

FORWARD

Newsletter #50 - October 2025



The official newsletter of the 2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment (Queensland Mounted Infantry) Association

Welcome to our third newsletter for the year and hope you are all doing well. I can report that we have one Honorary Member, three (3) Life Members and one hundred and seventy-five (175) Other Members. We are financially able to make all our obligations for the year and have 78% of your money invested.

On the 11 Sep 25 I was lucky enough to watch the Brigade soccer grand final between the Light Horse and 6 RAR. The Light Horse won 3-0 and it was a great game in very windy conditions. Well done to the Light Horse team.

2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment (QMI) is running its annual Tibby Cotter Memorial Cricket Match (Soldiers vs Officers) on Fri 31 Oct (anniversary of the Battle of Beersheba), at Brookfield Oval. The Regiment has invited the association to attend. So, grab a folding chair and a hat and go and watch the soldiers beat the officers. It should be a good day.

41 Club Black Hat BBQ 8 Nov 25. Once again the unit's Command Team has approved this annual get together. You should have received an email outlining the timings, no change to previous years. When you get an email please forward it on to other Black Hat members, remember all are welcome, most especially families. Please indicate if you are attending with your details (drivers lic #, mobile phone # and email). This is so you can be added to the security list for entry. I already have approx 60 names.

The 41 Club has a web page set up and our function is on their calendar. You will also note that the regimental shop has merchandise for sale. The stable belt looks good. So, check it out and save your money to make a purchase on the day of our reunion. www.41club.com.au

If anyone is experiencing difficulties, please do not hesitate to reach out. We the association will help in whatever way we can, even if it is just a chat on the phone or a coffee.

Please feel free to contact me on any matters that we may be able to assist you with.

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My number is: 0431 700 696

FORWARD!

Shayne Burley

GOOD READS!

Ironsides Magazine:

<https://ironside.partica.online/>

2/14 LHR (QMI) Facebook page:

[2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment \(QMI\) | Facebook](#)

2/14 LHR (QMI) Association Facebook page:

[2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment \(QMI\) Association Inc - Facebook Group | Facebook](#)



WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

The President and Management Committee welcome new members of the Association:

**Andrew BARHAM, Luke Peter HICKEY,
Peter MEYER-GLEAVES**

VICTORIA BARRACKS TOUR 2025



CO'S REPORT

BY LTCOL TIM HURLEY



2025 has flown by for the Regiment

When I last wrote in June, I outlined our achievements to date, including the Regiment's restructur- most notably, C Squadron's transition from Tank back to ASLAV - and our participation in Exercise Damascus/Koster River in March and April. I also reflected on the honour of the Regiment marching through the streets of Brisbane on ANZAC Day.

Since then, the Regiment has spent nearly two months in the field at Shoalwater Bay, commenced the introduction of Boxer Block II into service, and committed to several offshore activities within our near region.

In early June, the Regiment participated in the South East Queensland Warfighter— Exercise Diamond Strike. Concurrently, B Squadron (minus) deployed to Puckapunyal to begin the inaugural Boxer Block II conversion courses. Diamond Strike began with a live-fire activity, where A and C Squadrons formed Combat Teams tasked with a range of missions including screening, advancing, interdicting, disrupting, raiding, delaying, and guarding. The attack included defending the A Battery gun position, which was firing in support of the Combat Team. Both squadrons performed exceptionally, showcasing the Regiment's hallmark tempo, controlled aggression, and bias for action to the rest of the Brigade.

Following the live-fire phase, the Regiment formed Battlegroup Warhorse, integrating attachments from across the Brigade in preparation for the CTC-led Brigade Warfighting Exercise. Due to a real-world contingency, the Battlegroup was rapidly reoriented from BLUEFOR to OPFOR, as 6 RAR Ready Battle Group and key Brigade staff were recalled to Brisbane for a potential deployment. This shift presented a valuable opportunity for the Regiment, which was tasked with delaying and disrupting 8/9 RAR and the remainder of 7 Brigade as they advanced north to Raspberry Creek and along Shoalwater Bay's eastern flank.

Without revealing too much, Battlegroup Warhorse performed superbly. Through deception, stay-behind forces, and highly mobile, disaggregated cavalry groups, the Battlegroup sowed chaos behind enemy lines—repeatedly identifying and destroying gun positions, C2 nodes, CSS locations, and rear areas,

while drawing the fighting echelon into dummy positions. It was a textbook cavalry action, rewarding cunning, guile, and mission command.

Highlights included:

- Using reserve demolitions to prevent follow-up along the 10-mile gap track.
- Establishing a convincing company dummy position at Raspberry Vale, which triggered a deliberate enemy Battlegroup attack.
- Constructing a Ukrainian-style dug-in defensive position at a gnarly defile north of the dummy site.
- Triggering codeword "CHAUVEL," which unleashed simultaneous disruption of rear echelons by undetected cavalry troops during the enemy advance.

Needless to say, we had a ball - though the same cannot be said for BLUEFOR.

After a brief pause at Shoalwater Bay, the Regiment re-formed an even larger Battlegroup for Exercise Talisman Sabre, bolstered by B Squadron's return from Puckapunyal with their new Boxer Block II CRVs, A Squadron from 1st Armoured Regiment, and Electronic Warfare capabilities from 7th Signal Regiment. With the Brigade and 6 RAR back in the fight, Battlegroup Warhorse transitioned from foe to friend.

Once again, the Battlegroup excelled. It quickly became evident that a fully-enabled cavalry Battlegroup could move, identify, strike, and shape with unmatched tempo and controlled violence. The Battlegroup oriented the Brigade onto its objective through reconnaissance, shaping, blocking, disruption, and pursuit actions. Our year-long emphasis on cunning, guile, and mission command paid off. Several senior observers and mentors remarked that it was the most effective cavalry action they had seen in over a decade. While such praise should be taken with a grain of salt, it was nonetheless gratifying. It reflects a force structure that is now fit for purpose - and, more importantly, the exceptional quality of our people. Leading this outstanding group of young men and women has been a thrill and an experience I will never forget.

Upon returning from the major exercise period in early August, the Regiment shifted focus to the many tasks that typically arise in the latter part of the year. In August, 2 Troop from C Squadron, supported by a small A1 echelon, deployed by air (with

their ASLAVs) to the Philippines for Exercise ALON, which included a live-fire serial with service ammunition. They represented the Regiment with distinction and were impressive in every respect.

Additionally, a contingent from the Regiment recently deployed to Tonga for Exercise POVAI WARRIOR, where they are delivering training to Tongan soldiers in some of the most picturesque range locations imaginable. One of their key concerns is ensuring humpback whales can pass through the range danger area before commencing combat shooting serials. They're having a fantastic time, and the RSM and I look forward to visiting them in the coming weeks.

We're now looking ahead to Beersheba Day, which will feature the second iteration of the Tibby Cotter Memorial Cricket Match at Brookfield Oval. Officers will take on ORs for the trophy, and significant effort has gone into organising the day. I warmly invite the Association to attend and observe the match, which begins at 0900 and concludes around 1300. After the match, the Regiment will move to Brunswick Street for the Beersheba Ball—a well-earned opportunity for the men and women of the Light Horse to let their hair down.

As the year draws to a close, I find it difficult to come to terms with leaving the Regiment - where my journey began nearly 20 years ago. I look forward to seeing many of you at the Association reunion on 8 November, and catching up for lunch during my handover with LTCOL Tom Johnson, who will assume command of the Light Horse on 5 December. Until then, the RSM and I will make the most of every moment we have left in this remarkable Regiment.

FORWARD!

LTCOL Timothy Hurley
CO 2/14 Light Horse Regiment
(Queensland Mounted Infantry)



LEOPARD FOR BOVINGTON



A School of Armour Leopard AS1 Tank on the range at Puckapunyal in 2005. Photo: David Grant

The Australian Defence Force has donated an Australian Army Leopard AS1 tank to The Tank Museum at Bovington in the United Kingdom. The AS1 had previously been on display at the Australian Army Tank Museum in Puckapunyal and will now become part of the UK collection of armoured vehicles.

It was presented at TANKFEST 2025 on 27 June by COL Michael King, Australian Army adviser in London, and Australian Army Liaison Officer LTCOL Michael Henderson to The Tank Museum's chairman, LTGEN Sir William Rollo, and director Chris Price.

"It is a great pleasure to see this important piece of Australia's contemporary military history donated to the museum as a reflection of how our armoured forces fighting alongside each other in conflicts over the past 100 years has contributed to our strong strategic bond," COL King said. The German-designed and built Leopard first entered service in 1965. It was small and light, marking a significant change in design from the heavy armour and guns of the Second World War to prioritise speed and mobility. Brilliantly engineered, the Leopard was extremely successful on the export market.

The Leopard AS1 was brought into Australian Army service in 1977, the "AS" in the model name comes from the NATO abbreviation for Australia. In 2007, the Leopard was officially withdrawn from Australian Army service, replaced by the M1A1 Abrams.

"We are very grateful to the Australian government for this kind gift, and to COL Michael King, the Australian Army adviser in London, and to the Australian team who have helped us bring this immaculate Leopard AS1 main battle tank to the UK; I don't believe we have ever seen a tank arrive in better condition," LTGEN Sir William Rollo said.

Source: DEFENCE CONNECT
07 July 2025 By: Robert Dougherty

BEENLEIGH MEMBERS' FUNCTION 2025



WARNING ORDER

What - 41 Club Black Hat Family Reunion

When - 1300-1800, 8th November 2025

Where - 41 Club - RV front gate at between 1200 and 1300

Cost - Gold Coin Donation for Sausage Sizzle

Action If attending - Advise drivers lic #, mobile phone # and email if not already provided (... as noted on page 1 of this newsletter)

The process will be similar to previous years; stay flexible at the RV point as security clears us for entry.

ADF DRONE RACING TEAM CONQUERS US MILITARY TOURNAMENT



Thirty-seven pilots represented teams from the ADF, the United Kingdom, Singapore, and the United States in qualifying heats that culminated in an elimination final series.

The three-day event was held on the grounds of the refurbished Atlas-F missile silo facility in the Adirondack Mountains in upper New York state, incorporating decommissioned tanks, trucks and a helicopter. In their first appearance at the tournament, the US pilots took second place in the team event and had the individual fastest pilot.

The ADF's fastest pilot, Private Hamish Glover, placed second in the individual fastest pilot competition and Australian Army Cadet, Cadet Sergeant Angus Porter, placed third overall. Six of the ADF pilots made it through to the top 10.

ADF team captain Corporal Daniel McCulloch said it was incredible to compete in such a technologically advanced sport in a unique location. "It has been a fantastic week of racing, teamwork and excitement," Corporal McCulloch said. "To have six pilots make it through to the top 10 in the world is an incredible achievement and testament to the dedication and skill of our drone racers."

Three of the fastest Army Cadet drone racers only started to fly drones at the start of last year. Cadet Sergeant Angus Porter and Cadet Under

Officer Zach Melvaine finished in the top four of the ADF team.

"To be here as part of the drone racing team is just an incredible experience," Cadet Under Officer Melvaine said.

President of the ADF Drone Racing Team, Wing Commander Keirin Joyce, said its success was a testament to the dedication and efforts of the pilots who continued to improve their skills to remain competitive in such a dynamic and fast-paced sport. "Drone racing requires so many skills that are transferable in all aspects of life and work," Wing Commander Joyce said.

"Our military drone racers have to be at the top of their game to compete against the world's best. To win the title for a fourth time is a testament to the dedication, commitment and skill of our pilots, and the investment we have made in our cadet program."

Drone racing is an authorised sport in the ADF.

Source: DEFENCE CONNECT 02 May 2025

By: Robert Dougherty

GAME-CHANGER FOR CAVALRY

BY CPL MICHAEL ROBERTS

ARMY'S newest cavalry vehicles were put to the test during Exercise Talisman Sabre, with the first troop of Boxer Block II CRVs deploying to Shoalwater Bay.

Troopers from B Sqn 2/14 LHR (QMI) employed six vehicles in reconnaissance, offensive and defensive operations. Boxer Block II troop commander Lt Kyle Wilkinson said while they were doing the same role as the ASLAV, the Boxers' ability to integrate more data from sensors, and sustain themselves for longer, extended their reach and integration into the joint force. "We're able to identify and engage targets at longer ranges, which assisted the scheme of manoeuvre for the combat team and the battle group," he said.

The troop conducted reconnaissance, clearing, blocking and raid actions, including using a UAS to identify targets.

The Boxer Block I CRV was introduced in 2022 under Land 400 Phase 2 as an interim solution while the Block II systems were developed and built. The new platform retains a similar hull and armament but provides a turret with improved sights and sensors, making it easier for crews to land rounds on target with the first burst. It is further supported by integrated digital command-and-control systems to provide situational awareness to the crew.

Before Exercise Talisman Sabre, the troop conducted the Boxer Block II conversion course, starting with four weeks of theory and practical lessons at Gallipoli Barracks, learning the ins and outs of the platforms. The course continued at Puckapunyal where drivers took the vehicles into the field to put them through their paces, and learned how to maintain them. It finished with troop-level field training and a live-fire assessment.

According to gunner LCpl Peyton Fairbank, being able to shoot at longer ranges accurately with the improved sights was 'unreal'. "It's an extra 1000m on what the ASLAV has, and because of the sighting systems, you're still seeing it up close with zoom distances," LCpl Fairbank said. "You can really hone in and see where your rounds are landing. It gives you a better sense that you're getting rounds on first burst."

She said a bigger bang from the 30mm automatic cannon and the ability to fire kinetic energy timed fuse (KETF) rounds were a big improvement over the ASLAV. KETF is an airburst munition that uses a programmable fuse to detonate projectiles at a precise distance near the target.

To help gunners find their mark, crew commanders use a 360-degree panoramic camera that allows them to scan the battlefield and assign targets independently of the turret. For crew commander Cpl Rhyley Hinds, it allows extra command and control in dynamic combat situations. "Before, you had to be hatch up, use the hand controller and point the turret in the general direction of the target so the gunner can see," Cpl Hinds said.

"Now you can be hatch down, looking through your own sight while the gunner is searching for targets, press assign target and the turret will slew to where you're pointing. "You can supervise and the gunner can continue to fight the engagement while you look for more targets."

Lt Wilkinson said the Boxers' ability to integrate new systems would future-proof the vehicle. "I was sceptical going into the Block II, but having done the course and Exercise Talisman Sabre, I'd say the Block II Boxer is definitely the right direction for cavalry to go," he said. "It's a vast improvement in mobility, protection and fire power, as well as network communication, which is the four characteristics we look at for armoured fighting vehicles."



Boxer CRVs fire rapid obscuring systems during the Boxer Block II conversion course at Puckapunyal. Photo: Cpl Michael Roberts

NIGEL COX : BIO



Upon completing his basic training in August of 2003, Nigel joined 2/14 LHR (QMI) and completed his driving and servicing course on the M113 in 2004. Nigel volunteered to be member of the catafalque party at the Regiment's Anzac Day Service in 2004. Initially attached to B SQN HQ, he later joined the Queensland University Regiment in 2005 when the Regiment lost its reserve element and became a fully regular unit. In early 2007 Nigel re-joined the Regiment on a Continuous Full Time Service (CFTS) contract for a period of two and half years. During this time Trooper Cox was attached to Command Troop (Ready Reaction Force) and deployed to Iraq as part of OBG (W)-4. Spending his spare time in the S2 cell, Nigel completed a Battle Group Intelligence Course in the beginning of 2009 before deploying on OP Anode to the Solomon Islands as Acting Intelligence Corporal.

The year 2010 saw TPR Cox join the Regular Army and discharging at the end of 2014. During his four years at the Regiment, Nigel spent many hours volunteering in the Regimental Museum and was asked by Tom Ryan's OAM (long time museum volunteer) family to read a poem at his funeral service. Anzac Day 2014 TPR Cox was asked to recite the ODE for the Regiment's Dawn Service.

Upon discharge, TPR Cox was asked to join Army Museum South Queensland (AMSQ) part of the Australian Army History Unit (AAHU). As Register, Nigel was responsible for all donations, loans, transfers and conservation work. During this time Nigel started his connection with schools promoting our proud military heritage, particularly with Mt Alford State School. For the last 5 years, Nigel has been the Regimental Police soldier (part of 7 BDE) at Victoria Barracks Brisbane.

In 2019 Nigel was asked to host MR. Murakami the last survivor of the Cowra Breakout whilst he was in Brisbane. In showing him and his delegation wartime Brisbane, last year his Japanese delegation invited Nigel to attend the 80th Anniversary of the Cowra Breakout. Nigel organised the 80th Anniversary of the Thai- Burma Railway over March/ April 2023 and travelled to Miriam Vale to read the Anzac Day service in the same year. Nigel put together a Wests Old Boys' team and raised a little over \$3,400 for the 48km Kokoda Challenge on the Gold Coast, June 2023.

Nigel has been a committee member and curator of Wests Juniors Junior Rugby League since 2022. In 2023 Nigel imitated an Anzac Day game dedicated to QX17089 William Morgan Malin. Part of the 2/10 Field Regiment. Bill was interned as POW when Singapore fell to the Japanese 15 February 1942. Transported to Borneo in in 1943, Bill was a victim of the Sandakan Death



March, the greatest war crime committed against Australian service personnel during the Second World War.

With the seniors of Western Suburbs being formed in 1915 and the juniors in 1939, Wests have always had a proud history of their players serving Australia in times of war. Though the Anzac Day Memorial Trophy is dedicated to W. Malin, Nigel remembers a different Wests player each year that has served in our military. He is the Junior Vice President of the Royal United Service Institute Qld Branch, has been committee member of the North Melbourne Qld Supporters Group, and has been the Secretary of Wests Old Boys' Association.

Nigel has been the curator of Gaythorne RSL Club since 2020, becoming a Director in 2024 and President of the Sub-Branch in 2025. He is dedicated to the Sub-Branch and the Club remaining amalgamated whilst he is President, so it can provide care to current and retired members of the Australian Defence Force.

A keen runner, swimmer and a lover of scuba diving, Nigel has played most sports. A Wests Mitchelton Rugby League junior, he played U19 for Western Suburbs in 1992. Nigel supports Manly in the NRL and North Melbourne in the AFL. A lover of Morris Minors', Nigel recently purchased a Jeep used by the 2/4 Armoured Regiment in New Guinea. It is well known as the welder jeep.

With a passion for history, Nigel has always been fascinated with Ned Kelly and sharks. A lover of music, Nigel is a proud father and father-in-law to his son Anton and daughter-in-law Lauren and recently became a Grandfather with the birth of his grandson Jediah. A lover of German Shepherds, Nigel always has and always will care for his son's dog Kaiser. Why? Because he wants to.

Welfare and educational support available for RAAC soldiers, veterans and their families in time of need.

The RAAC's Colonel John Haynes Trust

As a serving or ex-serving RAAC member, if you or a member of your immediate family, requires assistance because of family trauma, emergency or an educational need you might qualify for a grant or financial assistance from the COL John Haynes Trust.

A career RAAC soldier for 36 years, John enlisted in the CMF in 1948 and soon realised he wanted to pursue a military career. He transferred to the ARA, was accepted to Duntroon and graduated to Armour. He had the rare distinction of having served in almost every RAAC unit during his career. His long service included Vietnam in 1970.

He always had a strong passion for RAAC members' welfare, especially their families and War Widows. After retiring in 1984 John became a driving

force behind the introduction of the Armoured Combat Badge and as the National President of the RAAC Association he set the groundwork and drove the activity that achieved the construction of the excellent Boer War Memorial in Canberra to honour the Australian Light Horse, our horse mounted predecessors.

John died in 2020 bequeathing a substantial sum to the RAAC via the RAAC Association (NSW) which set up the Trust in his name to honour his wish of assisting RAAC members, and their families, when no other means of assistance is available.

For more information, or an application form, visit the Trust's website:

haynestrust.org

or email: william.cross@haynestrust.org

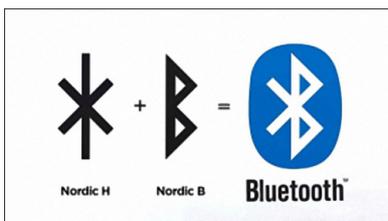


Colonel John Haynes AM



Royal Australian Armoured Corps Association

BLUETOOTH : DID YOU KNOW ?



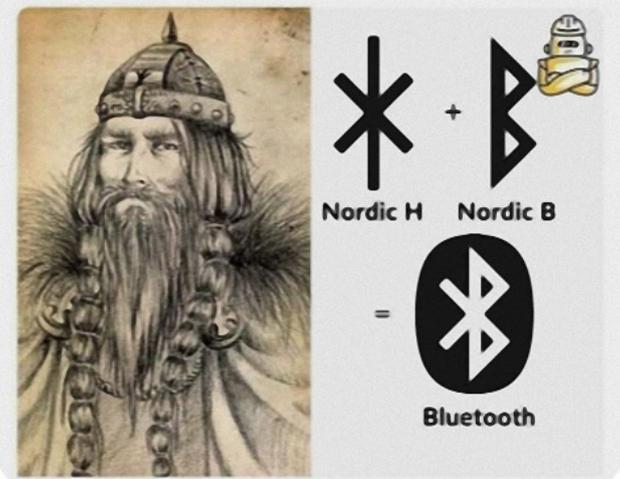
The term 'Bluetooth' finds its origins in Denmark in the 10th century AD. During that period, the Norse kingdom was ruled by King Harald Gormsson, who is more commonly referred to as 'Harald Bluetooth'.

The Bluetooth wireless specification design was named after the king in 1997, based on an analogy that the technology would unite devices the way Harald Bluetooth united the disparate Danish tribes into a single kingdom.

The name "Bluetooth" itself was initially a temporary code name, inspired by the historical figure who similarly unified disparate entities and it stuck. The Bluetooth symbol consists of a Younger Futhark bind rune for his initials, being (Hagal) for his initial H and (Bjarkan) for his initial B.

The symbol represents the merger of both initials of Harald Bluetooth in Old Norse runic symbols.

Turns out, **Bluetooth** is named after the 10th-century Scandinavian king named **Harald Bluetooth** who peacefully united Norway and Denmark.



ARMY CONDUCTS WORLD-FIRST HIGH MOBILITY MISSILE LAUNCH

In a world-first, Australian Army soldiers fired air-to-air missiles from a national advanced surface-to-air missile system (NASAMS) Hawkei high-mobility launcher at Woomera Test Range in May.

Australia is one of only three countries to have fired an AIM-9 Sidewinder from NASAMS and the only one to fire it from a high-mobility launcher (HML). The launcher, from 16th Regiment, was a modified Hawkei protected mobility vehicle-light, capable of carrying up to six Sidewinders or AIM-120 Advance Medium Range Air-to-Air Missiles (AMRAAM). The Sidewinder is more manoeuvrable in the air compared to an AMRAAM but has a shorter range. The activity was also the first time both canister and high-mobility launchers fired at the same target, in what is called “ripple fire”.

The successful test came after the regiment conducted Army’s first NASAMS live-fire using an AIM-120 AMRAAM in 2023. It was a first for many of the regiment’s soldiers at Woomera, the culmination of 18 months of training. 111 Battery HML detachment commander Bombardier Luke Dunbar said his young team had trained to operate NASAMS from day one at the Adelaide ground-based air defence unit.

“There were smiles from ear to ear,” Bombardier Dunbar said when the first missile went off. Described as ground-breaking and state-of-the-art by the soldiers involved, each NASAMS troop can comprise a combination of HML and canister launchers controlled through a fire distribution centre (FDC). Inside the FDC, tactical control officers and



assistants track targets travelling many kilometres away. Speed, altitude and pattern of flight help operators determine the type of target, be it an enemy cruise missile, unmanned system, or jet. The system will recommend the best munition and launcher to engage with.

Following the successful live-fire, 16th Regiment can mix and match AMRAAM and Sidewinder missiles in canister or high-mobility launchers to give ground-based air defenders more options. 111 Battery Commander Major Fernando Tula Recinos said the capability lifted the regiment’s profile at the strategic and tactical level. “Our peers in different units are asking us what we can bring to the table and how to integrate us into their plans,” Major Tula Recinos said.

“The buzz is real.”

Source: ADM

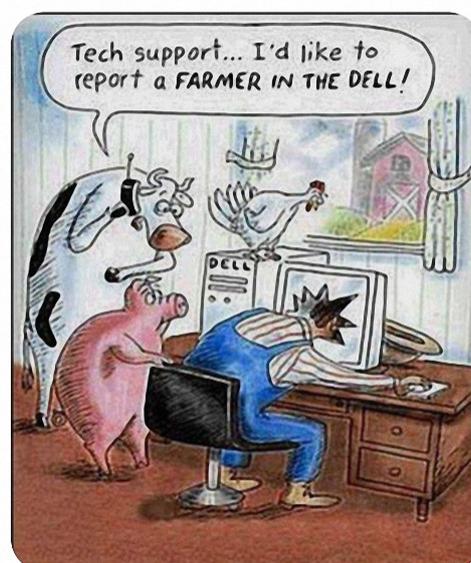
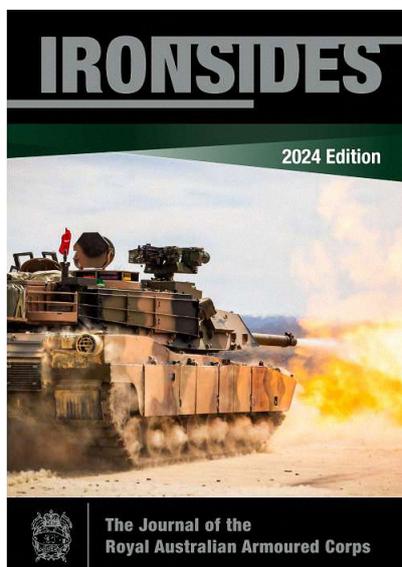
By Corporal Jacob Joseph | Defence | 7 July 2025

Image: Defence

2024 IRONSIDES link

Digital Ironsides can be found on the following site.

<https://ironside.partic.online/ironsides/2024-edition/responsive>



BAE SYSTEMS AUSTRALIA SUCCESSFULLY DEMONSTRATES ATLAS AUTONOMOUS TURRET LETHALITY



Australia's next-generation automated turret system, Vantage ATS, has successfully completed live-fire trials in Slovenia, demonstrating precision accuracy and validating its readiness for integration with autonomous land combat platforms.

The Vantage Automated Turret System (ATS), developed by BAE Systems Australia in collaboration with Valhalla Turrets of Slovenia, achieved tight shot groupings and successful target engagement at distances of up to 750 metres during recent testing. The trials were conducted as part of the Factory Acceptance Testing (FAT) process and were supported by the Slovenian Military.

According to Kisa Christensen, director of Integrated Defence and Autonomy Systems at BAE Systems Australia, the results exceeded expectations. "We've come away from this test firing knowing that the Vantage ATS fires accurately and performs exceedingly well," Christensen said. "This performance offers our customers a highly capable turret that can be integrated with a range of crewed and autonomous platforms, while also delivering lower acquisition costs through the adaptive re-use of legacy cannons already in service."

The live-fire trials capped off a staged testing process that began following Vantage's global debut at the Land Forces 2024 exhibition in Brisbane, where it was showcased alongside the ATLAS Combat Capability Vehicle (CCV).

The trials were conducted on a Slovenian Army Patria AMV, demonstrating the system's platform-agnostic design and suitability for both traditional and uncrewed vehicles. The Vantage ATS has been specifically optimised for operation on autonomous systems, featuring high levels of automation to align with advanced capabilities found in next-generation

land platforms like ATLAS CCV. It employs the 25mm M242 Bushmaster chain gun, allowing reuse of cannons from legacy vehicles such as the ASLAV and Bradley infantry fighting vehicle, significantly reducing costs and training burdens.

The turret also incorporates BAE Systems Australia's Multi-Spectral Automatic Target Detection, Tracking and Classification System (ATTCS) a passive system designed to reduce operator cognitive load, speed up engagement timelines and support one-operator-to-multiple-platform control concepts. "We've also seen the performance of Vantage successfully verified throughout the factory acceptance testing period," Christensen added.

Following the completion of FAT in May 2025, the turret is set to return to Australia for re-integration with the ATLAS CCV. Further dynamic vehicle testing and subsystem integration will support development of an increasingly autonomous and combat-ready system capable of taking on high-risk battlefield roles, such as direct fire support, combat reconnaissance, obstacle clearance and very short-range air defence.

With its modular design, scalable architecture and cutting-edge automation, the Vantage ATS represents a significant step in Australia's defence innovation efforts to equip future forces with intelligent, low-risk combat solutions particularly in the increasingly critical field of autonomous land systems.

Source: DEFENCE CONNECT

05 June 2025 By: Reporter



HOW UKRAINE IS IMPROVING M1A1 ABRAMS TANKS

Source: Defence Connect, 10 September 2025 | By: Robert Dougherty



US M1 Abrams tank operated by 47th Mechanized Brigade. Photo: Armed Forces of Ukraine

Ukrainian technicians are modifying Australian M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks with reactive armour blocks, frontal armour plating and rooftop steel cages in a fast-paced, at-war series of upgrades for the modern battlefield. Modified M1A1 Abrams have been seen with additional turret mesh-style and frontal plate-style armour in recent social media posts from Ukraine's 47th Mechanized Brigade. In addition, Ukrainian technicians have previously fitted other armoured vehicles with electronic warfare equipment, anti-drone "cages" on tank roof and engine compartments, as well as reactive armour elements such as Soviet-era Kontakt-1 explosive reactive armour (ERA) blocks. Thermal imaging has also been raised as a priority setting on the Ukrainian battlefield.

Stronger defensive upgrades for armoured vehicles are speculated to be a new requirement of modern warfare resulting from the proliferation of cheap, mass-produced surveillance and first-person view (FPV) kamikaze explosive drones. These drones have effectively created areas of no man's land in the conflict between Ukrainian and Russian forces where armoured vehicles are immediately identified by aerial reconnaissance drones, tasked to FPV drone operator units and considered as priority targets for destruction due to their larger military and filmed propaganda value. Both countries have also engaged in heavy use of anti-vehicle landmines, further limiting the use of conventional armoured vehicle tactics.

The Ukrainian unit has reportedly used similar armoured vehicles, such as US-made M1A1 Abrams tanks and Bradley infantry fighting vehicles in counter-attacks near the border town of Sudzha and in the Kursk region of Russia.

Australia originally donated more than 49 M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks, previously used by the Australian Army, as part of a \$245 million military assistance package and transferred to Ukraine with

assistance from Ukraine-based defence consultant JC Dodson. "The M1A1 Abrams tanks will make a significant contribution to Ukraine's ongoing fight against Russia's illegal and immoral invasion," Deputy Prime Minister Richard Marles said at the time. "I was pleased to meet the Australian Army personnel who helped facilitate the delivery of these tanks from Australia to Ukraine. "Australia remains steadfast in our support for Ukraine and seeing a just and lasting peace."

It has been speculated that Australian M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks have been deployed to the Ukrainian 425th Assault Regiment Skala, with the first delivery of armoured vehicles from Australia arriving in late July this year. Some of the Australian vehicles have reportedly been customised with new armour, AIM SA electronics fire control system, thermal imaging and communications equipment, as well as satellite navigation system, according to Militarnyi. The tanks have also reportedly been reconfigured to use diesel fuel instead of JP-8 aviation kerosene because use of diesel is standardised across armoured vehicles in the Ukrainian Army, the Ukrainian media outlet has stated online.

Final thoughts

The world has already seen the very public annihilation of columns of Russian armoured vehicles by drones, artillery and Javelin-guided missiles during the country's opening campaign towards Kyiv. Traditional armoured warfare tactics and equipment are being challenged in this new environment. Both sides of the conflict are now integrating the widespread use of active protection systems, caged armoured, ERA blocks and other counter-drone systems. It's clear that Australian Army-donated M1A1 Abrams main battle tanks are being prioritised and upgraded to protect against new targeted drone threats from above and landmines below.

Ukrainian forces have the most up-to-date battlefield experience using advanced main battles tanks in a modern combat scenario. Western nations, such as Australia, should be carefully monitoring and evaluating the ad hoc improvements being made to donated armoured vehicles. These changes seen in Ukraine can help inform our own military forces about tactics, equipment limitations and adversary systems that the Australian Defence Force could face in future.

In addition, modifications seen in Ukraine could be replicated, tested, refined and applied to Australia's new next-generation M1A2 SEPv3 Abrams main battle tanks.

TALISMAN SABRE: ADF TRIALS HEADSET-OPERATED M23D MINIGUN ON M113 APC



Australian Army soldier Lance Corporal Declan Bowditch from the 1st Armoured Regiment, performs maintenance on the M134D minigun remote weapon station attached to a modular robotic vehicle during Exercise Talisman Sabre at Townsville Field Training Area, Queensland, on 28 July 2025. Photo: LCPL Caitlyn Davill

Australian Army's Combat Experimentation Group trials use of headset-operated M23D minigun remote weapon stations on M113 armoured personnel carrier.

The 1st Armoured Regiment (1AR) transformed earlier this year to provide the Australian Army with a Combat Experimentation Group, designed to test and trial emerging technology to gain battlefield advantage. During Exercise Talisman Sabre, B Squadron from 1AR travelled from Adelaide to Townsville to test the Modular Robotic Vehicle with remote weapon stations and first-person view drones (FPVD) for the first time in a combat field environment.

The MRV currently uses an M113 Armoured Personnel Carrier (APC) as a "test bed", with 50-calibre machine guns or M23D minigun remote weapon stations attached. This technology allows soldiers to control the vehicle and weapon station using a remote control from up to 1,000 metres away. Similarly, FPVD are operated using a headset and hand controller.

Officer Commanding Major Tom Fisher said these drones could travel up to 20 kilometres from the operator, reaching speeds of up to 70 km/h with the ability to provide a strike function when weaponised with a payload. "It allows the warfighter to strike targets at range without placing themselves at risk," MAJ Fisher said. Embedding within the 3rd Brigade's Battlegroup Kapyong, the 1AR team and their new equipment were tested in a range of tactical scenarios, providing commanders with new opportunities on the battlefield. "Being able to implement the MRV and FPVD into a battlegroup, conducting tactical actions and seeing how other people would utilise the equipment is really exciting," MAJ

Fisher said. "The capability is quite early on, but looking to the future, this kind of capability can bring a heavy amount of firepower to bear without putting soldiers in harm's way, which is really promising."

Commanding Officer of the 3rd Battalion and Battlegroup Kapyong, Lieutenant Colonel Dan Ellis said testing the new technology was an opportunity to employ new tactics and enhance his soldiers' survivability. "Here we've been able to test how we fight with that technology which essentially reduces the risk to people," LTCOL Ellis said. "We don't have to put our soldiers in harm's way and it can also be employed to soak up the attention of the enemy while our people move forward." When new technology is delivered by Army Headquarters through the Army accelerated capability pipeline, 1AR conducts initial training and testing in Cultana Training Area, South Australia.

MAJ Fisher said the humid and undulating terrain of Townsville Field Training Area was in stark contrast to the dry plains of Cultana, which allowed his team to challenge the technology and push it to its limits. "Because of the way the vehicles communicate to each other, performance is very terrain-dependent, so we are experiencing some difficulties with terrain in Townsville that is quite vegetated," he said. "However, as with all experimentation, even if you have a failure, it's still a win, because you know the limitations of the equipment." Members of the regiment also deployed to Shoalwater Bay Training Area during Exercise Talisman Sabre to test uncrewed ground vehicles and hyper teaming drones.

On return to Adelaide, 1AR will evaluate how the equipment performed and whether it will progress to implementation across the wider Army.

Source: DEFENCE CONNECT

01 August 2025 By: Robert Dougherty

Never hint to a printer that you're in a rush. Those bastards smell fear.

H2HFW (NOMAD MK4) KNIFE



Zu Bladeworx Australia has confirmed the successful rolling out of the Hand-to-Hand Fighting Weapons System to the Australian Defence Force under the LAND 300 Lethality Project. The defence contractor, manufacturing the H2HFW (Nomad Mk4) Knife for the Australian Army and the Commonwealth of Australia, is contracted by NIOA to complete the delivery under the Commonwealth Land 159 Lethality Program.

Zu Bladeworx has also completed a battalion level contract for 1RAR and the School of Infantry. “After working on this product for the last three years, it is fantastic to see the knives making their way to the end user, Australian warfighters,” Bladeworx founder Matt Lucarnus said. “It has been a long road for us, in addition to manufacturing the knives, we have also worked with NIOA and the Commonwealth to manage the quality assurance, codification, distribution and final acceptance of the pieces. “It fills us with immense pride to see something that we have created with great care being issued to our soldiers. Our soldiers will now have access to a true Australian-made tertiary weapon system that they can depend on.”

Lucarnus confirmed the weapon system has a number of innovative features, such as a ring to allow the user to retain the knife if their hand is open. “The product will perform exceptionally well and is 100 per cent fit for purpose. From what I understand, ADF personnel have begun adapting their training to focus on close quarter combat and light weight, high speed work,” he said. “The H2HFW is a lightweight, high-performance knife designed around the needs of the modern soldier. It is also highly robust, as it is manufactured using technology seen in aerospace and high-performance car manufacturing. This process is known as billet machining where a block of material is machined to remove all the material that is not required, leaving a solid single piece of steel that

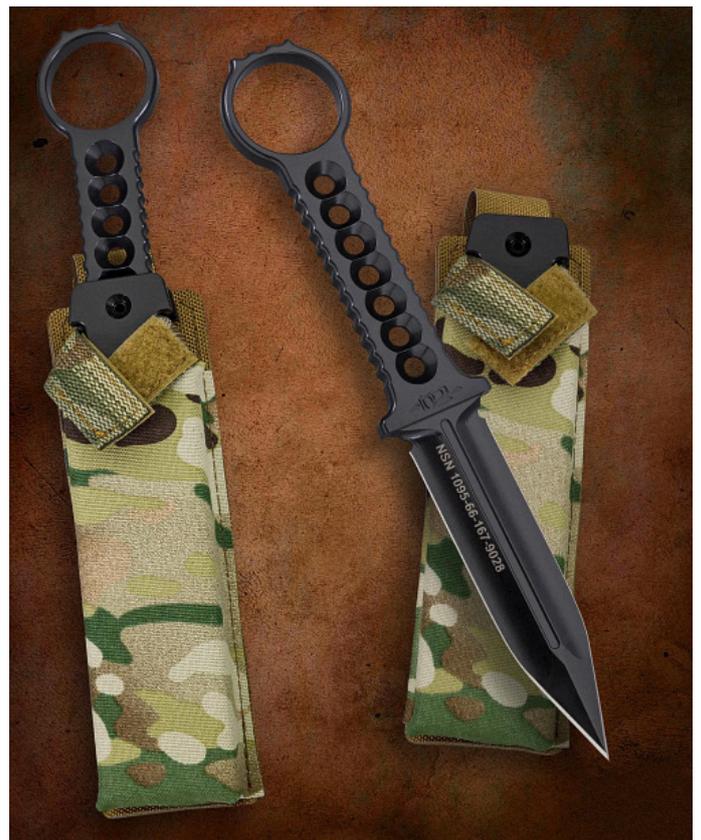
includes the blade and handle, which is quite a unique way of making knives.

“An example of this manufacturing is seen in race car engines where the camshafts are billet machined to make a stronger camshaft. After machining, the H2HFW is hardened in a furnace to 970 degrees C and then double tempered. Following that it is coated in a ceramic coating normally reserved for firearms (Cerakote). The final process is individual sharpening on custom knife grinding machines. All these processes are completed in Queensland.”

The Capability Acquisition and Sustainment Group, Army, and NIOA have successfully collaborated to achieve rollout for the Hand-to-Hand Fighting Weapons System under the LAND 300 Lethality Project, according to NIOA, and these systems will now be deployed to user units. “At present, our focus is on production for the ADF. We are three years into the LAND 300 contract, which is still ongoing, however, we are exploring export opportunities,” Lucarnus said.

“We are in early discussions with key stakeholders from a few Australian

Source: 17 July 2025 By: Robert Dougherty



2025 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Date/Time	Event	Location	Organised By / Remarks
31 Oct 0900-1300 (Fri)	Tibby Cotter Memorial Cricket Match	Brookfield Oval	Unit / SB
08 Nov (Sat)	Black Hat BBQ & Drinks	41 Club	CO / Committee
04 Dec 1230 (Thurs)	Dine Out CO, RSM & HON COL	United Service Club	Secretary
11 Dec 1500 (Thurs)	Management Committee Mtg and Xmas Drinks	Legacy House Drinks loc tba	President / Secretary
12 Dec (TBC)	Regt end of year Parade	Unit	Unit / SB
2025 DATE TBA	RHEINMETALL TOUR	Redbank	RDA / Committee
NOTES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ad hoc catch-up coffees: see details on our social media pages • Ad hoc bike rides and 4WD days: see details on our social media pages 		
SOCIAL MEDIA	2/14 FB: 2/14 LHR Association and Black Hats FB: Black Hats North Side Brisbane		

BLANK CHEQUE

A PLAY BY ASSOCIATION MEMBER BRETT LANE

“Powerful” / “Thought-provoking” / “The CGS needs to see this” / “This should be turned into a film and shown far & wide.”

These were just some of the responses to Blank Cheque, a dramatic one-act play, written by Brett Lane, exploring the struggle of PTSD and the lasting impact of military training. The performance opened to a packed house - actually, overpacked! Extra chairs were being dragged in as the curtains rose.

Set during a regular coffee catch-up, the play is inspired by real people and true stories. It begins with light-hearted humour before, a retelling of a forgotten battle, before gradually building toward an emotional crescendo—fictionalised, but grounded in truth. A chair is thrown. Coffee is spilled. So are tears.

With an audience made up of around 40% veterans, many found the story deeply resonant. Some of the real-life inspirations were present on the night and stayed afterwards to speak with the actors who portrayed them.

Blank Cheque reminded us that behind the uniform is a human story—one that demands to be heard. One that reminds us that we all signed a blank cheque, whether we deployed or not.

EDITOR – The play was performed at the Mousetrap Theatre, Redcliffe on Saturday 12 July 2025.



NOMINAL ROLL SEPTEMBER 2025

SURNAME	CHRISTIAN NAME(S)	SURNAME	CHRISTIAN NAME(S)	SURNAME	CHRISTIAN NAME(S)
APPLEBY	GORDON MALCOLM	ERIKSEN	JAMES ROBERT GEORGE	MCQUILLAN	MATTHEW
BALKIN	RODNEY JOHN	FALLEN	STAFFORD ERNEST	MEECHAM	MAURICE WILLIAM
BARHAM	ANDREW	FARMER	MILES WILMOT	MEYER-GLEAVES	PIERRE
BARLOW	PETER GEOFFREY	FAY	BOYD JAMES	METRIKAS	DAVID
BARTHOLOMEW	COLIN EDWARD	FERGUSON	BRUCE MACMILLAN	MILLAR	GARRY DAVID
BEAUCHAMP	PETER	FINLAY	ROBERT GRAYDEN	MILLER	TALAN BENJAMIN
BELL	PAUL JAMES	FLOOD	ALAN	MOLLER	PETER NEVILLE
BIRBECK	IAN WILLIAM	FLYNN	TREVOR	MORRIS	KEITH EDWARD
BIRD	RICHARD	GALLAGHER	CHRISTOPHER	MOYNIHAN	JEREMY
BIRD	STEPHEN RALPH	GAUDRON	DARRYL CLIVE	MURDOCH	GLYNN PATRICK
BISHOP	JOHN THOMAS	GIBB	ROSLYN RAE	MYERS	GREGORY FRANCIS
BLYTH	COLIN ROBERT	GIBB	MALCOLM	NOBES	ANTHONY JOHN
BORDUJENKO	GLENN MICHAEL	GILL	GEOFFREY BURTON	NOFFKE	SELWYN GEORGE
BRETT	FREDRICK	GOMERSALL	ROSS LAWRENCE	O'DONNELL	MICHAEL MELLIN
BREWER	MARK	GRIFFITHS	TREVOR	O'GORMAN	PETER DARMID
BRIDGEMAN	DARRYL ROBERT	HARBOUR	JUSTIN SCOTT	O'BRIEN	GEOFFREY VINCENT
BROADBENT	DAVID GEOFFREY	HARDY	SIMON DESMOND	O'ROURKE	THOMAS JAMES
BROOKES	DANIEL	HATFIELD	BRIAN JOHN	OVENDEN	ROBERT GEORGE
BROWN	DARREN	HAYDEN	CHRIS	PATULLO	RODNEY DAVID
BROWN	CHARLES FRANCIS GEOFFREY	HAYES	BERNARD JAMES	PEAKE	GREGORY JOHN
BROWN	GRAEME RODNEY	HENDERSON	ANDREW	PEPPER	JOHN EDWARD
BROWN	JASON BOURKE	HENSLER	JOHN	PHILLIPS	KENNETH ROY
BROWN	DIANE LESLEY	HERBERT	JOHN PAUL	PITCHER	GREG JOHN
BROWN	GEORGE	HERMANN	BRUCE RONALD	POOLE	ROBERT GEORGE
BUNKER	COLIN LESLIE	HICKEY	LUKE PETER	PORTER	STEPHEN
BURFORD	MATTHEW THOMAS	HOHN	ROD JAMES	PROUDFOOT	PETER CAMERON
BURKE	ANTHONY JOSEPH	HOLDEN	PETER DAMIEN	QUALISCHEFSKI	GEOFFREY LLOYD
BURLEY	SHAYNE	HOLDER	GARY JAMES	REDDAN	IAN LAURENCE
BURNELL	JEFF	HOLDER	WENDY ANN	REWKO	PETER MICHAEL
BURNS	CHRISTOPHER MARK	HOLLAND	CORY DARRYL KENNY	ROCHE	MICHAEL JAMES
BURROWS	GRAEME JAMES	IZATT	DAVID JOHN	RUSHBY	PETER ROY
CASHIN	DANIEL GRAHAM	JACKWITZ	KEVIN HERMANN	RUSSELL	GEOFFREY ALAN
CATTS	ADELE	JARDINE-VIDGEN	GRAHAME LASCELLES	SALMON	STEVEN GARY
CHALMERS	DAVID HUGH	JENSSEN	ERIK JOHN	SARGENT	DARREN
CHAPMAN	ROBERT GEORGE	JOHNS	ALEXANDER FRANCIS	SCAYSBROOK	JASON
CHAPPEL	DEAN	JORDAN	BON BARRY	SCHMIDT	DARRYL EDWARD
CHAPPEL	KAREN	JORDAN	RAY	SCHURR	JASON DAVID
CHETCUTI	WAYNE	KEARNES	JOHN SUMMER	SHEPHERD	KEITH EDWARD PATRICK
CHILDS	THOMAS EDWARD	KEENAN	PATRICK	SINCLAIR	TERRY ANDREW
CHIVERS	ALEXANDER FRANCIS	KENNEDY	MICHAEL DAMIEN	SPATARO	GIUAEPPE
CLARKE	BRADLEY ALLEN	LANE	BRETT	STEPHENS	CHRIS
CLEGG	ANDREW	LANE	RICKEY JOHN	STEWART	TIMOTHY JAMES
CLEMENT	JAMES ANTHONY	LANG	RODNEY IAN	STOCKS	ANDREW MARK
COKLEY	TERENCE PATRICK	LAWLER	PHILIP GEOFFREY	STRICKLAND	MARK
COLEMAN	PAUL MCKENZIE	LEGGETT	JOHN	SULLIVAN	RUSSELL LEONARD
COUGHLIN	JOAN MARY	LESLIE	DEREK PETER	SURNAME	CHRISTIAN NAMES
COX	NIGEL BRENDON	LILLIEBRIDGE	PHILLIP	THWAITE	MAURICE HENRY
CRAWFORD	SCOTT MCIVOR	LILLIEBRIDGE	PRISCILLA ELLEN	VONK	ROBERT WILLIAM
CROMBIE	DONALD SUTHERLAND	LITKOWITZ	TERRY DON	WADESON	ANTHONY
CROSS	WILLIAM PATRICK	LOWE	TREVOR	WAIT	GARRY JOHN
CROSSLEY	MICHAEL	LUCAS	SHANE	WALTON	KELLY
DABROWSKI	MICHAEL PATRICK	LUNT	ANTHONY	WAYCOTT	WILLIAM GRANT
DEVRELL	CHRISTOPHER BRIAN	MAGILL	KIERAN ANTHONY	WEAR	RUSSELL BARRY
DICKSON	FRANK ERIC	MARKS	CHRISTOPHER ROSS	WEBSDANE	CHRISTOPHER ANDREW
DIMMICK	GORDON JAMES	MARTIN	MICHAEL	WHITEMAN	CRAIG
DODD	ROY ANTHONY	MARTIN	ROBERT BRUCE	WILCOX	DARREN ANDREW
DUFF	IAIN A	MCCROHAN	SCOTT ANDREW	WILDING	STEVEN JAMES
DUNN	TIMOTHY JOHN	MCDONALD	GLENN ANDREW	WILLIAMS	PETER
EFSTATHIS	VLASIS	MCDONALD	WILLIAM JOHN	WILLIAMS	GREGORY ALAN
EHRICH	GRAHAM	MCMILLAN	ALEXANDER DAVID	WILSON	DARRYL
ELWELL	LEONARD JOHN	MCNAMARA	GRAHAM LAWRENCE	WILSON	JOHN ARTHUR WILLIAM