

## BRAVO COMPANY – Dec 2019

In 2019 Bravo Company carried on with their stellar performance as the Champion Company of 2018 and continued to push the boundaries of training, proving once again to the Battalion and Brigade that we are a tough, proud and capable fighting force. This has been a testament to all members who have served in Bravo Company through 2019, which has been a demanding and challenging training year for the Battalion.



B Company section patrol at Tully

The first major training activity for 2019 kicked off with the company deploying to Kangaroo Flats Training Area (KFTA) to complete a series of Live Fire shooting ranges, focused on sharpening our shooting skills and building the team in preparation for our deployment to the jungle to complete a Sub-Unit Training activity in Tully. During our training in Tully, the company completed Section and Platoon level training scenarios aimed at developing our Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) in the jungle environment. The two week training activity culminated in a platoon level live fire attack where the junior leaders were able to test their skills in the harsh and challenging environment that the jungle has to offer. Notwithstanding the fact that the platoons lived for two weeks tired, wet and battling the poisonous flora within the jungle, the company thoroughly enjoyed the experience in Tully and celebrated the end of the exercise with a few well-earned beers.

On return from the jungle, there was no time to rest and Bravo Company took part in the Battalion's Colours Parade in Darwin, assuming the duties as the Company Guard for the colours as Champion Company. This was an outstanding event and a rare moment in history that all the soldiers of Bravo Company were proud to be a part. Of note, the opportunity to socialise with some of the 5<sup>th</sup> Battalions veterans and share stories of past and present was a fantastic experience and one that the soldiers and officers of Bravo Company will cherish into the future.

On 05 June, 2019, Combat Team Bravo (CT-B) deployed to Shoal Water Bay Training Area (SWBTA) to join 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Regiment in a Battle Group Warfighter (BG WFX) activity run by the Combat Training Centre (CTC). Encompassing CT-B were elements from 1<sup>st</sup> Combat Engineer Regiment, 8/12 Artillery Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Military Police Battalion, 1<sup>st</sup> Armoured Regiment, 1<sup>st</sup> Close Health Battalion and a number of different logistical support elements from 5RAR. This was the first time CT-B had worked together in 2019 and proved to be an excellent opportunity to integrate our skills and tactics to form a highly effective fighting force. This was also the first opportunity Bravo Company deployed with their full fleet of Protected Mobility Vehicles (PMVs), allowing us to test the motorised capability at the sub-unit level. Whilst the company tested the PMVs to their fullest capability, we did not escape our dismounted role, finding ourselves walking through the night in support of Battle Group LION's mounted manoeuvre. The soldiers of Bravo Company displayed true resilience in their actions and a level of mental and physical robustness to be proud of.

After a well-earned night off in Rockhampton, Bravo Company returned to the field and continued their training in SWBTA with the conduct of a Company level live fire attack, prior to commencing the key collective training activity for the year in Exercise Talisman Sabre 19. This time, CT-B was back to its origins and working as part of Battle Group TIGER. This activity produced an excellent Combined Arms Training (CAT) activity through the conduct of Engineer led routes clearances, urban sweeps and Stability Operations, all while being supported by indirect fire and fast air coordinated by our Joint Fires Team from 8/12 Artillery Regiment. In addition to integrating our skills with 1<sup>st</sup> Brigade units, Bravo Company had the opportunity to work alongside elements of the New Zealand and American Armed



Troops receiving training from instructors at Tully

Forces which provided all of our members with a unique training experience and many lessons to take forward with us in future training and operations.

On return from SWBTA, Bravo Company took some well-deserved leave prior to switching focus to building our individual skills on Combat First Aid courses, promotions courses for our up and coming Junior Non-Commissioned Officers (JNCOs) and Combat Shooting Skills ranges. Additionally, Bravo Company soldiers proudly represented the Battalion in the Duke of Gloucester Cup, led by one of our Section Commanders, Corporal Mitch Bowman; bringing home the winning trophy for Section Foundation Warfighting Skills.

Elements of Bravo Company are now preparing to deploy to Iraq at the end of 2019 on Operation OKRA, focused on building partner capacity with the Iraqi Security Forces. For many soldiers of Bravo Company, this deployment has been an exciting opportunity on the horizon, to test their skills and broaden their experience on their first operational deployment. 2019 has been a challenging but exciting year for Bravo Company. On behalf of the Company, I would like to thank all the families of our soldiers who have shown such great support throughout the year and as we prepare to deploy into 2020. Without this support, our ability to be prepared and ready to execute the next mission would be that much harder. Bravo Company continues to display the attributes of a champion company and has proven itself as an effective fighting force throughout 2019. We look forward to the challenges and opportunities that lay ahead for Bravo Company in 2020 as a proud sub-unit of the Tiger Battalion.

MAJ Brett Edmonds