

CHARLIE COMPANY DECEMBER 2021

In recent times, the geopolitical climate and regional instability have highlighted the Australian Army's need to enhance its amphibious capability to the Indo-Pacific region in order to increase force projection and provide humanitarian and disaster relief to the neighbouring region. In response to this, personnel from Charlie Company, 5th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (5 RAR) with two attachments from Logistics Company and two NCOs from 16th Battalion, Royal West Australian Regiment undertook the Advanced Small Craft Operator (ASCO) Course delivered by personnel from the 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (Amphibious).



The three photographs depict C Coy putting their ASCO qualified soldiers to work in Darwin Harbour.

utilise an amphibious capability in a littoral manoeuvre environment between sea and land as part of a Pre Landing Force. Members of Charlie Company, 5 RAR were instructed on how to utilise equipment and apparatus such as the Zodiac Craft to conduct beach landings, swim approaches, surf negotiation, riverine patrolling and other skill sets which allowed them to gain a clear understanding of beach approaches via craft or

swimmers, surveying the beach itself and the exits from the beach with a crew, allowing command further appreciation of the potential risks associated with committing forces to an amphibious or littoral operation.

The course culminated with full mission profiles, which saw one group travel to Caloundra driving through the sea way under Binocular Night Vision Devices (BNVD), inserting a recon team 1 km from the beach to swim in. Special mention to CPL Smith and LCPL Muhleisen who discovered the particular difficulties of surf negotiation while conducting a beach extraction, a rogue wave flipped their craft, tossed them into the surf and flooded the outboard, ending the swim team's hope for extraction.



The ASCO Course overall was a great success in terms of developing 5 RAR's operational capability but also for soldiers to enhance their skill sets and develop them for Australia's needs in the future.

PTE Jackson Lucas