for the week had Support Coy take 1st place with Bravo and Charlie Company tied 2nd, BHQ/Log Coy coming in 3rd and Delta taking 4th place.



(L/R) CPL Parker, and PTE Turner



PTE Awesa taking charge

Every event also had a champion soldier for the day but the overall champion soldier for the week was Cpl Solis (SPT). He was a key player in the talented Support Coy team no matter which sport they seemed to play. Special mentions also need to go to LCPL Bettess(SPT) for his efforts in Soccer, PTE Deverson (B) for AFL, PTE Fletcher (SPT) for Water polo and CAPT Trembath (BHQ) for Rugby. Each of these players were awarded champion soldier for the individual sport as a result of their outstanding sporting prowess.



5 RAR Blood Week



Each day ended with a boozier parade where RSM WO1 De Kock and CO Lt Col Forbes would sum up the days scores and congratulate the winning teams.

The RTF Committee also ran a canteen selling refreshments and a sausage sizzle at the games where all funds raised went back to supporting the soldiers.

They were also in charge of running the boozier and put in some long hours making sure everything went smoothly.



(L/R) LCPL Bettess, CPL Solis, PTE Deveson, and Capt Trembath

At the end of the day Blood Week lived up to its reputation with only a few injuries arising, which spanned from cuts and bruise to a fractured clavicle and dislocated fingers.

The week overall went very well and despite the intense heat and high humidity every player put in their all and produced some very competitive and entertaining games.

Written by PTE Frischknecht



LCPL Richardson, Charlie Company

Quintus Painting

On returning from their first tour of Vietnam in 1967, 5 RAR (MECH), also known as the 'Tiger Battalion', was presented with a baby Sumatran tiger cub from the Toronga Park Zoo, Sydney.

Almost immediately the male cub was named Quintus, after the Latin numeral five, and was integrated into the unit with the service number, MA423. Later to be promoted to the rank of Warrant Officer Class Two, Quintus was to become the first of many Tiger mascots that 5 RAR (MECH) has had during its short but illustrious history.



5 RAR Tiger Painting



(L/R) Private Craig Blanchard, and Chloe Blanchard

The Tiger has been and still remains an important icon to the soldiers and officers of 5 RAR (MECH). The Tiger symbolises the courage, loyalty and fighting spirit that defines our fiercely proud unit.

In light of 5 RAR having only recently returned from operations, as part of Mentoring Task Force 2 in Afghanistan, it was an appropriate time to draw back to our roots and take stock in the unit's achievements to date with this celebration.

Having the painting of Quintus, created by Mrs Chloe Blanchard, wife of PTE Craig Blanchard, made the unveiling of the enormous artwork all the more important. This marks the beginning of a very important period in the Battalion's role as one of Army's two Mechanised Infantry Battalions, in which both current and future members of 5 RAR are encouraged to reminisce on the past but also look to what the future holds.

Written by PTE De Backer



The Operations Team of the 5th Battalion



The final half of 2011 has provided numerous challenges for the operations staff. Operations functions for 5 RAR have moved on from an operational mission, to achieving the Battalion capability for the future. As at writing, we were monitoring 63 separate courses, with approximately 250 soldiers on a course at any one stage. This has created some interesting challenges for the team. SGT Mel Bridge, our resource manager, has thus had to conduct some creative accounting.

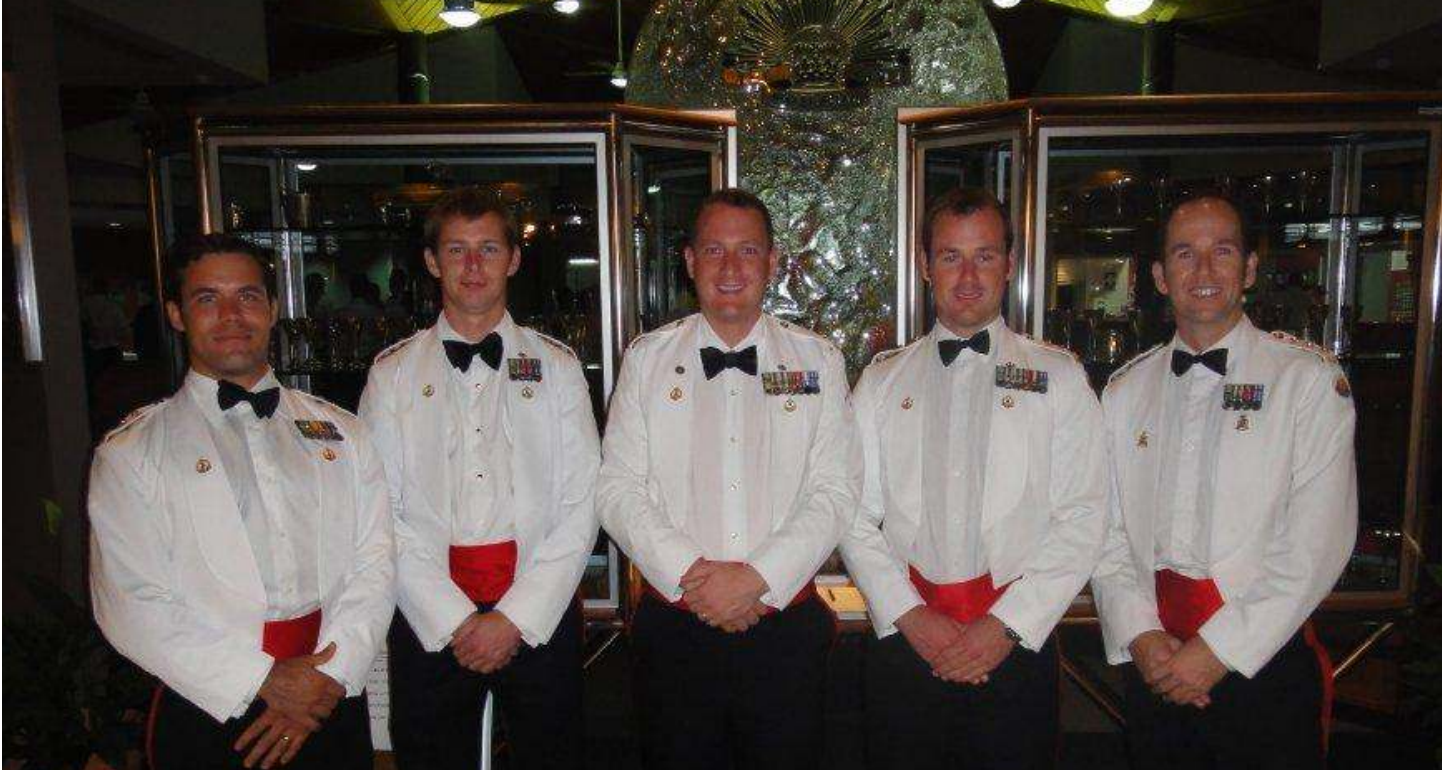
WO2 David Allen has been working feverishly nominating and withdrawing soldiers from the courses, whilst concurrently studying for the RSM's course. They have been ably supported by CPL Linda McNaughton (recently married) who has been busily moving the soldiers around the country - including when they change their minds. To the Battalion's great pleasure, SGT Bridge played in the Battalion sports week and out played LT John Sullivan (D Coy) in Soccer; and in the Rugby, tackled CPL Matt Solis (Spt Coy) thus saving a try. Cheers from the sidelines all round.

CAPT Rich Trembath (S33) (also recently married) has been dealing with the day to day ops issues and has been extinguishing more than his fair share of spot fires. At the time of writing, he is in Indonesia representing the Australian Army and 1 Brigade as he exchanges mechanized ideas with our partners. Notably, CAPT Trembath was also awarded the Battalion's Champion player in the Rugby.

CAPT Chris Stuart (the RTA) has been brought into the Ops Team to drive the Bn's mechanised capability for 2012. Through his team's efforts, he will be able to qualify upwards of 70 crew commanders and drivers. This is pretty impressive from a standing start and has set the Battalion up for success for 2012.



The Operation Team of the 5th Battalion



(L-R) CAPT Rich Trembath, CAPT Chris Stuart, MAJ Roy Henry, CAPT Ben Howard, and CAPT Steve Elston

CAPT Ben Howard (S35) and CAPT Steve Elston (S4) have been coordinating the 10 separate specialist courses that the Battalion has been running concurrently in three different states; with extremely limited resources. Each course has had its 12 foot wall to climb (some have had multiple), and through extreme tenacity, they have managed to achieve what some may have said was impossible. For administration and staff work, never has so much been achieved by so few.

Disappointingly every member of the Ops Team will be posting in 2012. I wish them best of luck in their new positions and thank them for their efforts this year.

Written by MAJ Roy Henry OPSO.



Bravo Company



With the Battalion recently having returned from Afghanistan, the intent now is to focus on future operations and developing our mechanised capability. In line with this, Bravo Company has seen a complete re-shuffle, not only to develop a new identity as one of two fully mechanised Companies (the other being Charlie Company), but also to redistribute valuable operational experience. The Company is in a challenging phase at this point, with manning lowered by the large amount of courses that are currently running. However, this is not stopping the Company from conducting training ahead of 2012.



Bravo Company focus will be steered towards conducting mechanised training and redefining its light infantry roots with some concentration on jungle training. The latter is ahead of the Battalion deploying on exercise in Tully next February. This will be the training that will test and improve soldiers of all ranks.

Upon return from this exercise, Bravo Company will have a brief reorganisation and revision period before developing its ability as a mechanised Company in Shoalwater Bay. The culmination of this training is 5 RAR's role in Exercise Hamel, in which the Company and Battalion will prove and mark their place as a confident and more than capable mechanised specialist unit within the Royal Australian Regiment.

As a whole, the Company has achieved much already. As for individuals, all should be proud of their personal skills and achievements which gives the Company its identity. Of note are Corporal S.J. Hodge and Private T.J. Pollock who recently received commendations for their exceptional efforts whilst on deployment in Afghanistan.



Also, Private T.M. Deveson, who during the Battalion Blood Week was recognised as the Champion athlete for AFL. Unfortunately, Bravo Company didn't taste success during the Rugby Union competition by being disqualified for an unrecognised Bravo Company enhancing the team.

Nevertheless, with its head held high, Bravo Company looks forward to the next 12 months on the training program and being able to further develop its skills and knowledge over all aspects of both light and mechanised infantry training.

Cry havoc! And let loose the dogs of war!



Charlie Company



After a well deserved leave period following a nine month deployment to Afghanistan, Charlie Company are steadily regaining their feet. The taxing work overseas has left a void of knowledge, skills and qualifications that need to be brought up to speed in order for the company to be ready for the mechanised training that is to culminate at the Shoalwater Bay Training Area next year. Part of this preparation is sending the men on a whole spectrum of courses, both within the 1st Brigade and abroad. From SIO-S in Darwin to DFSW in Singleton, JLC at Canungra to the AS4 Driver, Crew Commander and Conversion Course in Puckapunyal, the bulk of C Coy are scattered across the country.

Prior to 'star bursting', the company, along with the rest of the 5th Battalion, participated in the Beat the Retreat parade. As a final display for a Brigade Open Day held on Friday the 30th September, the battalion performed a centuries-old military ceremony involving the firing of blank volleys and a trooping of the Battalion Colours. All the grandeur was played to the beat of the Army Band - Darwin.

Preparation for this impressive ceremony took the entire week. Many long hours were spent on the parade ground under the blaze of the tropical sun and the lads did well to look their best on the day (it had been some 12 months or so since we'd worn our brass).

Following the Beat the Retreat the battalion hosted another tradition of a less hospitable kind. Blood Week, an aptly named four day sports battle where the various companies of The 5th Battalion would compete against each other in a different team sport each day.

A slow week beginning with soccer, C Coy quickly matched the skill and aggression of the dominating Support Company, putting up a good fight in the AFL match. After the heat and sunburn of the first two days out in the paddock, water polo provided some respite to the men of C Coy. The lads managed to leave the pool with a draw and three wins, placing C Coy at the top for the first time.

The final challenge (and it certainly would be the most arduous) was the rugby on the Thursday. With a mixed team of some who play, some who have and some who've only seen it on TV, the Company was a motley crew of hopefuls. Captained by none other than the Officer Commanding Charlie Company, Major David French, the team played a brutal four games, ultimately losing three and winning one. With injuries slowly mounting and backing up two games in a row, the company demonstrated the Battalion's Traits of a Tiger: Mission Focused, Combat Ready and Fiercely Loyal. At the close of the week, C Coy finished equal second in the 5 RAR Blood Week, a sound effort.

As the soldiers of Charlie Company 5 RAR return later in the year from their respective courses, they will look forward to a generous Christmas leave. In 2012 the tempo at work will undoubtedly increase. The focus will be the staple of the Tiger Battalion, conventional mechanised warfare. With a cadre augmented by newly promoted NCOs, vehicle crews and soldiers with fresh skills to bear, Charlie Company 5 RAR will be a promising team to face the challenges of the new year.

Written by PTE W. Kearns



Delta Company



Delta Company has been involved in a steady rebuilding phase since returning from operations and post deployment leave. The company has been involved in many Battalion and Brigade activities over this period, and displayed itself in the finest Delta Company tradition. Currently 5RAR is focusing on the re-mechanization of the battalion; Delta Company however will remain dismounted in a light infantry role while awaiting the arrival of its carriers. While the company currently has no carriers a number of members are completing driver and crew commander courses to ensure mechanisation will occur once the arrival of the fleet is complete.

The company is also looking to the future with a number of members attending promotion courses including Junior Leaders Course (SUB 1) and Supervisor Infantry Operations - Section (SUB 2). Delta also has members involved in numerous other courses including snipers, reconnaissance, combat first aid, and signals combat communication course. In addition to these courses a section is currently on exchange to New Zealand on Operation ANZAC, and a number of members deployed to RCB with 7RAR.

The remainder of the soldiers not on course are training extremely hard to take out this year's 1st Brigade military skills competition with 2 sections from Delta Company, under the command of LCPL Bloor and CPL Hodge from 10Pl. These sections are working hard over long hours honing their basic infantry and all corps skills. Along with the rest of the battalion Delta company wishes them all the luck for the upcoming annual competition.



LCPL Bloor Demonstrating a Mechanised Section Attack



Delta Company



LCPL Bloor had a great opportunity to test his section when he led a mounted section attack on the Brigade Parade ground as part of 5RAR's contribution to the 1BDE open day in late September.

Delta Company was involved further in this day participating in 5RAR's contribution to the 'Beating the Retreat' parade. All members involved can hold their heads up high after a long week in the heat on the parade ground with the parade being a huge success.

In early October the battalion held a Blood Week with each company competing against each other in AFL, rugby, soccer and water polo. With Delta's heavily depleted numbers it was always going to be a tough week but the company fought hard all week and did have some success especially in water polo finishing 2nd.

Looking forward to 2012, Delta Company will be deploying to Rifle Company Butterworth in early next year. This will be for many their first opportunity to train in the jungle environment. Delta Company will continue to prepare for RCB and is looking forward to some exciting training opportunities with the South East Asian comrades. Upon return from Malaysia Delta Company will then deploy to Shoalwater Bay to take part in EX HAMEL and then look further to the future with re-mechisation.

The next phase in Delta Company's history will be a busy but rewarding one and all members are looking forward to the challenges in the next 12 months.

Written by PTE M. Alborough



Support Company



Support Company, 5th Battalion (Mechanised) returned from their post deployment leave nicely tanned, relaxed and slightly heavier than the last time we had all seen one another. After extensive story telling and reminiscing, the Company was required to focus its efforts on the opportunities that still existed for training in 2011, and what will be a very busy 2012.

Shortly after the Battalion conducted its personnel rotation, the focus for Support Company was to organise and coordinate five of the six courses to be run before the Christmas holidays. Direct Fire Support Weapons Platoon, Reconnaissance Platoon, the Sniper Cell, and Signals Platoon all conducted specialist courses in order to identify and train the future specialists of Support Company. In addition to this Support Company also led the promotion course, Supervisor Infantry Operations - Section, which will see the future junior leaders refine their leadership skills and develop many new skills for the responsibilities that now face them.



(L/R) CAPT Perriman, CPL Donaghue, and SGT Herbert

LTCOL A.J. Forbes (CO 5 RAR (MECH)) has indicated that next year is a very important year for not only the 5th Battalion (Mechanised), but for all Mechanised units. The Mechanised capability will be closely monitored next year and for this reason the Battalion will travel the country in pursuit of maximum training opportunities. Throughout this training, Support Company will provide intimate support to all of the Battalion assets operating in the field, and like always we will do that with maximum effort and mind blowing accuracy.

Sadly, at the conclusion of this year Support Company will see some of its valued and loved members depart the Battalion on either posting or discharge. To those that are posting we wish you the very best in your new unit and look forward to seeing you return to the Tiger Battalion in the near future. To those that are exploring life outside of the Army we wish you nothing but success and happiness in your new lives. Thank you to you all for your dedicated service in the Battalion and we hope that you remember your time here as fulfilling and enjoyable.



Logistic Company



Technical Support Platoon

Workshops had a quiet start to the year in 5 RAR (MECH), as a vast majority of the Battalion was deployed on MTF-2. We did say goodbye to a few members at the end of 2010 and hello to some new ones, however; the core of the workshops was still intact with a few 5th VM veterans. Workshops were largely left to their own devices with the head shed thin on the ground looking after A Coy. That's not to say we weren't busy.

WO2 Marsh took this perfect opportunity for the rear details to do a lot of in house re-structuring that was carried over from the year before. With a big list of things the acting ACE wanted, we set to cleaning and tidying the place from top to bottom. It must be a British thing to have everything in neat rows and in order. Everyone was given key areas to work with and the workshop started to tick over nicely.

While all this was going on we were able to jump on top our "B" Vehicle back log and knock it right down. The COs pride and joy, our fleet of four "A" Vehicles were being maintained which had us rapidly becoming the envy of the Brigade.

Now that we had workshops running like a well oiled machine we were able to send a few of the boys on various maintainers' courses and, however you want to look at it, JLC. It almost seemed like a Medley relay with the boys passing the workshop baton over to each other as they returned from course.

The inevitable support to a couple of bush trips almost had the ACE going grey trying to sort out who was maintenance/ driver/ crew commander qualified or if they were even in the state to support but as always, the huge fluffy rabbit was pulled kicking and screaming out of the hat three sizes too small and it was done without a problem. At least we made sure that it looked like it was no problem.

By now, mid year, the workshop was purring along on all cylinders, the new procedures that the ACE and CPL Oldridge were working great and work was starting to flow in and out of the workshop at a great rate of knots. The new fleet of M113 AS4 started to roll in and the Infantry were keen to start putting the new cars through their paces. With a quick trip out to Bundy, supporting 1 Armd Regt, the boys were hard pressed to keep the cars on their feet, as the Infantry were like kids on a sugar high at Christmas with new toys.

The RPS has seen the arrival of two new staff members during the posting cycle CPL Sharon Holt from 1CSSB and PTE Chris Cowan from 16AD. The new staff have brought varying levels of skill and experience which will enhance the RPS capability to provide effective repair parts supply support to the Unit. The RPS had CPL Ryder and PTE Moeono deployed with MTF2 of which reports are they did enjoy themselves and produced some quality work and worked long hours in the process, that came as a shock to the Moe after all he is a Kiwi.

The RPS rear details team has been busy ensuring that we are well postured for success with the arrival of more AS4 vehicles and repair parts. This quieter period has enabled personnel to attend courses and re model the RPS warehouse to provide better support in the field and also crack into the Warehouse stocktaking program, which is a large beast in its self.

The second half of the year will see the RPS staff venture into the field and begin supporting Unit Mech elements. We hope that by the end of the year, the covered in warehouse will be finished so that the spares can be out of the weather (finally) and that we will be able to use the space for what it was intended for.



Transport Platoon



Since returning from Op Slipper MTF 2 in July, Transport Platoon has been busy with members on Post Deployment Leave until August and having a small contingent participating in the support of Talisman Sabre 11.

Upon return of the Platoon from either leave or exercise a Heavy Rigid Mack non-continuous course has been conducted which will conclude in December. During the process of the course Transport Platoon will be conducting a road move to Cultana in order to support the Battalion Courses being conducted.

We have busy times ahead at TPT with SGT Rey Leal on Long Service Leave until December, CPL Rick Smith attending Subject 1 for Sergeant Course and both LCPL's Donald and Wilkinson attending Subject 4 for Corporal and the Transport Managers course which will take them through till the end of the year.

At the completion of the year we will be saying good bye to a few members of the Platoon, those being, SGT Rey Leal, CPL Toby Smith, LCPL Wilkinson, PTE Aiton, PTE Scott and PTE O'Donnell. We wish to thank them for their efforts during their time at the Battalion and wish them all the best for the future.

We would also like to welcome to TPT PL, PTE Bronwyn Tweedie, and hope that your time at 5 RAR (Mech) will be enjoyable for your first posting.



QM Platoon



2011 year has been a very busy year for the QM Platoon of 5 RAR (Mech) in both MTF-2 and 5 RAR (Mech) Rear. As we are all back together this report will be a combined effort to give you a brief insight into the experience of being a member of the operator supply trade within the Battalion.

Since last we wrote our team in MTF-2 have had a wonderful time lazing around enjoying themselves in a far distant land. The team of the Main Q apparently felt the cold so much in March that they decided to warm themselves with a little fire.

Needless to say that due to the heroic fire fighting skills of LCPL McCarthy, Young and the rest of the team they were able to extinguish the fire before the whole main Q was lost. The rest of the trip saw this team continue to provide good support to the battle group. We all enjoyed stocktaking especially as we waited for returns to come.

The boys provided excellent assistance to the Battlegroup by conducting return / replacement action of a remarkable 45 tons of damaged equipment. This effort greatly assisted MTF-2 maintain critical capability during the operation. Towards the end of the tour the insurgents must have thought that we were a little over heated as they did their best to improve the ventilation of the Main Q with shrapnel tearing a few new air vents for us. The extraction went a lot smoother than the insertion with the main Q removing deployment equipment from all members as they departed Tarin Kowt.

Meanwhile back in Australia, we were all sad to say farewell to a number of our team from 2010 including the RQMS WO1 Greg Cooper, with the arrival of the new RQMS WO1 Pat Decker and his merry team of replacements arriving ready for an easy year. On arrival they were greeted with the return of the mighty A COY to the 5 RAR (Mech) home. With Q members required to support A COY through Range Practices, field deployments to KFTA and Bundy. This continued to build until Talisman Sabre where a small band of Q members supported the 300 role players.

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QM Platoon



During this period CPL Wallis and the RQMS coordinated receipt action of the new M113AS4 FOV fleet as they arrived into their new homes within the Battalion. This continues to be an on going challenge as we slowly build our fleet to the required level.

Throughout June and July as the MTF-2 equipment was back loaded WO2 Ireland and Dijkmans coordinated the receipt and redistribution. In August we finally got to see all our team on the ground (with the exception of those on leave).

As the year draws to a close we again are ramping up for the challenges as we close the Battalion for the Christmas leave period. With PTE Lewin and LCPL Gardner moving into civilian life and LCPL Young and Harrison, WO2 Ireland, SGT Kiernan and Skene and the QM CAPT Allport all posting out this year, 2012 promises to be even more fun. It is appropriate that we take this opportunity to thank all of these members for their service to the battalion and wish all the best to our personnel that are moving on to greener pastures.



Binh Ba Platoon



The role of Binh Ba Platoon is to manage injured personnel through their rehabilitation and reconditioning and to facilitate the transition of riflemen into and out of the Battalion.

On allocation to the Platoon a course of action is devised, through consultation with the soldier and relevant medical personnel, to set the conditions for return to fitness. Whilst the primary objective in most circumstances is the return to full fitness and resumption of pre-injury duties, the rehabilitation goals in priority order are;

- (1) Goal 1 - The soldier returns to full fitness and resumes pre-injury duties.
- (2) Goal 2 - The soldier is not suitable RAINF and trade transitions within ADF.
- (3) Goal 3 - The soldier transitions out of the ADF.

In those instances where the goal is identified as being trade transition within or out of the ADF, the soldier is offered the opportunity to undertake education and training to smooth the transition to an alternative trade or civilian employment. This includes courses run within the ADF, as well as those run by online and external education providers, with the intention of the soldier being fully qualified and employable prior to transition.

In addition to the core business of rehabilitation and reconditioning, Binh Ba Platoon also conducts a training program focused on the maintenance of basic soldier skills in order to ensure injured personnel are engaged in normal duties within their restrictions.

In addition to this, the Platoon usually conducts two PT sessions a day, those requiring specialist attention attending sessions with physiotherapist and rehabilitation PTIs and those with weight management issues attending the 1 Brigade 'Fit to Fight' program.

Members of the Platoon have also assumed responsibility for vital sedentary duties around the Battalion including management of the Battalion Shop and the Gary Holmes Club, as well as assisting with work parties and catering for Battalion functions and sporting events. Soldiers from Binh Ba Platoon recently joined with BHQ and Log COY to compete in the Battalion Sports Week, enjoying some success on the sporting field.