

CO 5 RAR'S REPORT – JULY 2020

Tigers,

The Battalion has been busy since the last edition of *Tiger Tales*, despite the challenges of COVID-19 that we are all sharing. Many of our plans and activities were modified, postponed, and only cancelled where absolutely necessary. I'm confident that Bravo Company conducted the last live fire section attack before the country locked down. The most significant imposition has obviously been on our people, particularly the inability to visit partners, family, and friends outside of the Northern Territory. Our Soldiers continue to take this in their stride but I know are as keen to travel as many of the Association members will be to travel to Darwin.

This last period has seen the conclusion of Australia's training mission at the Taji Military Complex in Iraq. 47,000 Iraqi Security Forces were trained by the ADF since 2015. The conclusion of this mission also saw the return of Tiger Battalion members from Task Group Taji X (TGT-X) in the midst of the COVID-19 lockdown. Domestically, the Battalion was tasked to support the Northern Territory Government's response to the pandemic. This mission saw members of the Battalion, working alongside state and federal law enforcement, NT Government Officials, Royal Australian Navy, and Royal Australian Air Force partners. The Battalion based in Darwin, operated a forward element in Alice Springs, and had teams from Kulgera to Tennant Creek, and from Tanami to the Queensland border. These teams were primarily from Delta Coy who had only recently returned from Afghanistan and completed their mandatory quarantine. Concurrently members of Bravo Company stood firm in Malaysia completing the 129th Rotation of Rifle Company (RCB) Butterworth. Most recently we deployed members including the leadership team for RCB 130. Throughout this time Charlie Coy has maintained their role in Afghanistan as Force Protection Element-13. This has been a unique operational experience for which they have continually risen to the challenge and strongly represented the Tiger reputation. Logistics Company deserves a special mention for their efforts over the last six months. In addition to supporting each and every activity, exercise, or operation above, they have diligently attacked a multi-year backlog of administration and trade hours. The Battalion is well postured to continue training and operations thanks to their ongoing hard work.



From Monday 08th June – Friday 12 June, the Battalion commemorated the Battle of Binh Ba in a series of regimental, social, and professional development activities. By all accounts a successful and enjoyable series of activities, our aim is to maintain this Binh Ba “week” approach, refining the events each year. As well as including sporting events we aim to invite our Veteran community to future years – without interstate travel restrictions! The week commenced with unveiling brass plaques at St Mary's Cathedral, depicting the role and history of the Battalion's layed up Colours. The enlistment of Quintus Durga was a milestone event for the Battalion for which the covering article of this *Tiger Tales* provides more detail. WO2 Critchley, LT Ede-Jones, and LT Mychael all developed an outstanding historical presentation and professional development discussion that linked the actions at Binh Ba with combined arms warfare and the future of land combat. The week culminated with a commemorative service and Battalion social event coordinated by the Padre, Chaplain Ricky Su and the Junior Leaders Committee President, CPL Mitch Howden respectively.

The Binh Ba week would not have proceeded without the incredible efforts of our RSM, WO1 Rob Munro. I am delighted to confirm that he has been selected for Tier advancement within our Senior Enlisted ranks and will be appointed as the RAINF Corps RSM in 2021. This significant career milestone reflects his commitment to the RAR and his clear potential for future service at this higher echelon of Army.

CPL Mitch Howden, CPL Max McCullough, and the Junior Leaders Committee have refreshed and revitalised the Battalion Museum, Coffee Shop, and Gary Holmes Club. With more opportunities to come, the efforts of this leadership team is commendable. I hope our Veteran community are able to visit the Battalion as restrictions leave and take the opportunity. If you are coming to Darwin and would like to visit the Museum, please email 5rar.welfare@defence.gov.au with your available dates and one of the team will get back to you with arrangements. We'll do our best to arrange security requirements wherever we can, however please accept my apologies if we are unable to support at your preferred time.

Where to from here? Over the coming months the Battalion will be conducting the inaugural *Kennedy Cup*, a Battalion Section Competition, *Ex Tigers Run*, a Battalion field exercise, and *Ex Koolandong*, a bilateral combined arms training activity with the Marine Rotational Force-Darwin. Concurrently we will be focused on Support Company and promotion courses, Logistics Company integration across the Brigade on *Ex Buffalo Run*, and with a strong likelihood of some Jungle Training for D Coy. Unfortunately, and notwithstanding the preparations of a passionate team of volunteers training for the Duke of Gloucester (DoG) Cup, the event will not go ahead this year. We expect a strong representation at the 2021 event. I look forward to updating you on this and more in the next edition

Duty First,

LTCOL Matthew Dirago