

RCT 149: A COMPANY, 5/7 RAR

Sets the Benchmark in Malaysia

A Company, 5th/7th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment, deployed to Malaysia in 2025 as Regional Combat Team 149 (RCT 149), formerly known as Rifle Company Butterworth. The rotation was enabled by the 2nd/30th Training Group, whose permanent staff provided rigorous instruction and clear direction throughout. Within this framework, the Company delivered disciplined, effective performance throughout the deployment in a challenging jungle environment.

Major Doyle Beaudouin and his soldiers of A Company, 5/7 RAR, were reinforced by personnel from across the 1st Brigade and the 1st (Australian) Division to deploy a combined arms team to Royal Malaysian Air Force Base Butterworth (RMAF-B) from August to December 2025.



RCT 149 formed up for the Opening Ceremony of Exercise HARINGAROO.



RCT 149 on the well-known waterfall of Sik National Park.

Following a rapid transition from Exercise TALISMAN SABRE 25, RCT 149 concentrated for pre-deployment training focused on jungle operations, cultural awareness, and battlefield shooting. Their first challenge upon arrival at RMAF-B was the Combat Team's activity in the hot, humid, and wet jungle of Sik National Park. This exercise provided an excellent opportunity to build on skills developed during A Company's earlier rotation through the Tully Training Area in 2025. The jungle exercise culminated in a Combat Team attack up a seemingly endless terraced hill in the adjacent rubber plantation—terrain worthy of the history made by our forebears. After the exercise, the team was fortunate to enjoy the heritage still present at the Hong Kong Bar and other well-known venues in Georgetown, making new memories alongside those preserved in the bar's photo albums and plaques.

After small-team jungle live-fire and grenade training, the Combat Team deployed for its next major activity—Exercise HARINGAROO—a bilateral engagement with the 14th Royal Malay Regiment



A soldier of 5/7 RAR live fires a MAXIMI which uses a 7.62x51mm NATO ammunition.

(Mechanised). This activity made A Company the first 5/7 RAR sub-unit to operate in 'buckets' since the de-linking of the original 5/7 RAR in 2006. A highlight of the exercise was the bilateral live-fire day, during which Australian and Malaysian soldiers fired their own and each other's weapons side by side. Systems ranged from rifles, pistols, sniper rifles and machine guns to automatic grenade launchers, mortars, and the Malaysian vehicle-mounted, tube-launched, optically-tracked, wire-guided (TOW) anti-tank guided missile (ATGM). Demonstrating Australian soldiers' adaptability, the two Australian firers who operated the ATGM achieved first-round success—after just 30 minutes of training.

The standout event of the entire rotation was the three-week range package at the Malaysian Army's Combat Arms Training Centre (*Pusat Latihan Tempur Tentera Darat*, or PULADA). The Platoons made their best efforts to "renovate" the jungle, destroying targets (and a number of trees) with rifles, 5.56mm and 7.62mm machine guns, and claymores. The Support Sections—reconnaissance, snipers, heavy weapons, and mortars—also enjoyed extensive training opportunities, conducting day and night break-contact drills, long-gun shoots, heavy weapons engagements, and firing over 100 mortar rounds.

RCT 149 eventually returned to Australia and were relieved to be home with friends and family just in time for Christmas.

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