

SUPPORT COMPANY – April 2022



Mortars

The waning months of 2021 saw Mortar Platoon conduct Basic Mortar Course (BMC). The course involved intense PT to test the group's ability to work under fatigue whilst conducting crash actions throughout Robertson Barracks with the intent of creating a strong group bond through hard training. The BMC qualified participants on the 81mm Mortar with ancillaries and the M32 Ballistic Computer. The course culminated with a field phase at Bradshaw Field Training Area (BFTA) conducting live fire missions and fire plans with HE, smoke and illumination rounds. The Platoon also fired in support of Delta COY during EX KOOLENDONG. The final part of the year had Mortar PL providing soldiers in support of OP COVID ASSIST at multiple locations Australia-wide and the remainder of the Platoon conducting training in preparation for a busy 2022. Mortar Platoon remains motivated and excited for the opportunities that 2022 presents, with increased live fire and field training seeming plentiful.

CAPT Hayden Murphy, Mortar PLCOMD

81mm mortar fired in support of Delta Coy's attack during the Bradshaw campaign.

DFSW

With a new PHQ command team of LT Ireland and SGT Grieve, DFSW PL started 2022 by integrating old with new and ensuring everyone was set to progress beyond our baseline standard. PMV course, Sub 2 and various readiness requirements meant that distractions and obstacles were abundant, however this did not deter the section commanders from grabbing all present diggers and heading out to train both in our specialist role and basic rifleman skills.

After taking the SFMG Kit out for some PT, the first real training was tank stalks with the 84mm Carl Gustav, using the brand new M4 variants. The soldiers went over to the CTA's glorious mud and overflowing creeks, a section at a time patrolling in, taking aim and simulating an engagement on enemy armour. The boys enjoyed getting back into the tactical mindset and testing out the head and shoulders camouflage which had been laboriously built over the previous weeks.

Thereafter, we practiced Javelin Observation Posts (OP). After some theory work and section SOP development, 64A, 64C and 64E went out the back of Robertson Barracks and practised the clandestine infiltration, setting up and conduct of an aggressive Javelin OP. These skills will hopefully be tested during the 1 BDE Warfighter later in the year.

Next on the cards for 64 is upskilling the unit in the M4 84mm, supporting the field phase of Sub 2 Corporal and continuing to train and achieve ATL3 in preparation for Ex TIGERS RUN.

LT Joshua Ireland, DFSW PLCOMD



64 in the CTA conducting tank stalks with the M4 84mm Carl Gustav.

Recon, Snipers

'Time spent in reconnaissance is seldom wasted'

RSS PL closed 2021 with a bang, conducting live Emergency Close Air Support (ECAS) with our Joint Fire Team brethren at 8/12 Regiment, with support from 1 AVN. The serials included kinetic strikes as well as simulated Casualty Evacuation prior to commencing with live fire strike. As 8/12 REGT closed their range, Recon was allocated extra ammunition supply to call in artillery and rockets.

The platoon reconsolidated after the end of year break, with training commencing for 2022 in Feb with the main effort of ensuring Unmanned Aircraft System currency across the battalion. Patrols made use of the early weeks of the year conducting team shakeouts in the Close Training Area, prior to the majority of Junior NCOs going on Advanced Reconnaissance Course, or Sniper Team Leaders course in March. Several diggers from the platoon will conduct promotional courses, as well as various driver courses. If all goes to plan, our gigantic platoon will soon have more than 20 detachments.

Reconnaissance platoon will now concentrate on developing skills and proficiency on key equipment in our lead up to patrol and sniper team training, as well as making use of the Tigers den non-lethal training ammunition activities to maintain infantry urban fighting skills. The emphasis on using equipment will never shadow the basic skills of a reconnaissance patrolman. Marking form up points, conducting point target reconnaissance, and occupying Observation Posts will never go out of style, therefore these skills will always be a significant portion of weekly training. Our focus for the year platoon Reconnaissance operations, allowing us to support multiple companies and provide patrols to answer information requirements on behalf of manoeuvre commanders simultaneously prior to EX TIGERS RUN.

LT Andrew Farrands, RSS PLCOMD



Sniper cell conducting night operations in the depths of the Mount Bunday Training Area.

Signals

2022 has kicked off swiftly, with Signal Platoon embracing a philosophy of “*soldier first, sig second*”. With an emphasis on balancing training between the technical and the tactical, we’ve started the year with familiarisation training, focussing initially on VHF communications, then moving onto UHF and HF means. With the baseline now set, training is shifting towards developing a resilient communications capability. While the plan may not survive first contact, comms will. To that end, Signal Platoon is building up to a series of activities, both independently and in support of the battalion. A navigation exercise will test individual fieldcraft, as well as each soldier’s ability to establish and flexibly employ a variety of equipment in challenging environments. Meanwhile, command post exercises will test how the platoon performs as a team, building from controlled environments to the chaotic.

It’s not all waveforms and rainbows. PT has started with a vengeance, and despite the introduction of a PT shirt for every emission control (EMCON) state, while we may train with sigs, we don’t train *like* sigs. Our fitness regime was a post-Christmas shock for many including the new platoon commander. Sig platoon has been shooting every week, with soldiers spread between courses, international cooperation and domestic operations, it truly has been a busy start to 2022. The next step is to see how well our Weapon Training Simulation System (WTSS) prowess translates to our first long range HF broadcast – although the targets may be a few thousand kilometres further away. There’s a lot to look forward to from Signal Platoon—stay tuned!

LT William Petersen, Signal PLCOMD