

DELTA COMPANY

CHQ

On 24 June 19 the soldiers and officers of Delta Company stepped into the future, or at least what felt like the future. It was on this day that the gates to the Equipment Mounting Facility (EMF), a facility owned by Joint Logistics Unit - North (JLU-N), swung open and signalled the start of the Mission Specific Training (MST) A vast change from the circa 2003 hangars of 5 RAR, the EMF is a well-crafted building complex with modern technical equipment and space to effectively train the soldiers. Over the coming month, it would see everything from urban clearances with paint simunition, rapid vehicle crossover drills and hand to hand combat. This will pave the road for Delta Company to deploy on Operation HIGHROAD in Afghanistan.

However, in keeping with other fine Army traditions this adventure started like all good Defence-sponsored activities, with paperwork.. a monumental amount of paperwork, with an even larger amount of staff hours. But those of Delta Company are resilient and after the onslaught of webforms and many 'resubmits', it was onto the nuts and bolts.

Enter – Paul Cale and his crew from Kinetic Fighting

Paul kicked down the door to the EMF and signalled the start of the Mission Specific Training (MST) phase and with it came 'The Bullring of Optimal Combat Behaviours' (Named by 2IC D COY CAPT B Dorland). Over the next month, Delta Company would cycle through the following areas of training: Tactical Care of the Combat Casualty [a course designed to train soldiers to administer high level first aid from the point of injury in a kinetic situation], Infantry Combat Behaviours – Tactical [a course designed by Kinetic Fighting], advanced medical



training for the Combat First Aiders (CFA), lessons on how to operate the lifesaving Electronic Counter Measures (ECM) and range practices on weapon systems including; 9mm close quarters shooting, EF88 combat shooting, HK417, MAG 58 and live fire Guardian Angel (GA) drills [similar to close personal protection drills]

The highlight was undoubtedly the first-class training Delivered by Paul and his team. Made up of Ex-Special forces soldiers and enablers and Police officers from Tactical Response backgrounds, they ran through a curriculum based off experiences and knowledge gained over years of Kinetic and non-kinetic operations across the globe. This saw the soldiers trained in: Combat shooting and the combat mindset, tactical vehicle drills, GA drills, close quarters combat both hand to hand and with a pistol and the single most important self-defence technique known to man – The Aussie Rack – a manoeuvre so fierce it would be impossible to describe it too you.

Many bruises and 90,000 rounds (Thanks SGT Buckley) down range later saw us at the final hurdle, the Mission Readiness Exercise (MRE). The brainchild of OC Delta Company and a fly away team from The 1st Division (with their shiny Defence credit card). After four days of driving around Darwin between Defence bases, dealing with IEDs and reacting to deteriorating situations as the Quick Reaction Force (QRF) Delta Company was officially signed off and ready to deploy overseas.



Delta Coy flag flies over AMAB, Dubai.

Tears and Cheers

Much like the scene from "We Were Soldiers" at 2300 on the 13th of August, from out of the darkness surrounding Darwin Airport walked 140 odd members of Delta Company. Some by themselves, others accompanied by silent loved ones come to say their goodbyes. It was a mixture of excitement, sadness and wonderment of the unknown but strengthened by the support of so many partners, family members and fellow 5 RAR members, early the next morning we boarded the flight to

Al Minhad Air Base (AMAB), Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

Red flying over AMAB

AMAB was a whirlwind of further mandatory training and briefs, with the only salvation coming in the form of the coffee shop 'Bean Around the MEAO' and the Camp Baird Mess Wrap Bar. But still the tired and weary soldiers and officers of Delta Company pushed on, waking up every day to a morale inspiring sight.

After our quick stop over in AMAB it was finally time for our last plane ride into Afghanistan, where our journey would really begin.

Landing in Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA), Kabul, we were greeted by the Commander of Task Group Afghanistan who proudly presented us with our Task Group Afghanistan Resolute Support patches, a symbol of our commitment to the NATO-led mission. However, this would be the last time that all of Delta Company would be together, with each respective Platoon moving off in their separate direction to start their new jobs supporting Australia's National interests and showing off the immense capability that 5 RAR has to offer.

We have all now settled into our individual roles around Kabul with soldiers positioned in HKIA, Resolute Support Headquarters (RS HQ) and at Camp Qargha (A combined British and Australian Company structure) By all accounts we are representing 5 RAR to the highest standard, our OC MAJ Evangelidis has (self-professed) won the battle at least twice. The CSM, WO2 Kelly has transited across Kabul more times than the Russians and he would want you to believe that it is to see the soldiers, however some say he is on a hunt for the best brew in Afghanistan.



But the trip hasn't been without hardship. We've lost good friends to illness, who have unfortunately had to return to country. We've come to learn that the ever-changing nature of conflict can affect us in unpredictable ways, highlighted best by the loss of our Relief Out of Country Leave (ROCL) relief team; soldiers that won't get the chance to represent 5 RAR overseas.

Above all, be assured that the soldiers and officers of Delta Company of 5 RAR are here, giving everything, to ensure that the reputation of The Tiger Battalion is known across Afghanistan as one of Respect, Professionalism and the highest order of soldier skills.

LT T Mychael