

SUPPORT COMPANY DECEMBER 2021

Direct Fire Support Weapons (DFSW) Platoon



DFSW Platoon with MRF-D CAAT Red/Blue at MBTA.

As you are all aware it was a very busy year for the Heavy Hitters of the 5th Battalion. Following the success of Ex Tigers walk, DFSW Platoon was quickly re-tasked to Quick Reaction Capability Display Platoon. Callsign I64 conducted themselves to a very high standard as always, taking part

in numerous displays for ADF Cadets, Army Indigenous Youth and even the Prime Minister. The word had got around quickly and 1 Aviation had got wind of our talents, which led to I64 being special guests to 1 Aviation Regiment (1 AVN) capability display. Because of DFSW Platoon's outstanding efforts during the display, it paved the way for future training activities, such as Close Air Support (CAS) live serials with the ARH Tiger helicopter and other aviation assets.

By May, DFSW Platoon welcomed Combined Anti-Armour Team (CAAT) Red/Blue from Marine Rotational Force-Darwin (MRF-D). Over the following months, DFSW Platoon and the MRF-D CAAT had formed a great bond which led to combined training and a competitive rivalry in all aspects of machine gunnery, physical training, drinking Australian beers and golf. Our time with the MRF-D CAAT culminated with a maximum fire power display with CAAT Red and elements from DFSW Platoon at Mount Bundy during Ex SOUTHERN JACKAROO.

What followed was the entry to a black hole of pre-course planning and booking, which saw DFSW Platoon at full steam ahead, conducting the DFSW Basic Course in Bradshaw Field Training Area. After 147,000 rounds of 7.62mm, 25,000 rounds of 12.7mm, 1580 rounds of 40mm link, a misfired Javelin Launch Tube Assembly and the crowd favourite 84mm Practice rounds, the platoon had qualified 28 soldiers from 5 and 7 RAR in the art of Anti-Armour and Direct Fires.



The DFSW Basic Course firing the .50 Cal HMG.

The last few months of 2021 saw DFSW Platoon supporting Ex WIRRA JAYA with the Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Darat (TNI-AD), as well as sending most of our members off for Promotion courses and postings for the New Year. The platoon has, however, welcomed new faces to the ranks in preparation for 2022. I64 Out.

LT Bill Tilly

Mortar Platoon



Mortar Platoon Conducting Battle PT on a Friday morning.

2021 was the year of live firing and, true to the company name, supporting every task the unit could throw at us. The beginning of the year saw Mortar Platoon support the 4 SQN RAAF Joint Terminal Attack Controller (JTAC) Course, supporting the ADF's newest JTACs co-ordinate indirect fire and attack aviation in

a stunning display of firepower, yet perhaps more stunning, there were no transfers to the RAAF afterwards. The middle of the year saw the traditional bi-yearly pilgrimage to Mount Bunday for Ex TIGERS WALK, which consolidated the platoons live fire training, and also allowed the platoon to conduct live fire with 103 BTY, 8/12 Medium Regiment, in support of troops. The use of the range by the Marine Air Combat Element allowed for a unique opportunity for Mortar Platoon to co-ordinate fires onto a target that was being called in by the Cobra pilots through an MFC.

The year also saw the conduct of the 2021 Basic Mortar Course. The live fire stages of the course saw Mortar Platoon provide fire support for EX KOOLENDONG, and trainees test their skills utilising live rounds. Special mention goes to PTE Shae Egan, who was awarded Student of Merit for the course.



Platoon preparing a baseplate location.

All this live-fire training in 2021 gave the Platoon access to an unprecedented number of live bombs in an attempt to flatten Mount Bunday and Bradshaw training areas once and for all. While the Platoon gave it their best shot, there still remains a few mounds of dirt to use as targets for next year. While 2022 looks to be a challenging year, I am fully confident the Platoon will handle it with ease. Effective Fast Fire (EFF).

LT Jonathon Doble

Signals Platoon

2021 has been a busier year than most for the signals specialists of 5 RAR, who have enabled Battalion communications for every exercise this year without fail. This support has included integration with US Marine Corps and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) elements on exercises SOUTHERN JACKAROO and KOOLENDONG, where trying conditions, inter-operability hurdles and logistical challenges tested the professional and emotional capacity of SIG Platoon members, to admirable success.

The rapid evolution of signals technology and cryptographic best-practice has demanded consistent adaptability from the Platoon, refreshing signals fundamentals has occurred apace with upskilling on new platforms including the TKL cryptology device and the 117G radio, while the short-notice retirement of the Battle Management System required Command Post detachments to refine low-tech means of battlefield tracking. Concurrently to this was the platoons' delivery of multiple Basic and Specialist Combat Communications course packages throughout the year; increasing foundational signals knowledge and capability across the rifle companies and enabling greater independent action.

As 2022 approaches and 5 RAR extends its manoeuvre footprint to the northern waters and far-south training grounds of the Territory, sustaining Battalion Command and Control will present new difficulties to overcome and opportunities to seize, challenges that Signals Platoon is well-postured to meet.

LT Tom Bellamy

RS Platoon

Reconnaissance and Sniping Platoon has had a busy year in barracks and the field. Throughout the year the Platoons attended the one BN Reconnaissance Officer/NCO course, two Specialist Combat Communications Course, one Patrol Persistent

Surveillance System course, one Image Capture and Transfer Course and conducted a Basic Reconnaissance Course qualifying 28 new patrolman from across 5 RAR, 1 Combat Engineer Regiment, 8/12 Regiment RAA and the USMC. The Platoon was heavily focused on Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) operations conducting four Black Hornet and 3 WASP (both UAS's) qualification courses to reinvigorate the Battalion's UAS operations into 2022.



LCPL Malcom Davis firing the AMR 50 Cal AW50F on Tigers Walk.

In addition to completing a Basic Sniping Course qualifying 8 new Snipers, the Sniper Cell worked to introduce new equipment such as CPL Dunwoodies' Sniper Mobility Platform, CPL O'Neil's Hog Saddles and new Ballistic Computers and CPL Murray's enduring work on IT systems and training.



Recon Snipers Platoon celebrating the conclusion of Tigers Walk.

The platoon supported all exercises conducted by 5 RAR in 2021. The Platoon ran ranges and were roll-players during EX TIGERS CRAWL. Under the astute leadership of CPL McCulloch and LCPL Lique, 63A won the Kennedy's Cup. On EX TIGERS WALK the Platoon for the first time in a number of years conducted break contacts by night and cross-pollinated

Sniper Weapons Qualifications across the Platoon. Snipers conducted specific training with our international allies the USMC and JGSDF on EX SOUTHERN JACKAROO whilst 63B and 63C lead by CPL's Harmey and Frieser integrated with D COY, 5 RAR and the USMC, Air Combat Element on EX KOOLENDONG 2021. 63C under the leadership of LCPL Lique conducted successful air-mobile and ground operations attached to V3, 1 Armoured Regiment, most notably identifying opposition force positions and marking Landing Points for an Air Mobile assault executed by D COY, 5 RAR.

The year has concluded with a steady stream of qualification and recertification courses such as Protected Mobility Vehicle Drivers, Visual Trackers, Combat First Aider (CFA) and 117G to enable a strong start under LT Farrands and SGT Synott in 2022.

LT Tom Etheridge