



Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers



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Serving the Nation

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Welcome to the 2024 edition of the Royal Corps of Electrical Mechanical Engineers (RAEME) Journal. This Journal seeks to capture our collective snapshots in time and adds to our corporate memory whilst maintaining our Corps integrity.

Our thanks go to our individuals and Units who contribute, for without your efforts this Journal would not exist.

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HEADS OF CORPS



Message from Head of Corps – RAEME (Out going) Brigadier Ben Slaughter

It has been an absolute honour to represent the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers as Head of Corps over the last two years. Our crafties remain our greatest strength, and their enthusiasm and good humour are infectious, even in the face of difficulties with resources and demands. They truly bleed the tri-colours.

I have been extremely fortunate to have been supported by a dedicated HOC team and the Master Artificers.

DHOC-G LTCOL Tim Soper, DHOC-A LTCOL Rick Watling, and Corps RSM WO1 Jon Tynan have been tireless in promoting and pushing the Corps forward, even with their busy day jobs. Along with the Corps' most experienced Master Artificers, WO1 Mick Nolan, WO1 Ben Munro, WO1 Marc Craigie, WO1 Sean Roberts, WO1 Jason Hawke, WO1 Peter Chambers, WO1 Grant O'Leary, and WO1 Terry Jones they have done a mountain of work, including the Aviation Capability Review, the inaugural FRT trade competition – The St Eligius Cup, improving Corps communication, the Corps conference, and opportunities with Matt Stone Racing, to name a few. It has been an absolute honour to serve with each one of you. With this calibre of leaders, RAEME is in a very strong position to build and enhance these initiatives.

As the outgoing HOC, I would like to reflect on the state of our Corps and what I believe is needed in the near future as the nation prepares for an increasingly uncertain world. We are at another important juncture in our Corps history. The last was Army's logistic modernisation in the 1990s, where RAEME joined with trucks, ordnance, and health, gaining synergies as Army's logistic Corps. While much was gained, much was lost or deprioritised. RAEME effectively transformed from a technical Corps to a logistic Corps that does maintenance. While this may seem like a subtle distinction, it has led to what Jared Diamond refers to as "landscape amnesia," where we forget how different the surrounding landscape is because the change has been so gradual.

I believe the Corps needs to refocus to ensure we are ready to perform our unique role of combat repair, maintenance, and recovery. There are a number of areas where the Corps needs to regain control and define the outcomes, or else I fear Army will not have the capacity to sustain its equipment in a combat environment. Our refocus needs to transition RAEME from a logistic Corps back to a technical Corps. I assess that the following fundamental elements of an effective combat repair, maintenance, and recovery system are core RAEME functions and need to be refocused:

Re-establish our purpose and focus. We are a technical Corps. Our contribution to the fight is combat repair, maintenance, and recovery. Our training is conducting repair, maintenance, and recovery tasks in barracks and on exercises. Employing RAEME personnel in other roles will undermine combat repair, maintenance, and recovery. This requires the entire Corps to have a repetitive and consistent voice. Our key message is that RAEME needs to spend more time in the workshop. The current average of 10 hours per week per craftie is not a situation that allows effective technical mastery or addresses Army's growing fleet maintenance liability.

Repair parts. Supply of repair parts is a repair and maintenance function. Years of “Just in Time” supply has ensured a cost-effective parts system for a static peace environment where repair and maintenance functions can be delayed waiting for parts. Combat is inherently uncertain and needs equipment available as quickly as possible or risk mission failure. We are not set for this, while there is now work in DLOG-A to increase repair part supply, like the pharmaceuticals in health, repair parts are an essential component of timely repair and maintenance. A change from “Just in Time” will be costly and will require a fundamental shift so that the planning and control of repair parts is a maintenance and repair function, not a supply chain one.

Maintenance classifications. RAEME folk solve problems, and in response to the “Just in Time” approach to repair parts, we have in effect adjusted our maintenance classifications to hide resource and repair part deficiencies. In barracks, equipment should only be “fully functional”/“serviceable” or “XX – do not use.” Intermediary maintenance classifications like “battleworthy” only have a role on exercise and operations to balance against risk to the mission. Any intermediary code like “restricted use” enables our commanders to work with, rather than address fundamental flaws in our supply or personnel systems. Our maintenance classifications need to simplify to provide commanders with the true condition of their fleets. DTR-A is already working to adjust the way we communicate equipment maintenance conditions.

Engineering. As a technical Corps, we do not have a clear understanding of the role of the land engineer. The recent Aviation Capability Review has provided this career and employment guidance for our aviation engineers, but there is no career pathway developed for our land engineers. While there are engineer opportunities in regulation, qualified engineers can provide Army with much more, including design, maintainability, availability, reliability, and systems engineering. CMA is investigating the Army’s employment and career pathways for qualified engineers.

RAEME is Army’s technical Corps. I encourage our community to continue to challenge and discuss RAEME’s future. I believe we need to focus on what only RAEME can provide. We have a proud and long history as a technical Corps. All the best for the future, and I’m sure our Corps will continue to thrive.

Arte’ et Marte’



**Message from
Head of Corps – RAEME (Incumbent)
Brigadier Gabrielle Follett**

Welcome to 2025 and I hope that most of you had the opportunity to have some down-time over the Christmas and New Year period. I am genuinely excited and honoured to be appointed as your new Head of Corps. This is an incredible time for our Army as we continue our transformation to a force optimised for littoral manoeuvre with long-range land and maritime strike capability. This transformation will continue to demand much of our Corps, as we adapt to ensure that we are well placed to execute our role in the littoral environment.

I won’t write too much about the future of our Corps here, as I want to spend time listening to you and better understanding the intent of our Army’s senior leaders first. Instead, I will use this message to let you know a little about my background.

My first appointment in our Corps was as OC Workshops in 1 CER, just as 1 CER arrived in Darwin in January 2000. I was lucky to return to 1 CER in 2009-10 as OC of the Operational Support Squadron. I have also served in 1 CSSB, HQ 17 Sustainment Brigade, and HQ 7 Brigade. My career highlight to date has been serving as CO 3 CSSB in 2016-17. I’ve also instructed and been OC Gallipoli Company at the Royal Military College – Duntroon, and have undertaken a range of staff roles including as the Deputy Chief of Staff to CDF, as SO1 Plans and Logistic Policy in AHQ, and in an interagency and liaison role in HQ SOCOMD.

Most recently, I have completed two years as the Director General of Fuel Capability in JLC, responsible for the maintenance, technical regulation, supply and development of Defence’s fuel capabilities. This year, I have just commenced as the Director General of Estate Service Delivery, responsible for a wide range of services across the Defence Estate and for our range and training area management. Both these positions have confirmed the absolutely critical role that our industry partnerships play in supporting Defence capability and operations.

I’ve been fortunate to serve on operations a number of times, including two tours of Afghanistan (one with 3 RAR and one as an embed with the US Headquarters), two tours of East Timor (one of which was with 5/7 RAR), 18 months as a United Nations Military Observer in Syria and Jerusalem, and on a range of disaster response operations in Indonesia and domestically.

This year I am going to do my best to escape Canberra and get out to meet as many of you as possible. I am really keen to hear from you about how we can evolve our skills to ensure we are ready to enable and achieve our Army’s core purpose: to fight and win against those who would do harm to Australia and its interests. I also want to understand how you think we can better attract and retain our people, so that I can represent that with the key leaders who develop those policies.

Best wishes for 2025, I am looking forward to getting out there and talking with you as soon as I can, so that my next message is all about you, not me.

Arte’ et Marte’



Message from
Deputy Head of Corps – Land
(Incumbent)

LTCOL Hans Hamilton

It's an absolute privilege and I am extremely humbled by the appointment as CO ASEME and DHOC-Ground for the next two years. Coming back to Command the School where I started as a tradesman over 27 years ago is quite surreal, and I hope to carry forward some of the excellent progress that LTCOL Soper has achieved in his tenure with WO1 Tynan in training and advocacy for our current and future tradesmen.

I have personally seen their efforts challenge the status quo and

I ask the same of you moving forward as we adapt and progress. To that end, I thank LTCOL Soper and WO1 Tynan for their respective efforts over the last two years within ASEME and for the CORPS.

Additionally, I would also like to acknowledge BRIG Slaughter's efforts as Head of Corps and I wish him all the best in his future endeavours. I believe the lines of effort he presented have all enjoyed meaningful progress.

I wish to congratulate LTCOL Chris Porada on his appointment as the CO to the newly forming Aviation Support Battalion, and I am looking forward to working with Chris regarding Corps matters. We should also welcome another Chris, WO1 Chris Clifton, coming from the School of Armour to ASEME in his first RSM appointment.

Given our rapidly evolving environment, I would initially request that we all seek to understand 'what is coming in 2025 that will affect us and how can we inform or value add (meaningful and enduring adaptation) to the situation?' Events such as the rescheduled release of ERP's maintenance module, Talisman Sabre 2025, and the introduction into service paths for a significant quantity of new capability is, and will continue to require ongoing subject matter expertise to minimise impacts to Army and the Joint force. This initial request is about you all, looking for, and professionally developing resilience, both in our trades and our people. I look forward to the challenges and rewarding opportunities ahead of us all.

Arte' et Marte'



Message from
Deputy Head of Corps – Air
(Out going)

LTCOL Rick Watling

As I write this article I take pause after what has been an incredibly humbling opportunity as part of the RAEME HOC cell over the past two years in representing all of you. I continue to be proud of the RAEME esprit de Corps and comradery witnessed wherever I travel, whether it be in welcoming our newest Crafties or officers into the Corps, celebrating amazing service milestones and dedication to RAEME at award ceremonies, catching up for a beer at the various RAEME gatherings across the country

or answering to senior officers how the tri-colours have yet again bled onto various buildings/ artefacts! This spirit we all hold so close is what makes us the envy of the other Corps and my challenge to all of you to ensure it only continues to grow.

I have been fortunate to be a part of an extremely dedicated team supporting the RAEME cause, led by the outgoing BRIG Ben Slaughter as our HOC who has enabled us to seek countless opportunities, assisted by outgoing DHOC-G LTCOL Tim Soper and Corps RSM WO1 Jon Tynan for their significant contributions to the Corps, the Master Artificers for their continual banter and occasional hard work and MAJ Steve Howells and MAJ Craig Chatterton keeping the Corps history, secretarial roles and finances ticking along. Without their dedication and hard work the Corps would not find itself in the great position we do today.

It has been an absolute honour to be part of the HOC cell supporting the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers these past two years. Our extremely passionate people continue to make us proud across all ranks and drive us towards our vision for the future and challenge put to all of us from the outgoing HOC to re-establish our purpose and focus as a technical Corps.

RAEME-Aviation continues to be an exciting place to be, with significant Force Modernisation underway as we re-posture and re-organise towards the future requirements called out in the **National Defence Strategy** and **Integrated Investment Program**. We have now implemented the organisational structure via the Army Aviation Capability Review to ensure we have an appropriately structured workforce that is both resourced and enabled to support our battlefield aviation programs into the future, with appropriate force dispositions in the right locations.

We have already seen the relocation of the Headquarters 16th Aviation Brigade from Enoggera to Townsville. We have commenced relocation of elements of the 1st Aviation Regiment into Townsville where they will begin training and acceptance of the 1st AH-64E Apache Guardians into service, as we draw down ARH Tiger in Darwin. The Army's newest unit on the Order of Battle, the 16th Aviation Support Battalion (16 ASB) has taken shape in Townsville to better deliver through mass and density aviation maintenance, logistics and ground support re-arming and refuelling effects to the 16th Aviation Brigade. The vision for the ASB's 5th Workshop Company sees all levels of maintenance through an integrated workforce, with deep RAEME specialisation and advanced technical mastery and proficiency opportunities. 16 ASB will be commanded by DHOC-A (LTCOL Chris Porada) and Corps RSM (WO1 Jon Tynan) so I know it is in great hands! CMC25 will see the establishment of the 2nd UH-60M Black Hawk training node in Oakey,

to complement the 12 operationally focused aircraft already delivered to Holsworthy Barracks. This will be an important enabler for training and set conditions for operational Black Hawks in Oakey from 2028.

Concurrently to the Capability Review, a Workforce Segment Review (WSR) has also been underway to generate positive outcomes for RAEME aviation members. The WSR has analysed in detail all aviation trades, to provide enhanced workforce propositions and remuneration commensurate with Army’s contemporary expectations of each workforce segment. The WSR outcomes are currently with the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal (DFRT) for approval, with opportunity to champion similar employee value proposition enhancements across RAEME ground trades.

I welcome the newest members to RAEME who have commenced with us this year as we embark on exciting opportunities with the introduction of new capabilities. I know LTCOL Chris Porada (DHOC-A) and LTCOL Hans Hamilton (DHOC-G) will be great advocates for RAEME along with the RSM and MAs, so please ensure you approach them with opportunities and issues affecting the Corps. They are your champions, but need your great ideas voiced. Once again, it’s been an absolute honour.

Arte’ et Marte’



**Message from
Deputy Head of Corps – Air
(Incumbent)**

LTCOL Chris Porada

As In 2025, the Army Aviation capability will introduce into Service the Apache Helicopter to Townsville, expand Blackhawk operations to Oakey, and grow the Chinook fleet. RAEME, both its land and aviation trades will support this development in our military’s capability through our role in the realisation of the Army Aviation Capability Review. Critically, an outcome of this review, as mentioned by LTCOL Watling, is the raising of the 16th Aviation Support Battalion (16 ASB), a new unit within the 16th Aviation

Brigade and one which is predominately staffed by technicians, both military and civilian. As CO of the ASB my focus this year will be on raising the unit; executing on our mission, put simply - the generation of land and aviation capabilities in support of the 16th Aviation Brigade; and developing towards a value proposition to include the expansion of a national rotary wing Maintenance, Repair and Overhaul capability within Defence. As DHOC-A my focus will be on training, with a focus towards EMEAOs and Aviation technicians; maintenance quality and standards; and connection, both within the Department, and externally to Industry, towards Future Ready. In subsequent articles I will aim to expand on the journey of the ASB, how it executes on its directed roles and tasks, introduces new capabilities and establishes its identity.

To share a little about my career, my formative experience within Defence include postings to 3 CSSB as a PL COMD, to the 1st and 5th Aviation Regiment as TST COMD and EMEOPSO, and as an OC at 6 ESR. I have worked briefly at CASG as a Staff Officer and at DOCMA as one of the RAEME Career Advisors. Prior to my current position I served within 16 Aviation Brigade HQ as the DQ and then as Brigade Aviation Maintenance Officer, a position which held Quality Manager responsibilities over the Army Aviation Maintenance Organisation. My deployment experience includes the final rotation to Timor-Leste for the Timor-Leste Aviation Group.

To share something personal, my grandfather was a Kokoda Veteran and dairy farmer from the Sapphire coast, while he has now passed, his memory to me as a stoic rock within the family, dry humour larrikin and jack of all trades is where my passion for Service and resonance with RAEME was born from.

I am grateful for the opportunity to contribute to our Corps which underpins many of the capabilities operated within Defence. I have been fortunate to serve with many wonderful leaders over my career, good men and women, excellent soldiers and Officers and even a couple of decent engineers – TIC. I am keen to pay it forwards. I look forward to reconnecting or meeting with as many members of the Corps as possible, currently Serving and Veterans. Be forthright in your skill and fighting.

Arte’ et Marte’



Message from Corps RSM

WO1 Jon Tynan

Welcome to 2025, the last year has flown past with myself not achieving all I had intended (I'm sure many feel the same). 2024 saw massive changes within the ADF and predominately Army; with restructures of Brigades, the raising of new ECNs (based around littoral manoeuvre) and introduction of new equipment.

The HOC Cell has made numerous changes to how we conduct ourselves; returning to light and heavy Corps Conferences, changing how Corps awards are determined and the introduction

of a new annual skill based competition (The St Eligius Trophy). We are also asking all Brigades to become involved in the some of the higher profile activities of the Corps, as an example; we took the Corps conference to Townsville in 2024. Apart from the Corps Conferences traditionally being held at the home of the Corps in Bandiana, this is the first time a conference has been held outside of a state capital city, allowing members that have previously not been allowed to attend a chance to participate and assist in the conception of directions for the Corps.

A huge thank you to WO1 Ben Munro who has built the foundation for Vehicle Technicians to be able to take on a secondment with Matt Stone Racing at each race for the V8 Super Car season. The skill, knowledge and experience this provides our technicians is invaluable.

ASEME has seen many changes, from under subscribed Electrical based courses to Vehicle Technology Wing being well over subscribed. The changing of how we train and employ ECNs based off the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal (DFRT) has provided many challenges, one of the important points I'd like to raise based off the review is the change to the Soldiers pay. The DFRT saw some trades pay increase based on greater work value; also the removal of having to attend a 'Specialist Course' for a pay increase, as this was also rolled into the DFRT outcome and included in a soldiers pay on completion of OJT.

I hope the email I send every month is reaching all members of the Corps, as this provides updates on not only the Corps, ASEME but also Workforce and Training Group (from a trade governance point of view). If anyone would like to see anything else included in the updates, please email myself and I will include as appropriate.

SGT Rob Clarke has worked tirelessly to improve the recognition process for those receiving awards or separating from the ADF. Please be patient and remember to submit any requests as early as possible. WO1 Dave Clarke is again editing and putting together the Craftsman Magazine, thank you so much for all you have done. Please get articles into Dave as soon as possible for the 2025 magazine.

Lastly, thank you to you as members of the Corps, your efforts during trying times (not all equipment is easily repaired), times of uncertainty (competing priorities) and your ability to always show off the Esprit de Corps (with Skill and Fighting) makes me very proud to be the Corps RSM.

Arte' et Marte'



Message from Artificer Sergeant Major– Land

WO1 Andrew 'Jim' Beaman

G'day All

Firstly, congratulations to all members of the Corps recognised in the Australia Day 2025 Honours and Awards list, but a special mention to CFN N who received the Conspicuous Service Medal. Seeing a Craftsman awarded a CSM is one of the highlights of my time in The Corps. For all the Warrant Officers and Officers of the Corps please continue to nominate our junior soldiers, and officers, for appropriate recognition when they have provided outstanding service.

Secondly I would like to acknowledge BRIG Slaughter for his time as HOC. His corralling of the Master Artificers and Corps RSM and aiming them towards a common goal, whilst still allowing them to find their own goals as well, is possibly some of the greatest "cat herding" ever seen. BRIG Follett may require 2 laser pointers to maintain this collegiate approach.

On a personal level my first twelve months in the role of ASM-L has been the steepest learning curve I have undertaken since the first year of my apprenticeship back in 19diggetysumtin. There are so many things that definitely were not in the brochure.

Participating in Chief of Army's strategic framing sessions was the first "shock" for me. Being in a room with CA, all his 2*'s, RSM-A, the Tier C cohort of RSMs, a former Chief Justice, a former Defence minister and a couple of other luminaries who are extremely analytical, and being encouraged and expected to contribute to the discussion was initially a little daunting, however I soon realised that a strong technical background actually suited the discussions and I am now comfortable that the voice provided by this position belongs in that room and will continue to value add into the future.

I travelled with Director General Landworthiness (DGLw) to the USA in December 2024 where we spent time with various experts in blast overpressure and Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI). This is an issue and it will require significant input from technical people to mitigate these issues in the training environment.


The second part of the USA visit was to attend the US Department of Defense Maintenance Symposium. This was a great opportunity to build some networks with our largest ally and also to understand what maintenance issues they are facing. Unsurprisingly they have very similar issues to us, though they may not have the traction that we have due to the considerably larger size of their organisation.

In the interests of full disclosure there is some truth to the rumour that I was given "pinks" by RSM-A and RSM 1 Div for my dress at an RMC graduation parade in 2024. On the upside this "may" result in an acceptance that ASM-L incumbents are not masters of wearing uniform?

Looking into this year I am sure all members of The Corps will be striving to implement the changes required under DSR etc. I will continue to provide a focus on enabling our junior leaders (think JNCOs and junior officers) to command effectively in the environments that the Defence Strategic Review (DSR) and National Defence Strategy (NDS) have indicated we may have to operate in. I

implore all members of The Corps to support this and implement changes at whatever level you can, being innovative in training and trusting the great people we have to do their job. My circulation last year gave me great confidence that our junior leaders are well placed to embrace the roles they are required to, we just need to enable them to assume that responsibility.

Arte’ et Marte’



Master Artificer – ECN 146

WO1 Michael ‘Mick’ Nolan

Ladies and Gents,

2024 has again seen significant changes, both in unit relocations or dissolution across Army writ large that moves to align force elements against the Defence Strategic Review (DSR) outcomes.

‘You get what you work for, not what you wish for’. Unknown

This year I have again witnessed the critical work being conducted by ECN 146 weapon technicians across Army writ large. The dedication to task, delivery of vital technical and maintenance effects through effective execution has been outstanding. However, there is an increased level of responsibility being accepted by junior soldiers, which highlights both the adaptability of our technicians but also the gaps in our workforce within units and where a transfer of risk is occurring. Rest assured this has not gone unnoticed by commanders and higher headquarters.

Whilst attending the Corps conference in Townsville, I was also fortunate enough to present several MA ECN 146 coins to 3 BDE members, nominated by their Chain of Command. The coin is a means, as the MA for the trade, to recognise the great work being carried out by weapon technicians across Army who provide vital support to capability day-to-day. As mentioned previously, from my perspective the majority the nominees are delivering technical effects/support well above what is typically expected of a person of their rank and experience. In my opinion, an MA coin should be considered just the starting point and you work up from there.

The inaugural St Eligius Trophy was conducted in November this year at the home of The Craftsman (ALTC). Three teams participated, drawn from 1, 3 and 7 Brigade where all-corps skills and technical mastery were put to the test. Overall, it was deemed a success by both the competitors and directing staff involved. A separate article focusing on this activity will be included in this years Craftsman edition.

Looking to next year, 2025 will likely not be any slower or less chaotic. L300 will conduct the F9 Sidearm Weapon System (SWS) Material Release (MR) and initial training for ADF units within SEQLD throughout FEB - MAR 2025, which will see the withdrawal from service of the 9mm Browning Mk3 which entered into service in 2001.

Ultimately, as a key enabler to the Joint force you need to continue to develop yourself across technical, tactical, and cognitive domains. Use your Technical Support Network to find and exploit opportunities to organise, participate or witness the conduct of realistic training to build wartime proficiency. Train like you go tomorrow.

In closing, to all those members that are posting, travel safe and I hope that the relocation goes ‘to plan’ and as stress free as possible. Enjoy the downtime, reconnect with family and friends and enjoy the break – we need you back good to go in 2025. And to those who may be separating at years’ end, I thank you for your service and best of luck in your new undertakings.

If you wish to contact me about this article, please email me direct: michael.nolan@defence.gov.au

Arte’ et Marte’



Master Artificer – ECN 222

WO1 Tim Costin

I am honoured to have been appointed as the inaugural Master Artificer for the new ECN 222 Marine Technician (MT) Trade. I enlisted as a 47th Class Fitter and Turner Army Apprentice, before conducting the Armourer component of the trade, and then being given the opportunity of branching into Marine Engineering. My career has included postings with FORCOMD, SOCOMD, ALTC, DFR, and now Army Marine which was within CASG before transferring to NSSG.

The new ECN-222 MT is being raised after the Defence Strategic Review (DSR) 2023, and the National Defence Strategy (NDS)

2024 directed Army to optimise for littoral operations. The Littoral Area is 'the area of the sea that influences the land, and the area of the land that influences the sea'.

Army's 1st (Australian) Division with its combat brigades will be repurposed and optimised for operations in the littorals of our region. The littoral manoeuvre program Land 8710 will deliver new Landing Craft Medium (LC-M approx. 50m long) and Heavy (LC-H approx. 100m long) under phase One and Two respectively, and they'll all be built in Australia.

Although this change in strategic direction for Army is new for all current serving members, littoral manoeuvre for Army is not new. Army operated a vast fleet of vessels (over 2000) during WWII, of various types and sizes for the critical transportation of troops and supplies in challenging terrain and conditions. There were many Army Watercraft Workshops raised during WWII to sustain these vessels around the Pacific theatre, manned by AEME after being raised on 01 Dec 1942 with the transferred troops of the Australian Army Ordnance Corps (AAOC). The original craft engineer was the RAE Fitter Marine Engine's (FME) ECN 150, before the RAEME Fitter Armourer ECN 146 took over the responsibility around 1974. Army continues to operate a wide variety of watercraft and marine equipment, although the future craft will be a capability game changer.

The trade development of ECN 222 MT has many outstanding decisions. The comprehensive training needs analysis is yet to be delivered, therefore many answers on our trade structure are a while off yet. The training qualification will be to a higher level than what is currently provided to our watercraft maintainers (which currently includes ECN 146 and ECN 229), as these craft will be much more complex, vastly larger, and will go into international waters. The Littoral Manoeuvre Facilities will be delivered through Land 8710 Phase 5 to match delivery of the vessels. Posting opportunities will include North Queensland, Northern Territory and South East Queensland.

The LC-M is expected to have 3 x ECN 222 MT in the crew of 15, and the LC-H may also include ECN 418 Energy Technician and ECN 421 Electronics Technician. Some of the members who took the DSCM-A ECN 222 MT transfer offer are now conducting gap training within Australia and the USA. This is a nine month investment in our members. These members are likely to become the first of type craft crew maintainers and instructors.

It's an exciting time to be part of a new and growing trade. Our first six members have already started Initial Trade Training, where they are studying a certificate three in Engineering (fixed and mobile plant). We have another three starting in January 2025. The Littoral Program team is already starting to look around for watercraft qualified members to start civilian TAFE training in 2026. It might be time for you to consider getting on board.

As part of my daily role as the Army Marine National Survey Officer (NSO) conducting Quality Assurance and Configuration Surveys (QACS), I look forward to catching up with all the Marine maintainers in our watercraft units next year. I'm always happy to be engaged with questions. Safe travels over Christmas, and I look forward to working with you in next year's Marine challenges.

Arte' et Marte'



Master Artificer – ECN 226

WO1 Mick Wynd

Hello to my fellow Recovery Technicians and Corps members. I am honoured to be appointed as the new Master Artificer for ECN 226 Recovery Technician.

Firstly, I would like to thank WO1 Terry Jones for unofficially representing the trade during 2024. As normal, he continues to do a lot of great work behind the scenes for us. I would also like to farewell WO1 Rick Colefax (first Corps and ASEME RSM from the trade) who has recently retired and enjoying all that spare time we seem to lose during our service to our nation.

For those of you I have not had the pleasure of meeting yet, my history is short, I enlisted as an armoured vehicle crewman/driver with the RAAC in 1991, I transferred to RAEME as a Recovery Mechanic (now Recovery Technician) in 1998 and served within many units over several locations.

Well, 2024 has certainly been a very interesting year with the release of the Defence Strategic Review (DSR) and the rebalance of Army's equipment across the country. This has seen significant changes to our structure and the concentration of assets within new locations.

The 'so what' has seen many units restructured with an increase or reduction in recovery personnel and platforms. This will provide many challenges to you on the ground over the next few years as each Bridge transitions to their new roles.

Congratulations to all those members who have been promoted and take up their new positions in 2025. I wish the best for all those members who are transitioning from the trade (Corps/trade transfer or separation).

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your efforts to date. I hope you can continue to maintain your professionalism as Recovery Technicians within or out of trade, and provide a much need capability to Army throughout 2025.

Arte' et Marte'



Master Artificer – ECN 229 (Out going)

WO1 Marc Craigie

My time as the Master Artificer for ECN 229, Vehicle Technicians concludes at the end of 2024 and I will hand over this appointment to my long-time colleague and fellow 46th intake apprentice, WO1 Jake Donnelly.

I would firstly like to congratulate Jake on his appointment and wish him all the best as he continues to advocate for the Vehicle Technicians within the Corps and more broadly within Army.

It has been an absolute pleasure to fulfil the appointment as the MA for ECN 229 and it is a personal milestone to have achieved

this in my career. Whilst I have been limited in my interactions within the regions other than SEQ and AWMA; I am acutely aware, through my Technical Support Network of the major contributions you have all made as Vehicle Technicians within your units and your formations over the past two years and I commend you for this contribution.

The Regional Trade Training (RTT) trial commenced in Brisbane, Darwin and Townsville with in service trade transfers targeted to be part of the trial. RTT is similar to a civilian apprenticeship with trainees undertaking their 'theoretical' learning at a regional TAFE and developing their trade skills in Defence workshops. RTT has enabled the nine successful candidates identified for the trial to remain in their existing location to complete their trade training. This initiative broadens the scope for training in regions other than AWMA and is fantastic initiative that has been created by the team at ASEME.

The St Eligius Trophy was held at ASEME on 27 Nov 24 and pitted teams from the 1st, Brigade, 3rd Brigade and 7th Brigade against each other in a test of All Corps Soldier skills and technical trade skills. Vehicle Technicians CFN Tyson McInnes (1 CSSB), CFN Mitchell Sydenham (3 RAR) and CFN Leon Tokley (7 CSSB) represented their units and Brigades extremely well and demonstrated outstanding all corps and technical trades skills. Their individual efforts are commendable and I am encouraged by their commitment to their trade and to the Corps.

I would like to pass on my personal thanks to my fellow MA for ECN 421, WO1 Ben Munro who has for the past few years organised placements at Matt Stone Racing during the V8 Supercars races throughout the country. A number of Vehicle Technicians have participated in this awesome placement and benefited from the exposure to operating within a fast-paced professional team. This arrangement has been endorsed and now operates under an MOU between Army and Matt Stone Racing and whilst he remains very humble, Ben Munro is to be congratulated.

To my fellow Master Artificers, thank you for your fellowship over the past two years. As a group, we have continued to promote the Master Artificer appointments within the Corps and have all made significant contributions to our ECN's.

To the Head of Corps, Deputy Heads of Corps and Corps RSM, thank you for your leadership. Your contributions to the Corps are commendable and you are all leaving your appointments in a better place than when you took them over.

Best of luck for 2025 and beyond.

Arte' et Marte'



Master Artificer – ECN 229 (Incumbent)

WO1 Jake Donelly

Firstly, I would to thank WO1 Marc Craigie for doing a stellar job. I am looking forward to taking on the role of Master Artificer for the Vehicle Technician trade. I would also like to point out WO1 Craigie, WO1 Beaman and myself are 46th Intake Vehicle Mechanic Apprentices.

The outlook of the trade looks strong with a large number of trainees coming through the system. Additionally, the initiatives that ASEME have trialed look very positive for future training models. I have confidence we are closing the gap between

recruitment and retention. However, it is an area I will continue to focus on throughout my tenure.

As a trade we all need to focus on being brilliant at the basics. This is not just our trade skills but also our soldiering. Whether you are part of an A1 Echelon in an Armoured Unit, mounted in a Motorised Unit or part of an FRT in a CSST, you are a Crewman/Soldier first and tradesman second. I have the strong philosophy, “Be the asset not the liability”. If you have this approach you will be well respected in any organisation you work in.

In my next role at ACAU, I intend to use the opportunity to visit as many units as I can in a MA capacity. I look forward to meeting face to face as many Vehicle Technicians as possible and to hear the stories from the coalface. I believe it is my job to capture these stories, both good and bad, and staff them through to the HOC.

I wish everyone a safe and Merry Christmas. If you a travelling and/or relocating, I hope all goes well and you are able to leave time to recharge the batteries for 2025. All the best for the New Year!

Arte’ et Marte’



Master Artificer – ECN 235

WO1 Grant O’Leary

2024 has been a year of significant changes in the Army structure and trade. One of the highlights was the first St. ELIGIUS Cup, which was held at the school and tested members of our trade. They performed well, but there were also some areas for improvement identified. These will be discussed with the CORPs to help improve our soldiers.

St Eligius Trophy

The Master Artificer stand for ECN235 tested soldiers on various trade skills and abilities across all Corps. While it was a valuable

experience, we hope to see even more teams participating in future events.

The competition assessed soldiers on their time management, fault-finding, and welding skills/abilities. Based on the positive feedback received from participants, we are eager to enhance the competition and make it even better in the future.

Trade Updates

Standards-

The Manual of Army Employment (MAE) is presently being revised, and the most recent amendment (amendment 4, updated on November 24) has incorporated welding to the Structural Purposes (SP) Standard for both Manual Metal Arc and Gas Metal Arc welding methods. Changes to LMP and the enhancement of Units of Competency (UoC) at ACW, ASEME for Adult Trade Training (ATT), and pre-qualified Material Technicians are also expected to be implemented in the future.



This upskilling initiative will result in more proficient and qualified Material Technicians in the future. Additionally, it will better prepare them for the Special Alloy Maintenance Techniques (SAMT) and Quenched & tempered Steels (Q&T) courses, which have had a significant failure rate in the past.

Requalification/Currency-

“How can we recertify our soldiers to ensure they remain current?”

This has been a topic of discussion for many years, and various suggestions have been proposed. One such proposal is to have soldiers recertify every 6-12 months, with the testing taking place at ASEME in a test environment. Alternatively, some members of ASEME have suggested other ways to recertify Material Technicians’ competencies for SAMT and Q&T. These alternatives include ordering test plates through the system, with the plates then being tested at both on-site and off-site civilian welding agencies. Another suggestion is to have a Material Technician Sergeant within a Brigade complete the welding assessor course and be authorised to inspect and recertify Material Technicians within their area, with overall control maintained by the Material Technician Trade WO at ACW, ASEME.

Discussions on this topic are ongoing, and we hope to provide a solution that meets everyone's needs in the near future.

Other - from ASEME

We currently have our first ever Ab-initio trainee going through OJTs and he is setting a high bar for those following him, with positive feedback from work placements as well as coming second in the world skills competition held at Wodonga TAFE at the end of 2024.

SGT Maher will be working on updating the content of the SAMT & Q&T courses to provide quality training skills to our members.

Overall, it has been an eventful year for the trade, and we are looking forward to continuing our progress in the coming years.

Arte' et Marte'



Master Artificer – ECN 411

WO1 Peter Chambers

The ECN 411 aircraft technician trade continues to achieve outstanding capability outcomes through continued support to the Australian Defence Force and the community. The trade continues to see recruitment pressures, which has seen reduced training through put with the ECN 411 trade category remaining as critical. As we see the Aviation capability transition over the coming years, the trade will see the introduction of Blackhawk, Apache and Integrator into the training continuum and provide opportunities for our trade to maintain aircraft types that lead the world in technology and war fighting capabilities.

The AVNCOMD capability restructure will see 1st Aviation Regiment relocate over a number of years to Townsville (RAAF Base Garbutt) in support of Apache introduction into Service, allowing the ARH capability to maintain its capability effect until withdrawn from service. The aviation capability will also see the Blackhawk introduction into service fleet grow in Sydney and allowing the formation of B SQN Oakey to be established around 2027 in support of Aircrew training (AAvnTC) and the Australian Defence Force.

The training opportunities for our aircraft technicians is extremely exciting as we see the introduction of advanced training systems and software to compliment the advanced weapon systems we maintain. The aircraft training system will also be supported by overseas training opportunities to develop our technicians as part of the introduction into service training plan.

The great work by the Employment Category Management (ECM) team has provided opportunities for our aircraft technicians to be recognised for their technical mastery / skill sets and contribution to the capability through submissions to DFRT in 2025.

The Master Artificer ECN 411 Unit Aircraft Technician of the Year Award.

The purpose of this award is for AVNCOMD and CASG units to annually identify and recognise the most outstanding aircraft technicians across the ECN 411 workforce, and encourage all eligible personnel to strive for military and technical excellence; the epitome of the ‘Soldier-Tradesman’. The technician consistently displays both military and technical skills that set them above their peers and represent attributes of being in the RAEME Corps and teamwork within your unit.

It is my pleasure to announce the following ECN 411 award winners for 2024;

- 1 AVN REGT - 8652187 CFN Cody Thompson
- 5 AVN REGT - 8633210 CPL Todd Callow
- 6 AVN REGT - 8643507 CFN Denzel Kaliyev
- 20 REGT, RAA - 8621716 CFN Nicholas Barton
- RAMS - 8610912 CPL Joshua Crellin
- CAMO - 8609163 SGT Paul Batty

Arte' et Marte'





Master Artificer – ECN 412

WO1 Scott Breen

I have the privilege of being the third artificer selected as MA 412. Firstly, I would like to thank my predecessors WO1 Tony Jenner and WO1 Jason Hawke for their efforts thus far, and the advice and direction they provided moving forward. I will continue to represent the avionics trade and seek recognition for the amazing work that ECN 412 deliver within the Army Aviation units and wider Army.

The Master Artificer ECN 412 Avionics Technician of the Year Unit Award.

MA 411 WO1 Pete Chambers and my predecessor WO1 Jason Hawke, created awards for ECN 411 and ECN 412 to recognise the outstanding technicians who contribute to Army Aviation maintenance and support activities while upholding corps and Army values. 2024 is the inaugural year of these awards and it is my pleasure to announce the following ECN 412 recipients:

- 1 AVN REGT - CFN Thomas Green
- 5 AVN REGT - CFN Isaac Rosenberg
- 6 AVN REGT - SGT Mark Szewczuk
- 20 REGT, RAA - SGT Patrick Schweikert
- CHMU - SGT Christopher Brown
- AAvnTC RAMS - SGT Nicholas Stienstra
- CAMO - WO2 David Gorbai



Health of the ECN 412 Trade

There is no sugar coating that the low recruitment and retention rates are affecting the health of ECN412. Initiatives from Army AVNCOMD to entice in-service transfers have created seven tradesman in the training pipeline, but there is much more required with only 14 of 30 (46%) of the target recruitment for 2024 achieved.

It is widely acknowledged that Avionics Technicians (and our ECN 411 brethren) are working hard to maintain capability, and to reward this effort a remuneration proposal from Workforce Training Branch AAvnTC to the DFRT in Feb 25 will see (once approved) CPL and SGT ECN 412 increase one paygroup. This means CPLs will reach equal pay to RAAFies and RAN, and the SGTs go one ahead.

Retention of tradies is an issue for all, but at the rank of CPL the separation rate towers at 17.6%. This is the SME of our trade and due to the hollowness, 81% of CPLs have less than 3 years of experience at rank. We ask a lot from our newly promoted supervisors.

I encourage all avionics technicians not to be burdened by their responsibility but to look to the future, which includes state-of-the-art technology and aircraft to work on such as A61 Integrator UAS, UH-60M Black Hawk and AH-64E Apache aircraft in addition to the workhorse CH-47F. Army aviation has never had such a stacked hand of capability.

My final words are, if you have any great ideas or ways to improve your work or the avionics trade please speak up to your chain of command, your RASM, myself as MA 412, or the Employment Category Manager at Workforce Training Branch. You can make things better rather than rely upon 40 and 50 year old tradies deciding what is best for you.

Arte' et Marte'



Master Artificer – ECN 418

WO1 Jamie Redman

It is with great pride that I assume the role of MA Energy Technician ECN 418 for 2025-26. I look forward to championing our trade through a period of significant change; new power generation assets will be introduced into the ADF, whilst concurrently managing the legacy fleet. I express my gratitude to the other applicants for throwing their hat in the ring as a last minute call for nominations; knowing this is a role that adds further responsibility to personnel who already have busy schedules, I appreciate your motivation to support the HOC MA initiative. Additionally, I would like to personally thank WO1 Sean Roberts for carrying the Energy Technician MA torch during the

last two years. Sean has been a great advocate for the trade and Corps, leading and supporting many initiatives impacting the 418 trade over his tenure.

As for myself, I am currently posted to the Land Engineering Agency within CASG and am assigned to CA22 Electrical Systems within the Deployable Infrastructure Systems Program Office (DISPO), previously GSSPO. Within this role myself along with the other members in the technical team are responsible for the sustainment of the in-service electrical and refrigeration fleet. Additionally, I have had the opportunity to provide technical advice on the Joint 8140 Expeditionary Basing project, which is delivering future power generation systems. It is an exciting time to be an Energy Technician, as over the next couple of years there will be a new range of small and medium power generation systems rolled out across Defence. The Medium Power Generation Systems (MPGS), will consist of a suite of equipment that will provide greater power configuration and control to deployed elements. The MPGS will be made up of the following items:

- 30 kVA generator
- 16 kVA generator
- 8 kVA generator
- 700L transportable fuel cell
- Paralleling box



Figure 1: MPGS

The MPGS will be capable of operating up to four generators in parallel, thereby increasing the capacity of a power grid, whilst alleviating the problem of a grid shut down during servicing events, as experienced with the current 16 kVA. This feature will also permit the paralleling of different capacity generators, which will enable the establishment of more agile power grids.

Speed to Capability (SC) and Minimum Viable Product (MVP) has changed the way the Small Power Generation Systems (SPGS) are being developed and delivered to accelerate these items into service. This approach attempts to reduce time consuming process, whilst still retaining an appropriate level of engineering and technical rigour, to deliver what is essentially a more ruggedized version of a commercial off the shelf item. This decision has been undertaken to recover some of the time lost to delay in the early stages of the project and get this new, modernised and essential capability into the hands of the user as quickly as possible. I know there is concern that SC and MVP may reduce the quality of the products provided to Defence, however JP8140 are still accountable to meet stringent safety and performance requirements, and rigorous test and evaluation applying the learnings from the MPGS test activity is being undertaken at ATS Monegetta. SPGS will consist of:

- 3.5 kVA generator (A/C)
- 1.8 kW generator (DC)



Figure 2: 3.5 KVA & 1.8 kW Generators.

Both the small and medium power generation systems are manufactured by Enquest, located on the Sunshine Coast, Queensland. Enquest has been supporting the ADF for many years through a number of lines of effort, from supplying parts for in-service power generation assets, manufacturing 40 and 100 Amp distribution boxes and manufacturing the PMV-M auxiliary power units. What makes this company an ideal Australian Industry Partner is the Sovereign Capability Enquest delivers to the ADF, with local manufacturing and assembly within the Brisbane region bringing direct support to the ADF in a time of need. The JP8140 team has been working with Enquest for a couple of years now to bring new power generation capabilities to realisation, and after recently being involved with the maintenance validation activity for functional acceptance testing, I can attest to the great work that both parties have undertaken to deliver high quality products to the ADF.



Figure 3: MPGS – Parallel box, 16 kVA & TFC.

Although a new fleet will reduce many challenges the 418 cohort are experiencing today, there will still be challenges to overcome with sustaining a tired fleet of generators in parallel to a new capability roll out, with an added complexity of no replacement high capacity generator program at this stage. I empower you to continue to challenge the supply chain in maintaining these items. If there is zero stock, still place a demand, then follow up with an email. Where there are issues, raise RODUMS, this is the only way decision makers can validate data and support increased sustainment budgets. Life of Type buys for repair parts will become more prevalent moving forward to meet minimum order quantities, RODUMS will support these decisions.

Coming to the end of a busy 2024 period it is time to reflect on the accomplishments we have individually and collectively achieved across the organisation. Take the time to have a well-earned Christmas break with your family and friends, make the most of it.

Arte’ et Marte’



Master Artificer – ECN 421

WO1 Benjamin Munro

The 2024 was another year where the MA cohort was able to work together to achieve a number of outcomes. As the role and responsibilities of the MA develops, I offer this as a summary of my activities this year as MA 421.

Promotions

I’d like to begin this summary by acknowledging a number of promotions for 2025.

| Warrant Officer Class One: | Warrant Officer Class Two: | Sergeant: |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| WO2 Karl Loerand | SGT Adam Somerville | CPL Sean Sweeney |
| WO2 Chris Hawkes | SGT Iliona Mathers | CPL Nicholas Fuller |

Congratulations and good luck with your next role, gentlemen.

Promotion courses

Once again, the MAs were fortunate to attend most Subject 4 courses this year to answer questions from the attendees. This year we were joined by the ASM Landworthiness – WO1 Jim Beaman, which presented a unique opportunity for course members to ask questions of some of the most senior technicians within the corps.

The scope of questions posed displayed a genuine interest in the direction the corps is heading. I am encouraged that the Corps is in good hands given the calibre of future leaders attending promotion courses.

MA ECN 421 Coin

I was fortunate to be able to present an MA ECN 421 coin to a few high-performing boffins this year. This coin is a small token to reward exceptional performance within the workplace where other forms of reward may not be appropriate. Coins were also presented to ECN 421 competitors at the St Eligius Trophy and to Students of Merit completing their Initial Employment Training.



Master Artificer ECN 421 coin.

If you know of a boffin in your workplace that is deserving of such recognition/reward, then please email me with your justification.

Technical Support Network

One of the most reward aspects of being the MA is when fellow boffins reach out to discuss aspects of our trade. Even more made contact this year than last year. This is encouraging as it shows a genuine interest in the future direction of our trade. It is also an excellent opportunity for us

boffins to develop our Technical Support Network. To that end, all ECN 421 Warrant Officers have been added to a MS Teams group where they are able to, and do, share important information that affects the trade.

Common topics raised by those that have contacted me are unsurprisingly recruitment and retention. This is followed closely by boffins having the ability to conduct work to a deeper level than they are currently permitted – which most would argue is closely related to retention! It is heartening to know that the ideas shared by our technicians is aligned with what is being discussed amongst Army and Corps leadership in order to progress and improve our trade.

I ask that all boffins please feel free to continue to contact me at any time if they have questions or ideas about our trade; it is genuinely the most enjoyable aspect of being the MA for ECN 421.

ECN 421 – Critical Trade

This year, ECN 421 was formally listed as a critical trade. A Critical and At Risk Categories and Occupations (CARCO) working group was held mid-year where causes and possible treatments were discussed. Due to restructuring within Defence, particularly within Personnel Division, an update from the SO2 CARCO has been delayed at time of writing. Once I receive an update I will promulgate that amongst senior boffins for dissemination.

Future capability introduction

There are a number of future capabilities being introduced that will provide opportunities for our technicians to provide deeper level maintenance than they are currently. These include; Landing Craft – Heavy under LAND 8710 Ph 2, HIMARS under LAND 8113, Weapon Locating Radar under LAND 8113 Ph 1, BMS under LAND 200 Ph 3. I will endeavour to communicate what maintenance technicians can expect to perform as it becomes available to me, however, given the various stages of procurement these projects are currently, much of this information isn't yet known.

St Eligius Trophy

The crowning jewel in the Corps' achievements this year would arguably have to be the conduct of the inaugural St Eligius Trophy. The competition is covered in more detail elsewhere in this magazine, but I would like to focus particularly on the three boffins that competed, and what was expected of them at the "trade stand." The stand was a combination of theory and practical assessment. Topics included basic circuit theory, optics and RF. The competitors were required to terminate a data cable and build a basic circuit. It was clear that there was some skill and knowledge fade since the competitors had left trade school, but the pressure of being under "assessment conditions" with the weight of representing your team ever-present.



Competitor at the ECN 421 stand.

Hats off to the boffins from 3 Bde, 7 Bde and ASEME (representing 1 Bde) as they had no idea what to expect, and I am sure they will be the first to admit that their pre-conceived notion of what they would be tested on was completely wrong.

The results highlighted the requirement for us as technicians to continue to be "brilliant at the basics" and not become too reliant on automated test processes. We need to maintain and develop our ability to identify and repair faults by thinking outside the box. Though this was only a competition in a simulated operation, one day these basic skills may be called upon in a real-time situation.

Final thoughts

There are a few people I'd like to recognise and give thanks. Firstly, the outgoing HOC and DHOC-G for their unwavering support of all MAs this year. Likewise, the RSM who once again has been pushing hard to progress the role of the MAs. To the outgoing MAs, thank you for all the work you have done during your tenure. Thank you for making yourselves available to attend plenaries, conference calls, and a variety of meetings – all while continuing to achieve outcomes with your regular role.

Finally, thank you to all the tradies out there – from ASM to CFN. You continue to do more with less, succeeding in ensuring capability is available for your units to achieve their mission.

I look forward to engaging with as many of you as possible next year, and as always, I welcome any interaction from my fellow boffins

Arte' et Marte'



Boffins at the Corps Conference Dinner.



Message from the Editor

WO1 Dave Clarke

Welcome once again to the 2024 edition of The RAEME Craftsman. As I say every year, I look at The Craftsman as a time capsule to record and save the Corps history on a yearly basis. So, I thank everyone that has contributed to this year's Craftsman. You now have a record of your time in the Corps saved for posterity.

We have received a wide variety of articles this year and I'm confident you will find something that should appeal to you. I would like to thank the Brigade and Formation ASMs for getting the word out to their units to submit articles. I'd also like to thank

the various RAEME Associations for forwarding me articles that have appeared in their publications.

My favourite part about being editor, is that it gives me the opportunity to read the articles first. It is very interesting to read what is happening out in the Units and the direction that Army is heading. Being the editor can also be enlightening as there is an interesting article on a WW1 unit that was a predecessor of RAEME; The Australian Electrical & Mechanical Mining and Boring Company (AE&MM&BC).

For those of that follow Formula One, you will see that RAEME may have had a hand in McLaren winning the 2024 Constructors' Championship. LT Alina Hutton did a two-month internship with McLaren in England as part her mechanical degree; she has written an interesting article for you. Continuing with the motor sport theme, there is also an update on RAEME's partnership with Matt Stone Racing.

We also have a number of interesting articles about the latest on what's happening in the Corps and across Army. This includes articles on the 2024 Corps Conference; the 3rd Brigade Maintenance Industry Placement Program (MIPP); the latest update on how training is being delivered at Careers and Advanced Training Wing (ASEME); and on the Maintenance Demonstration conducted in Korea for the 'Huntsman' Self-Propelled Howitzer and Armoured Ammunition Resupply Vehicle.

The HOC Cell and Corps Master Artificers have been extremely busy doing their best to support the members of the Corps. A result of their hard work was the running of the inaugural St Eligius Trophy, there is an article on how the competition went. This event allows the Corps to show off its talent and professionalism and will only get bigger and better in the future.

Thankfully things have slowed down on the Operational front, so this year articles are related to the Defence Cooperation Program (DCP) in Fiji and 25th Anniversary of Timor Leste'. There is also a story on RAEME units sprayed with chemicals in Vietnam in 1968.

The Unit Jottings were well supported this year and we have fantastic contributions from the Aviation Brigade and Brigade units. As mentioned above the BDE ASMs have been fantastic putting the word out and encouraging units to submit Unit Jottings articles.

I would like to congratulate all of those members of the Corps that received awards throughout the year. There are a number of articles members being presented with their Federation Stars for

40 and 50 years' service. Unfortunately, I only received a couple of photos of our very worthy Corps Awards recipients. Can I ask that when members are presented Corps Awards, that photos are sent to the RAEME HOC Cell for inclusion in the magazine?

This also goes for any other awards that our members' receive. Unfortunately, I've seen numerous posts on Facebook, in the Army Newspaper and in Association Newsletters this year of RAEME members receiving awards, yet nothing is being forwarded to HOC Cell to allow us to recognise these achievements in The Corps Magazine. It doesn't have to be war and peace, just a paragraph in a word doc and some photos with captions.

The worst part of my job as editor each year is compiling the list of members that have passed. Throughout the year, we receive emails regarding members that have passed and we monitor the RAEME Facebook pages and Association Newsletters/websites. Unfortunately, the details provided varies greatly and can be light on for detail. Therefore, I keep the details in the Vale' notices to just the members name and the month they passed. There were articles submitted for the passing of members of the Corps, BRIG Bert Barker who passed at 102 and was an original member of the Corps. In addition, MAJ Ray Norman who after a very successful career in went on to be a very active member in the RAEME Association and was directly responsible for the delivery of many of the Spanner Packs that you may have received whilst deployed on operations.

Can I ask that if you are providing articles for the 2025 Craftsman, that you submit your articles with the photos in the document? However, we also need you to send the photos separate to the article, labelled, as you want them to appear. If you just send photos that is fine, but please provide some sort of explanation of why/where the photo was taken and who is in it to give them context.

Unfortunately, due to financial constraints the number of hardcopies of the magazine being printed are being reduced. However, all editions of the RAEME Craftsman can be accessed in electronic format on the RAEME website under publications and on the RAEME Association webpage at: <https://raeme.org.au/index.php/publications/raeme-craftman-mag>. Over the past couple of years, the electronic version of the RAEME Craftsman has been available online months before the hardcopies have been printed. One of my goals for this edition is to ensure that all contributors receive a hard copy of the magazine to thank them for taking the time to submit articles. In the case where Unit Jottings have numerous contributors to their articles, I will try to send a number of copies. However, this will based on how many copies we can get printed.

Once again, I hope you enjoy the 2024 edition of the RAEME Craftsman as much as I've enjoyed putting it together.

Arte' et Marte'

ARTICLES

2024 RAEME Corps Conference

WO1 Dean Goninan

Early October 2024 saw the RAEME Corps converge on Far North Queensland's, Lavarack Barracks in sunny Townsville for the Corps Conference. This is believed to be the first time the Conference had been held in Far North QLD and with the Defence Strategic Review moving the majority of Heavy Armour to Townsville it seemed an appropriate place to host the conference. The week opened on Tuesday evening with a welcome BBQ dinner and some refreshing beverages hosted by the TSP crew at 1 RAR with event held at the Patrick Budgen Victoria Cross Club. The RAEME Association Queensland – NQ Chapter sold some merchandise thanks to WO2 Jason Ballard, with a number of people getting their hands on the tri-colour bow tie and cummerbund set in preparation for the dinner. A small but worthy presentation was conducted to WO1 D Maggenti (ASM 3 RAR), which set the scene for an interesting and enjoyable week of Corps business.



WO1 Duane “Maggs” Maggenti (42nd Class Army Apprentice Vehicle Mechanic) was presented his “Recognition of being a True Tightass” and Corps Tie from WO1 Dean Goninan (ASM 3 Bde a 43rd Class Fitter & Turner). Dean and Maggs served together in Somalia back in 1993 whilst posted to 102 Fd Wksp. Something about “Odds are Gods or you need to be Odd to be Number 1” was also mentioned. Great to see that the Army Apprentice School banter is still going strong.

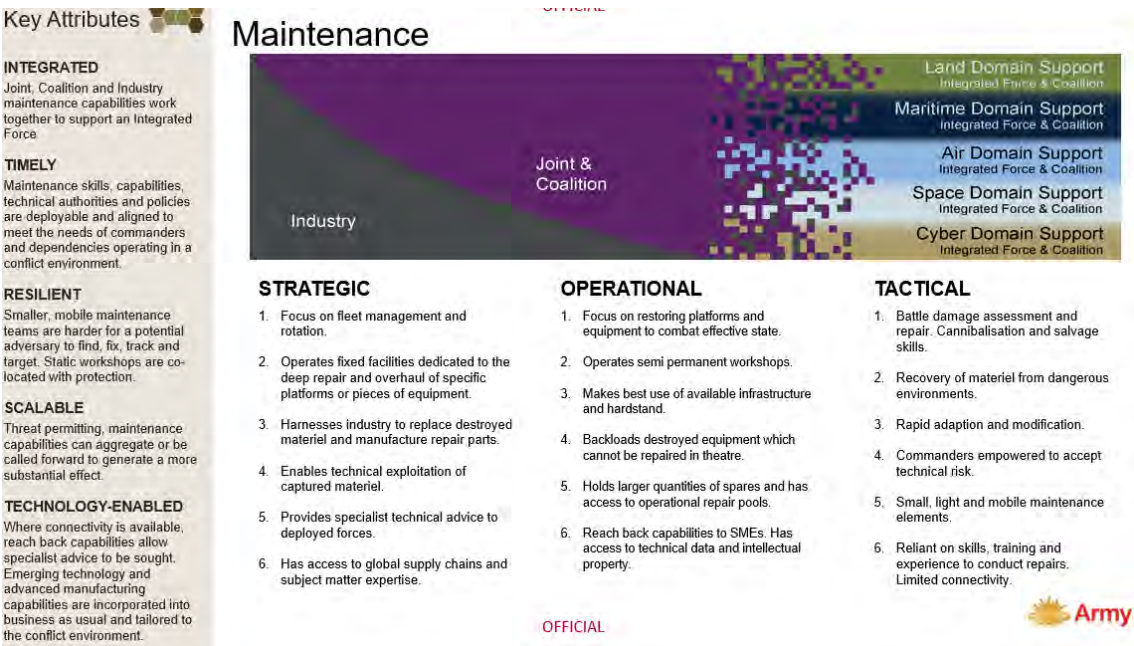


Wednesday morning the Corps was down to business with over 150 personnel in attendance (over 50% having travelled from around Australia), as well as a large amount of dial-ins online. The conference was started with a presentation on Land Capability System Priorities by our Keynote Speaker, Head of Land Capability (HLC) - MAJGEN Richard Vagg, DSC, highlighting the impacts of the National Defence Strategy, with a focus on new investment in key capabilities in the littoral manoeuvre and long-range fires areas. This provided the direction for the remainder of the conference. HLC then opened up the floor to questions, which was taken up en-masse.

We had the war fighter perspective of Combined Arms Land System Employment, which was delivered by the Commanding Officer of the 2nd Cavalry Regiment, LTCOL Ashley Hicks, on behalf of the Commander 3rd Brigade who was unable to attend due to deployment. This presentation highlighted aspects of land maintenance, integration and employment of our maintenance personnel within a combined arms environment with LTCOL Hicks’ stated his opinion on RAEME

as the key maintainers of his equipment and how the technical advice maintainers provide back to him enabled his decisions is pivotal in battlespace appreciation. It involved key sustains, improves and fixes to be considered by key stakeholders within the Corps with some being confirmed to LTCOL Hicks as already moving in the right direction.

On behalf of COL John Bouloukos, LTCOL Adam Davidson Land and COL Duncan Polich gave a presentation on the Land Domain Support System (LDSS), highlighting the need for input into the detailed functional level and application level attributes contained within the LDSS Methods of Employment (MoE). They also highlighted that these MoE are intentionally brief, allowing for our people to find novel ways of employing them in different environments; equally they provide a useful guide as we continually refine our doctrine and Land publications, and influence Army's future structures and modernisation. Focus on the Functional level attributes for Maintenance within the LDSS Tactical area would be discussed further.









LDSS Functional Level Attributes for Maintenance.

SO1 FIC Littoral Manoeuvre Program– LTCOL Mark Ripper (L8710 Project) gave a passionate update on all things Littoral Manoeuvre. He opened with a snap shot of history, highlighting the fact that Army has previously operated large watercraft. For example, the AS3051 John Monash (71.1m long) was in-service from 1955-1975 with a crew of over 50 Soldiers and Officers when deployed. This was to highlight that the Littoral Manoeuvre concept isn't anything new and we are up to the challenges that lie ahead. One such challenge is the speed of capability delivery required to meet the direction in the National Defence Strategy. Underpinning the speed to capability is the workforce and skills growth required within the ECN 222 Marine Technician trade stream. He also described the creation of an Army Marine Systems Program Office (SPO) that would absorb the current CA42, which manages the current capability and a new product schedule that will oversee the larger craft. The new Army Marine SPO will reside within Maritime Systems Division and requires dedicated and motivated degree qualified Engineering Officers and ECN 222 to guide the capability. In the fullness of time this should include Army Officers gaining qualifications as Naval Architects. He also highlighted the fact that other trades will be needed to support the capability and potentially serve on the larger vessels. He closed his discussion with a simple statement, now is the time for our trades people to get on at the ground floor of the capability. The capability webpage can be found here. While information on the workforce development can be found at Littoral Manoeuvre Workforce Review (sharepoint.com).

Littoral Manoeuvre Program

Vessel Comparison

| Legacy Fleet | | | Next-generation Fleet | | |
|---|--------------------|------------------------|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| No in-service fleet | | | Littoral Close Support Craft (CSC) Riverine & Close Support  Enables rapid manoeuvre in littoral and riverine environments for reconnaissance, patrolling or insertion of squad (+) strength dismounted force elements. Also capable of escort and security tasks. | | |
| Length: N/A | Beam: N/A | Height: N/A | Length: ~14-16m (45-60 ft) | Beam: ~3-4m (10-13 ft) | Height: ~5.0m (16.4 ft) |
| Lighter Amphibious Resupply Cargo – 5 Ton (LARC-V) Logistics Over-the-shore (NS 1968)  | | | Amphibious Vehicle - Logistics (AV-L) Over-the-shore Mobility  The Amphibious Vehicle - Logistics will provide over-the-shore mobility and sustainment to the Integrated Force in littoral environments inaccessible to landing craft or vehicles. This watercraft plays an essential role in providing access over beaches and through waterways that may be clogged with obstacles and debris. | | |
| Length: 10.7m (35 ft) | Beam: 3m (9.8 ft) | Height: 3.4m (11.1 ft) | Length: ~10-12m (32-38 ft) | Beam: ~3-4m (10-13 ft) | Height: ~3-4m (10-13 ft) |
| Landing Craft Mechanised 8 (LCM-8) Water Transport Operations (NS 1968)  | | | Landing Craft - Medium (LC-M) Shore-to-shore Manoeuvre  The Landing Craft - Medium will provide enhanced transport and deployment capability to a range of landing sites, dramatically increasing the persistence, mobility and survivability of forward deployed land forces. These vessels are lightly armed for self-protection and capable of transporting Army's fleets of tracked and wheeled vehicles. | | |
| Length: 22.5m (73.8 ft) | Beam: 6.4m (21 ft) | Height: 4.5m (14.8 ft) | Length: 50m (164 ft) | Beam: 10.5m (34.4 ft) | Height: 8m (26.2 ft) |
| No in-service fleet | | | Landing Craft - Heavy (LC-H) Inter-theatre Manoeuvre and Sustainment  Eight Landing Craft Heavy will provide enhanced transport and littoral manoeuvre capability. These vessels are lightly armed for self-protection, capable of transporting large mixed loads including infantry fighting vehicles, long range fires, other combat units and supplies across our region. | | |
| Length: N/A | Beam: N/A | Height: N/A | Length: ~80-100m (260-330 ft) | Beam: ~14-18m (45-60 ft) | Height: ~25m (82 ft) |

*The next-generation fleet images and dimensions are indicative only and do not represent any specific intention by the Commonwealth to acquire such platforms

Littoral Manoeuvre Program Vessel Comparison.

DIR LCSP Long Range Fires – WO1 Roshan Haverfield and WO2 Stephen Lambourn (Technical Advisors for project Land 8113) and accompanied by ASM 10th Bde WO1 Chris Gordon, provided a very informative presentation focused on the future of the establishment of the 10TH Bde and the future Long Range Fires capabilities. It highlights the capability being introduced and the fantastic career opportunities being presented for our ECN 421 as future SMEs.



Director Engineering – Army, COL Brett Eaton, presented an update on the ERP Tranche 1B rollout and also it provided an opportunity to farewell WO1 Melissa Corkery who had been involved in the Enterprise Asset Management side of ERP for a number of years.

Wednesday concluded with Corps Updates from HOC cell which included updates from HOC – BRIG Ben Slaughter, LTCOL Timothy Soper (DHOC-Ground and CO ASEME), LTCOL Rick Watling (DHOC – Air and CO Rotary-wing Aircraft Maintenance School) and WO1 Jon Tynan (Corps RSM).

The second day of the conference involved the DHOC – Ground, LTCOL Tim Soper and WO1 Andrew ‘Jim’ Beaman (ASM Tier C from Directorate of Land Worthiness in AHQ) setting the scene for the syndicate discussions to be conducted on the Tactical Opportunities for Success, focusing on the Functional level attributes for Maintenance within the LDSS Tactical area. These were facilitated by the Master Artificers and the outcomes back briefed in the afternoon.

The HOC’s closing remarks included guidance that moving forward the Corps messaging needed to re-focuss on promoting RAEME as the “Army’s Technical Corps”. The announcement of new Master Artificers (MA) including the ECN 229 – Vehicle Technician WO1 Jake Donnelly replacing WO1 Marc Craigie, ECN 418 – Energy Technician WO1 Jamie Redman replacing WO1 Sean Roberts and ECN 412 - WO1 Scott Breen replacing WO1 Jason Hawke. The ECN 226 –Recovery Technician is now WO1 Michael Wynd. The first ECN 222 – Marine Technician was also presented to WO1 Timothy Costin (current National Survey Officer – Hydrographic Systems Program Office-Army Marine).



WO1 Tim Costin and WO1 Dean Goninan.

The week the culminated in an All Ranks Dinner conducted at the Chauvel SGT’s Mess. The dinner layout was set as a more intimate dining experience, exposing attendees to a larger group of all ranks to fix the world’s problems. The inclusion of ORs into the event gave a great opportunity for them to experience such a great occasion and see the acknowledgement of senior dedicated Corps members in a formal setting.





SGT Leino Ahlstedt & CPL Jasmine Hendry.

The dinner presented a great opportunity to formally farewell some stalwarts of the Corps, as well as recognise some significant service lengths and contributions to RAEME and Army. These presentations included the significant 51 years of service by WO1 Russell Cliffe who joined RAEME as a 15 year old 28th Class Army Apprentice Vehicle Mechanic in 1971. LTCOL Geoff Orton provided some insights into the number of new fleets Russ had seen introduced into Army during that time and acknowledged his commitment and professionalism through a range of postings that included many mentoring roles through posting at ASEME as well as his time as the MILIS guru within AHQ. Russ has been looking forward to the rollout of SAP and the replacement of MILIS, but acknowledged he may need to hang around a little while longer (but hopefully not too long). MAJ Mick Gordon was also formally recognised for his 28 years of service with numerous deployments and postings both as an OR and as a commissioned Officer in RAEME.

WO1 Brad Sanderson provided an insight into their friendship as tradies serving alongside each other.



SGT Mark Lennox, MAJ Cody Duffield and CPL Mick Miller (3 RAR).



WO1 Dean Goninan and LTCOL Richard Hayes (served together in 1995 in Rwanda as CFN).



WO1 Russell Cliffe and MAJ Mick Gordon (Ret'd) being presented their "Recognition of Service" parchments by BRIG Slaughter.

Overall, from all reports, the conduct of the 2024 RAEME Corps Conference at Lavarack Barracks in Townsville was a resounding success and hopefully something that can be replicated again in the near future. I wish to thank WO2 Blaine Askew (EME WO, HQ 3 Bde) for his efforts in assisting me and the HOC Cell team with the organising and conduct of the event.

Arte' et Marte'



MAJ Steve Howells presented an award for service to the Corps.

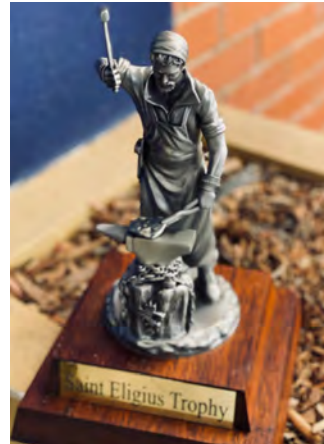


LTCOL Timothy Soper and LTCOL Rick Watling were presented awards for serving as DHOC-G&A.

Saint Eligius Trophy

It has long been a desire of senior Corps members that RAEME conduct its own Corps competition. In 2023, the incoming Master Artificers were tasked by the Deputy Head of Corps – Ground, LTCOL Tim Soper, to make it happen by the end of their tenure.

The competition was to be based in contemporary practices and be a test of martial and technical skills. It needed to test competitor's all-corps, corps, and trade skills. It also was to include a component of Battlefield Damage Assessment and Repair (BDAR) – something Corps leadership has identified as an area of future focus for the Corps.



ALTC Simulation Centre.

A broad scenario was developed and issued to regional representatives for 1, 3 and 7 Brigades so that they could select their team members by whichever means they deem appropriate. Teams were comprised of one of every ECN and a Lieutenant.

Teams arrived prior to competition day and received a number of briefs after being issued the equipment required for the competition. A welcome BBQ followed where teams had a chance to network and get to know the assessing cadre.

There was no information passed to the teams prior to the competition, therefore no one had time to prepare or revise learning or skills, this allowed the assessing cadre to observe member's actual skills and abilities as would be used in any unit. The day of competition comprised of three main activities in a staggered format; a range activity conducted at and in the vicinity of the WTSS (RP3A testing marksmanship and weapon handling and a 1km run and falling plate shoot); a FRT using the ALTC Simulation Centre; a BDAR stand and a trade stand. This meant that teams could be assessed on their all-corps, corps, and technical skills. Each of these activities nested into the over-arching scenario, enabling teams to immerse themselves into the competition.

At the completion, the assessment cadre convened to discuss scoring and decide the winner. The following day, teams were debriefed on the activity and asked for their thoughts on the competition. The winner was then announced as part of the ASEME RAEME birthday celebrations. The winners of the inaugural St Eligius Trophy 7 Brigade led by LT McAlpin and CPL Pettigrew! Congratulations to competitors it was very closely fought out.



Simulated FRT.



BDAR Exercise.

As this was the first year the competition was being run, it was imperative that it was successful in order to secure support for future iterations. As such, the scale and complexity of the competition was intentionally reduced. This meant that only three teams attended and only from RAEME ground trades. Future competitions will include all trades and more competitors.

St Eligius Trophy 2025 will build on 2024 and incorporate the valuable feedback from competitors. The complexity of assessments will increase slightly and the competition may span over multiple days. It is intended that the winning team from each year will be funded to attend the Farrier's Cup in New Zealand, and perhaps even the Duchess of Edinburgh competition in Canada or the United Kingdom.

An event like this takes a great deal of resources to bring to fruition. The greatest is time, and it took too many people a great deal of time from their primary role to name them all here. That said, a number need to be singled out for recognition. First of all, it never would have happened if LTCOL Tim Soper had not challenged the Master Artificers in 2023. Further, the funding to enable so many competitors to attend from around the country was a result of his tenacity. WO1 Jon Tynan, the Corps RSM was also instrumental in organising so much behind-the-scenes from a logistics perspective. Finally, the competition would not have been the success that it was without MAJ Brook Buchan and his staff. Thank you all for ensuring our proud Corps now has an enduring competition that its members can aspire to attend.



BDAR Exercise.



ECN 235 and 421 Trade Stands.



7 Brigade Team being presented the Inaugural St Eligius Trophy by COMDT ALTC COL Freeman

Left to right: SGT Gavin Watson 418, CFN Leon Tokley 229, LCPL Jesse Mierisch 226, CPL Mason Roberts 235, CAPT Corey McAlpin, CPL Liam Pettigrew 146.
Absent: CPL Joel Robinson 421 and CFN Blake Beattie 418.

A huge thank you must go to MAJ Steve Howells who commissioned the artwork and donated the trophy as a gift to the Corps. Without his efforts, we would only have a shield that is 15 years old to display. In addition to the large trophy that was presented to the winning team (perpetual – not to leave ASEME), each member received an individual miniature of the statue personally engraved with their details.

Employment Category Management – Ground Trades

WO1 Paul Kitching -

RAEME Employment Category Advisor (Ground)

This article is to update the Corps on our two newest Employment Categories: ECN 034 - Technician Assistant and ECN 222 – Marine Technician.

Both ECNs were created as a result of the Technical Workforce Review that was finalised at DFRT in 2022. At this point in time establishment positions are still a work in progress and once finalised will see units have the correct position numbers that will allow members to be posted in without having posting order mismatches.

ECN 034 – Technician Assistant

Recently the Employment Specifications for ECN 034 were rewritten to facilitate both Ground and Aeroskills Technician Assistants. The Employment Specifications detail that the function of the Technician Assistant is to work under direct supervision of qualified maintenance technicians and provide assistance in the provision of technical maintenance effects on Land or Army Aviation materiel and equipment.

There are subtle differences between the two TAs such as the training continuum and Aeroskills have established a Gap year for ten personnel annually. To date in the Ground RAEME side there are now two ECN 034s and hopefully once the establishment positions are finalised more will start to appear in workshops. If you are unsure about how to employ a Technician Assistant, refer to the Employment Specifications in the first instance and if still unsure contact the Employment Category Advisor at ALTC.

ECN 222 – Marine Technician

The Marine Technician category is gaining momentum and WO1 Tim Costin was appointed as the inaugural Master Artificer at the 2024 Corps Conference. A quantity of qualified ECN 146 Weapon Technicians have been identified to transition to ECN 222. One ECN 222 Warrant Officer is undertaking training at the United States Maritime Intermodal Training Department (MITD), and six ECN 222 SNCOs will complete training/advanced study in a Diploma of Marine Engineering – Engineer Watch keeper (an international qualification for Australian registered vehicles operating in international waters).

Ab-initio training has been established with a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Army and Navy that will see cohorts undertake the Navy's Marine Technician - Propulsion Course at HMAS Cerberus. One cohort has already started with the second starting in Jan 25. This will more closely meet the requirements of the new L8710 Littoral Manoeuvre Medium and Heavy Landing Craft. These new capabilities are still undergoing Training Needs Analysis that will determine exactly what training will be required and how personnel will be employed.

Changes to ASEME delivered Subject 4 and Specialist Equipment maintenance/Recovery Operator Training

WO1 Neil Taylor - Standards WO CATW

Current Specialist Equipment Maintenance Distributed Maintenance Training Model.

At the outbreak of COVID 19 in 2020, IOT continue to deliver capability to Army, ASEME made a change to use a flexible learning model for the conduct of the Ground RAEME SUBJ 4 continuum (CPL, SGT and ARTS Cse's). This involved the introduction of the training delivery model known as Distributed Maintenance Training (DMT) IOT deliver Specialist Equipment Maintenance Training. For the sake of this article, the use of the term Specialist Equipment Maintenance Courses will refer to the courses delivered at ASEME covering the maintenance of Land Material including Armoured Vehicle hulls', turret armament and fire control systems; Bushmaster Vehicle Maintenance, Artillery systems maintenance and specialist Recovery Vehicle Operator Courses (M88A2, ASLAV-R and ARVL Operator).

The flexible learning model allows the learner to spend more time in their posted location, to spend 'time with their teams' and complete their individual training via the online learning management system – ADELE.

For the SUBJ 4 continuum, the learning was conducted via full time self-paced learning and facilitated discussions with the instructors.

For Spec Equip Maint TRG – DMT allowed the tradespeople (learner for this context) to complete the theory component of the Cse using online learning and then complete the practical tasks at their unit.

The theoretical component of the Course (Cse) is the underpinning knowledge of how the systems and the components of the systems that are fitted to the equipment are constructed; and how they operate. The practical component of the course required the learner to complete a series of practical or repair tasks IAW the EMEI or Technical Manuals; and an ASEME developed task sheet. The learner completed the practical task whilst being supervised by a mentor (a maintainer/operator who has already been deemed competent and is qualified on that equipment). At the completion of the task, the learner and the mentor would sign the task sheet identified that the task had been completed correctly.

The completed task sheet was then submitted by the learner via ADELE to ASEME; where the ASEME Assessor would mark the task sheet. If a learner was unable to access the equipment or complete any or all of the practical tasks within their unit, ASEME also offered Residential/ Practical periods that are conducted at ASEME in Bandiana; and delivered on average, a practical session every three months. This allow the learner to travel to Bandiana and complete the practical requirements under supervision of ASEME Instructors.

For both the SUBJ 4 Continuum and Specialist Equipment Maintenance Training, once all the theory and practical tasks were complete IAW the standard required, the learner would be issued an ROA and the proficiency for the completion of the course.

The flexible learning model sounded simple enough for individuals to complete their training. However, for the SUBJ 4 Continuum, even though individuals were completing the training, there were constant themes in the learning review responses from the learners that:

1. The online learning, self-directed learning did not support all learning styles.
2. Online learning did not allow the learners to develop their Technical Support Network.
3. And in ASEME's opinion, gave rise to the CTRL "F" learner style and the rise of a collusion/ plagiarism culture IOT pass the course rather than learn.

For the Specialist Equipment Maintenance Training, ASEME saw a reduction in course completion; which after engagement with Units across multiple BDE's, it was identified that there were multiple factors affecting course non-completions, ranging from:

1. Units did not understand the process of how to mentor and complete the Cse, due to limited information provided to the Unit WRT how the Cse and learning was to be conducted.
2. The DMT model did not suit all Specialist Equipment platforms, specifically artillery systems and heavy armoured vehicles.
3. The DMT model did not suit all units. If the Unit did not have access to the equipment, it was very hard for the learner to complete both the theory and specifically the practical tasks. This was very evident in 3 and 7 CSSB.
4. There was a belief that the learner was required to 'break' the equipment IOT complete the maintenance tasks and there was a reluctant (at all levels of command) to allow this to occur.
5. A lack of workforce and spare parts required to complete the practical tasks, as units prioritised Unit and BDE repair tasks over training tasks.

Changes in Course Delivery

As of 30 June 2025 (the new Training Year or earlier if achievable), changes will be made to the delivery method/modes of delivery for the ground RAEME SUBJ 4 Continuum and ASEME Specialist Equipment Maintenance/ Recovery Operator Training.

SUBJ 4 Course Continuum. For the SUBJ 4 Continuum, the CPL, SGT and ARTS Cse's in general will return to centralised, face-to-face, instructor lead courses delivered at ASEME at Latchford Barracks, Bonegilla. There will more than likely be components of online pre-course learning and specific to the ARTS CSE, a requirement for the conduct of some in Unit tasks, but the majority of the CSE will be delivered by an Instructor, in a physical classroom.

Specialist Equipment Maintenance Training. For Specialist Equipment Maintenance Training, it will no longer be referred to as DMT, as ASEME will adopt a two-part blended learning delivery model, that will look similar to the following:

1. Part A of the Cse will contain some or the majority of the theory component of the CSE or tasks that are easily completed by the learner in their home location and in the Unit.
2. Part B of the Cse is the completion of the practical components of the Cse and conducted in Bandiana, using ASEME equipment and ASEME Instructors.
3. NOTE – the learning journey of each Cse may be different. That is:
 - a. The duration of Part A of the Cse may range from minutes / hours to complete out to multiple days to complete.

- b. Part A of the Cse may be able to be conducted at ASEME, if the learner wishes to access the ASEME Instructors,
 - c. The time required for the learner to complete Part A will be set by the Course Manager.
4. **Alternate Training Delivery and Assessment Options.** The attendance on ASEME delivered Specialist Equipment Maintenance / Recovery Operator Training courses is one way for tradespeople to gain qualifications. Some alternate options that are available to Unit Commanders and ASM's to gain the qualifications their people require are as follows:
- a. **Exported Training.** If a Unit or Formation requests, IAW HQ FORCOMD Exported Training Business Rules, ASEME has the ability to develop a session of the course to be able to be delivered and assessed in the unit. This process is similar in its delivery nature to that of DMT. It will require the Unit or Formation to have Assessors in the location that are competent and qualified in the course requested to be delivered; and access to the resources detailed in the Course Learning Management Package (LMP); i.e. 3RAR may request the ability to deliver and assess an M113AS4 Vehicle Maintenance Cse as they have access to the equipment and S&TE; as well as having competent and qualified NCO's within the Unit who can deliver and assess their tradespeople, in their Unit, IAW their Unit Battle Rhythm.
 - b. **Recognition.** The Recognition or RCC/RPL pathway is open to all soldiers and officers, and in the case of Maintenance / Recovery Operator courses, tradespeople who have worked under supervision of qualified Specialist Equipment Maintainers; and believe that they have completed the tasks IAW the assessment criteria within the LMP, can submit an AE651 Recognition of Prior Learning Application to ASEME to have their application assessed by ASEME and awarded the qualification for the Cse. The application is to be submitted with attached evidence to show that the tradesperson has completed the assessment criteria of the LMP. An explanation of the process and evidence types required is explained in ALTC Standard Operating Procedure 505 – Recognition. It is also highly recommended that before submitting the Recognition Application, the tradespersons' ASM or Supervising SNCO contacts ASEME for more details on what is required to be submitted.
 - c. **Workplace Assessment.** Workplace Assessment is essentially a hybrid option of Exported Training and DMT. ASEME will manage the Cse conduct and the tradesperson can complete the learning and then be assessed by a competent and qualified Assessor in the tradespersons unit.

Recovery Platform Operator Cse's. For Recovery, a delivery model has not been finalised as yet. However, some platforms may still be able to be conducted via Exported training or In-unit Workplace Assessments. ASEME are currently undertaking planning and engagement with stakeholders on the ability to delivery Recovery Operator TRG more effectively and more efficiently.

Specialist Equipment Maintenance Training Verses Maintenance Experience when assigning Technical Authority. Though not the expert in the assignment of Technical Authority, with the update of Land Material Maintenance SOP 3 – Technical Authority, the LMM SOP provides freedom to the TIS to use Technical Authority as a pathway or means of authorising tradespeople to work under supervision of qualified maintainers on Specialist Equipment IOT gain experience. As the tradesperson gains experience, the TIS has the ability to amend and update the tradespersons TA if the tradesperson by the TIS's assessment is competent to complete specific tasks with limited or no supervision.

Future Specialist Equipment Maintenance Training Courses.

M1A2SEPV3 Abrams Tank. At the completion of the Introduction into Service training of the M1A2SEPV3 Abrams Tank, ASEME will develop the steady state of Sustainment Training Version of the M1A2SEPV3 Vehicle Technician, Weapon Technician and Electronics Technician Maintenance Cse's. The M1A2SEPV3 Sustainment Cse's will provide training in the Skills and Knowledge required for Non-Abrams Tank qualified tradespeople to maintain the M1A2SEPV3 Abrams Tank. In order for ASEME to build its skills and knowledge on the M1A2SEPV3, these Sustainment Courses will be delivered as Face-to-Face Residential Courses at ASEME, North Bandiana.

ATM the development is tracking towards Quarter 4 2025 for the commencement of the M1A2SEPV3 Sustainment Maintenance Cse's for Vehicle Technician, Weapon Technician and Electronics Technician Maintenance.

M1150 Assault Breacher and M1074 Joint Assault Bridge System (JAB). Under Acquisition Program LAND 8160, Army will introduce the Abrams Tank hull based M1150 Assault Breacher and M1074 Joint Assault Bridge, Combat Engineering Vehicles into service throughout 2025. CASG and AHQ will conducted targeted Introduction into Service (IIS) Maintenance Training (focused on 3 BDE) that will be conducted in Q2 of 2025. ASEME will then develop the IIS Maintenance Cse into a Sustainment Combat Engineering Vehicle training package, with a planned commencement period of Q1 or Q2 of 2026.

What can unit commanders, ASM's and Supervisors do?:

Engage with ASEME OPS or the ASEME ASM's to discuss the changes or gain clarification on the changes.

Nominate your tradespeople for Specialist Equipment or Recovery Operator Training Courses (if your unit requires these capabilities). The tradespeople themselves do not seem to be overly proactive in developing their skills and Army's Specialist Equipment Maintenance and Recovery Capability.

If in doubt – Unit ASM's are encouraged to reach out to ASEME and request advice.

3 Brigade Maintenance Industry Placement Program (MIPP)

Purpose

The 3rd Brigade Maintenance Industry Placement Program (MIPP) has been operating since Nov 22 and has been approved by two consecutive Brigade Commanders for use by 3 Bde Direct Command Unit (DCU) RAEME personnel.

Background

In Aug 20, a 2 Cav Regt Maintenance Industry Placement Program (MIPP) Decision Brief was given support, however it took some time to get endorsement from higher HQ. This was enabled considerably by the release of the DCA Directive 08/21 – Army Secondment Program in Oct 21.

It was confirmed through HQ FORCOMD that a number of existing Defence policies enabled the exchange/secondment via the following documents:

- a. MILPERSMAN Pt 6 Ch 6 – Exchange and Secondment of Defence Members with Non-Defence Organisations (NDO), with Para 6.7 confirming that it can be endorsed at formation level.
- b. DCA Directive 08/21 dated 31 Oct 21, para 9 – Group One – Individual Short-Term Secondment, does not provide for any particular target rank, which means Senior CFN (6th Year) -SGT and LT-CAPT RAEME members could be involved and it is co-ordinated by the unit/formation.
- c. The Group One secondment (being coordinated at formation level) also aligns with the Army Partnership Guide Flyer, which would categorise this proposed industry placement as a “local partnership” that is approved at formation or command level and formalised through a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

MIPP program

The 3 Bde ASM and Maintenance Engineering Support Officer (MESO) manage the nominations and scheduling/administration for the placements for 3 Bde DCU high-performing RAEME members. It aims to provide RAEME tradesman and Engineering Officers with a desirable and professionally rewarding experience. It also aims to provide an investment in the professional development of our people and an incentive that could also facilitate retention, while enhancing Defence Industry knowledge sharing and maintenance partnerships in the Townsville region.

High-performing RAEME personnel have been detached to civilian maintenance/engineering businesses in the Townsville area. The personnel were selected by their CoC utilising a selection criteria based on readiness, character, performance and capability. The units also acknowledge that the candidate will be absent from unit activities during the full placement. Candidates conduct two to four week (maximum) placements; the duration of the placements are dependant on resource capability factors or opportunities for additional exposure and learning. The focus of MIPP is to provide the opportunity to undertake engineering design, maintenance engineering, and deeper level maintenance that is learnt during attainment of their qualification, but rarely practised within the current workshop environment. This is a factor that RAEME personnel have identified as a shortfall in technical opportunities provided within their normal role and have highlighted as a factor for considering voluntary separation.

Program placements

HQ 3 Bde ASM sought the interest and commitment for MIPP placements with Townsville based company AEP Engineering. AEP conduct a range of work such as the modification of four-wheel drive vehicles. AEP have the capacity to offer experience to a variety of trades as well as to junior engineering officers. AEP have the capacity to provide placements for three members at any one time eg. one Engineering Officer (four week period) and two ORs (for two week periods).

The Engineering Officer placement provides the opportunity to develop meaningful and required outputs to investigate and design engineering solutions for current issues on Army materiel. Whilst this is a definite opportunity, it was identified during the first placement in Nov 22, that IOT make the most of the limited time at the placement, this can be quite restrictive if the ability to develop the idea fully is not financially resourced.



L to R: WO1 Dean Goninan (3 Bde ASM), SGT Gary Kelly (3 CER), CAPT Cooper Rzepka (2 Cav Regt) and Mr Michael McMillan (AEP Engineering).

Penske in Townsville have also been added as an option specifically for our Vehicle Technicians to gain deeper level exposure to engine rebuilds, engine diagnostics and tuning, however this placement is yet to be utilised.

Outcomes sought. The outcomes sought through this program are, but not limited to, the following:

- a. Contemporary learning opportunities in conducting engineering design and deeper level maintenance.
- b. Investigations and proto-typing of engineering solutions to current issues as provided by HQ FORCOMD PE.
- c. An increased growth and development of trade/engineering knowledge and skills.
- d. Professionally rewarding experiences.

- e. Assessment overtime (S1 reports) of links to retention/less voluntary separations.
- f. To promote a culture of soldier professional/career continued development.
- g. To make 3 Bde and Townsville the posting location of choice.

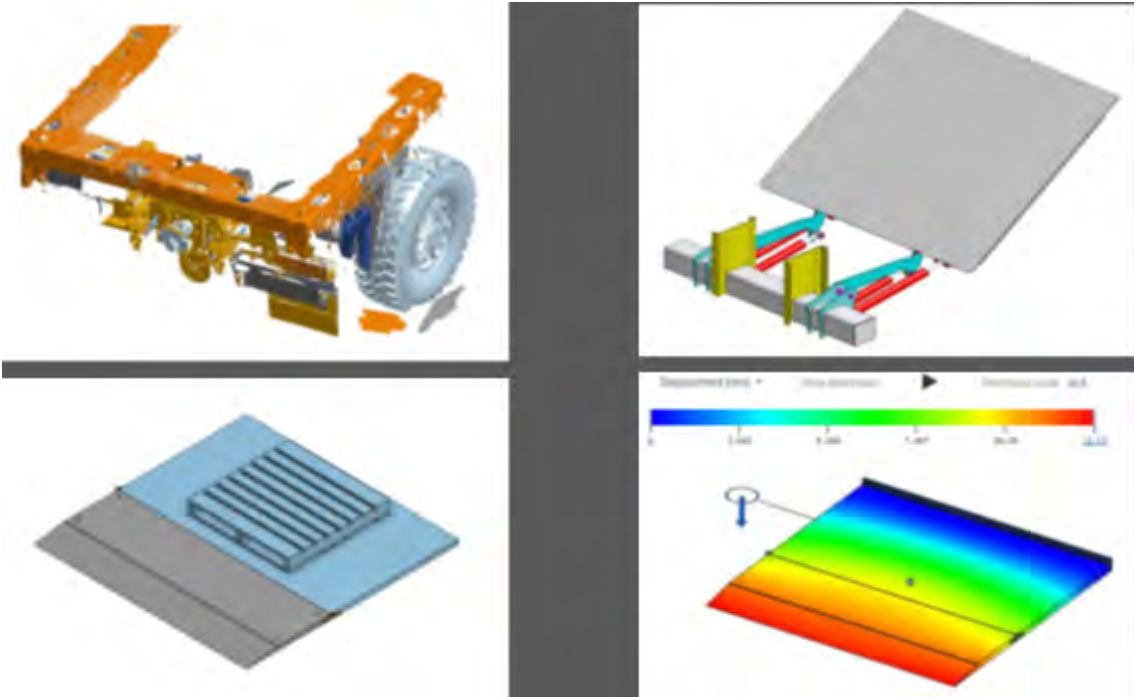
Program feedback and experiences gained to date

Whilst AEP Engineering is better suited to the ECNs 146 (Weapon Technicians) and ECN 235 (Material Technicians) and the Engineering Officers, we have had a few Vehicle Technicians also take part for a different experience in seeing some of the companies vehicle chassis modifications etc.

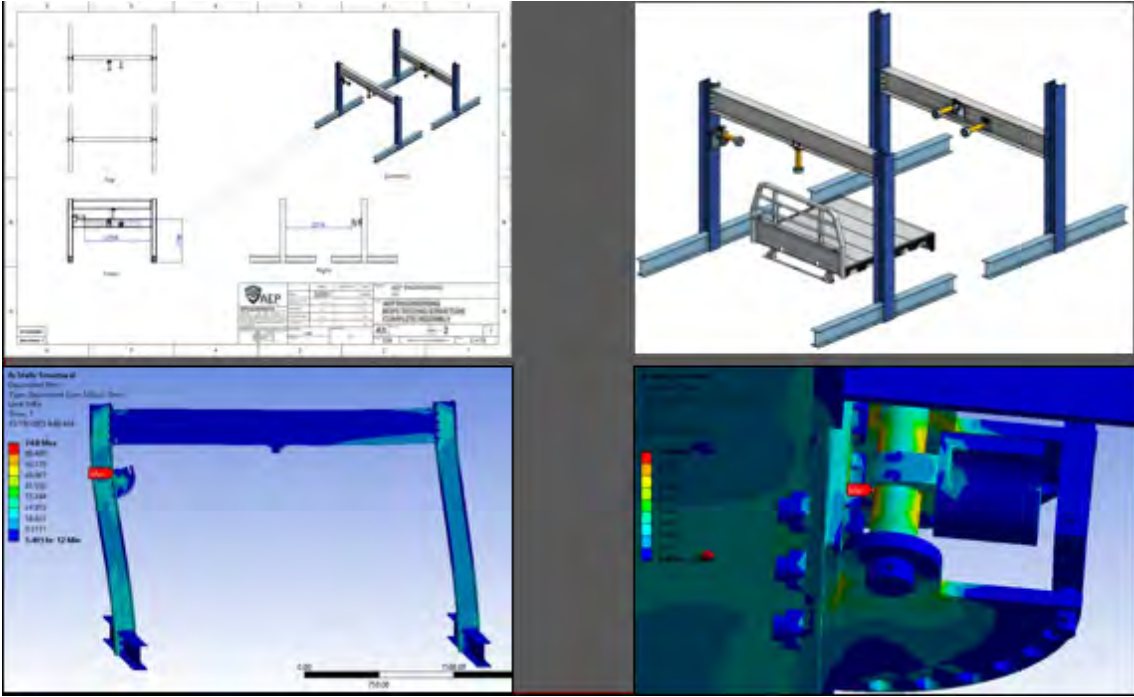
To date there has been a total of 13 RAEME members take part in the program with four ECN 146 (Weapon Technicians) and four ECN 229s (Vehicle Technicians) CFN/CPL complete the two-week placement and five Engineering Officers (LT and CAPT) complete a variety of three and four week placements. Some of the experiences received and feedback from attendees is below and as follows:

- a. Conducting stakeholder analysis to determine the needs and requirements.
- b. Developing 3D models using 3D design software OnShape for Computer Aided Design (CAD).
- c. Conducting Finite Element Analysis (FEA) of the expected load in a gantry frame, trolley hangers and sliding racks.
- d. Producing engineering drawing packs.
- e. Producing engineering FEA reports.
- f. Using 3D scanners to generate models
- g. Using 3D printers to print an initial prototype to test the correct dimensions and functionality
- h. Exposure to the manufacturing process within AEP including the considerations when sending drawing to CNC and the supply chain.
- i. Use of heavy manufacturing equipment including CNC laser cutter, CNC water-jet cutter, CNC mill and other equipment
- j. Exposure Quality assurance processes
- k. Assisting the engineering team with the testing GVM modified vehicles to ensure they met the Australian Design Rules (ADRs) particularly with break and swerve testing.

CAPT Alexander Moyes (2023): “I found my secondment to AEP Engineering to be thoroughly enjoyable and highly enriching experience. I was afforded the opportunity to conduct a wide range of engineering tasks, many of which I have not touched since my undergraduate study, in an engineering workplace, all under the direct mentorship of an experienced automotive engineer. I consider experiences like the AEP secondment to have a significant impact on retention as it allowed me to maintain currency and competency in my specialised skillset and experience a new and exciting workplace for a reasonable period before returning to my role in Army”.

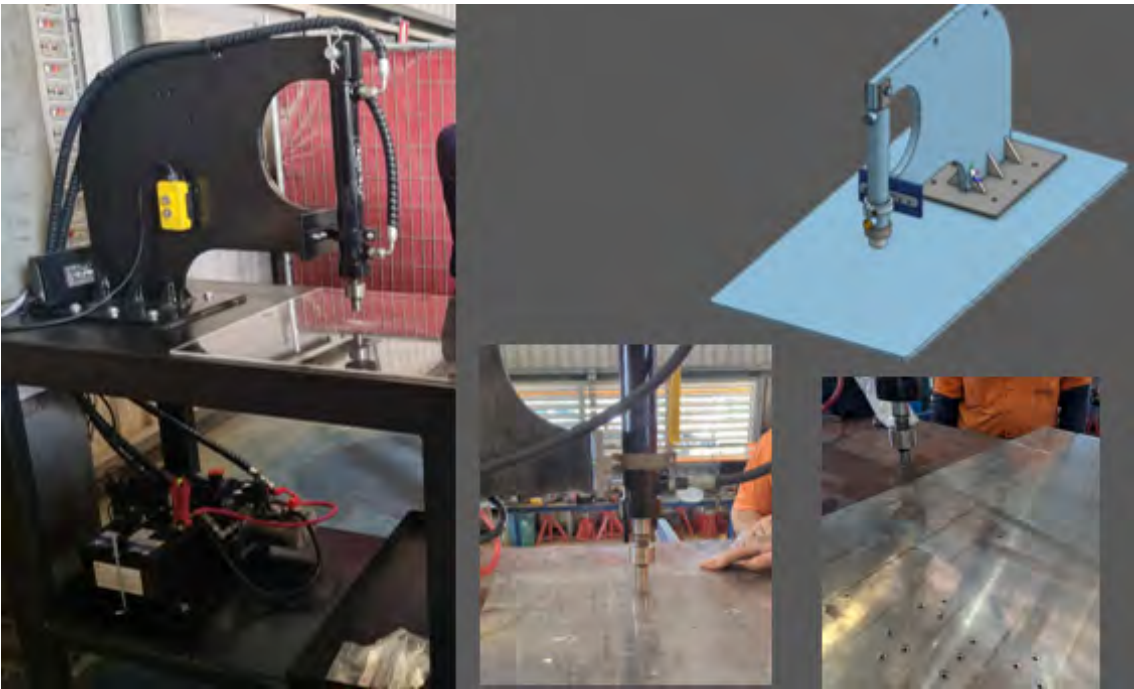


CAPT Matt Roberts (2023) – “I have gained exposure to many engineering industry practices. It has also allowed me to re-hash a number of skills taught at university, but have not been practiced since. Overall the experience at AEP is worthwhile for Army Land Engineers and I recommend future engineer LTs and CAPTs are given this opportunity”.



CAPT Cooper Rzepka (2 Cav Regt) - (2024) - “Exposure included design, analysis and then manufacturing of products. I was also able to be involved in some of the other aspects of the company such as vehicle testing. Overall I found it to be an excellent experience. This was due to the quality people that I was privileged to work with, as well as the professional development and expansion on my already existing knowledge base. I found it very useful to see how civilian processes compare to Defence.”

CPL Watson (3 CSSB) - AEP is a highly capable engineering outfit, and so seeing how they work through complex engineering projects from initial consultation, design, review/acceptance, through to manufacture was very interesting. Their small team of engineers works closely with their CAD and manufacturing team, which allows them to produce end-use products unbelievably quickly. The mechanics needed a tool in the morning, and the tool was drawn up, manufactured, and in the mechanic’s hands before lunch that day”.



Program expansion

An online presentation was conducted by WO1 Goninan and CAPT Sehmish-Lahey (3 Bde MESO) in Nov 23 for LTCOL Brendan Robinson (Chief Engineer – Army, Dir Engineering – Army, Landworthiness Branch) as part of the Army CPD Seminars. Its recording was listed on the Army Technical Workforce Professional Development Program page. The presentation highlighted the process in gaining approval for the MIPP, some of the feedback and experiences being gained by attendees and the positive benefits of the program.

As identified in the examples above, all feedback from personnel who have attended the placements has been resoundingly positive. Having utilised AEP Engineering as the primary placement for the ECN 146 and 235 and qualified Engineering Officers, ideas for possible expansion are now being considered. Expansion would provide other trade groups the opportunity to gain participate in the Program.

The medium term plan sees partnerships enhanced with existing organisations already utilised for RAEME OJTs. Partnerships will be developed with organisations not currently engaged that could provide broader opportunities and experiences.

In the longer-term expansion plan for MIPP is to transfer the program to a 1 (AS) DIV level program in each Combat Bde HQ/Regional location, enabling similar placements to be conducted by other Army units in their regional areas. Brisbane, Darwin and Adelaide would also have great NDO opportunities for this concept to be utilised with similar Maintenance Industry partners.

Conclusion

MIPP represents a significant opportunity to increase the professionalism, experience and retention of our soldiers whilst enhancing partnerships through the exchange of ideas within the Townsville Maintenance and Engineering Community.

LAND8116 Phase 1 AS9 & AS10 'Huntsman' Maintenance Demonstration

WO1 Mal Costello - SNR Tech Advisor L8116



Hello fellow RAEME maintainers.

For those of you who aren't aware, Hanwha Defence Australia (HDA) was selected to deliver the LAND 8116 Self-Propelled Howitzers (SPH) and Armoured Ammunition Resupply Vehicles (AARV) to the Australian Defence Force. The AS9 SPH and AS10 AARV are upgraded and modernised versions of the parent RoK K9 and K10 platforms, featuring enhanced protection, and digital and ammunition integration for the 155mm 52 calibre main ordnance.



The K9 is one of the most popular Self-Propelled Howitzers in the world, being used by multiple nations, including the NATO alliance.

Australia has not had any Self-Propelled Artillery since post World War Two. The Yeramba, which was based on a M3A5 Grant tank hull and a 25 pounder gun-howitzer, was built in Bendigo and was in service from 1950 - 1957.

Over the period 7 – 27 Sep 24, I represented the LAND 8116 team by attending the AS9 SPH and AS10 AARV Maintenance Demonstration (MD) which was conducted in Changwon, South Korea. This was a demonstration specifically focused on the maintenance requirements in support of the introduction of the capability. Over this three-week period, 168 light grade and medium grade maintenance tasks were demonstrated on the AS9 SPH and AS10 AARV.



The MD's function was to act as a 'show-me' activity for Commonwealth of Australia (CoA) to align an agreed selection of maintenance tasks for the AS9 SPH and AS10 AARV platforms to correspond with CoA definitions of Grades and Location of Repair and assist in the development of maintenance manuals.

Hanwha Aerospace South Korea (HAS) provided extremely knowledgeable technicians to conduct the MD. The HAS team were welcoming and open to discussing suggested improvements to the procedures displayed. Additionally, HDA provided a large contingent of FSRs (mostly Ex-RAEME) and engineers for the activity and this exposed them to the AS9 SPH and AS10 AARV platforms to assist in developing technical expertise and knowledge for their upcoming roles.

The MD delivered a very successful outcome, allowing the CoA to understand and analyse the maintenance requirements for the capability, one that will be heading to Australian shores for manufacture and ongoing maintenance.

What's next? The AS9 SPH and AS10 AARV Maintenance Evaluation is planned for late 2025. This activity will utilise qualified Defence maintenance personnel, guided by a combination of Support and Test Equipment and interactive manuals to verify that CoA support needs are met.

If you feel you would like to be involved in this new capability, please speak with your CoC and Career Advisor and seek a posting to 4 Regt, RAA in Townsville. I may see you there.

Arte' et Marte'

Australian Electrical & Mechanical & Mine Boring Company (AE&MM&MBC) or ‘Alphabet Coy’

All four horsepower of the battered single-cylinder Triumph motorcycle clatter to a halt behind a crumbling stone wall in what was once a postcard-worthy French village.

The only reminders of its long-gone inhabitants are the collapsed, burnt-out shells of homes and piles of rubble, sprinkled with the sad detritus of happier times. An imposing figure with a neatly trimmed moustache dismounts and greets the weary soldier leaning against the wall. The young soldier’s eyes are too old for his youthful face as he straightens momentarily – much safer than a salute so close to the front. “G’day sir, good to see you.”



Together they turn from the ruins and pick their way across the brown pockmarked landscape, following a path between the shell craters that gape like hungry maws ready to claim them if their attention should falter. Their route, only slightly less littered with twisted metal fragments and skeletal remains of barbed wire, winds past what were once grand trees reduced to grotesque fingers, straining to snatch unwary passers-by to their final rest. Artillery fire provides a constant low rumble in the distance, punctuated by the occasional rifle crack and machine gun burst - far enough away that these experienced soldiers pay it little heed. As they reach the rearmost trench line, barely distinguishable from the excavations made by tonnes of artillery, the two men disappear from view.

After being led through an almost impenetrable maze of earthworks, duckboards and sandbags, the tall man stoops to enter a timber-and-sandbag reinforced dugout. Maps and drawings spread across the rough wooden table beneath the dugout’s single dim bulb as he holds a lengthy conversation with the occupants. Once satisfied, the weary soldier guides him to another dugout where another young soldier pumps the contents of a grease gun through the open cover of an electric generator. They exchange brief words over the machine’s drone before he moves on. The next dugout, full of hoses, fittings and pumps, leads to a narrow passage barely a metre wide and 1.5 metres high, feebly lit by a string of incandescent bulbs. The tall man enters, hunched over, emerging some time later to be guided back through the desolate landscape to his motorcycle. He pauses, adding notes and quick calculations to his field notebook before riding away, carefully navigating the rubble-strewn cobblestone streets.

Today, 107 years later, this landscape in northern France bears little resemblance to its wartime past. Only subtle hints remain of the scene just described - a gentle rise here, a depression there and a sealed road aligned with the old wartime timber-marked tracks. Under a vibrant blue sky, golden wheat fields spread almost to the horizon, punctuated by ripening corn and emerald paddocks, where cows graze peacefully. What were once grotesque fingers have transformed into pockets of verdant woods. The soundtrack is now the chatter of birds as they flit across the fields, the distant hum of a tractor and the occasional passing car. Those misshapen shells of buildings, testament to the war’s wanton destruction, have been rebuilt and the quaint village is again recognisable. Its church bell tower once again proudly marks the centre of community life. While any contemporary RAEME soldier or officer transported back to 1917 might struggle to

recognise the landscape or relate to the methods being used to fight the war, they would instantly understand the work of that commanding figure, Major Morse, OC of the Australian Electrical & Mechanical Mining and Boring Company (AE&MM&BC) - better known as the ‘Alphabet Company’ - and his soldiers.

The work of the ‘Alphabeticals’ predates RAEME’s formation, and though their contribution was not widely known, even among their AIF compatriots, their legacy laid the groundwork for the technical expertise that has become our Corps’ hallmark and certainly has claim as part of our history. So, who were these unique soldiers? To understand this, we must first explore the context of tunnelling on the Western Front.

After von Moltke’s German Army swept through Belgium and northern France during August and early September 1914, by 1915 the war had become static, devolving into bloody trench warfare. Gains and losses with each offensive and counter-offensive would often only be measured in metres but counted in hundreds or even thousands of lives. The machine gun, then still a relatively new weapon, had forced both sides into networks of trenches, tunnels and excavations. These underground complexes often contained sleeping quarters, cook houses, headquarters, operations rooms, aid posts, and wells - providing soldiers the means to live underground with protection from the machine gun as well as the artillery and trench mortars ubiquitous on the Western Front. The reality of this new form of warfare was these trenches and tunnels were at once both sanctuary and prison and, for many, a tomb.

While infantry fought and died en masse across no man’s land, another deadly unseen war raged beneath the surface. Tunnelling in warfare has a long history – indeed, the term “Sapper” has been used since the 1800s and comes from the French word to undermine, with military engineers serving the English crown since the 15th century. But it was on the Western Front underground warfare would reach unprecedented levels of scale and complexity.

The primary function of tunnelling in offensive operations was mining enemy positions by digging deep tunnels, or saps, under enemy lines and packing them with explosives. A well-executed detonation would not only collapse enemy defences, clearing the way for assaulting infantry, but also inflict severe psychological damage. Soldiers who felt relatively safe from artillery and machine-gun fire in their underground positions – despite enduring mud, rats and lice – had the final threads of their sense of security severed facing the terrifying prospect of instant destruction from below without warning. Other support to infantry included ‘Instant’ assault trenches, which could be made over 2m deep and as long as 100m using horizontal boring and ‘push pipes’ full of explosives and synchronised cratering in no man’s land to provide additional precious cover for advancing troops.

The threat of mining led to a lethal underground game of cat and mouse. To counter enemy mining efforts, defensive tunnels would include listening galleries to detect and locate enemy saps. Tunnellers would spend hours in near-total darkness in these galleries listening for the sounds of enemy digging with a geophone – a device resembling an outsized stethoscope. Once digging was localised via triangulation from multiple listening galleries, the most common response was a camouflet, a small mine placed in a shaft dug below the enemy tunnel, usually instantly killing anyone in the vicinity. Although occasionally occurring by accident, another method of countering the threat of enemy mines was to break into their tunnels. While this could assist in gathering of crucial intelligence and allow the enemy tunnel to be destroyed further away from friendly digging works it risked brutal hand-to-hand combat. Trying to remain undetected in these pitch-black spaces as small as 0.7m wide and 1.4m high, could mean identifying friend from foe by feeling for the presence of epaulettes on uniforms. While the knuckle knife was the weapon of choice to dispatch a foe, the tools of the trade such as picks could be equally effective.

Enemy tunnellers were not the only threat. Beyond the common perils of trench warfare - constant artillery barrages, trench mortars, snipers, enemy raids, gas attacks and disease, the very nature of the work could be treacherous. Tunnels could collapse with little warning due to unstable ground, sudden flooding was a constant threat and poor ventilation could lead to build-up of toxic gases and suffocation with little to no symptoms until too late. Just like generations of miners before them, canaries and mice often served as lifesaving sentinels. The 2010 film, Beneath Hill 60, captures a glimpse of the unique brand of terror and psychological strain faced by the tunnellers on the Western Front working in these dark, confined and deadly conditions.



The author in the Caterpillar Mine crater on the northern end of the Messines Ridge. The mine was detonated by the 1st ATC and is the subject of the film Beneath Hill 60.

The first use offensive tunnelling of the war occurred in late 1914, when German engineers detonated eight mines beneath the Indian Sirhind Brigade's positions near Festubert. The attack was devastating killing over 800 soldiers and creating such panic among the survivors that the subsequent German assault met little effective resistance. While tunnelling was also a feature of the Gallipoli campaign, these operations were relatively limited and conducted by infantry pioneers rather than specialist units, as was initially the case on the Western Front. It was the Germans who first recognised the potential of specialised units, using many soldiers who had been miners in their civilian lives. By mid-1915 it was clear to the British command that German mining operations were becoming increasingly systematic and sophisticated. In response, the British Army quickly established their own tunnelling companies, with initial units being formed in the field by transferring men already on the front with the requisite skills. The need was so urgent that newly enlisted Sappers might go from digging London's Underground or in Welsh coal mines to digging saps three weeks later.

So how is tunnelling on the Western Front significant to our RAEME corps history? Following the rapid establishment of nearly 30 British tunnelling companies between July and October 1915, Australia proposed forming its own mining corps as a unit of the Australian Corps of Engineers – a proposal accepted in October 1915. One of the effort's champions was Professor Edgeworth David, a Sydney University geologist. Far from being merely a respected academic, he was eminently practical, familiar with tough environments (a veteran of Shackleton's 1907-1909 Nimrod polar expedition) and had had extensive involvement in the mining industry. Under his guidance, and insistence, the Australian Mining Corps (AMC) would be much better equipped than the existing tunnelling companies already engaged in France, with extensive workshop plant and mining support equipment. The Corps recruited and trained a wide range of expertise relevant to mining including geologists, engineers, surveyors, miners and crucially, many technicians and trades that support mining operations.

After an inauspicious start - their troopship Ulysses ran aground in Fremantle harbour - the AMC arrived in Marseilles on 5 May, 1916 and immediately entrained for Hazebrouck in northern France. The newly arrived AMC did not align with the organisational and operational hierarchy of the established tunnelling companies, so within a month the AMC was disbanded and split into three independent tunnelling companies, mirroring the established

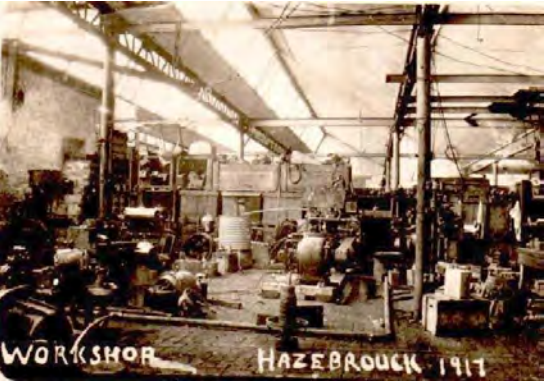


The ATC Colour Patch.

structure of the allied companies from Britain, Canada, New Zealand and South Africa. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd Australian Tunnelling Companies (ATC) would each operate in different sectors for the rest of the war.

The arrival of the AMC in northern France coincided with a significant advances in the Allied tunnelling efforts across the front. Control of all tunnelling, mining and large-scale excavation across the front had been centralised under the Inspector of Mines, Brigadier General Robert Harvey, based at GHQ, who initiated a comprehensive survey of the front. The survey mapped water tables, their seasonal changes and soil types – clay, chalk, sand – critical as each required a very different approach. The newly commissioned 57 year-old, now Major, Edgeworth David quickly became the Chief GHQ geologist and in addition to being responsible for GHQs geological survey, soon all significant mining and dugout construction for the entire front passed through his office for approval.

Prior to 1916 tunnelling operations had been comparatively poorly equipped, prone to waterlogging, struggling with poor lighting and inadequate ventilation. The detailed geological understanding gained through survey efforts enabled the Allied forces to efficiently allocate resources and greatly expand their tunnel systems both horizontally and vertically, reaching depths of up to 30 metres in some areas. This was quite a remarkable achievement, particularly under wartime conditions, with the German tunnellers unable to match the depth of Allied tunnels and indeed had not believed the depth of Allied tunnels was possible in some areas. This expansion of Allied tunnelling activity however created a corresponding increase in the demand for the limited supply of specialist equipment such as pumps and power generators.



Alphabet Company's electrical and mechanical workshop, Hazebrouck, 1917 (SGT E. 'Hughie' Dodd via Mr Keith Dodd.)

Following the AMC's dissolution, the bulk of its specialist equipment was consolidated into a single company - the Alphabet Company. This new Company now held, and was responsible for boring equipment, petrol engines, portable electricity generators, lighting, ventilation fans, electric and hand-operated water pumps. Additionally, it held the tools required to keep the equipment functioning: heavy generators, lathes, drilling and machining equipment, forges, emery wheels and welding apparatus. This totalled some 270 tons, sufficient to equip a Machine Shop, Fitting and Engine Shop, Electrical Shop,

Plumbing Shop, Carpenters Shop, Welding and Blacksmith shop. The Company also absorbed the majority of trades - machinists, electricians, plumbers, mechanics and others – previously dispersed throughout the AMC. It was the only unit of its kind on either side of the conflict and was put under direct command of the Inspector of Mines, tasked with supporting Allied tunnelling from Nieuport in the north; to Arras in the south.

The Alphabet Company was by far the smallest of the companies formed from the AMC, remaining around 260 soldiers and seven officers throughout the war. While the tunnelling companies quickly deployed to their respective sectors from Hazebrouck, the Alphabet Company remained, setting up a headquarters in the former meat market with temporary workshops in an adjacent barn. Workshops were soon moved to the more suitable former cycle accessory factory nearby and the Company remained here until the German summer offensive of 1918 forced a retreat to St Omer. Within six weeks of arrival in France, the Company's workshops were functioning and the detachments were deployed across 60km of front including Messines Ridge, Givenchy and Vimy.



*Alphabet Company's blacksmith workshop, Hazebrouck, 1917
(SGT E. 'Hughie' Dodd via Mr Keith Dodd).*



*Alphabet Company's plumbing workshop, Hazebrouck, 1917
(SGT E. 'Hughie' Dodd via Mr Keith Dodd).*

The Alphabet Company's NCO-led detachments were responsible for setting up and running 'engine rooms', electric lighting, pumping stations – air in, water out – and maintaining the other mining equipment, ventilation and rescue gear, essential for tunnelling operations. Engine rooms, housing an electric generator, were initially located in a dugout or cellars, as close as possible to the front lines. While this proximity had advantages in managing the electrical load, it created other challenges; an engine room was a clear combat indicator of key headquarters or tunnelling activities, making high value targets for artillery and raids. As the war progressed, higher voltages were used, allowing engine rooms to move to less vulnerable locations further from the front line. Maintaining power was vital to tunnelling efforts – ventilation failure and flooding caused by the loss of pumps could be as lethal as enemy action. Shallow or surface laid power lines were particularly vulnerable to artillery and Alphabet Company electricians regularly repaired cut lines, sometimes multiple times a day, while under fire.



The exterior of the Alphabet Company's No. 2 engine room, Givenchy, 1918 (AWM H12798).



Switchboard of the engine room in an old cellar in the communications trenches at the side of La Basse Canal, Givenchy 1918 (SPR J.A. Lockrey).

The Company's Officers served as roving supervisors for the scattered detachments, coordinating equipment and other dependency requirements and managing maintenance and repair schedules. The movement of men and equipment was done by the unit's small vehicle fleet - one car, one box car, four lorries, and three motorbikes. Despite the relatively short distance from Hazebrouck to the front and poor or non-existent roads, unit records from January to March 1918 showed the vehicles travelled 25,600km. Major Morse alone logged 56,000km by car and motorcycle during his time in northern France, not including the tens of kilometres he would often walk a day back and forth through the trenches. This extensive coverage meant that the Alphabeticals contributed to every major British offensive in 1917 including Messines, Arras and Cambrai.



The Alphabet Company's vehicles.

The accommodation at the Company's Hazebrouck base, some 40km from the front line, was comfortable compared to the forward detachments, providing the men a welcome reprieve from the front line. The ingenuity of the soldiers made the most of available resources including such luxuries as four hot showers, fed by the cooling systems of the heavy machinery. Just as equipment was pushed forward and returned for repair, so too were the men rotated back from the front lines for rest. At any given time, most of the soldiers labouring in the main workshop were on their rest before returning to their forward detachment. Typically, detachments would stay in location for the supported tunnel's life, remaining in location as other units rotated in and out and sharing the same brutal conditions in the trenches - constant bombardments, enemy raids, gas attacks and disease - as the units they supported. This often resulted in the Alphabet Company forming stronger bonds with the soldiers of other Commonwealth nations than their AIF counterparts.

The Alphabeticals specialised work required ingenuity, technical skill, and unwavering dedication to using their technical skills in support of their fellow soldiers. The tunnellers' work was secretive by nature with the work of Alphabeticals a more obscure part of that effort. Nevertheless, the Alphabeticals were well led and quickly established a reputation among those who knew of their work for their diligence and dedication to duty under trying conditions, exemplified in Corporal John Nancarrow's Distinguished Conduct Medal citation:

"...While in charge of the pumping and electric power of mining systems, two of his three engines were smashed, and the mines commenced to flood.

By working continuously, in 56 hours he installed a new plant under shellfire, and by keeping the remaining set running continuously heavily overloaded, the water was kept from rising more than two feet in the galleries...."

This was just one of the numerous individual acts of heroism, as the Alphabeticals worked tirelessly to keep the electricity and air flowing into the tunnels and the water flowing out in the most unimaginable circumstances. For their work, members of the Company were awarded: a Distinguished Service Order, two Military Crosses, five Distinguished Conduct Medals, three Military Medals, and fifteen Meritorious Service Medals.

The Alphabeticals didn't charge 'over the top' like the infantry, but fought as infantry on occasion. They might not have been digging the tunnels under the enemy by hand, but they often worked side by side with the tunnellers deep underground, helping ensure their comrades survived the many subterranean hazards. Twenty members of the Alphabet Company never returned home, five returned home after enduring the ordeal of being a POW. Other members became casualties of the war after the guns fell silent – surviving the trenches only to succumb to suicide and health complications as a result of their service. Major Morse suffered from ailing health after returning from Europe, likely in part due to long-term effects of multiple gas attacks and died at just 39 years old.

Today, just a few minutes' drive from the Somme in stifling July heat, the picturesque fields show few signs of the underground war – the significance of the faint reminders recognisable only to those intimately familiar with this place's history. If not Major Morse, then one of his Lieutenants trod this ground, coordinating dependency requirements and managing repair and maintenance

schedules. Soldiers of the Alphabeticals plied their trade across the road in the most trying of conditions. Local residents, fascinated by the history beneath their feet and the soldiers who came from half a world away, formed ‘La Association Les Diggers de la Cote 70’ to honour the Australian tunnellers’ sacrifice. The site they chose for the memorial is on the outskirts of the village of Hulluch. It overlooks the fields where the battle of Loos and Hill 70 took place. The memorial stands directly above tunnels dug by 3 ATC with support from an Alphabeticals detachment.



The dedication of the memorial on 20 July 2024 brought together families and descendants of ATC and Alphabet Company soldiers, mayors and officials from the surrounding area, military representatives, French veteran Porte de Drapeau (flag bearers) local youth, service associations as well as local residence. Representatives from the RE, RAE and RAEME had the honour of laying wreaths on behalf of their Corps and in a poignant gesture, soil from the soldiers’ home regions - WA, NT, Northern QLD - was scattered to mingle with the earth they had toiled in and bled for.



Wreaths being laid by representatives of the RE, RAE and RAEME Corps at the memorial on the outskirts of Hulluch.

After the armistice, the AE&MM&BC was disbanded, with most members returning home to resume, or try to resume, their interrupted civilian life. Though their service was decades before the formal establishment of the RAEME Corps, the men of the Alphabeticals certainly embodied the spirit. **Arte’ et Marte’**

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www.tunnellers.net

Authors note:

The grandsons of the OCs of the two Companies recognised by the memorial (3 ATC and AEMMBC) extended an invitation to both the RAE and RAEME HoCs to attend the dedication of the Memorial. The author MAJ Shaun Brown is currently posted to the south of France as the Technical Liaison Officer for ARH Tiger. Deputy HoC-A LTCOL Watling contacted him regarding attending the ceremony on behalf of the HoC. MAJ Brown is ex-enlisted RAE and this provided added interest for him. An invitation was also passed to the Embassy in Paris and the current Australian student at Ecole de Guerre (French Staff College) is RAE and the Embassy got in contact with him about representing the RAE HoC, which he did. MAJ Josh Watson is an ex-OC of 20 EOD SQN which traces its history to 1ATC, this gave him added incentive to represent his Corps.

McLaren Racing Internship

LT Alina Hutton completed a 2 month internship late last year, as part of her mechanical engineering degree, with the McLaren F1 Racing team at the McLaren Technology Centre (MTC) in the UK.

"I have always had a very keen interest in motorsport, but never in a million years did I think I would have been given the opportunity to work at McLaren" Alina said.



McLaren is a name synonymous with motor racing, and their success is plain to see at the MTC. The sweeping, metal and glass-fronted facility highlights their place at the cutting-edge of engineering excellence. Step inside and you're greeted by the famed "Boulevard", proudly displaying some of the finest race cars ever developed and driven by the greatest drivers to ever step into a car – Ayrton Senna, Alain Prost, the man with his name above the door Bruce McLaren, and many more.

Gaining Experience in the world of Motorsport

Alina had initially reached out to Australian-based V8 Supercars teams when it came time to settle on a work experience placement. However, Alina had a big dream and took her shot for her chance in F1. Taking that chance led her to travelling to the other side of the world and being embedded in one of the most advanced mechanical engineering programs in the world.

V8 super cars offers many work experience placements for many roles including mechanics and engineers within Australia. If you are interested Alina highly encourages you to reach out and gain experience within the motorsport industry.

"I have now got my foot in the door which opens up so many possibilities within my time in Defence and after"



LT Hutton at MTC.

Opportunities with Defence

Completing work experience is a requirement of all Engineers alongside their degree in order to become fully qualified however, many roles require similar industry experience.

"It took a lot of admin in order to get my work experience approved in order to work and travel overseas however, there are times when it is worth fighting for a once in a lifetime experience" Alina said.

"Really there's no such thing as good luck, its good preparation and hard work"

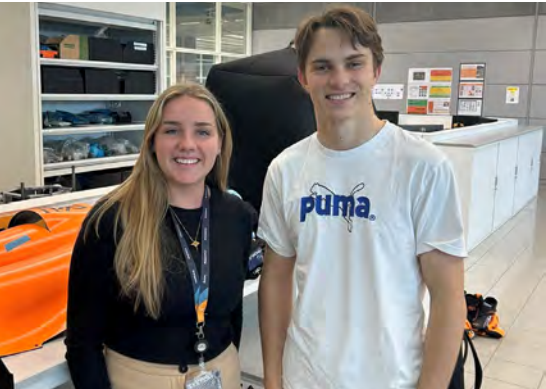
– Bruce McLaren

And, if you are still reading ... more on her time at McLaren



Spending time with a racing team also has some other perks – such as going for a spin in the McLaren Artura (capable of reaching speeds above 300km/h)

and meeting McLaren's Australian Formula 1 superstar, Oscar Piastri (right).



Of course, work experience is about more than fun perks and Alina says her time at McLaren was invaluable for her to gain a greater understanding about putting mechanical engineering concepts into practice.

"I was treated as an engineer in all aspects of my work. I was required to organise meetings, establish progress reports and complete the design process just as any other engineer in my department would." Alina said.

MEANWHILE ON THE TRACK ...

Azerbaijan 2024:
Piastri P1

Singapore 2024:
Norris P1, Piastri P3

Abu Dhabi 2024:
Norris P1

McLaren F1 won the constructors championship for the first time since 1998

Alina worked within the Design and Engineering Group at McLaren Racing and as a sign of the highly secretive environment those working in the ultra-competitive world of motor racing face, she was contractually obliged to not provide any specifics about what she worked on.

Last year also saw Alina commissioned as an officer in the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers Corps. She will continue on her journey with the Australian Army in 2025, while also looking for opportunities to further explore her passion for racing – she is planning to complete her honours thesis with Porsche in Sydney.

And perhaps Alina will be lucky enough to be invited back to McLaren one day on a more permanent basis, considering her short stint with the team coincided with them winning the 2024 Formula 1 Constructors World Championship.

Luck? There's no such thing.



Matt Stone Racing

The partnership between Matt Stone Racing (MSR) and RAEME continued to grow in 2024. This year, 22 technicians from units around the country joined the team working alongside the pit crew for a race weekend. The cohort spanned various ranks and SERCATs with RAEME technicians at every race except New Zealand.

Participants join the team for the entire event, helping set up the pits, prepare and repair vehicles, and pack-down. They are fully integrated into the team, joining the vehicle on the starting grid, conducting repairs and adjustments to the vehicle (at times, early into the morning), and even joining the team to celebrate the victories!

Selection to join MSR for a race weekend is highly competitive and the nominations are made by senior corps members in each location. High performing technicians are given the opportunity by displaying the right attributes such as initiative, resilience and work ethic, as well as technical skills.



Conducting repairs in Adelaide after major incident.



Head of Corps Cell joins Vehicle Technician on starting grid.

The partnership continues in 2025. One of the new developments is that the two best-performing technicians from the previous year, as voted by the MSR team, will be funded by the Corps to attend the Bathurst 1000. This enduring initiative was proposed by team owner, Matt Stone, and agreed to by the HOC, BRIG Slaughter.



Matt Sone Racing join RAEME birthday celebrations in Brisbane.

Women in RAEME Breakfast inspires & celebrates



Women in RAEME 24 (L-R) Invited guest LTCOL Wendy Wheadon, Guest Speaker LTCOL Krystal Wright, VIP COL Lauren Wright, CPL Emily Cope, Suzanne Shipp, LT Bec Rasmussen.

On November 29, the RAEME Association of Queensland (RAQ) proudly sponsored the Women in RAEME (WIR24) Breakfast as part of the RAEME Corps' birthday celebrations at 106 Field Workshops, 7 CSSB. The "Bring Your Daughter" breakfast was a resounding success, drawing a strong attendance and providing a unique opportunity for families and friends to tour the workshops and witness firsthand the environment where RAEME personnel contribute to Army capability.



WIR24 L-R Suzanne Shipp, Guest Speaker LTCOL Krystal Wright, LT Bec Rasmussen and CPL Emily Cope take part in the Q&A.

RAQ Chair Pete Matthews opened the event with a ‘spelling out’ of RAEME’s origins and introduced the distinguished keynote speakers, Colonel Lauren Wright, Project Director Land 1508 Greyfin and Lieutenant Colonel Krystal Wright, Director of Land Engagements and Communications, AHQ. Both officers shared compelling stories of their journeys into the Army, highlighting how they have overcome challenges and adapted throughout their careers. Their experiences inspired the audience, showcasing the resilience and determination that defines the RAEME spirit.

The event also featured a panel discussion moderated by Suzanne Shipp, General Manager of Operations and Maintenance at APA Group. Suzanne, an ex-apprentice and former RAEME Engineering Officer, facilitated an engaging conversation with panellists Corporal Emily Cope (Vehicle Technician, 7 Signal Regiment), Lieutenant Rebecca Rasmussen (Engineering Officer, 7 CSSB), and Lieutenant Colonel Krystal Wright. The discussion delved into life in the military, emphasising the unique camaraderie and professional growth within the RAEME Corps family.

A highlight of the morning was the participation of Quilts of Honour, an organisation dedicated to supporting veterans. Corporal Emily Cope was honoured to receive one of their cherished quilts, a gesture symbolising warmth, protection, and gratitude. Special thanks were extended to Michelle Lafferty and the team at Quilts of Honour for their continued support of the veteran community.

Now in its second year, the Women in RAEME Breakfast aims to foster camaraderie among the women of RAEME, promote the Corps and its association, and encourage more women to consider a career in the military, specifically within RAEME, where there are many opportunities for growth and adventure.

Gratitude was extended to Lieutenant Rebecca Rasmussen and Suzanne Shipp for their outstanding efforts in organizing the event, and to CO 7CSSB Lieutenant Colonel Amber Humphreys for graciously hosting, and invited guest CO 11CSSB Lieutenant Colonel Wendy Wheadon. The event underscored the enduring strength of the RAEME sisterhood and its vital role in the Corps’ legacy.



WIR24 L-R Michelle Lafferty Quilts of Valour QLD Rep presents CPL Emily Cope with a Quilt.



VIP COL Lauren Wright presents at the WIR24 event as VIP.

39th Operational Support Battalion Exercise Kanga Return 2024 (RAEME)



Over the period 27 July to 09 August 2024, a contingent of thirty military leaders attended the third iteration of the annual Army-led Exercise Kanga Return 2024 (Ex KR24). Organised by the 39th Operational Support Battalion, the contingent undertook a facilitated nine-day trek that started at Kokoda and moved along the Kokoda Track to Ower’s Corner, following the footsteps of Australia’s historic actions in defence.

The contingent consisted of a diverse selection of Army corps, which enabled participants to consider the parallels between their experiences within the modern Australian Army and the experiences of the soldiers who fought throughout the 1942 Kokoda Campaign. Ex KR24 not only represented an opportunity for members of the ADF to gain an intimate understanding of the perils faced by Australian and Japanese soldiers throughout the Kokoda Campaign, but also to commemorate the courage, sacrifice and mateship of the Australian soldiers who bravely fought for their country.

CPL Scott McCarthy (2 FSB), CPL Daniel Sheil (1 Avn Regt) and LTCOL Matt Barnes (CO 39 OSB) of The Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (RAEME) completed the trek with the contingent. CPL McCarthy and CPL Sheil explained their experience as a “100km walk/climb/scramble” between Kokoda Village & Ower’s Corner and appreciated the conduct of the exercise.





Ex KR24 'was an experience we never thought we would ever partake in until given the opportunity by 39 OSB' as it 'followed the advance of the Australian soldiers from Kokoda Village to Imita Ridge, until the Japanese forces commenced their retreat'.



LTCOL Matthew Barnes – 39 OSB,
CPL Daniel Sheil – 1 AVN REGT,
CPL Scott McCarthy – 2 FSB.

When reflecting upon their experiences, CPL McCarthy and CPL Sheil stated that 'overall, the Kokoda Trek is an experience that every Australian soldier should strive for at least once in their lifetime in order to gain an understanding of Australia's historical involvement throughout associated conflicts during the Kokoda Campaign. It was a challenging experience (even with porters carrying our packs), which pushed us to our limits. We would recommend Exercise Kanga Return to anyone who is given the opportunity to take it.'

LTCOL Barnes stated "The remarkable efforts of our forefathers during the Kokoda campaign cannot be overstated.

The 39th Infantry Battalion were poorly equipped, with limited training against a numerical superior adversary employed a

successful delayed defence in the most unforgiving conditions. As the supervising officer for this activity LTCOL Barnes also stated "I am incredibly proud of this cohort of junior leaders on Ex KR24. They made a conscious investment to learn about our history while demonstrating resilience and tenacity as they completed this activity". 39 OSB has commenced planning the next iteration of Ex Kanga Return with a call for nominations expected to go out across Army in March 2025.

Having gained an intimate understanding of jungle warfare tactics, military strategy, key historic battles and the bravery of individual soldiers throughout the Kokoda Campaign, CPL McCarthy, CPL Sheil and LTCOL Barnes returned to their units with a renewed sense of pride and education of Australia's military history.

RAEME Military Medals

Prior to the Tobruk battle, 2/2 Army Field Workshop were asked to supply three men to accompany the Tank Corps for the purpose of effecting minor repairs during the battle.

Their after action report merely stated the repairs carried out on 6 x Matilda tanks (out of 18) – what wasn't mentioned was that:

- this work was of a nature which would normally only be carried out in a full workshop;
- it enabled 5 of the tanks to return to the battle; and
- was carried out under heavy enemy shellfire.

In fact these men can claim to be the first ever to carry out welding in the front lines during an action. As a result of this action SGT W Allison, Pte E Dunning and Pte K Smith of 6 Recovery Section were awarded the military medal.



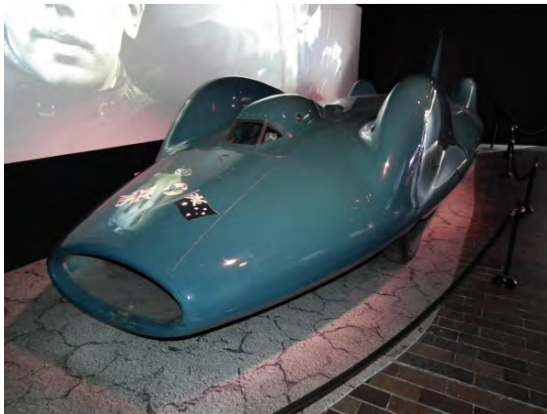
Bluebird Bluebell

Early in 1963 Donald Campbell selected Lake Eyre as a suitable site for his attempt on the world land speed record in his car ‘BLUEBIRD’. A RAEME team was deployed in April 1963 to maintain the fleet of Land Rovers used by the SA Police Force, who assisted in the project, and to help Campbell whenever possible. One of these tasks as recovery.

A 4 ton recovery vehicles was stationed one at each end of the prepared track during all speed trials; their task being recovery of ‘BLUEBIRD’ if required. When the Recovery vehicles were driven on to the Lake dual front wheels were fitted. Rain delayed the speed attempt and after the Lake became flooded the attempt was temporarily suspended. All the Army equipment, together with the ‘BLUEBIRD’ project equipment, needed to be recovered to the bank of the Lake. As it was feared that the vehicles used for the recovery might break through the salt crust on the Lake, they were moved out in extended line, loaded, and returned to shore in the same manner.

A track was cut along the bank of the Lake, ‘BLUEBIRD’ was loaded on to a timber jinker whose prime mover was a ‘no goer’, and the whole load was towed by a 4 ton Recovery Vehicle to higher ground. It became a race between the convoy arriving at the ford and the floodwaters arriving there. The convoy eventually arrived safely at the base camp at Muloorina station with only one hour to spare before the ford became flooded.

Campbell returned to Lake Eyre in June 1964 but found that the prepared surface of the Lake was now useless. A new track was prepared, on which ‘BLUEBIRD’ finally attained a speed of 403 mph on 17 July 1964 (well below its theoretical 450 mph theoretical top speed), and thus the world land speed record. A RAEME team supported this attempt as well. Immediately after his attempt Campbell took his Bluebird Boat to Lake Dumbleyung in WA where he achieved his seventh water speed record on 31 December 1964, at a speed of 276 mph. He had become the first, and so far only, person to set both land and water speed records in the same year.



OPERATIONS

Defence Cooperation Program (DCP) – Fiji

MAJ C Court - ADF Logistics Embed, Republic of Fiji Military Forces

The Defence Cooperation Program (DCP) – Fiji and Defence High Commission staff total 15 uniformed and APS positions permanently posted in Fiji. The role of the DCP is to promote the professionalism and capacity of the Republic of Fiji Military Forces (RFMF), support with capability delivery, improve the ADF's capacity to work with the RFMF, and build and sustain enduring people-to-people links between both militaries. On a day-to-day basis this sees a dozen ADF members embedded into the RFMF across a number of functions including training, HR, intelligence, operational plans, Navy, engineering, and logistics.

Throughout the year, the DCP is supported by 1 (AS) Div through the conduct of Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) under the Coral Warrior training series, which provide short term, intensive training that is tailored to meet the needs of the RFMF.

The first logistics MTT of 2024 was conducted by 7 CSSB in April, and included the conduct of a Bushmaster PMV Maintainers Course and Armourers Course, each delivered over a 4 week period. The training teams only had a short time on the ground to get acquainted with the RFMF workshop, before getting started on their two courses. The RFMF Vehicle Maintenance Facility lacks the comforts of an ADF Workshop, with amenities including hard standing, four walls and a roof. None the less, the training team were able to conduct two 40,000km services of RFMF PMVs, and conduct assessments on pack lifts. The armourers course worked through similar limitations, with ST&E and CL IX parts heavily limited in support of a weapon fleet that includes American, Korean, and Russian weapon systems. The training team were able to provide weapon maintenance training to the attending students, as well as making suggestions for what ST&E would be best suited to supporting the fleet going forward.



CFN Rix (7 CSSB) oversees the pack removal of a PMV by RFMF VM students.

In mid-2024, the RFMF received their purchase of an additional 14 reconditioned PMVs from Australia. The delivery was conducted by HMAS Choules, with a number of RAEME Vehicle Technicians supporting from units across Australia. This tiger team conducted delivery condition checks on all vehicles, and helped the RFMF to diagnose faults in the battery isolation switch and aircon compressor of one vehicle that were missed at factory. This RAEME support ensured that the vehicles were handed over in the best possible condition, allowing a fleet increase from 10 to 24 total PMVs operated by the RFMF.

Equipment husbandry of PMVs remains an enduring line of effort for maintenance planning support to the RFMF. The fleet of vehicles are spread between Fiji and the Middle East, with seven vehicles deployed in support of UN missions. RFMF maintenance on UN missions is provided through deployed Vehicle Mechanics, as well as fly in tiger teams, with the bulk of maintenance conducted by ADF trained, uniformed RFMF mechanics.

The second MTT of 2024 arrived in Fiji in mid-October, and saw a change in the delivery method of training. A number of tradesmen from ALTC worked hand in hand with the RFMF to analyse their SOPs and TTPs, with support provided to PMV maintenance planning, armoury operations, weapon maintenance, bulk fuel, supply, and medical systems. The supporting RAEME members helped update the SOPs in the main RFMF weapon armouries, develop procedures for planning and conducting PMV scheduled maintenance, and delivered a .50cal maintainers course.



LCPL Barker (ASEME) provides PMV Maintenance lessons to RFMF VMs.



A newly purchased RFMF PMV is unloaded from HMAS Choules in Fiji.

Planning is already underway for the conduct of further logistics MTTs in 2025, with 7 CSSB preparing to deploy the first team in the new year. As always, PMV maintenance is on the agenda, with the team also preparing to support the RFMF to further develop their own in house training solutions to continue to up skill their mechanics and armourers.

25th ANNIVERSARY TIMOR OPERATIONS 1999 – 2000

The 25th Anniversary of Australian service in Timor- Leste, was marked by the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) which held a National Commemorative Service at the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial in Canberra on 20 September 2024.

For those who couldn't attend, but have many memories of that time, here are some excerpts from the Corps History Book "With Skill and Fighting – Craftsmen of the Australian Army 1942-2014" published in 2014. Copies are available at <https://raeme.org.au>

Operations in Timor Leste.

Indonesia annexed the former Portuguese colony of East Timor during 1975 resulting in almost one-quarter of a century of bloodshed, until eventually, in 1999, the Indonesian Government agreed to a ballot to allow the East Timorese to vote on their future. UNAMET (United Nations Assistance Mission to East Timor) was established by UN Security Council Resolution on 11 June 1999 to organise and conduct the ballot which was held on 30 August 1999. The result was an overwhelming vote for independence. In the wake of the ballot, pro-Indonesian militias, at times with not so covert support of Indonesian security forces, commenced a campaign of destruction against pro-independence supporters. Amid bloody violence, many East Timorese were killed

The Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor referred to a minimum of 102,800 conflict-related deaths between 1974-991 and as many as 500,000 displaced from their homes. As the violence was beyond their control, Indonesian authorities agreed to the deployment of a multinational peacekeeping force into the former colony. Australia developed the International Force for East Timor (INTERFET), which was authorised by and operated in accordance with UN Resolutions and commenced operations on 12 September 1999. Australia contributed over 5,500 personnel to INTERFET under force commander, Major General Peter Cosgrove.¹

Indonesia withdrew its armed forces, police and administrative officials from East Timor; and the UN established the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET) to administer East Timor. The hand- over of military operations from INTERFET to UNTAET was completed on 28 February 2000. Australia provided landing craft and Black Hawk helicopters to these operations in East Timor and committed 1,500-2,000 personnel. Since then Australia's involvement in East Timor has progressed through a number of UN managed operations including the United Nations Mission of Support to East Timor (UNMISSET) which commenced after the new nation was officially recognized and ended in 2005. Australia again provided troops to East Timor in 2006 for the purposes of additional security after local political unrest.²

¹ <http://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/peacekeeping.asp.EastTimor>

² Morgan, B J. A Brief History of Australian Army Operations in East Timor, 1999-2005.

RAEME involvement in the East Timor operations commenced from the earliest days of INTERFET operations through to the withdrawal of UNMISET forces in 2005 and redeployment in 2006. The RAEME contribution to these operations was characterised by long hours of hard work and a readiness to assist the overall force by accepting tasks that were beyond the normal RAEME role. OPERATION WARDEN, from 16 September 1999 to 10 April 2000 provided for broader ADF involvement during the 1999 East Timor deployment, including logistic support from the Australian support area. The deploying force, particularly from a RAEME point of view, gained great benefit from the presence of men, such as Sergeant Rocky Hema, with recent operational experience gained on UN deployments.

"We got back to Townsville after exercising in Shoal Water Bay Training Area (SWBTA) during late August 1999 to be told we were deploying to Timor at short notice. I was attached to 1 Troop of B Squadron 3/4 Cavalry Regiment (3/4 Cav Regt) as a part of the logistic support element for this on-line Troop. We were to further regroup with the on-line Battalion, 2 Battalion Royal Australia Regiment (2 RAR), for battle preparation. Needless to say, there was some frantic refurbishment of the vehicles and other general preparations to complete before deploying."



23 Sep 99: Callsign 84A, an M806A1 ARVL 84A, B Sqn, 3/4 Cav Regt at Fort Hill Wharf, Darwin, waiting to be loaded for shipment to East Timor.

around us there was frantic activity as units made last minute preparations for the deployment. The air assault element had crossed the start line about two days before the rest of the troop finally sailed for East Timor."

The East Timor operations provided many Australians with the opportunity to engage with and assist the local population. In this aspect, RAEME tradesmen were better placed than most, as their trade skills enabled a more direct approach to be taken in the provision of aid. This was the case during the INTERFET deployment for CPL Paul Gibbs. Paul's unit the 1st Joint Support Unit (1 JSU) had established its workshops in Dili and as the situation in the city stabilised, Paul and his mates were moved to try to assist a local school.

"I was able to procure enough material to make two large swing sets for the school. The only thing that I couldn't get my hands on was chain for the swings themselves. Enter Telstra! The guys, who were setting up a mobile phone network out of the Obrigado Barracks' site, imported 25 metres of

"Two of 1 Troop's (1Tp) Armoured Personnel Carriers (APC) were airlifted to Darwin, to form part of the air assault group to fly into Dili with C Company 2 RAR. The remainder of the troop made an early road move to Darwin while the rest of the Squadron moved by road a little later. 1 Tp's road element arrived in Darwin safely and waited its turn to be lifted across the water."

"We spent that time billeted in the transit compound of Robertson Barracks with the New Zealand Battalion. We still had some post-SWBTA-exercise maintenance work still to be done on our vehicles so we were not idle. All



Dili 1999: 1 JSU Wksp.

chain specifically for me and the swings. They also decked out all the workshop guys with the first mobile phone sim cards in country. We were grateful for both. The swings were completed and moved to the school in quick time."

"I can safely say that it may be one of the reasons that there are limits on package sizes and quantity of free post available to deployed Defence personnel. When I had the opportunity, I wrote to my mother to say that the local people did not have much and that anything she could organise would be gratefully received as the post was free!!

From that point on, I was receiving about a Unimog truck load of donated clothing and equipment each month from the 'Thongs for Timor' drive in the Riverland of South Australia.

We regularly did trips to the Dili orphanage to drop off the items received at 1 JSU through myself and other like-minded individuals.

The orphanage held a dinner at the end of the rotation for a number of us, to say thanks, which was a good night but a bit embarrassing all the same. It was great to see the kids with kites and balls and clothes and, of course, thongs!



Current RAQ Executive members, CPLs Michael Patman and Paul Gibbs at presentation of swings.



CPL Paul Gibbs at Dili orphanage after the presentation of Australian donations.

"One of the most touching moments of my Defence career occurred as the time to leave for Australia arrived. CPL Michael Patman and I, kept aside some sports equipment, toys and bikes from the donated items for donation direct to the children of the houses behind the workshop compound. Being mobbed by gleeful kids trying to get their hands on the toys was like being Santa in a shopping mall. Then eight of us decided we would donate excess food and our unwanted clothing and equipment to our washing lady. All eight of us, had employed her to wash our clothes every day for US\$10 a fortnight."

"This was a sizeable wage for her and her family was very happy to be receiving the income. I've never witnessed such a reaction as we received at her house, a tiny two-room shack of cobbled together wooden planks for walls and a leaking corrugated iron roof. Within its walls lived an entire family of three or four children, parents and grandparents. We asked where they wanted our gifts and began to unload boxes of donated food items, clothing, pillows and bedding and toys for the kids. I will never forget the whole family, in tears of gratitude, shaking our hands and thanking us. Grandfather was particularly moved and he held my hand for nearly the whole time we were there, speaking to me constantly in words I couldn't understand but whose meaning I understood, thanking us for everything while tears rolled down his cheeks. It was an amazing feeling to be able to help so much and yet so humbling as well."

United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET)

Following the transmission of authority from INTERFET to UNTAET the Australian contribution to East Timor was reduced, to an Infantry Battalion Group with supporting air, armour and logistic elements. The Australian battalion, AUSBAT, had its Area of Operations (AO) along the border between East and West Timor with BHQ initially located at Balibo. AUSBAT technical support was provided by RAEME Craftsman embedded within the Battalion's Logistic Support Company. Their primary task within AUSBAT was to provide first line technical advice and support. However, on some occasions they were tasked with other duties as was the case during 2001 when Craftsman (CFN) Christopher Lach deployed to East Timor with 4 RAR. In addition to traditional RAEME tasks CFN Lach and his colleagues expected, accepted and actioned extra tasks.

“Early in the Battalion’s deployment on Operation TANAGER, I accompanied the water and fuel trucks out to Patrol Base Marko. It was on the way back that a Unimog driver decided to follow the river and cross it without the aid of either a bridge or a crossing point. Needless to say he didn’t make it. CPL P L McCauley, RAEME, tried hooking up the 6 x 6 Land Rover for an attempted tow, but succeeded only in getting six wheel drift. A radio message was sent and CFN Rusty Crawford (Recovery Mechanic) came out and recovered the truck.”



Technically Stuck.



Rusty Crawford (Recovery Mechanic) to the rescue.

The unsuccessful 6 x 6 Land Rover tow

“From April to October 2001, 4 RAR (CDO)5 Log Spt Coy was tasked to secure the re-transmission station during the conduct of the election. A section of RAEME, RAAOC and RACT personnel were given the task and most of us thought it would be a holiday. We had seen the rest of the Area of Operations (AO) while conducting numerous repairs at various patrol bases. However, this was going to be somewhere new and we were keen to go. We packed the Russian helicopter with our gear and supplies and crammed onboard for a flight that was postponed for a day due to bad weather. The re-trans station was situated at 1700m above sea level, on the knife edge of a mountain range. It was quite a lot cooler up there than down in the usual high humidity and temperatures of the coastal areas of East Timor. We considered it similar to Canberra in August.”

The Re-Trans Mountain side as the cloud rolls in

“Our home for the next week was well dug in and we wondered why. Well we found out that night. The wind blew sideways at gale force as sheets of rain pelted down. The main pit had a roof and a single side. The tents were low and dug into the spur with sandbags on the outside to help shield them from the high-velocity wind. All our warm and wet weather gear was necessary and worn. Bed was a welcome place to get out of the weather.”



“The days that followed were spent huddling in a small tent, playing UNO or cards in between shifts to pass the time. The inclement weather was unrelenting for four days before the sun finally broke through. Even then warmer conditions did not last long. At around 1600 hours every afternoon, like clockwork, a misty cloud would start cascading over the adjacent peak meaning we had no more than five minutes to get suitably clothed before getting blasted by a return of the cold, windy, wet conditions and fading visibility.”

The 4 RAR (CDO) Log Spt Coy Re-Trans Security Team.³

“The toilet was three sheets of tin with no door which gave an excellent view of the valley below when seated. The shower was an old ration pack tin with a few holes in the bottom hanging from a tree. You had to be quick and the cold water temperature encouraged water conservation. Then on the scheduled departure day, the weather turned bad and so our stay on the mountain was extended by three days until it was clear enough for the Russians to land their helicopter for the pick-up and return flight to the Battalion.”



L to R Back: LCPL Tame (Tpt), CPL McCauley (VM, partly hidden), CFN Kelly (Boffin), Pte Harding (Q), CPL Poultney (Q).

³ 4 RAR (Commando) had been redesignated as a light Infantry unit for the 2001 deployment to East Timor.

RAEME UNITS SPRAYED WITH CHEMICALS IN VIETNAM 1968

Des Kearton

OPERATION RANCH HAND DEFOLIANT FLIGHTS.

Operation Ranch Hand was a name given by the USA to the tactical project for aerial spraying of herbicides in VIETNAM.

The HERBS tape is a computer file listing of Ranch Hand flights from 1965 to 1971. The print-out of the HERBS tape used by the Department of Veterans' Affairs was provided by the Department of Defence.

BASE AREA VEGETATION CONTROL.

Perimeter defoliation was carried out at Australian base camp areas at Nui Dat, the Horseshoe, and the 1 A.S.L.G. area at Vung Tau, for security purposes. (The perimeter of the Nui Dat base was some 400 to 500 hectares).

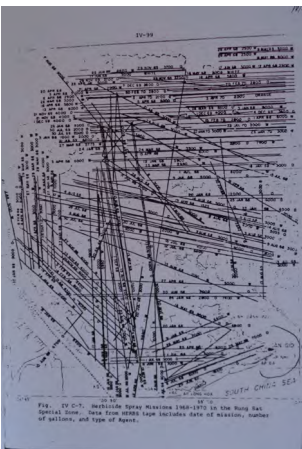
On the 25th June 1968, the HERBS tape show that 6 aircraft sprayed a total of 5675 gallons of Agent Orange along a 13KM flight path, part of Squadron HQ, 1 Troop and 3 Troop, C Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment, are recorded as being in a location 2 to 5 KM from the flight path and part of 2 troop is recorded as being in a location .5 to 1KM from the flight path.

On the 27th June 1968, the HERBS tape shows six aircraft sprayed a total of 6,000 gallons of Agent White along a 16 KM flight path, parts 1 troop and 2 troop, C Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment, are recorded as being in a location 2 to 5 KM from the nearest point of the flight path.

As a vehicle mechanic with the units named in this report, I was working with a Centurion Armoured Recovery Vehicle (ARV), in repair and recovery of Centurion Tanks of C Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment in Vietnam 1968.



American plane spraying chemicals over 1st Armoured Squadron Workshop RAEME, at Nui Dat, Vietnam, in 1968.



Depending on the weather, American planes sprayed chemicals over our unit location, once or twice a week.

RAEME members of 1st Armoured Squadron Workshop were also exposed to these chemicals whilst repairing the fogging machines and spray tanks that were used with chemicals.

Of the units total of 90 RAEME and RAAOC personnel, approx. 30 members have died of cancer and war caused disabilities, since Vietnam 1968.

We live with these medical conditions during our lifetime.

Left: American flight paths spraying chemicals in Vietnam from 1968 to 1970.

UNIT JOTTINGS

1st Armoured Regiment

In 2024, the 1st Armoured Regiment (1AR) launched into the year, embarking on a journey that even a Magic 8 Ball could not have foreseen. The Defence Strategic Review (DSR) and the need for divestment, meant that 1AR would be assigned a new role within Army, and without it's M1A1 Tanks or ASLAVs. This led to a frantic effort to achieve twelve months of training benchmarks in the initial six months. The first step was the Course Camp, where our crafties were trained to become drivers or crew commanders on various armoured vehicle platforms. Subsequently, the Regiment then quickly moved on to Exercise PARATUS WALK in March, where they were evaluated on their first set of training outcomes for the year. This was immediately followed by the Paratus Cup troop competition, where the Squadrons competed against each other to determine who was the most skilled in the Regiment.



ATL 1 for workshops AFV qualified crew.

Following the PARATUS exercises, we were immediately thrust into a maintenance surge which someone, (no doubt a black hat officer), accidentally labelled as a "Reduced Tempo Period (RTP)" on the unit planner, as the various 1AR squadron workshops readied equipment for Exercise RHINO RUN in May. This was a joint exercise with the majority of 9BDE. 1AR, 7RAR, 3/9LHR, 10/27 SAMR and 9CSSB all getting the opportunity to witness 1AR in their element, with their spanners, chewing on Cultana's red dust, whilst keeping their vehicles running. As an added bonus,

the location of Cultana proved to be an excellent vantage point for viewing the recent magical display of the Aurora Australis.

Since we had completed all of the Regiment's training requirements in a whirlwind six months, the RAEME men and women of 1AR felt relieved when June arrived. As we caught our breath and began to look towards the upcoming SAP-ERP roll out and DSR equipment divestment, someone moved some boxes in a warehouse and discovered a whole heap of spare tank ammunition, "Bugger"!



SPT SQN A2 FRT EX RHINO RUN.



3 GENERATIONS OF PACK LIFT – Centurion and ARVL, Leopard and ARV, Abrams and M88.

Exercise LAST-SABOT was now added to the regimental planner. The July RTP was hastily re-named as the “July Maintenance Surge” and spanners kicked into full speed once more. Concurrently, some of our RAEME members were also taking one of our M88s for a spin in support of Exercise LEADFOOT in Western Australia. July and into August saw 1AR stand up numerous short notice FRTs; In order to support JLU-V with their significant backlog of higher level armoured vehicle repairs. Notice was so short that some members were still shaking off Cultana dust as they headed to the airport.



ECN 146 Weapon Technician ABRAMS remote fire.

August bought us even closer to the arrival of SAP-ERP and once again had the spanners swinging wildly as 1AR cleared out as much scheduled and unscheduled maintenance as possible, with all squadron's a blur of activity. Vehicles began to be reshuffled and divested to other parts of the country, as A Squadron began surging for the upcoming joint exercise with the Malaysian military in Cultana known as Exercise SOUTHERN TIGER.

September arrived and we had RAEME members scattered to the four winds, we finally saw MILIS shutting down ready for SAP-ERP. A FRT was raised to support Exercise LAST-D in Puckapunyal as 1AR's focus begins to shift to its new role under the DSR, trialling autonomous armoured vehicle platforms. CPL Anderson got a surprise overseas trip for on Exercise SUMAN WARRIOR. We also had people detached for Field Maintainer New Equipment Training (FMNET) in Bandiana on the M1A2SEPV3. Plus we also have the privilege to farewell our EMEWO, WO2 Brian Dawes, after 35 years of service.



M134D Minigun firing from M113AS4OCCV on Ex LAST-D.



B SQN A1 CAMBRAI DAY 2019 (The M113AS4 ARE in the pic...).

| A.S.M's 1st ARMoured REGIMENT | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|--|
| L.A.D. | | |
| WO1 R.G. McEACHERN | NOV 56 - DEC 60 | |
| WO1 I.R. ARCHER | DEC 60 - OCT 65 | |
| WO1 D.A. JUERS | DEC 65 - OCT 67 | |
| WO1 D.V. KERR | MAR 68 - AUG 68 | |
| WO1 A.M. KENDRICK | OCT 68 - AUG 69 | |
| WO1 G.D. CHAPMAN | AUG 69 - FEB 74 | |
| WO1 K.R. BERRY | FEB 74 - DEC 74 | |
| TECH SPT SQN | | |
| WO1 K.E. SHIRLEY | SEP 75 - DEC 76 | |
| WO1 R.L. TONGE | JAN 77 - AUG 77 | |
| WO1 J. CLIFTON | OCT 77 - FEB 81 | |
| TECH SQN | | |
| WO1 J.R. MADEX | JAN 81 - AUG 83 | |
| WO1 J.W. BLACKWELL | AUG 83 - JAN 85 | |
| WO1 G.A. ERNST O.A.M. | JAN 85 - DEC 87 | |
| WO1 J.G. PHOENIX | JAN 88 - NOV 91 | |
| WO1 D. G. MARTIN | DEC 91 - DEC 92 | |
| WO1 C. T. HOLLAND | JAN 93 - DEC 96 | |
| OP SPT SQN | | |
| WO1 M.P. WILLIAMS | JAN 97 - DEC 99 | |
| WO1 G.E. WHITE | JAN 00 - OCT 01 | |
| WO1 A.G. PERRY | NOV 01 - SEP 02 | |
| WO1 P.E. COLEIRO | JAN 03 - DEC 04 | |
| WO1 M.J. RYAN | JAN 05 - DEC 07 | |
| WO1 RYAN | APR 07 | |
| WO1 J.J. MILLER | JAN 08 - DEC 10 | |
| WO1 M. MORAN | JAN 11 - DEC 12 | |
| WO1 J. WALLACE | JAN 12 - DEC 13 | |
| WO1 A. "JIM" BEAMAN | JAN 14 - DEC 15 | |
| WO1 S. BUTLER | JAN 16 - DEC 18 | |
| WO1 G. "PADDY" O'LEARY | JAN 19 - DEC 21 | |
| WO1 R. "FJ" HOLDEN | JAN 22 - DEC 2 | |

October was all about DSR divestment and re-shuffle, as units move to new locations within the Edinburgh Defence Precinct and equipment is transported across the country. 1AR have our eyes firmly fixed on November, with Cambrai Day set to be a huge event, followed closely by the 82nd RAEME Birthday. 1AR workshops are very excited to be the hosts for RAEME Birthday for South Australia, and we are planning many unique events.

Come January 2025, 1AR will become an innovation and experimentation unit for the Army. Without it's Tanks, 1AR will be the home for Robotics and Autonomous Systems, as well as Optionally Crewed Combat Vehicles (OCCV). These vehicles are currently based primarily around the M113AS4 platform, although who knows what the future could bring?

Left: RASM OF 1st ARMoured REGIMENT (TANK)

1AR B SQN A1 (T28)

Sergeant Alexander Wendt



I'm sure everyone can agree 2024 has been a High Speed; High Drag type of year. The B Sqn A1 wksp (T28), we welcomed four new march-ins from external units including the new ASM, WO2 Maitland. This would cement the small, highly experienced and competent team of seven which was rather rank heavy with only two Crafties!

Production had already been well underway on the back end of Reduced Tempo Period (RTP) and after the Sqn had completed Force Preservation, T28 had approximately four weeks to get our 10 M1A1s (can't forget the buckets either) in a mission capable state for our first exercise, EX PARATUS WALK. Concurrent to this preparation was also the Regt's Courses Camp which unfortunately meant we were down three of our team. However, we persevered and all of the tanks made their way to Cultana. The exercise quickly proved how well the new team could work together, working out of three AS4s and putting the smell of morale (bacon) throughout the leaguer. The cohesion was short lived, when one of our newly qualified Crew Comds, LCPL Gal, had the ground disappear from under him when dismounting his Fitters Track; rumours have it his driver pushed him. This meant he was out of action with a lengthy recovery ahead of him.

After end EX, the first of many RF2F and CES checks were conducted. This should have been the time to relax, catch our breath and enjoy the RTP... but the BG exercise, EX RHINO RUN was coming for us at full pace. Another quick four week turn around proved just how skilled our technicians are. Managing to rectify the unscheduled and breakdown maintenance from the previous EX, getting nine tanks back to fighting form. The exercise tested our capability as an A1 WKSP was at it's absolute limit. Having no LOC with the A2 and our CCP essentially being

the tow points of the M88. Numerous suspension and pack pulls were being conducted behind enemy lines, through the night, under STANO tight with sporadic AIR RED. This kept our stage 3 camouflage skills sharp. Overall these exercises tested the teams Resilience, Determination, Excellence and ability to take the mickey out of each other, keeping moral high at all hours of the night.

EX RHINO RUN was meant to be the last hoorah! But another allocation of main gun ammunition was manifested leading to the short and sharp EX LAST SABOT. This consisted of a troop+ heading to Cultana to fire off the last 120mm out of an Australian Army owned M1A1 Abrams MBT.



Numerous other tasks and exercises were attended by members of T28 throughout the year. Including EX LEAD FOOT, EX BLACK PRINCE and JLU-V assistance task. CFN Sonter was also chosen to go on Indo-Pacific Endeavour. For the back end of the year we currently have our tank fitter, CFN Cook on M1A2 conversion and CPL Ramage about to head off to Canungra to complete the last of his SGT courses. Morale has been moderately maintained throughout the year thanks to RAEME BBQs, RASM's Golf Day, SGT's Mess scones and various Sqn functions, one of which included the ASM putting a pig on the spit for all to enjoy.

Our last maintenance push will be to get the M1A1s fit and ready for their ceremonial send off on Cambrai Day before being divested and then enjoy the festivities of RAEME birthday. All seven members of T28 will be posting out of locality for CMC25.

As of 22 Oct 24, T28 has contributed 1393.5 official production hours to the Regt. An outstanding effort.

T28 NOMINAL ROLL 2024:

EME: WO2 Maitland (ASM), SGT Wendt

VM: CPL Ramage, LCPL Gallagher

FITT: CPL Fewster, CFN Cook

TES: CFN Sonter

1st Aviation Regiment TSS - Darwin

MAJ Juan Peters, Officer Commanding Technical Support Squadron

A Brief History and Introduction. The 1st Aviation Regiment (1 AVN) is the oldest serving aviation unit in the Australian Army and has been officially operating since 18 December 1964. Over the years, the unit has proudly represented the nation on numerous deployments overseas. Significant campaigns include initial deployments for 161 Reconnaissance Flight in South Vietnam (Dec 1965 – Mar 1972) during the Vietnam War; and 182 Reconnaissance Flight in Malaya, Borneo and Singapore (Oct 1965 – Oct 1973) during the Malayan Confrontation.

Other significant deployments include 161 Reconnaissance active operations supporting OP TANAGER in East Timor (2000) and 171 Operational Support Squadron's contribution to OP BEL ISI in Bougainville (1997 – 1998).

Over the years, the unit has operated many aircraft such as the Bell 47G Sioux, Bell 206B-1 Kiowa, Bell UH-1H Iroquois, GAF N22 & N24 Nomad, Pilatus PC-6B Porter and the De Havilland DHC-4 Twin Otter.

After years of operating from numerous locations (Oakey, Townsville, Holsworthy, Goroka PNG, Singapore and Lae PNG), the unit was reorganised in 2004 to prepare for the new Armed Reconnaissance Helicopter, EC665 Tiger. During this restructure 171 Operational Support Squadron and 173 Surveillance Squadron were placed as direct command units of 16 Brigade and later formed the 6th Aviation Regiment.

Between 2005 and 2006, the remaining Squadrons were consolidated to one location, Gaza Lines, Robertson Barracks Darwin, for the first time in history. The reorganisation saw four primary sub-units, 161 Reconnaissance Squadron, 162 Reconnaissance Squadron, Technical Support Squadron, and the Logistic Support Squadron,



An ARH Tiger embarked on a LHD.

The ARH Tiger has remained ready and deployable from 1 AVN since 2015, in support of land, joint and special forces. In recent history, ARH Tiger has extended its capability to littoral operation on the Navy's Landing Helicopter Dock (LHD) in support of the Amphibious Combat Element (ACE).



161 Recce SQN Kiowa on Operations.

Within the next 12 months, 1 AVN will again be asked to adapt as it embarks on a significant transformation with a relocation from Robertson Barracks to RAAF Base Townsville and the Introduction Into Service (IIS) of the Apache (AH64E).

The relocation will commence in Jan 2025 with ARH Tiger continuing to operate in Darwin while the AH64E is fielded in Townsville. 1 AVN's Technical & Logistic Support Squadrons will be a critical enabler to the successful transition of Army's attack and reconnaissance capability. The RAEME element are trusted to maintain the legacy ARH fleet capability in Darwin while Technicians and Logisticians are sent forward to establish new facilities, develop theory and practical training, and commence maintenance operations on AH64E in Townsville.

I am proud to share our journey with the wider RAEME community and look forward to our continued Regiment success and future in Townsville.

Arte' et Marte'

Recent Operations and Exercises – Joint Task Force Operation – Exercise Talisman Sabre 2023.

CAPT Darius Nooriafshar,
Maintenance Aviation Safety Officer,
Technical Support Squadron

In June 2023, the members of 161 Technical Support Troop (TST) supported the air-self-deployment of six ARH Tigers across the country from Darwin to Townsville to participate in Exercise Talisman Sabre 23 (EX TS 23). Our RAEME Technicians provided an aircraft recovery support capability from Darwin to Townsville and made the move, via road convoy with few recoveries.



161 TST maintainers replacing a tyre on an ARH Tiger after a heavy landing.

The maintenance team had to recover the aircraft off the main taxiway of Townsville Airport.

EX TS 23 involved 24-hour maintenance operations working closely with 16th Combat Aviation Brigade (16CAB) and the Royal New Zealand Air Force. Working in a Joint Task Force (JTF) provided the opportunity for technicians to collaborate with international counterparts and gain an understanding and insight into the different maintenance processes and aviation regulations used by our allies.

Throughout the exercise, the tradesmen of 161 TST consistently enabled high aircraft availability whilst also conducting multiple simulated tactical aircraft recoveries, including the conduct of an actual aircraft recovery from the main taxiway of Townsville Airport post a heavy landing. The efforts of the members of 161 TST ensured that aircraft were available for all the operational training and mission requirements.

Whilst on EX TS 23, the Squadron was re-tasked to conduct a short notice search and rescue mission. This saw the successful planning, preparation and deployment of two ARH Tigers, tooling, spare parts and an FRT to Proserpine, to support the operation. Overall, the tradesmen of 161 TST gained valuable experience working in the JTF environment ensuring that the ARH aviation capability remains ready to fight.

Philippines 2023
and Exercise IPE 2024 Look ahead.

CAPT Alexandra Clark,
Technical Support Troop 2 Commander

On 19 August 23, 162 Recce Squadron (162 SQN) deployed as TU (Task Unit) MARLIN to the Clark Air Base, Philippines in support of Indo-Pacific Endeavour 23 (IPE 23). It was the first time many of the members of 162 SQN TST and the attached ancillary trades from Maintenance Support Troop (MST) had deployed overseas.

The preparation required to serve four aircraft for deployment overseas was complex. The movement of tooling, support and test equipment (S&TE) and spare parts were some key considerations. Additional challenges were presented by balancing existing 1 AVN commitments to EX TS 23.

The short turnaround time between the two Exercises relied on maintenance personnel in Townsville to switch focus in order to support the forward movement to Clark Air Base. 162 SQN deployed along with four ARH Tigers and the associated, equipment, spares and stores in five C-17 Globemasters over five days to Clark Air Base.

162 SQN TST provided unwavering support to TU MARLIN flying operations, which sought to integrate with the Philippine Air Force (PAF) through the conduct of a Combined Joint Live Fire Exercise at the Colonel Ernesto Rabina Air Base. Multiple typhoon systems off the coast of Luzon disrupted the exercise, resulting in a cancellation of the Live Fire Exercise (LFX). The exercise intent was still achieved, through JTAC-controlled dry serials of close air support to operations in complex urban terrain.

The maintenance team faced many novel and complex issues during the deployment of a scalable ARH Tiger capability element operating in support of an amphibious ground force. They were consistent and proactive in responding to changes. The deployment successfully proved the fidelity of support to ARH during an international deployment and was an excellent opportunity for the Army's attack aviation capability to deploy within the Indo Pacific Region and conduct International Engagement with allied partners.

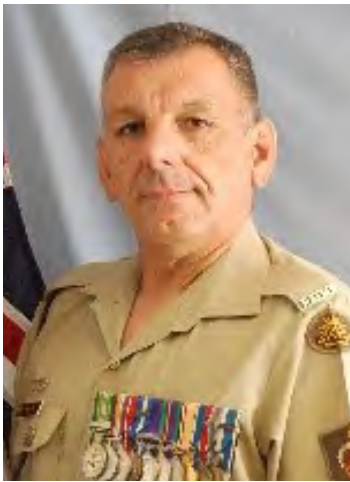
162 SQN will once again support EX IPE in Q4 2024, as one of the final exercises conducted by ARH Tiger as the transition to AH-64E Apache commences from 2025.



162 TST Maintainers loading a RAAF C-17.

Exercise DEVIL CRAWL 2024.

WO2 Steven Frost,
Squadron Sergeant Major,
Technical Support Squadron



The re-consolidation of the flying Squadron's TSTs under direct command and control (C2) of TSS in late 2023 has provided an opportunity for enhanced sub-unit all-Corps training not seen within the Regt since 2017.

Exercise DEVIL CRAWL 2024 in May allowed all three maintenance troops, reinforced by SHQ and OPS, to revisit and enhance those All-Corps Officer and Soldier skills required to allow maintainers to conduct their tasks in a contested environment, as part of an Aviation Maintenance Task Unit. The exercise comprised of three key activities:

- Combat shooting refresh and practices
- Road deployment and occupation of a defensive harbour at Kangaroo Flats Training Area.
- Rotation through multiple All-Corps skill enhancement stands to revise individual and small team skills.



TST 1 conducting clearance patrol of Troop defensive position.



MST LSW gunner observing arcs.

Sun Sets on 1AVN REGT in Darwin – 1 AVN Regt Transitions to Townsville and AH-64E Apache.

**WO1 David Bowden,
Regiment Artificer Sergeant Major**

To facilitate the restructure of Army Aviation, and specifically 16th Aviation Brigade, 1AVN will relocate to Townsville to be co-located with the 5th Aviation Regiment and Headquarters 16th Aviation Brigade. The move will coincide with the 1 AVN transition from the ARH Tiger on to the AH-64E Apache, being introduced under LAND4053.

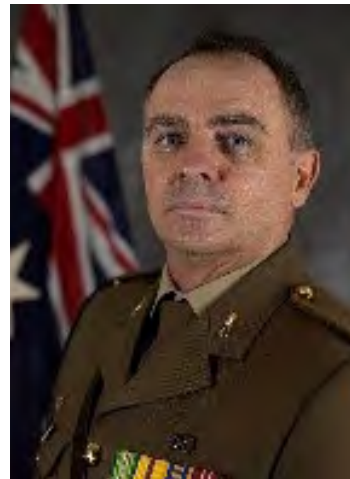
The move and transition comes with some considerable restraints including: zero growth throughout the transition; and the requirement for ARH Tiger to maintain Chief of Defence Force Preparedness Directive (CPD), until Apache reaches Initial Operational Capability (IOC).

The first maintenance elements are scheduled to commence transition to Townsville from CMC25, and the final maintenance elements transitioning after IOC. The transition will implement one maintenance brick at a time. A maintenance brick, as defined by The Future Aeroskills Workforce Design (FAWD), is an eleven person Forward Repair Team (FRT), with a 60/40 ratio between ECN 411 Aircraft Technician and ECN 412 Avionics Technician, with a SGT of either trade as the FRT commander. Supporting trades and functions, including RAAF Aircraft Life Support Fitters (ALSE) and Aircraft Structural Repair Fitters (ASR), along with EMEOPS and Maintenance Control Section (MCS) will begin to transition from CMC26.

A residual workforce of three FRTs along with supporting elements (EMEOPS, MCS, ALSE, and ASR) will remain in Darwin until Apache reaches IOC, to facilitate the transition, and ensuring that Tiger CPD is maintained whilst the Apache Aeroskills workforce is developed. An individual transition plan is being employed in consultation between the CMA and Regiment for each technician.

The current workforce that transition to Apache will be required to complete Additional Type Training (ATT) that will be conditionally conducted in Townsville. Long term Initial Type Training (ITT) will be conducted at the Army Aviation Training Centre, Oakey, upon the delivery of training aides. Those training aides are not expected to be delivered before 2026.

The Rotary Wing Aircraft Maintenance School (RAMS) will cease training first quarter 2024 Tiger ITT, in order to support the Introduction into Service of Apache. ATT will be suspended at the same time, with the option of training being delivered on demand.



Our Airbus Maintenance Partners – OJT Management and AADAR Opportunities.

**LT Shanil Panchal,
EMEOPS, Technical Support Squadron**

Aircraft and Avionics Technicians each typically require between 3 and 3.5 years to complete approximately 1000 general maintenance tasks as part of their on-the-job training (OJT) to earn their Certificate IV in Aeroskills. With the rollout of DASR (Defence Aviation Safety Regulations) in 2018, trainees now, must also complete approximately 400 tasks (aircraft) or 300 tasks (avionics) specific to their chosen trade to complete their Types Course. The intent is tasks completed combined with Journal work is used as a recognition of prior learning (RPL) towards achieving the Cert IV.

As the training pipeline draws to a close there is a large cohort of trainees being put through the ARH Types Training. 1 AVN and RAMS are working together to distribute trainees out across contracted Deep Maintenance (DM) facilities, being Airbus Australia Darwin (AADAR) and Airbus Australia Oakey (AAPOAK), to minimise the training and supervision workload on 1 AVN's TSS maintainers, while also providing new trainees more in-depth maintenance experiences.



Airbus DM Facilities.

Currently, AADAR employ Aircraft and Avionics technicians similar to the Army, and have their own training and management programs. They are embedded throughout 1 AVN Regiment and work in partnership with Army maintainers to maintain ARH serviceability and airworthiness.

AADAR personnel provide specialist trade capability in general aircraft and avionics maintenance, both sheet metal and composite aircraft structural repairs, tool control and calibration, component deeper maintenance (CDM) and maintenance control among other tasks.

As the drawdown of Army personnel commences from Darwin with infill to Townsville it is expected that AADAR will take on a more involved role in managing the maintenance program in Darwin and subsequent disposal of ARH Tiger expected in 2027.



Maintaining ARH Tiger Readiness and Capability until Planned Withdrawal – FLYPRO changes, stabilisation and its impact on improving serviceability and the ROE of ARH Tiger.

CAPT Nicholas Degotardi,
EMEOPSO, Technical Support Squadron

Late 2023 and early 2024 ushered in a number of significant changes to the 1 AVN operations and maintenance (O&M) battle rhythm. The changes focussed on three main Lines Of Effort (LOE):

- Fleet stabilisation,
- Home station training, and
- Reduced OP and force generation demands.

All three lines of effort were aligned with the common theme, to balance our workforce in all trade streams with the capability demands of operating the ARH Tiger until Planned Withdrawal Date (PWD).

Maintenance Battle Rhythm changes have primarily focussed on consolidation of the maintenance workforce under the Technical Support Squadron (TSS) and Flying Program (FlyPro) optimisations to enable maintenance concentration of effort. Our maintenance technicians provide in-barracks support 18hrs a day, 5 days a week, across day and night shifts IOT support the flying program. Our shift structure is focussed on providing maximum maintenance support outside the primary flying window while sharing the load of night shift among the FRTs, and providing an aircraft recovery capability. Other considerations for FRT shift planning are based on the Non-Technical Skills (NTS) concerning human factors, to ensure FRTs are afforded appropriate rest and fatigue management IAW OIP.

Considering the abovementioned LOEs from a maintenance perspective, fleet stabilisation significantly reduced the state of rolling cannibalisations, which has supported the throughput of DM pipeline and wait-times for repair parts and critical components. Stabilisation also reduced the number of operational airframes IOT align with the maintenance capacity of the available workforce based on the required Maintenance Man Hours (MMHRs) per airframe hour generated. Home station training has enabled the maintenance workforce to focus on balancing the inexperienced OJT workforce with available trade supervisors and limited the maintenance burden required for scheduled servicing and aircraft preparation for interstate exercises. Our newly authorised maintenance managers and trade supervisors have also been afforded the time and space to consolidate their skills in barracks. Finally, the reduced OP and force generation demands has been adjusted to meet the current ARH Tiger fleet and available workforce for sustained operations if required.

The implementation of O&M battle rhythm optimisations and adherence to our three lines of effort have resulted in a successful first half of the year. Despite workforce, supply and platform challenges, we are on track to deliver higher than average aircraft serviceability rates and as a result continue to provide a responsive and resilient attack and reconnaissance capability for the Australian Army as it transitions to AH64E Apache.



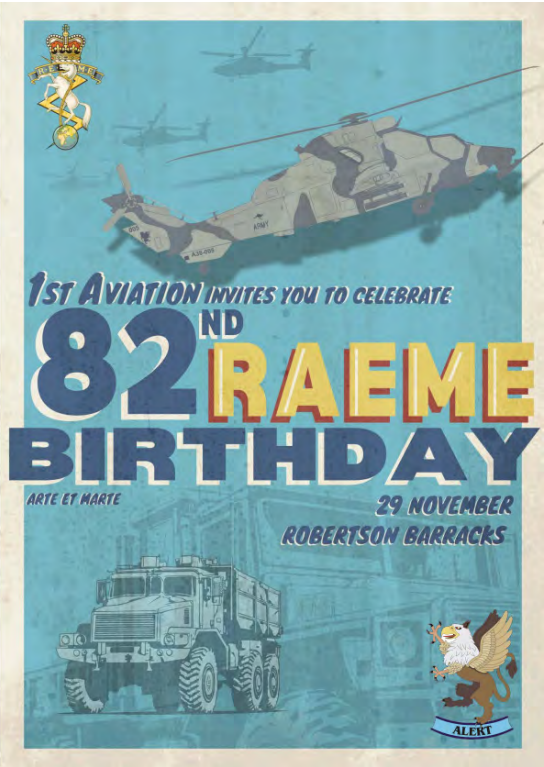
RAEME Birthday 2024.

LT Chris Burnell,
Technical Support Troop 1 Commander

The 1st Aviation Regiment was excited to host the 82nd RAEME Birthday for the NT Region, as this is the last year 1 AVN will be complete at Robertson Barracks. Additionally, 1 AVN has also organised the 2024 RAEME Port, running with the theme ‘The Sundowner’. The Sundowner represents a place where the tradies of 1 AVN still gather at the end of shift after a long slog on the tools.

It is fitting that the Regiment is hosting both events this year as it provides the ability for the largest RAEME element in the NT to say goodbye to Robertson Barracks and Darwin, as well as farewelling the ARH capability before we begin the transition to Apache.

Each year on RAEME birthday, we get to celebrate the dedication that the RAEME workforce contributes to the Army and the wider community. It is 1 AVN’s intent to ensure we uphold the commitment to our tradies by putting on an enjoyable event.



RAEME Birthday Poster 2024.

The tradesmen within 1 AVN are in a unique position as both Ground and Air RAEME are exposed to how each discipline operates and the idiosyncrasies associated with each. By hosting RAEME birthday we are able to showcase the work we conduct at 1 AVN to other units in Darwin, the event was very well received the last time we hosted it in 2017. A little touch of legacy is behind the hosting of the event this year as MAJ Juan Peters is OC TSS and was one of the key organisers of the 75th Anniversary event in 2017 as 161 TST Commander.

1AVN TSS RAEME Members Representing Army AFLW.

LT Chaylee Reeve,
Learning Engineering Officer

The 2024 ADF Australian Football League national carnival was held between the 15th and 21st of March. Navy, Army and Air Force went head to head in both the Men’s and Women’s divisions to determine the annual AFL champion team. Each service spent the week prior to the carnival developing their skills and tactics as a squad in various locations around Melbourne. The Women’s training involved intensive sessions followed by beach recovery at St Kilda where comradery was strengthened within the team. After our first recovery session in the heat of the sun, an excited group of Army AFL representatives established their goals of unity, professionalism and determination for the training camp and carnival. This was an excellent opportunity enabled by CO 1 AVN and OC TSS to get involved in not only wider Army activities, but also with the Air Force and Navy.



Army AFLW ADF Carnival Premiers.

1st Combat Service Support Team

Lt Oscar Brown,
Workshop Platoon



The 1 CSST WKSP PL postured IVO the 1 AR parade ground for the ASM Farewell.

The year 2024 presented a distinctive set of challenges for the soldiers and officers of 1 CSST. Following the announcement in February regarding the impending closure of the sub-unit at the end of 2024, a sense of mourning and uncertainty permeated the platoons. Nevertheless, 1 CSST remained committed to its responsibilities and diligently prepared for a notably busy year ahead. New personnel were welcomed, and the company initiated planning for Exercise Rhino Run 24 (EX RR 24), which necessitated a rigorous period of individual and small team training to ensure the company’s success. During this time, various lessons were conducted, covering topics such as navigation, weapons handling, Close Service Support (CSS) position sighting, Forward Repair Teams (FRTs), and distribution points. Prior to the exercise, the company engaged in several events to commemorate ANZAC Day in the Adelaide region. A significant portion of 1 CSST had the honour of parading through the Adelaide CBD, while many others participated in dawn services and other ceremonies within the wider community.

The Workshop Platoon (WKSP PL) had a remarkable final year at 1 CSST, successfully managing the repair and servicing of the entire unit’s fleet, alongside two battle groups (BG Boar and BG Lion), even in the face of staffing limitations. The WKSP PL encompassed seven different trade groups in its final year – Weapon Technicians, Materiel Technicians, Vehicle Technicians, Recovery Technicians, Energy Technicians, Electronics Technicians, and Distribution Operators, comprising 45 members, while still operating at a 30% vacancy rate.

After compulsory introductions and leading into the year, the Battle Preparation phase commenced which proved to be an intensive period for the vehicle technicians of the WKSP PL. Upon the publication of the initial Order of Battle (ORBAT) on 14 March 24 and exercise staffing document, 44 B-Vehicles and 26 trailers were task assigned for deployment, a significant portion of the fleet required maintenance and repairs to be completed prior to deployment. The B-Vehicle team dedicated additional hours each day to ensure that the sub-unit was fully prepared for deployment in the field environment. This undertaking formed the priority of maintenance effort, which also

extended to the servicing and repair of 1 AR and 7 RAR equipment/vehicles for their deployment. This achievement marked a significant milestone for the B-vehicle team, leading to their recognition with the 9 CSSB Army Team Award of 2024.

During EX RR 24, members of WKSP PL were deployed into a tactical field setting within the Cultana Training Area. The entire WKSP contingent, operated under the task-oriented call signs L11 and L13, which were tasked with delivering CSS to BG Boar. The L13 call sign was structured as a maintenance-intensive element, characterised by a significant static force posture to execute maintenance tasks both while stationary and on the move. Throughout EX RR 24, L13 completed over 30 missions, which included the fitting of two HX77 windscreens – previous experience indicated that this task typically had a success rate of about 20%. However, in this case, both windscreens were installed, with only one being damaged, resulting in a commendable accuracy rate of 66.67%. The accompanying image features the B-vehicle section from L13 fitting the first windscreen, highlighting an extraordinary achievement.



Lima 13 Vehicle technicians replacing a HX77 windscreen, utilising a Maintenance Shelter as the working platform.



Lima 13 Vehicle technicians replacing a M113AS4 power pack.

Following the completion of EX RR 24, 1 CSST entered a refit phase. This phase involved the consolidation of all supplies and equipment, as well as creating opportunities for soldiers to recuperate. A significant highlight of this period was the organisation of a welfare week, which featured later start times and earlier finishes, off-base physical training, guest lectures from essential support agencies, and adventure training activities. This initiative was effective in lowering the operational tempo and allowing the company to reset before shifting focus to the disestablishment of 1 CSST, Exercise Southern Tiger 24 (EX ST 24) and assisting with the Army's rebalance.

EX ST 24 provided an opportunity for members to once again operate in a field setting, training alongside their Malaysian counterparts while also offering vital close support to 7 RAR and 10/27 RSAR. For the WKSP PL, three specific trades were essential for support: two Weapon Technicians, one Vehicle Technician, and one Recovery Technician. This small team was required to deploy FRT's at short notice, which not only tested their rapid decision-making skills but also contributed to their professional development through meaningful training.

Each Platoon/Troop within 1 CSST has played an important role in relation to the Army Rebalance. The Transport Troop was actively engaged throughout the week, conducting road runs across every state in Australia. WKSP PL was responsible for ensuring that all vehicles were operational and prepared for handover. Furthermore, FRT's were tasked with accompanying the Transport Troop on the longer/more complex runs, enabling the identification and repair of any vehicle issues while on the move.

Since its formation in 2017, 1 CSST has made substantial efforts to acknowledge its historical significance and the contributions it has made to the Army's preparedness. A multitude of soldiers have been involved in this sub-unit, enriching its proud narrative. The 1 CSST WKSP PL closed its workshop for maintenance requests on 08 Nov 24, with the CFN parading down at the Headquarters workshop for outstanding maintenance. Following the disbandment of 1 CSST on November 29, 2024, the existing members paid tribute to this legacy and are dedicated to perpetuating it within new Army units.

1 RAR TSP

At 1 RAR, the WKSP is a testament to the power of small teams achieving big results. With limited manning, limited deployable FRTs and limited availability of parts, the workshop team kept the regiment's equipment operational under challenging conditions. Their success wasn't just due to skill and determination, but also the unyielding support from JLU, ready to XX tires at the drop of a hat. When RAEME was required, RAEME delivered with skill and fighting.

The 1st Battalions antics have stretched across SE Asia this year, where the grunts go so does their support, A Coy in Malaysia accompanied by CFN R Vermaak and CFN B Willcocks; B Coy in PNG supported by CFN L Wheaton and C Coy in the Philippine supported by CPL Envall, who described his experience overseas as "challenging". It is unknown if that was due to the tropical heat or trivial variety of equipment requiring maintenance daily.

The tasking requirements for RAEME have been diverse affording opportunities for PME training and exposure to peer militaries technical knowledge and processes.



Front-line units present unique situations for craftsmen, of note recovery. During a tenure at Tully, time trials were held, how fast can this 12.5T vehicle get from A to B. Unsurprisingly the vehicle did not reach B. CFN H Ambrose and CFN A Frost reacted to the scene and rendered the vehicle safe, as it had overturned. This posed significant risk to the pers inside and around the vehicle. The line of Fair and Non-fair wear was tested that day, One HX77 and trailer later the vehicle was on its way home, ready to be XX'd pronto. The unique nature and tempo afford training and practice at the unlikelyest of times.

WKSP has been tasked with ensuring that all armoured vehicles were not only sea-proof but also grunt-proof. After all, there's nothing quite like the creativity of an infantrymen trying to 'modify' equipment for an "important" mission. The team quickly learned that if you can make a vehicle maritime-ready, you can make it grunt-resistant—just add extra padlocks and a stern warning about paperwork.

The Culture that RAEME exudes has been steadily increasing in intensity, with many wandering eyes into the WKSP, curious if the PDs are better than combat cams, 'they are'. 1 RAR has seen change just as the rest of 3 BDE, although we are more likely to hear that from surrounding WKSP's rather than Ops, the ever-changing fleet of vehicles, losing PMV's, gaining a few back, a rebalance that has everyone realising this Dismounted Air mobile Amphibious fighting force, somehow has more vehicles then when we were motorised. Enjoyable weekend shifts await the Vehicle mechanics.

1 RAR TSP has so far experienced a fantastic 2024, with many more opportunities and experiences to come, optimism remains high and RAEME is prepared to overcome any challenge presented.

Arte' et Marte'



10 Force Support Battalion, 10 Theatre Maintenance Company & 35 Water Transport Squadron



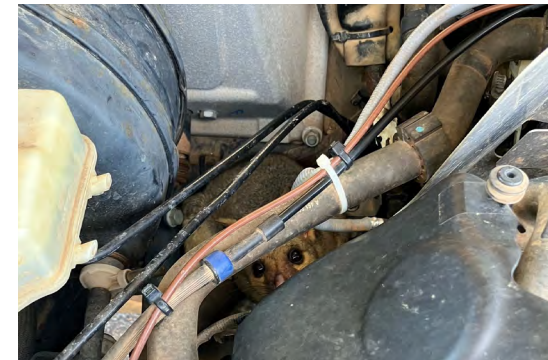
In late 2023 as a result of the implementation of the Land Domain Support System, 10 FSB's RAEME elements were well and truly shaken up! The 10th Logistics Support Company was re-named and re-rolled as the 10th Theatre Maintenance Company (10 TMC). 10 TMC grouped together Technical Support Troop, and welcomed the 9th Force Support Battalion's Close Maintenance Platoon elements from Townsville and Darwin. The resulting structure were Vehicle Platoon, Technical Support Platoon and Close Maintenance Platoon – Darwin (made up of the remaining Darwin workshop elements of the former CMP). Fortunately 35 WTS's crafties remained unscathed.

The new OC 10 TMC, MAJ Wayne Gregory, arrived fresh from the inner sanctum of ERP, and the new ASM, WO2 Matthew Stephens (second posting to 10 FSB), arrived on the scene with grand plans to make 10 FSB great again! A plethora of new LTs commenced march-in and the workshop was unusually flush for LTs for a RAEME Maintenance Company. With two new platoons raised in Townsville and CMP-D, the new OR march-ins initial confusion with a posting order stating 9 FSB but working for 10 FSB took some time getting used to...not to mention overcoming the old "us-verse- them" mentality. But the RAEME mafia pulled together with the new OC and ASM working harmoniously towards the OC's vision! The ever-elusive CFN Jack "I'll just go back to Antarctica then" McLeod finally defrosted and turned up to work after a year off in the deep freeze. Jack promptly decided that the Army and the tropical NQ weather wasn't for him after all, so he decided to bugger off back to Antarctica for good. Farewell mate and bushy-beards go-on.

The workflow and organisation of the workshop was flipped on its head and simplified to allow more equipment to flow freely into the workshop; a new and envisioned EMSD helped the process. This held true until the re-organisation of the shared 3 CSSB Transport/Workshop and 10 FSB yard required the 10 FSB croc line to be absorbed into the new 3 CSSB Transport bulk fuel storage area. Therefore, we had to become even smarter in the way we did business and do more with less.

The introduction of ERP and MILIS BOBO period was rapidly approaching and training courses were furiously conducted by all and sundry. The ASM and the newly developed EMEOPS SGT's Team were up to their necks in governance and milestone tasks IOT allow a seamless transfer of data into the new program. The decision to conduct a Six-week surge period was a pivotal masterstroke by the ASM in preparing the workshop for the ERP cutover. The tenacity of the 10 TMC Crafties continued the surge well past the ERP/BOBO period, through their own drive until the end of the year until they finally achieved over 14000 Maintenance hours for the year combined with 35 WTS WET!

This author also attempted to get his hands dirty on the CO's G-Wagon, only to be foiled by the CO's Personal pet possum who was promptly stuck in the engine bay. 45 mins later, a lot of sweating, swearing and with incredulous looks from the OC 10 TMC, who just happened to walk by, the possum was on his jolly way.



*Can't park there!
Possum stuck in the CO's G-Wagon.*

The year was very heavy on courses and included a suite of L121, Marine and Kalmar maintenance, Comms suites, AFA/TCCC, SCE19, BNVD/LAIRD/LAID, G-Wagon and HX77 driver courses and who could forget the plethora of mind-boggling ERP training modules were conducted by all. The non-implementation of ERP post BOBO was disappointing for most after all the hype, training and build-up, but secretly some welcomed MILIS back to the fold and the resumption of BAU.

FRTs

Various FRTs were sent out as part of multiple Exercises throughout the year. During EX ISOPTERA 24 our FRTs had their first official hit out at maintaining the unit's dependencies with 30 TML SQN testing their MHE capability in the field. The ageing fleet had a few issues, but the Bluebells were there to lend a hand. Whilst quiet, it was still good to have them in the field for their first hit out to test and adjust.

EX WARHORSE CRAWL 24 was quickly on top of us and was the first time we all came together as a Maintenance Company for a four-day walk-through, talk-through in a quasi-field (read=barracks) environment.

EX WARHORSE WALK 24 was the first real Company level shake out, which was conducted at Macrossan Training Area. This tested the new Corporals and also put the new command structure to the test in the field environment. It was also the first time that the RAEME Flag was "officially" flown in the field for 10 TMC.



The 10 TMC RAEME Mafia at end of EX WARHORSE WALK.

EX BROLGA RUN 24 was the Major Exercise of the year, where the FSU was raised and FST's were sent out to multiple locations in the Ingham and TFTA areas. Although very quiet for an exercise, more IMT-like activities were performed than FRTs and repairs, in the end experiences-may-vary for some members.

EX PREDATORS RUN 24 was a FRT sent out to assist the 30 TML SQN convoy to Darwin and out to Bradshaw Training Area. As a testament to the tradies skills back in Barracks, very few breakdowns were experienced. CFN Tinning was well adept at keeping the generators humming along, with LCPL Hayes looking on in awe. LCPL Jake Peterson (newly field promoted in Darwin) and CFN Ayden Bandura kept them company.

EX ISOPTERA SPRINT 24 yet again saw our FRT travel in convoy with 30 TML SQN from Townsville to the Port of Darwin. CPL Jasmine Hendry and CFN Jack Gardner hit the ground running and continuously kept the various pieces of MHE operational. There were even opportunities for sightseeing and suns-out-guns-out “Photo Ops” in the pristine NT environment.



10 TMC FRT CFN Jack Gardner and CPL Jasmine Hendry enjoying time for a quick tan and Suns-out-Guns-out ISO EX ISOPTERA SPRINT 24.

Reccy Mech CFN Alex “Red Rocket” Robertson also got an opportunity to test his skills by recovering various pieces of stricken equipment from as far south as Rockhampton when the MPs forgot to tell any tradies about their broken G-Wagon and 800KG Trailer left at DSG Rocky. Red Rocket has also been sent as far north as Cowley Beach for multiple platforms. When arriving for one job he was met with the familiar quote of “oh yeah our 40M is also bogged - 9 PET OPS PL”.



10 TMC FRT CFN JACK Gardner performing repair work during convoy ISO EX ISOPTERA SPRINT 24.



10 TMC Recovery of 1 MP Crocs from DSG Rockhampton.

Close Maintenance Platoon – Darwin jottings



Despite being physically dislocated from the rest of 10 TMC, the CMP-D “Darwinite’s” had a great year in their own right. The following is an account by CPL Adam Moran:

2024 has been a busy one for the members of CMP-D with the RPS position vacated early (as they made a shift to God’s Corps), and a number of vacant trades positions has given some junior members a good chance to step up and have greater responsibilities bestowed upon them. We are still waiting to see if this was a good idea.

With the CoC sorted and the Crafties eager to get started swinging spanners and whatever the hell Boffins do, it was time for the ‘All Arms Call for VM’s’ to rain in, with support requests coming in hot and heavy from all units in 1 BDE and even NORFORCE. This provided members of the unit opportunities to go out on FRT’s to Broome and Gove and to provide internal support to other units, this has made CMP-D a hot commodity. As we have the only working tyre changing machine on Robertson Barracks; CFN Haigh has become the base wide SME on tyre changing.



CFN Laubscher ‘Lobster’ on the Big boy forklift.

With Crafties going left, right and centre supporting other units, it was now time to start sending them out to not only attend multiple maintainer courses, but also throw them in the deep end with multiple members attending their subject courses for CPL.



EX PREDATORS RUN at Bradshaw. Recovery on the last night of EX involving CFN Cox.

Now that all members are forklift certified, it was now a race to see who can get on the forklift first and drive it like they stole it.

Along came the re-allocation of vehicles Defence wide, we can now say goodbye to our only two G-wagon GMM’s. But that’s alright, 1 HB received four XX two-door Hawkei’s so that’s a fair trade. Luckily, some of the Crafties have their mountain bikes at work so we still have the ability to conduct FRT’s.

Although there was a sense of sadness when we had to part ways with our GMM’s, it was a nice change of pace when CFN McFarlane who was made up to LCPL and his wife was present to promote him. Just don’t ask the Brass to take the photos, as they won’t contain all of the people present in the same frame, as LCPL McFarlane is rather tall!

With all this going on, we still found the time and resources to go out on EX PREDATORS RUN 24 and assist 1 CER and the Royal Marines. We even had members going to RAAF base Amberley to help out 6 ESR with VM support and a further two members being away for the greater part of the second part of the year conducting Watercraft Maintainer courses and all things boat, whilst channelling their inner Capt Jack Sparrow.

The 2024 CMP-D consisted of the following members:

CAPT Jackson Lee – PL COMD - The great course nominator of 2024.

CPL Adam Moran – SECT COMD - Might as well be acting PL SGT and ASM for CMP-D.

LCPL McFarlane – Boffin - Still wants to be referred to as EMEOPS Technician.

CFN Cox – Greaser - Now rethinking signing his retention bonus after EX PRED RUN.

CFN Dawson – Gun plumber - Has more bodgy's in GE then real work, but we let that slide.

CFN Graves – Greaser and new march in from OJT's - Has now seen the light being away from ASEME and Latchford Barracks.

CFN Haigh – Greaser - The man who somehow has multiple bodgy's going at once and still manages to pump out the 'green work'.

CFN Johnston – Greaser - The future B-VEH SECT COMD as CFN Haigh continually states.

CFN 'Lobster' Laubscher – Pretend sparky. The man who has his daily updates on skype on all things lobster.

CFN Naveau – Greaser. The man who continues to clear the room before entering it, you can take the man out of the infantry but you can't take the infantry out of the man.

CFN Street - Greaser and new march in from OJT's. Just received his coke bottle medal and now has a taste for more.

With 2024 soon to wrap up, it has been a year full of all things Army with some good, some bad. Even with this being said, CMP-D has been a great place to work, with all members of the WKSP having the 'Esprit de Corps' that all RAEME members need. This will allow us to keep the Army moving in whatever direction they decide to go in. May 2025 be as full on as this year has been, and may MILIS **never die**.

CPL Adam Moran and members of CMP-D.



The boys enjoying the Fat truck special.

35 WTS LCM8 Section jottings



The LCM8 engineers of 35 WTS's Watercraft Engineering Team (WET) started the year on RAEME birthday 2023 with CPL Sean "SOC" O'Connor advised while 4 beers deep to pack his bags for departure in support of OPRES09-23/OPRES01-24; consequently missing Army Team Award "consequences".

Then came relief "somewhat-in-place" (2 cyclones in the AO will change plans) by CPL Joel Cronin and followed up by CPL Aaron Moro for OPRES03-24. CFN Mitchell Ryan was also deployed north of Cairns after it attempted a Noah's Ark event. This saw the complete capacity of LCM-8 engineers deployed (less the PL SGT and discharging member CFN Brady "Bdizzle" Allan) before mandatory training 2024, establishing the tempo for the rest of the year.

The following months saw CFN Aidan Newnham-Kirby dragged into WET to assist with LCM8 support to multiple exercises around the Townsville area in support of 1 DIV and Army School of Transport - Marine Wing. In June, a boat was sailed down to Sydney to exchange CONFE/HMAS CHOULES allocated craft, presenting all the challenges of returning a capability from long-term storage prior to the return of the previous craft to Townsville. Special mentions to CFN Byrnes-Tynan and CFN Foster.

The rest of 2024 for WET looks like we won't have the whole section lined up at Linton's lattés, (LT Finnian Linton's personal coffee machine, which SGT Warren "Squiz" Taylor has not abused at all) from August until at least mid-December. As everyone prepares to step off on the upcoming support tasks around Australia and overseas. On the upside, the new paint shed is up so the boaties are not so jaded about their chipping and painting, whereas 10 TMC & 11 CSSB seem to like boats enough to feed us a few qualified members.



End Ex, Soldiers at Rainbow Beach pose for a group photo. Love a sneaky Tri-Colour – Photo courtesy of RAQ Friday Files 13/9/24.

35 WTS RAEME 2024 Nominal role:

LT Finnian ‘Latte’ Linton – PL COMD.

SGT Warren ‘Squiz’ Taylor – Marine Maint SPV

CPL Sean ‘SOC’ O’Connor –
Marine Maint SPV/LCM DET

CPL Aaron Moro – Wpn Tech/LCM DET

CPL Joel Cronin – Wpn Tech/LCM DET

CPL David Cope – Veh Tech (RES)

LCPL Tyler Grinke –
LARC-V/ABT CPL/LCM DET

CFN Mitchell Ryan – Wpn Tech/LCM DET

CFN Bryce Thompson (RETD) –
Veh Tech/LARC/ABT

CFN Newnham-Kirby – Wpn Tech/LCM DET

CFN Riley Madigan – Veh Tech/LARC-V/ABT

CFN Joshua Gayler – Veh Tech/LARC-V/ABT

36 WTT (Darwin):

CPL William Mitchell – Wpn Tech/LCM DET

CFN Alexandre Berthier – Wpn Tech/LCM DET

CFN Ted Fleischer – Wpn Tech/LCM DET

RPS

SGT Pettitt-Brown arrived on the scene with a vision: Make 10 FSB RPS great again! His team flew into the year with hangovers from years past and a very eager RQ/RIS WO breathing BPMs into gear daily, ERP/BOBO cutover and the insane amount of ERP training required for an ECN 104. With two dislocated RPS locations on both Lavarack and Ross Island Barracks presenting great challenges, CPL’s ‘Didge’ Harris and Abbas along with their PTE’s Rhook, Akee and Bligh set to work clearing up both locations whilst simultaneously preparing RUKs for deployment on watercraft and FRTs at short notice. The extremely hard work and turnaround of the RPS space and its processes earned the entire RPS a Army Teams Award. Well done team!

Social

The members of 10 TMC have worked extremely hard in 2024, yet we have still found time to participate in social activities around Townsville. The RAEME Association Queensland (RAQ-NQ chapter) held frequent gatherings at various pub locations around town this year. Members of the workshop were invited to attend and even become financial members.

These gatherings provides a relaxed atmosphere with multiple raffles, food, drinks and opportunities for the ‘old and bolds’ to mix with the newest generations of the crafties coming through the ranks. These were great times for the author to connect with not one, but TWO of his old TTMOs from years back, including old ASMs from years gone by. Opportunities for various RSL “Diggers Lunches” were also taken when presented.

The ASM’s love of golf was not apparent on his arrival, so it was decreed that the ASM’s Bowls day would better suit the majority. We enjoyed a half day at Kirwan Sports Club where shenanigans were had, tasty food and beverages were consumed. Prizes for best bowler, best dressed, worst dressed and worst bowler were awarded. It was noted that silk shirts for the officers and fishing shirts for the Crafties were not considered “Hawaiian shirt theme” and subsequent awards or punishments were given, including a men’s “beauty pack” that CPL ‘Latho’ Latham pranked with a picture of yours truly taped to it. (Duke also got a packet of coffee for his trouble).

The team were also given the opportunity to go for a week of Adventure Training in various locations around the glorious NQ region. Some spent their time gaining diving qualifications in Cairns and others chose mountain biking and hiking in the Paluma ranges with some wet overnight accommodation as an added bonus.



CFN Duke Randall Graciously accepting his “Worst Dressed” punishment ahhh...prize.



10 TMC members hiking and mountain biking at Paluma Range.



10 TMC members on their Crystal Creek “convoy drive”, perform a “Short Halt” at Frosty Mango.



10 FSB Members involved with some ‘old and bolds’ at the first RAQ Gathering for 2024.
Photo courtesy of RAQ Friday Files 23/2/24.

The 82nd RAEME Birthday was soon upon us and we quickly realised that the previous year’s kart would not survive the challenging 5th Aviation Regiment’s (5 AVN) track. Armed with this revelation and 5 AVNs new set of technical regulations, the team quickly ordered enough steel to construct the chassis and they were off!

Testing the brakes were a concern and the kart met a sudden stop against an immovable object. Cue the big day with repairs completed and with no time to actually paint the kart RAEME colours, a new driver CFN Myles Taylor was in the hot seat and he did us all proud with a top 4 effort! All this despite the formal protest about the engine capacity affecting our ability to change gears; we were only allowed to run if we stuck to 1st gear only!

Left: 10 FSB Go-Kart – 2 CAV preparing for an alleged formal protest at 2024 RAEME Birthday

CMP-D decided their numbers were too few and decided to collaborate with NORFORCE in their boaty-kart and participated in various shenanigans at Robertson Barracks. From all reports, it was a fantastic day with celebrations continuing well into the late afternoon.



10 FSB Go-Kart – 2 CAV preparing for an alleged formal protest at 2024 RAEME Birthday



Members of CMP-D enjoy a combined team for RAEME Birthday Celebrations with NORFORCE.

10 TMC Workshop nominal role for 2024:

HQ:

- MAJ Wayne Gregory – OC
- CAPT Kirsty Reason – 2IC
- LT Ryan ‘Punching bag’ Newhill – OPSO
- WO2 Matthew Stephens – ASM/ACE
- WO2 Matthew Hallett – CSM
- SGT Dane ‘Marshy’ Marsh – EMEOPS SGT
- CPL Jasmine Richardson – CQMS
- PTE Kalem Masso – Qwee
- PTE Anthony Cutts – Super Clerk

VEH PL:

- LT Aaron Gillan – PL COMD
- SGT David Pool – PL SGT
- CPL Mitchel (Eddie) Edwards – C/D Veh
- CPL Jasmine Hendry – B-Veh
- CPL James ‘Latho’ Latham – Veh Tech/EMEOPS
- CPL Jonathon Moore – B-Veh
- CPL Amber ‘JB’ Johnson-Briggs – Servicing
- LCPL Kennith ‘Vinnie’ Vincent – Veh Tech
- LCPL Jake ‘Peto’ Peterson – Veh Tech
- CFN Cadence ‘Ash’ Ashley – Veh Tech
- CFN Ayden ‘Bandy’ Bandura – Veh Tech
- CFN Robert ‘Robbie’ Claxton – Veh Tech
- CFN Rebecca ‘Bec’ Dunnett – C/D Veh Tech
- CFN Jack Gardner – Veh Tech
- CFN Benjamin ‘Macka’ Mackenzie – Veh Tech
- CFN Jack ‘Antarctica’ McLeod – Veh Tech
- CFN Kieren ‘Pricey’ Price – Veh Tech
- CFN Diego Olivares – Veh Tech
- CFN Jordan Arthur-Davidson – Veh Tech

- CFN Alex ‘Red Rocket’ Robertson – Recovery Tech
- MR David Smith APS – Vehicle Mechanic
- TSP PL:**
- LT Adam Lindsell – PL COMD
- SGT Matthew Armstrong – PL SGT, D/TIS
- SGT James Pettitt-Brown – RPS SGT
- CPL Sami Abbas
- CPL Cody ‘Didge’ Harris
- CPL Simon Clark
- CPL Russell ‘Russ’ Myhill
- CPL David ‘Stewy’ Stewart
- LCPL Cody Hayes
- LCPL Christopher Markham
- PTE Jessica Bligh
- PTE Scarlet Rhook
- CFN Samuel ‘BT’ Byrnes-Tynan
- CFN Sean McComas
- CFN Duke Randall
- CFN Joseph Wright
- CFN Isaac Dawes
- CFN Myles Taylor
- CFN Toby Minns
- CFN Callam Tinning
- CFN Francis Yuzon
- CFN Jacob Rush
- CFN Kris Kelly

Summary

The year has been a very busy but rewarding one for 10 TMC and the RAEME members of 35 WTS. Very high levels of maintenance were achieved with record hours logged utilising the old adage - more from less and work smarter not harder principles. Maintainers were upskilled by gaining higher qualifications, and all members had the time to enjoy some fun and hilarity throughout the year.

On behalf of the OC 10 TMC and 10 FSB RAEME members, may your families and friends have a great festive season break and safe travels if posting out of the unit.

Compiled by SGT Dane Marsh – EMEOPS SGT extraordinaire (Latho made me do it)

3 CSSB - 102 Field Workshop

Exercise BEACHHEADS 2024

EX BEACHHEADS is a 3 Brigade training exercise that focuses on the study of Australian assaults on Japanese beachhead positions in Papua New Guinea (PNG) during World War II. The exercise specifically covers the retaking of Beachheads Buna, Gona, and Sanananda.

In 2024, I had the privilege of deploying as one of two RAEME officers for the exercise. The officers participating in EX BEACHHEADS conducted a TEWT (Tactical Exercise Without Troops) of the battles that took place, with each Corps contributing their unique expertise.

For RAEME, our focus was on the maintenance support provided to M3 Stuart tanks, BREN gun carriers, and 25-pounder artillery pieces that were crucial to the retaking of the Buna beachhead. At that time in history, mobile repair was not yet implemented, and recovery was conducted using whatever was available near repair posts.

Our team struggled to apply our modern thinking to the challenges faced by the soldiers in the past, such as the lack of supplies, assets, and manpower. However, we were able to gain valuable experience in the landscape and history, which will be useful as we move forward and prepare for future war fighters where littoral movement in those environments is highly likely.

EX BEACHHEADS provided us with a unique opportunity to delve into the past and understand the challenges faced by our predecessors. It was a humbling experience to see how they overcame adversity with limited resources and technology. We were able to appreciate their resilience, determination, and innovation, which ultimately led to their success.



As we continue to prepare for future conflicts, exercises like EX BEACHHEADS are essential in helping us understand the complexities of warfare and the importance of adaptability, resourcefulness, and perseverance. We must continue to learn from the past to ensure that we are better prepared for the challenges of the future.

LT Jarrod Johnson

GE/EIR Platoon Commander – 102 Fd Wksp Coy

FRT Support Shines in Defence Strategic Review (DSR) Rebalance

The DSR rebalance saw four FRTs from 3 CSSB deployed across Australia, where they demonstrated their ingenuity and resilience. With limited parts availability, the teams worked tirelessly, often through rest days, to repair vehicles in harsh and hot environments. They ate dinner beside the vehicles and embraced long-haul driving, showcasing their adaptability and dedication.



“The Zac Attack” CFN Zac Walder (226) and CFN Zac Smith (229).

The experience built relationships, developed skills, and tested the teams’ ability to work with limited resources.

The FRTs should be proud of their contributions to the mission’s success, demonstrating their professionalism and commitment to their craft.

WO2 Soult-Walter “Snappa” Croc new pool

LT Jane Hickie
A and B Vehicle Platoon Commander

In a stunning turn of events at the 102 Field Workshop, the beloved mascot WO2 Soult-Walter ‘Snappa’ Croc has been living in what can only be described as squalor. For years, this courageous crocodile has been the heart and soul of the Premier Workshop in the Army, providing morale-boosting entertainment and a general sense of prehistoric charm. But alas, the enclosure that was meant to be her kingdom has become more of a den of despair.



Thankfully, a group of dedicated craftsmen, led by the one and only CFN Riley ‘Steve’ Burgin ‘Irwin’, took it upon themselves to rescue WO2 Soult Water from her dismal living conditions. Armed with nothing but shovels, these brave soldiers waded into the murky waters of the Billabong Sanctuary, ready to do battle with the debris and mud that littered the enclosure.

But the task was not without its challenges. As the team worked tirelessly to clear the area, they found themselves face to face with some of the most formidable adversaries in the animal kingdom - crocodiles. With no fear and a steely determination, CFN Burgin ‘Irwin’ led the charge, wrestling these beasts to the ground and ensuring the safety of his fellow soldiers.

After a full day of hard yakka, the enclosure was finally ready for inspection. And who better to

judge the new and improved habitat than the queen of the swamp herself, WO2 Soult Water. As she glided into the water, it was clear that she was pleased with the changes. The enclosure now boasts a large watering hole, perfect for a crocodile of her stature, and a clean, debris-free environment that allows her to maximize her efficiency as the heart and soul of the workshop.

As we look towards next year, we are excited to celebrate WO2 Soult Water’s 40th year of service. This milestone will cement her place as the longest serving mascot in the Army, a title that is well-deserved for such a dedicated and hardworking crocodile.

So here’s to you, WO2 Soult Water. May your new and improved enclosure bring you many years of happiness and continue to provide inspiration for all those who have the privilege of serving alongside you.



CFN Burgin-Irwin (front) LCPL Kyle Ross (Tail duties).

PNG Mobile Training Team - Bravo 2024

From 28 May to 02 September 2024, three members of 102 Field Workshop, 3 CSSB were deployed to Papua New Guinea (PNG) as part of the Mobile Training Team - Bravo (MTT-B) under the 3rd Combat Engineer Regiment headquarters. The focus of MTT-B was to support a variety of courses for the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) and to seek out opportunities for cultural exchanges to enable further collaboration between the ADF and PNGDF.



CPL Stephen Marlow supported the Admin Company of the 1st Royal Pacific Islands Regiment, facilitating weapon maintenance and repairs, bringing their weapon systems back to operational requirements. He also provided armourer support to the Basic Recruit Course during their weapons training and initial range practice serials at the Goldie River Training Depot.

SGT Travis Doll effectively embedded himself into the PNGDF FSB Maintenance Company, running a 3-month directed welding training program for 3 PNGDF personnel. This course provided the PNGDF with the knowledge and ability to repair vehicles and boats, keeping their fleets functioning.

My time on MTT-B saw me as the Logistics contingent commander. This role consisted of two key functions, that being provision of support for the PNGDF FSB located in Port Moresby whilst simultaneously managing the deployed ADF contingent, made up of Army and RAAF personnel. I was able to embed directly within the PNGDF FSB, supporting the ADF Defence Co-operation Program (DCP) Objectives within Port Moresby. My key task was supporting a self-help trial to

repair 220 houses for PNGDF personnel within the Murray Barracks district of Port Moresby, this included establishing systems to introduce, track and maintain equipment provided by the DCP.

This enabled me to work within all elements of the PNGDF FSB, including the Garrison Engineers who mentored trainees from local hardware stores and youth from local community, providing exposure to opportunities within the PNGDF.

Overall, MTT-B provided all involved, especially those of 102 Fd WKSP Company with a sense of achievement in supporting both the PNGDF and the historical relationship between our two countries. The exposure to the culture of PNG, the PNGDF and its logistics systems will provide ongoing benefit to all involved, both within our military careers and beyond.

LT Hudson Smith

RSM 3 CSSB Challenge

CPL M Reid ECN 418 Section Commander

Winning the RSM's Challenge was an incredible experience for my section, 7 Section/ the winning section of 102 Field Workshop Company. Over the course of the three-day event, we were faced with a series of soldierly tasks designed to test our military skills, knowledge and attributes.



Each day began with a PT session, intended to pre-fatigue us and get us thinking about command and control from a military perspective. The stands varied, but all were aimed at honing our military skills and allowing us to put our previous experience and knowledge into practice. We also had time prior to the challenge to go over some topics with further training, allowing us to be as prepared as possible.

One of our favourite stands was the close combat shooting at the 25m range. This stand allowed us to learn or practice our combat shooting skills, including admin top-up drills and transitions. The final day included the bayonet assault course, which many of us had not completed since Kapooka. It was a great experience to go over the bayonet drills and run through the course, not once but twice.

Overall, the RSM's Challenge was an engaging and challenging experience that I would be more than happy to do again. I am incredibly proud of my section and the hard work and dedication we put into preparing for and competing in the challenge. It was an honour to be part of the winning section, and I am grateful for the opportunity to have been a part of such a great team.

Winning Section:

CPL Mitchell Reid, LCPL Joshua Smith, CFN John Chubb, CFN Blake Irlam, CFN Liam Kowaleski, CFN Nathan Heron, CFN Noah Oosterbeek, CFN Riley Scanlon, CFN William Ginn, CFN Jacob Dehnen

Both sections from 102 Fd Wksp Coy winning the Champion Section and Subunit Award.

Farewell from the OC, Major Wil Woods, 102 Field Workshop Company



As I step down from my role as the Officer Commanding of 102nd Field Workshop Company, I would like to take a moment to reflect on the journey we have shared over the past two years. Together, we have weathered cyclones, heatwaves, Brigade exercises, deployments, international engagements, new equipment introductions, FRTs across Australia, lateral transfers, and non-stop support to the 3rd Armoured Amphibious Brigade as OPFOR for 3 Bde and 2 Div.

It has been an honour to command the Army's Premier workshop, and I am incredibly proud of the team's achievements, all while facing severe understaffing. The workshop's standard of work is a testament to the dedication and professionalism of each team member. I will miss the technicians the most as they are among the most skilled and committed individuals I have had the pleasure of working with throughout my career.

The workshop has witnessed the growth and promotions of our junior technicians, who have consistently risen to the occasion and exceeded expectations. I am confident that they will continue to thrive under the leadership of the incoming Officer Commanding, Major M Mirza, during his tenure.

As I bid farewell to this post, I want to express my sincere gratitude to the entire team for their support, hard work, and camaraderie. I have no doubt that the 102nd Field Workshop Company will continue to set the bar high for other units and maintain its reputation as the Army's premier workshop.

Thank you for the memories, and all the best for the future.

113 Workshop Company

MAJ Perry Beor

Here I was having lots of fun doing the last Regi job of my career as 2IC of WAUR and looking forward to moving gently into the twilight before CRA when the phone rings.... it was my Career Advisor (and fellow subbie from 113 in the 90s)

“G’Day mate, what you doing next year?”

“As of 5 minutes ago I was staying as XO WAUR”

“Shaun needs someone back at 113. He hasn’t anyone for next year” Shaun Fenn was a subbie under both of us as OCs and now CO 13 CSSB.

“Have I any \$#%^& choice?”

“Course not, you know the drill”

So once again back into harness. 4th time lucky. The only saving grace was Mike Tamassey, who I did ROBC with late last century, got similarly dirked and was back at 107. We commiserated over the DPN.

All too soon I was getting a handover, forgetting the CO had a first name (apart from Sir) and boning up on the current crop of acronyms.

The poor S7 staff didn’t know what to make of me at first – this old bloke who seemed to know everyone, but professional as always, gave me a bit of the benefit of the doubt. After a few weeks, I knew I was back on track when walking back from a Bn OGRP one night.

We passed by a flash new Ford owned by one of the truckies

“Guys I am thinking of getting a retirement car at the end of the year, what do you reckon is good value?”

“New or Classic?”

“Classic – I want to drive not run a computer”

“Ford, Holden or Valiant”

“Whatever has a Red Motor”

“Monaro or Torana?”

“Toranas have always been overpriced, even when they were new”

“HG or HQ?”

“That’s what I am asking you”

A spirited discussion then ensured over the relative merits of the 327 Small Block Chev as opposed to the 308 Iron Lion. It was good to be home!

We started with the usual FPT weekend, where I was able for the first time to do the Pensioner’s BFA, much to the amusement of the rest of the Bn, but as I retorted, we are not called 113 Walkshop for nothing!

The next weekend was where the fun began. We had the lead for an adverse driving weekend in the sand dunes at Lancelin. Getting back into the swing of convoy orders, deployment orders and just how fine the Lancelin dune sand is. As we took the truckies along we took it easy for the first day and the night drive with NVG, (how can you get lost on a single track with no turnoffs?) but things got interesting on day 2 on the beach.



One of the tyre biters stated categorically that you can’t bog a Land 121 vehicle. Harry and Jamie, the two Wksp WO2s just looked at each other “Challenge Accepted - hold my er.....lemon barley water”. Two minutes later, – job done!

We ended up having the 45 and both the 42s with multiple rigs working hard to get the crock out (though it may have just been the tow rags showing off their kit). Of course we could have

simply backed it out but we didn’t tell the truckies that. A few more recoveries up and down the sand dunes and we called it a day. Good old fashioned RAEME fun.

The next weekend we took Mogzilla out for a proof of concept test. Mogzilla is a rolling Mog cab/chassis with a roll cage from hell. Fully CAD designed and built to withstand the most deranged recovery training scenario. The crew had great fun trying to roll it sideways down a hill, but the straight sides of the frame (since corrected) did not allow it so they had to be content with placing it upside down in a gully at the bottom of a rock face. Recovery from this and a number of even more convoluted positions (we have some WO2s and SNCOs with very evil minds) tested the tow rags to their limits. The language was loud, descriptive and very colourful, but they had a ball. Unfortunately, the Mog’s steering assembly was not to the same standard as the roll cage – but it has now been reinforced and tow rags are looking forward to the next trial weekend like a 10 yr old kid on Christmas eve.



The annual range shoot was a real blast with buku ammo and great efforts being made to ensure everyone was current with the EF89 and the M4. I almost got away with avoiding the latter by mentioning my M16 qualifications, but the ASM happened to be walking past and just gave me “the look”.

Comments like “Sorry sir we haven’t a 0.303 for you”, died a natural death when I pointed out I was actually Bren qualified (Ok it was the very last Bren shoot ever but I have the piece of paper). Some people even took me seriously when the Boss asked everyone on the end of the weekend whether they preferred the EF88 or the M4 and I said the SLR.

Many of the troops have never done combat shooting by day and night over a full weekend before and many manic grins were seen. (23 rounds on a WTSS is no comparison to getting hot brass in the neck on the mound). There was considerable shock when the Wksp OC and 2IC spent their non-shooting time doing non techs and picking up brass – apparently no one had seen RAEME officers helping in the field before.



The big event of the year was Austral Shield 24. – two weeks at RAAF Curtin. We got dirked to command the CSST and the RSD – said a bit for our reputation. The RSD was the first large 13 Bde Convoy north since the Spiderman Exercises of the 1990s - 2,500 km of roadhouse pies and red bull. Actually it wasn't quite that bad with stops each night planned at the local speedways (No, you cannot take the '45 on the track and try to drift it) and hot meals laid on. 84 vehicles left Karrakatta and we only lost two on the way up and one on the way back – having new vehicles rather than 20yr old Mogs and Land Rovers helped.

Of course, a week of driving around RAAF Curtin with fine pindan sand and drivers unfamiliar with the conditions had its effect and the ASM decided that a number probably wouldn't make it back so the convoy down was a bit smaller than the one up, though some judicious loading (what dump truck?) meant we got everything back we were asked to.

Still some vehicles needed a bit of TLC on the trip back and on one night the FRT had to stop short in a night loc in a truck park on bitumen to effect some repairs, but strangely enough the fridge truck with meat packs and the BBQ were on hand. I will leave it there!

One of the more amusing episodes of the year was when the museum wanted their Mk 2 Ferret moved to the car park to be picked up for a strip and repaint. It would have been a nightmare to try to get a '42 or a '45 around the back of the building to where she was parked (though I did think about 113's old F1 Twin boom which used to be there on display, but it had been sent over east the month before), so we went old school – lots of soldiers, pushing. 3.7 tonne of A Veh with half flat tyres. Getting it up the hill at the back of the museum was fun, stopping it running away from us on the other side was even more so, but we managed it with ease, the (very light) truckie we bunged in the driver's seat even steered it perfectly into a parking space. I was all for putting a Mk2 Ferret competency in her blue book but the RSM kyboshed it.



Like everyone we then attempted to come to terms with ERP and its course requirements but managed to have a break one weekend with F89 scenario shooting on the WTTS (what do you mean we can't shoot down helicopters with the F89 from the hip – I just did) and assisting the truckies with a small convoy drive (what only ONE bakery!).



The year did end on a high note with the Bn as a whole is helping out with some general clean up work at the Veterans Transition Centre in Jarrahdale. What we thought of a dry overgrown pond full of fallen trees and bush litter ended up being a set of concrete lined swimming pools with proper stairs, surrounds and overflows etc. The Wksp's chainsaws got a workover and we cut enough firewood to keep

all the chalets supplied for all of next winter. The CO and OC even got their hands dirty bogging in like everyone else. This bushland setting provides a real service to vets and the fact that they let us have our wind up there was simply icing on the cake.

As always at this time of the year people start to move on and we said goodbye to a number of stalwarts of the workshop – Dylan transferred across to the Navy to work on Submarines and Harry has really gone dark side to become an officer in the RAAF! We wish them all the best, though Harry has got his work cut out to beat a former 113 CPL Greaser who is now an AIRCDRE.

Alas all to soon my 12 months was up and it was time to pass on the baton to another one of my former subbies, Rob Reeves. As an avid craft brewer, piper and classic car aficionado - having two each of classic Mustangs, Minis, MGs, and Beetles (just in case you needed to cannibalise er... carry out a controlled parts transfer) and a Stingray, he will fit in a treat. Also, unlike some of our current set of vehicles (no names but you know which ones I am referring to), all his cars run.

I have been uniquely favoured/cursed in the Corps by getting 4 stints commanding a field workshop, which is the greatest job a RAEME Officer can ever aspire to. As I look toward the twilight of my career, I will reiterate my final words to the workshop on my handover.

"I have already said goodbye to this workshop on three occasions, fully expecting never to return, so rather than saying goodbye, I will simply say – until next time, Arte' Et Marte"

God bless you 113, you have given me the best years of my life.

145 Signals Squadron Workshop

CFN Olivia Gibson

It's time to pack down another year at the mighty 145 SIG SQN. We've seen 12 months of changes, challenges and some sporadic yet much needed fun. So, let's take a look at the highlight reel.

The workshop had the honour of hosting its first Spanner Club. Which, from the damage seen behind the bar, proved to be hugely successful. As a very small team of tradies, it was refreshing to see the wider Corps come together for a beer and offer to lend a hand whenever we find ourselves in a tight spot.



Our legendary Fitter, Marshy, took a trip on Operation Accordion (OP ACC) for some weapon TLC. A well-deserved opportunity to flex his knowledge muscles and help the boys out there get the job done. However, it would appear the sights of Dubai and a few camels garnered most of his enthusiasm...at least that's what his happy snaps suggested.

A few lucky members of the shop set off on Exercises Clydesdale Run and Diamond Run to take in what Rockhampton had to offer. Upon arrival, it became apparent that it offered a job in the newly formed railyard cleaning Corps. Position development unfortunately involved sweeping and mopping 10 years of dust, bird poop and actual birds off the floor of the warehouse. The lads stayed in high spirits, but the prospect of digging in at the Bay didn't look so bad after all.



We said some farewells to Bondy, our illustrious Tech Elec, Jayce, our RPS God and Daysey, our golf pro with a sprinkle of Boffin. After an absolutely stellar career in the Force Bondy is moving onto greener pastures with his lovely family. Jayce, following an equally stellar career, is off on a must needed respite. A uni degree and a new daughter later, Daysey took on a new career close to home. Unfortunately, we were left with a few pieces of our workshop puzzle missing.

Thank God Troy was on a flight to Sydney to save the day. He didn't get too comfortable before heading to Rocky and immersing himself in the land of the Sigs. The Brigade gave him some shiny new Radlink smart batteries to trial within the HQ node. It was initiation by fire, but he took it in his stride. Providing the bridge of information between the Project and the Brigade.



The vehicle section was afforded little opportunity to put their feet up this year. Without an EMEOPs, the section had to share the love, and the workload, to achieve any semblance of smooth operation. We welcomed the addition of PMV Headquarters-On-The-Move to our fleet, adding a set of new challenges to tackle around the daily grind. Through it all, we've come out the other end all the better for it, albeit a little exhausted.

And that's about all we have to report from 2024. Our little team doing what we can to keep the satellites up and the servers on. In the new year we will welcome two new Vehicle Techs, a Boffin and a much-needed Sergeant. Until then you can find us taking a load off and getting set to fight the good fight in 2025.



2 CAV REGT – A SQN A1

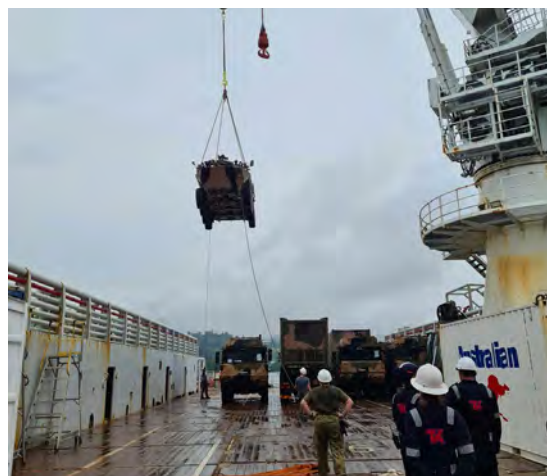
EX WANTOK WARRIOR 2024

CPL Benjamin O'Rourke

After a busy year consisting of exercises within the Townsville Field Training Area (TFTA), Beersheba Cup, jungle training in Tully and winning the Commanders Trophy (2 years in a row), the 2nd Cavalry Regiment was not finished. The members of A SQN were presented with a unique opportunity to support a troop of ASLAVs in Papua New Guinea for the first time in history. The mission – 2 Cav Regt is to support 3 RAR in building on the training value of an already existing Exercise Wantok Warrior (Ex WW24), as part of Mobile Training Team - C (MTT-C) over the period 08 OCT – 28 OCT 24. The aim - to integrate and demonstrate to the PNGDF an enhanced combined arms training package, utilising mounted and dismounted capabilities across the Wewak area and surrounding provinces. The troop from A SQN consisted of 6 ASLAVs, 2 of which were Type 3 (RAEME) variants. Out of the nineteen soldiers to drive, operate, and command these vehicles, were 7 very keen and very capable V18 personnel.

The 6 deployed ASLAVs were loaded aboard the ADV RELIANT in Townsville and met in Wewak by an unloading party consisting of SGT David Seymour, SGT Daniel Jaynes and CFN Codie Hawkins to transport them to Moem Barracks. The unloading party were able successfully ferry the vehicles, but not without complications of their own. The only access to Moem Barracks was via a bridge that was held together with hopes, dreams and betel nut.

It would not have survived the nightmare that a 12 tonne ASLAV was about to bring. Instead, the highly skilled and determined unloading party broke track and ferried themselves and other vehicles through the sandy crossing. Concurrently they were tallying up some international recovery jobs on the back door of the 'R'. Once the unloading party had positioned the vehicles, tents, generators and had a tour of the ADV Reliant, it was time to return back to Australia.



The prospect of taking ASLAV's to PNG for the first time was an exciting opportunity for A SQN, especially for those that had never travelled overseas before. The pre-deployment paperwork was as expected: vast, painful, mostly unnecessary, never filled out correctly and needing multiple copies. On completion of the admin, the movements personnel doing checks on equipment were a breeze. The same thing could not be said about the flight to get into PNG. There was no breeze rushing past these freshly cut heads and ADM compliant moustaches on any of the initial proposed departure days.

Once the main body finally arrived in Wewak, they quickly realised they were not in Kansas anymore. The main body of V18 consisted of SGT Daniel Jaynes as the ASM, CPL Ben O'Rourke (VT), LCPL Kyle Foster (RT), CFN Bailey McKenzie (WT), CFN Jayden Hartshorn (VT), CFN Guy Ekblad (RT) and CFN Matthew Foot (ET). The temperature was high, the humidity higher and roads stained red. This did not hinder the morale of the V18 contingent. After doing a quick check of the vehicles, it was evident that the sea prep that was conducted was no match for the sea breeze that the vehicles were subject to whilst on the ADV RELIANT for 10 days. After gently tapping and lubricating all of the seized hinges and hatches, the first jobs started rolling in.



The first big job this C/S received was not on an ASLAV, but for a lift pump for the camp's Water Purifier. With the pump in pieces, it was clear that water was not the only thing passing through this now toothless, plastic impeller. With the camp's water supply now in jeopardy, there were no dumb ideas on how to resolve this issue. Between the brains of CFN Ekblad and the technical prowess of CFN McKenzie, they were able to replace the pump side through a not so controlled parts exchange from another water pump that had an unserviceable motor. This solution looked promising, however the water purifier could not be fooled. All nonessential activities using water were ceased, meaning no showers, but also no shaving. 'You win some, you don't win some'.

Not all fun was had by V18. A big shout out to the K38 team consisting of CFN Ben Reynolds (VT), CFN Josh Hull (WT), CFN Bailey Lette (ET), CFN Curtis Bill (ET) and the RAE electrician from 3 CER, SPR James Ashcroft. These boys were kept busy maintaining the camp, fixing the Kubota and maintaining the Rigid Inflatable Boats (RIBs) that were used for courses and island hopping. Morale was high in the K38 tent, and they were happy to share their secret with everyone. Whether it was fixing everyone's problems in the workshop by day or fixing everyone's sorrows in 'The Royal' by night. No matter if the sun was up and WIF raised, or sundown and WIF lowered, the K38 tent was a universal problem solver, and everyone was welcome.

With Ex Wantok Warrior open, our next hurdle was now to overcome the fuel issue that was affecting everyone in the East Sepik region. While the fuel tanks were low, enthusiasm was high.

The ASLAV's were still able contribute to the mounted tasks, having all 6 vehicles utilised in the Wewak Port block task. While ASLAVs were blocking the entry by land and the RIBs were blocking entry by sea, the CH-47s were able to drop a combination of PNGDF and ADF dismount soldiers to clear the port.



The next task was for four ASLAVs: to provide security for the insertion and clearance of the Wewak Airport so a friendly aircraft could land to provide reinforcements. With dismount forces clearing the terminal, engineers clearing the runway and the ASLAVs in security, the stage was set for the aircraft to land. After a couple of hours, a few millimetres of rain and some smoke in the cockpit, the now 'notional' aircraft landed and the airport task was complete.



Whilst in fuel state black, only 2 ASLAVs were used for a task up in the highlands, freeing up crews for other supporting roles. CFN McKenzie came home with the MVP for this serial by putting down his tools and turning on his sublime acting skills; even getting a ride back to Moem Barracks in a CH-47 as a screaming casualty. Macca received a carton of liquid morale from the med team for his performance and dedication to the role. LCPL Foster took out the 'Rough, No Duff' award, receiving a couple of stitches for his efforts in assisting a 40M to traverse through some low hanging local flora.

With Ex WW24 completed and our time in PNG coming to an end, we could focus on swinging spanners again. With building relationships in mind, we supplied a couple of keen Crafties to assist the 2RPIR workshop with some maintenance on one of their Land Cruisers. CFN McKenzie and CFN Hartshorn were excited...at first, but the more they looked at this rusted 'flaky' chassis, the more it dawned on them that this job was more than just 'fixing a bracket'. Whilst utilising all of the appropriate PPE, the dynamic duo got to work by cutting out the piece they needed from a 'donor' car. There was sweat, a lot of grinding, swearing, some welding and a few tears. However, at the end of the day, they were able to deliver a much better product than what they started with, and the car was back on the road again.

After 3 weeks in PNG, it was time for the 2 Cav Regt contingent to head home. The experience was great, lessons were learnt and relationships were stronger. Even though the exercise did not go as planned due to reasons out of our control, the team adapted, overcame and pushed through in true RAEME spirit. Training value was still achieved and the core reason for us being there, to build relationships, was definitely met. Giving the PNGDF and the civilian population the opportunity to see the ASLAV in person and be able to touch it was a very positive experience for us and them. The most common questions were; 'Are they propellers? Do they go in the water?' 'Are you leaving these here?'. Although disappointed the ASLAVs weren't staying in Wewak, everyone hoped we would return with them in the future and reminded us that the ADF is always welcome in Wewak.

Arte' et Marte'



2nd Combat Engineer Regiment (2 CER) Technical Support Troop

2024 was another busy year for the Technical Support Troop (TST) at the 2nd Combat Engineer Regiment. The Troop sent several members overseas to support exercises in Fiji, Malaysia and Vanuatu; while closer to home we supported several Regimental and Brigade level exercises.



2 CER TST 2024.

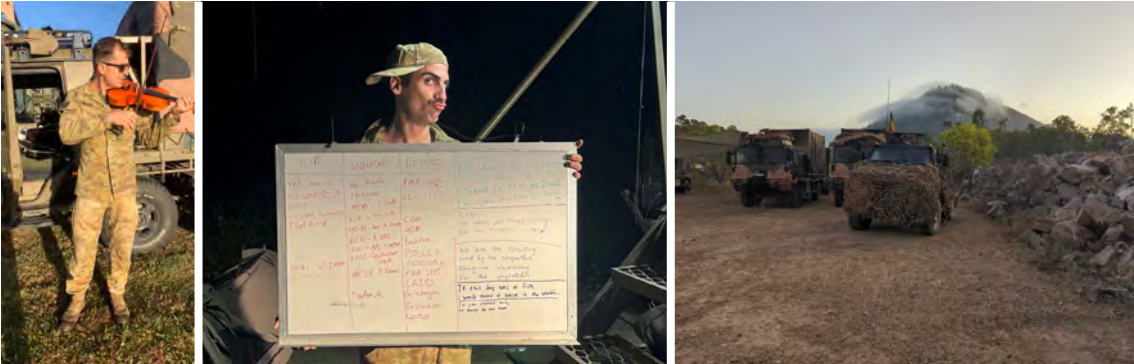
2 CER Ex Terrier Run

May saw the Troop supporting the Ex Terrier Run in SWBTA. The 3 week period consisted of daily FRTs out to engineer call signs who provided us with some unique faults in plant and vehicles; which in turn created some challenging and creative times for diagnosis and parts procurement. The sun was bright and shining for the majority of the exercise which kept morale high, along with the sneaky acquisition of multiple double cheeseburgers for the boys.

Work started straight away with the breakdown of RHQ’s “petrol powered” G-wagon. This ended up being recovered forward to the training area and later drained, replaced filters and flushed through with diesel to get it back on the road.

2 CER provided the Brigade with key plant assets which were utilised to resurface roads, build pads and dig in defensive positions for 6 RAR when they forgot how to use their ETs. Due to the heavy use of equipment, there were multiple breakdowns. Everything from coolant leaks to valve body replacements providing plenty of work for the WKSP. There was also the incident involving our fearless 2IC and a scary movie, which if the rumours heading rear were to be believed, had him jumping at ghosts on piquet for weeks to follow.

The exercise was a huge success for TST. Much experience was gained throughout the FRT whilst providing the unit with the capability it required.



CFN Besedin plays the fiddle keeping the enemy at bay,
CFN Alexopoulos and the Battle Board & Sunrise over TST in SWBTA

7 BDE Ex Warfighter

As July rolled around, 2 CER TST once again deployed to SWBTA as part of the 7 BDE Ex Warfighter (WFX). Several hundred miles of rain saw nearly the entire brigade rapidly becoming bogged in the swamps and creek lines they had inevitably decided to harbour in. Much to the joy of the 2 CER Recovery Mechanic - CFN Saffrett and his off sider CFN Levy - this resulted in several days and nights of recovery work (including self-recovery) for the 45M Wrecker and PMGMV.

2 CER constructed a Non Equipment Bridge during their March Ex Terrier Run to the north west of Elanora, which was left in place. During the Brigade WFX, the engineers decided to blow up said bridge IOT deny the enemy a crossing point. Post demolition, TST was sent in to cut up and palletise the remnants of the bridge. The small team rotated through oxy-cutting, manual handling and craning the huge pieces of bridge that had been blown across the creek line. The 45M loaded the pieces onto flat racks with a sense of urgency; as there was an extremely tight timeframe due to the area becoming a live trace for artillery once the LFX began.



TST Conducting Non Equipment
Bridge Demolition Clean-up.



CPL Bond having a ball in a bog.



The large steel beams of the demolished bridge were strewn across the creek bed.

Back in Barracks

2 CER barracks life this year has consisted of a whirlwind of production, field activities and Tool Noms. Like most units, there is currently a hollowness within the workshop; however with hollowness comes opportunity. Multiple members within the workshop have gone above and beyond this year. A notable effort goes out to CFN Chris Wellington who provided a massive capability in the VM space to the workshop. I would also like to give a shout out to CFN Shane Hume, who has stepped up taking over the EIR section to great effect.

The challenge of lower workforce numbers has brought out different ideas on how to recruit new members within the Corps. The ASM (WO1 Brad Sanderson) has taken Defence Force Recruiting to another level this year with his introduction of animal based trade assistants.



The ASM introducing animal based trade assistants.

The year ended with the usual wind-down activities and fanfare. Special mentions to CFN Dmitry Besedin ('Weapons Grade' ECN 146 MA Award), CFN Luke Saffrett (Soldier's Medallion) and CPL Ben Whiteside (Bronze Commendation) – your efforts this year gents have been highly regarded and very much appreciated. The year was capped off with a highly entertaining and memorable trip to an inflatable aqua adventure park. Many members vied for the title of 'King of the Inflatable Thing' - but none survived standing long enough to wear the crown.

As the year ends, we inevitably loose people to the posting cycle or are moving on to other phases of their live. My heartfelt thanks and best wishes to those going on to other workshops, picking up sweet out-of-trade gigs, or changing tack to other adventures: CPL Michael Bond, CPL Jonathan Adsett, CPL Ee Goh, CPL Deryk Unsworth, CFN Luke Saffrett, CFN Dmitry Besedin, CFN Peter Ryan, CFN Samuel Ryan-Winn, and PTE Sean Lerona.



TST End of Year Function.

2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment
(Queensland Mounted Infantry)

Overview – CAPT Luke Sudholz, Technical Support Troop Leader



The maintenance organisations of 2/14 LHR (QMI) have continued to lead the Regiment for 2024. In a 'quiet' non-Talisman Sabre year, the outcomes of the Defence Strategic Review have shaped the Regiment and its technical support as we implement the change from an Armoured Cavalry Regiment to a more traditional Cavalry Regiment structure. This has seen a significant turnover of both equipment and our most valued technicians.

The withdrawal of tracked vehicles from 7 Brigade has seen us farewell our M88s and logistic variants of the battle-hardened M113AS4. This has also reshaped the Regimental ORBAT with A, B and C Squadrons shifting from BOXER Block I, ASLAV and M1A1 to BOXER Block I, BOXER Block II and ASLAV constructs. The impact of this change will test our reconstituted A1s and Technical Support Troop as we traverse the road to Talisman Sabre 2025. Another significant change to maintenance processes is stemmed from the introduction into service of the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Program, replacing the familiar Military Integrated Logistics Information System (MILIS). The RASM, SQN ASMs and EMEOPS continue to drive the innovation and training required to facilitate the new method of logistical and resource planning.

2024 also sees the continuation of the partnerships with our defence industry colleagues, primarily General Dynamics Land Systems Australia (GDLS-A) within the main workshop and for A Squadron, Rhienmetall Defence Australia. The efforts of GDLS-A cannot be understated, particularly with the withdrawal of M1A1 MBTs and ongoing support to our ageing ASLAV platforms. GDLS-A, led by Mr Dave Langley, have fostered enduring partnerships with our technicians through day-to-day maintenance, field exercises and regular participation in Regimental and RAEME functions.

Technical Support Troop – CPL Russell Penn

TST hit the ground running in the first half of this year starting with mandatory training, High Risk Weather Season (HRWS) standby support, preparations for the relocation of tanks to Bandiana and SOARMD. Transitioning from MILIS to ERP, an early start to the campaign season all while maintaining an ever expanding and simultaneously aging fleet with an ever-reducing number of tradespeople across all trades.

Technical Support Troop was able to execute a highly effective technical output despite the pressures of carrying the workload of such a high tempo unit along with the aforementioned staffing shortfalls, and were able to effectively prop the Regiment up and achieve the necessary requirements for Army Training Level Five.

Maintaining such a diverse fleet of platforms including PMVL/M, ASLAV, AS4, Tank, and the long list of B vehicles in a challenging field environment is no easy task. The expertise and rigorous approach of our small RAEME Troop ensured that essential maintenance was carried out efficiently despite logistical and environmental constraints. The Troop endured lengthy periods of surge maintenance leading up to the exercise period which ensured optimal operational readiness, many foregoing the luxuries of activities such as sport, PT, functions and the prospects of the cheeky EKO. This proactive approach enabled sustained operational effectiveness, maintaining the momentum of the campaign and ensuring mission success during both exercise KOSTER RIVER and DIAMOND DAGGER.



The Troop ensured optimal operational readiness and a high level of morale despite environmental and logistical constraints. This was facilitated by experienced personnel, including specialized welding support from ‘Macca the Welder’ who addressed critical repairs and reinforced vehicle integrity. Macca’s expertise in welding was instrumental in addressing complex structural issues, thereby enhancing vehicle reliability and minimising downtime for the A1 and A2 echelons.

In the midst of a demanding exercise period, TST was tasked with more than just vehicle maintenance. Their mission extended into the realm of soldier training and specialist courses. This included running and participating in advanced weapons training and driver’s courses to meet the occupational capability for an ever-changing battlespace. Selected members also participated in ADFFL courses, overseas deployments, and specialist trade courses in preparation for the upcoming integration of BOXER Block 2 in the coming year.

In summary, although a very busy and challenging year for TST, all the vital steps and foundations are in place in order to put us in a much better position to prepare us for the back end of 2024 and into 2025. This couldn’t have been achieved without the extraordinary effort and sacrifice that all of our tradies have put in throughout the year.

Recovery – CPL Jake Hughes

Recovery Technicians within the 2/14 Light Horse Regiment (QMI) have exhibited exceptional adaptability and resilience in the face of short staffing across the Regiment. Traditionally, these Recovery Technicians have been pivotal in ensuring the operational readiness and mobility of the regiment’s recovery assets. However, due to current personnel constraints, they have been



centralised into Support Squadron within the barracks environment. This strategic move has necessitated junior recovery technicians to assume greater responsibilities, often beyond the conventional scope of their roles, thereby fostering a culture of versatility and professional growth.



Exercise DIAMOND DAGGER 24 served as a critical test of the Regiment’s operational capabilities under these new conditions. Despite an adequate headcount, Recovery Technicians were tasked with manning multiple platforms simultaneously within a demanding field environment. Their performance was exemplary, conducting numerous vehicle recoveries and ensuring mission continuity without compromising the Regiment’s operational tempo.

Furthermore, the ‘Tow Rags’ demonstrated a commendable commitment to professional development by undertaking and completing multiple operator courses for various recovery platforms during these exercise. This dual focus on immediate operational demands and long-term capability building underscores the Regiment’s strategic foresight and the Recovery Technician’s dedication to excellence.

In summary, the Recovery Technicians of the 2/14 LHR (QMI) have not only met but exceeded the challenges posed by current staffing levels. Their ability to adapt, innovate, and maintain high standards of operational effectiveness is a testament to their professionalism and the robust leadership within the RAEME network.

Repair Parts Store – CPL Christian Gray

The Repair Parts Store (RPS) at 2/14 LHR (QMI) operates in tandem with workshops to ensure seamless maintenance and operational readiness both within barracks and during training exercises. The RPS while understaffed has provided workshops with impeccable results in the providing and acquiring the parts needed by the workshop to sustain 2/14 LHR (QMI). The RPS has played a pivotal role in supporting the workshop teams by maintaining a comprehensive inventory of critical items needed for repairs and maintenance of military equipment and vehicles.

During exercise KOSTER RIVER and DIAMOND DAGGER, the RPS supported the workshop unreservedly. Working closely with A1 and A2 elements to provide immediate access to repair parts and where needed liaised with other units to acquire items needed to address any electrical or mechanical issues that occurred. This capability was essential for maintaining the operational tempo of training exercises, enabling RAEME personnel to repair capability to achieve mission success.

The back loading of all M1A1 & M88 parts from the RPS marks a significant logistical operation for 2/14 LHR (QMI) driven by the relocation and introduction of the M1A2 SEPv3 Abrams to 3 BDE. This process involved meticulously organizing and transporting essential components necessary for the maintenance and support of the remaining M1A1 Abrams tanks in Townsville and SOARMD.

A Squadron A1 – CPL Jack Preedy

The A1 began its year with its support of the BOXER driver/ gunner conversion courses in the first half of 2024. During these courses, the A1 soldiers, or “Spanners”, assisted in recovery support and vehicle breakdown maintenance, most commonly tyre replacements. Concurrently to these support courses being run, every non-qualified member of the A1 completed the non-RAAC ASLAV driver course, significantly increasing the A1’s current capability.

The soldiers of “Anarchy” deployed field to Shoalwater Bay Training Area (SWBTA) at the end of March and completed six weeks of field training. During this time, they supported

A SQN with both ATL3 and ATL5 live-fire activities. They also completed extensive Troop and Squadron level training to perfect their individual soldier skills and Armoured Cavalry Regiment (ACR) specific skills.

At the conclusion of field training, the A1 returned to barracks and began a maintenance period with Rheinmetall Defence Australia (RDA). During this time, significant work was conducted to get the BOXERs ‘road-worthy’ for public road moves. This marked an important milestone as it was the first time the BOXER vehicles had driven on public roads by ADF crews.

The A1 has now moved into a forecasting period, as a large number of A SQN members are leaving for courses, activities and deployments. Due to this, maintenance is being conducted now to get ahead before the SQN members depart.



In the New Year, the regiment will be welcoming a new iteration of BOXER, being the Block II Combat Reconnaissance Vehicle. This will signal a new era for the RAAC and RAEME with a drastic change to how we conduct maintenance and servicing on our armoured vehicle fleets. The BOXER vehicle platform is a very large beast, but it is incredibly reliable, exceptionally capable and the future of the Armoured Corps.

B Squadron A1 – CPL Maddison Kaindl

The staffing issues felt around the Corps has meant that Recovery Technicians and Electrical Systems Technicians were relocated from A1s and placed solely in the Support Squadron. This reduction along with the decreases in staffing across SNCO’s came with a huge increase of workload for Craftsman and JNCO’s. Our workforce is only six personnel strong. Luckily for 2/14 LHR (QMI), RAEME personnel this year have proven strong esprit et corps combatting this shortfall with a wider lens. Where needed, other Squadrons have provided staff to assist in maintenance tasking to allow junior soldiers to stay up to date with courses and personal commitments. Within the SQN we have seen this teamwork with both CPL Telford and CPL Meredith stepping up for half of the year each into a SGT position.



There was a new addition to the A1 with the trial for re-treads granting us Trainee/SGT Ringshaw for the year. This program has been amazing on both a maintenance side, having a trainee attached to us that is driving and servicing qualified, but also has proven to be beneficial by creating greater corps transfer interest into RAEME. SGT Brown fit right into the SQN as acting ASM with his uncanny resemblance to CFN Bruce to complete our team.



The first outing that they had as a crew to show case their trade skill was to Shoalwater Bay in May. The team was joined by two Recovery Technicians from Support Squadron, CPL Hughes, and CFN Smith. The group demonstrated a wealth of knowledge consistent with the informal ASLAV SQN slogan of, ‘ V2 make do’, with the aging fleet of ASLAVs keeping them on their toes. Prior to stepping off onto the exercise, there was over 200hrs of maintenance surge to perform at the hard standing. CPL Telford and CFN Ryan being both fitters showed their experience working on the fleet by assisting the mechanics to get all repairs completed on time. Once on the exercise, the unit showed how interconnected RAEME was in a complex recovery, where both C SQN and B SQN’s vehicles were used to

assist another SQN’s rolled vehicle utilising the joint experience of all of support SQNs Recovery Technicians. A single set of vehicle stands almost broke the A1s fearless leader, CPL Meredith. Who was forced to conduct multiple vehicle lifts to exchange one swing arm between two vehicles. The tediousness experienced by CPL Meredith lifted the sprits on the rest of the group. This humour and mateship was carried out throughout the rest of the exercise reflecting the consistent smiles on the A1s faces.



Straight after the field exercise was completed, myself and CFN Ryan headed down to assist JLU-V Puckapunyal for three weeks where we assisted in maintaining the School of Armour’s fleet for courses. This experience was beneficial to us by providing awareness to civilian maintenance systems and the different levels of maintenance. There was a great

wealth of knowledge that we were able to access from the more experienced tradesmen that will prove beneficial moving forward. However, we were both happy to get back to Brisbane and away from the cold.

Focus has now shifted for the next half of the year to courses with CPL Telford on the BOXER maintenance evaluation followed by jungle warfare, and CPL Meredith and CFN Ryan completing the last of their subject courses. The rest of the A1 is continuing their maintenance capability with the continuous morale of CFN Bruce keeping trade outcomes moving ‘Forward’.

C Squadron A1 – CPL Brendan Devine

T38 started the year off with some fresh new faces into the A1, and immediately hit the ground running. With half the callsign spearing off for courses, we were left with a skeleton crew to service and repair the Squadron’s fleet of M1A1 and M113AS4 in time for deployment to Wide Bay Training Area for ATL2.



After a successful hit-out at Wide Bay, it was another tight turn around period between exercises. With T38 complete back on deck, and a few late nights repairing and servicing, it wasn’t long before the “heavy horse” was once again loaded onto trucks and headed north to Shoalwater Bay for ATL 3 and 5, and their last live fire as C Squadron, 2/14 LHR (QMI).

After another successful five weeks away the Squadron returned back to barracks. Vehicles were cleaned, equipment de-stowed in preparation for the next big hurdle facing T38 – the drawdown of M1A1 from the unit. This involved a one week turn-around of four vehicles for the School of Armour.



Closing out the first half of the year the Squadron hosted a farewell dinner of the fleet from the unit, as well as providing us with a great opportunity to farewell WO2 Terry Lemmon and recognise his 41 years of service.

Conclusion – WO1 Steve Bartlett, Regimental Artificer Sergeant Major

To round up the content provided by the team at 2/14 LHR (QMI). 2024 has indeed been a demanding year so far. As with all units in Defence, 2/14 LHR (QMI) has had its fair share of challenges, with the ongoing rebalance of PMV-M/L & MHC, withdrawal of tracked vehicles from Brisbane IAW the DSR, IIS of LAND 400-2, hollowness within the workforce, MILIS-ERP transition, struggles with external repair agency output and several high performing personnel re-assessing their career paths outside Defence. However, the whole team in the Regiment (including RPS) have upheld the RAEME ethos to an unprecedented standard. Their collective morale is incredibly high given the pressures they have all been under. They have pulled all the stops out to ensure the Regiment has as much operational capability available to achieve their mission, and others for that matter. Due to their efforts, we have inadvertently become a temporary loan pool for SEQLD organisations with platforms loaned out all over the region. This in itself is testament to their achievements.

It would be remiss of me not to mention that part of this team are the GDLS-A personnel we have. Without them to bear the brunt on the M1A1/M88 and ASLAV maintenance, we surely would not have achieved what we did. Now that Tank have departed, they have the opportunity to focus their efforts on, and re-energise the ASLAV fleet IOT improve capability to the Regiment's success on the road to TS25 alongside BOXER Block II (we hope).

In a nutshell, maintaining the aging ASLAV fleet to the BOXER Block II and everything in between has shown that the drive, morale, attitude and performance of the 2/14 LHR (QMI) members of this esteemed Corp have been the envy of the Regiment. As the Regimental Artificer Sergeant Major, I could not be more proud of their achievements in an ever-challenging environment and consider this posting/position as one of my personal/career highlights.

Arte' Et Marte'



20th Regiment, RAA (20 Regt, RAA)

20 REGT, RAA has experienced an exciting and challenging year, with RAEME elements playing a pivotal role in supporting operations and introducing new capabilities. From deploying the Shadow 200 (SH200) Tactical Uncrewed Aerial System (TUAS) on Operation RESOLUTE to preparing for the upcoming A61 Integrator TUAS, the Aviation and Ground Workshops have proven instrumental in sustaining the regiment's operational readiness (and morale).

OPERATION RESOLUTE

In late 2023, 20 REGT, RAA was directed to support **Operation RESOLUTE**, requiring rapid mobilisation to provide essential support to Joint Task Force (JTF) 639. Aviation and Ground Workshops demonstrated their exceptional adaptability by preparing and transporting SH200 TUAS equipment to the Kimberley region of Western Australia. This marked the first-ever deployment of SH200 to Mungallalu-Truscott Airbase, WA, executed via a complex combination of land, air, and sea transport.



CPL E Sheridan and CFN N Barton capturing the SH200 in Truscott.

Upon arriving at Truscott, the RAEME team encountered a significant logistical challenge when the barge ramp at the shoreline was found to be eroded, preventing the barge from landing.

WO2 R Simpson (Aviation Workshop's Hangar Artificer) recalls:

"When the barge got stuck just shy of the shoreline, RAEME aviation tradies rolled up their sleeves and took on the Herculean task of building a ramp with nothing but rocks, dirt, and sheer stubbornness. Within minutes, shouts of, 'More dirt! We need more dirt!' and 'Who's got the biggest rocks?' echoed across the site. What began as a chaotic pile of rocks and mud miraculously turned into a ramp by the second day—dubbed the 'RAEME Ramp of Dreams.' It groaned under the weight of the equipment, but it held firm, enabling the mission's success."



RAEME successfully rebuilding the Truscott barge ramp.

Through their ingenuity, the RAEME team ensured critical SH200 equipment reached the airbase, enabling TU DRAGON to contribute 964 operational flying hours between December 2023 and April 2024. The maintenance team's outstanding efforts in supporting Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) operations received high praise from Army Headquarters and JTF leadership.

DRAGON’S DUSK – SH200’S FINAL FLIGHT

From May to July, 20 REGT, RAA deployed to Swartz Barracks, Oakey under the banner of Exercise DRAGON DUSK. This marked the regiment’s final use of the SH200 system, with the last flight conducted on the 20th of June 2024 by Aerial Vehicle (AV) 82. Under the direction of CPL Jesse Hickman, who served as the Crew Chief for this historic mission, the SH200 AV took off for one last time, concluding over 12 years of operational service. During its tenure, SH200 accrued an impressive 20,000+ flying hours, providing critical ISR capabilities over numerous locations. This final deployment not only capped the legacy of the SH200 but also highlighted the hard work, dedication, and commitment of the operators and maintainers who were instrumental in building and sustaining its remarkable history.



The RQ-7B Shadow 200 TUAS during various deployments.

A61 INTEGRATOR INTRODUCTION INTO SERVICE (IIS)

Alongside operational commitments, both RAEME workshops provided essential support for the **Introduction Into Service (IIS)** of the A61 Integrator. Despite challenges such as equipment shortages, publication gaps, and parts delays leading up to Exercise **CHIMERA WALK** and Exercise VIGILANT SCIMITAR, RAEME maintainers stepped up to extend their scope of expertise. They actively assisted the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) in addressing technical challenges, significantly mitigating project delays and enabling successful flying operations.



ATA Recipients: Air Workshop’s FRT 2 including WO2 A Harvey, SGT P Schweikert, SGT N Osborne, CPL C Burnett, CPL J Hickman, CPL M Uzulin, LCPL T Hoerlein, LCPL Cox, CFN N Barton, CFN B Greene and CFN J Maidment.

Aviation Workshop’s FRT 2 was formally recognised for their contributions, earning the **Army Team Award (ATA)**. This prestigious recognition highlighted their pivotal role in enabling A61 Integrator operations during Ex CHIMERA’S WALK and Ex VIGILANT SCIMITAR and their commitment to excellence.

GROUND WORKSHOP: A YEAR OF EXCELLENCE

The Ground Workshop also had an exceptional year, maintaining an additional fleet of 10 Protected Mobility Vehicles (PMVs) while preparing for the delivery of 36 new PMV-GCS platforms. The Energy Technicians showcased efficiency and precision by completing **Telematics installs**

within narrow windows between exercises and training courses. Meanwhile, the Electronic Systems Technicians utilised a Limited Engineering Change Proposal (LECP) to integrate 40M VIK systems into PMVs, enhancing the regiment’s communication capabilities.

The Workshop’s sole Weapon Technician went above and beyond their role by maintaining all unit weapon systems while also instructing three separate driver’s courses. Notably, the Workshop farewelled SGT Evan Johnston, who concluded 13 years of exemplary service, and CPL Dylan Chamberlain, who transferred to the Navy to begin a five-year training program in the U.S. for nuclear submarines, enjoying a substantial sign-on bonus and no Return of Service Obligation.



SGT Johnston's farewell gift.

LOOKING AHEAD

20 REGT, RAA’s RAEME Workshops have demonstrated their commitment to operational excellence and innovation throughout the year. With their technical expertise and relentless determination, they have overcome challenges, delivered mission-critical support, and laid a strong foundation for future success. Whether it’s on the ground or in the air, the regiment can always count on RAEME to rise to the occasion.

3rd Combat Engineer Regiment - TST

Ending 2023 on a high from winning overall champion workshop, at the NQ RAEME Birthday event, we said farewell to some exceptional tradespeople and departed on the RTP to recharge for 2024. Well, the RTP went way too fast as usual and we entered 2024 with gusto, welcoming some fresh faces to the TST and Log TP teams of Operational Support Squadron (OSS). Fortunately, we still had our devoted and dedicated SHQ team (MAJ Kev Moran and WO2 Jase Ballard) providing the necessary and always excellent top cover for OSS to do their jobs.

The year began with the normal mandatory training briefs, SCE issues, range shoots, AIRN stuff and a multitude of other training in preparation for upcoming field training activities. Before we knew it the first field exercise was upon us and we were chasing our tails dealing with changing priorities and trying to get equipment out the door for the Combat Engineer Squadrons.

EX Dingo Fury – Mar 24

EX Dingo Fury, TST provided close maintenance support out to the SQNs through FRTs. TST performed outstanding and were able to lay the logistical foundation to enable training value to the engineers and our own craftsman. The exercise was a success and one of our Recovery Technicians, CPL Brayden Flett was awarded a COs coin for his tremendous efforts over the weeks at TFTA.

Once the team recovered, we then pressed the ‘replay’ button to do it all over again in preparation for EX Brolga Run.

EX Brolga Run – May 24

TST deployed on EX Brolga Run, where our members were able to further refine their skills and show they are soldiers first, as they supported 25 SPT SQN through FRTs and Class IV distribution to help finalise the amazing underground Brigade CP fixture. The majority of 16 CE SQN were away on Sea Series activities with 1 RAR and again a majority of 18 CE SQN were away on MTT-B in PNG, hence the majority of support provided by TST was focussed on 25 SPT SQN and RHQ.

Again, whilst under the command of SHQ, the TST and Log TP teams performed to a high standard, completing all logistic functions with very limited numbers of logisticians on the ground. Remember “Log just happens” or is it more ‘just make it happen’, anyway OSS kicked goals!

Next we had to support the annual 25 SPT SQN activity, EX PUK PUK which was conducted in Wewak PNG.



The 45M and the Recovery techs providing assistance to the Sappers for a sinking Dry Support Bridge after a BDE crossing, which included multiple M1A1 MBT.

EX PUK PUK – Aug/Sep 24

For this one we sent CPL Shane Allen (Wpn Tech), CFN David Gadsden (Veh Tech) and CFN Corey Kardol (Energy Tech) to provide FRT support to elements of 25 SPT SQN and attachments. The focus of PUK PUK 24 were some much needed improvements to the Moem Barracks Guard House, the live firing range, Puk Puk bridge, surrounding roads and just for good measure their obstacle course.

As usual the activity provided some interesting challenges for the FRT team and kept them amused while they dealt with the hot and humid conditions of this tropical paradise. Luckily there was a beach nearby to cool off in after repairing equipment and trying to keep the WPDS-M (water purification system) functioning.

The other stuff

Of course, in the background to all of this happening were two other activities, which caused some angst and varying levels of problems.

ERP

What can I say here and remain a little positive? Let’s get ready for “Go Live”, everyone must achieve their training otherwise you won’t get access to ERP. Plus, the Unit Implementation Checklist tasks and the BO/BO period, all of which took time away from the trade floor, only to be told “I’ll be back, in 2025” BAU in MILIS go on!

Army Rebalance

Getting harder to remain positive on this one. Anyway, let’s take vehicle platforms away from you and replace them with like platforms, excluding our PMV-M fleet, which we lost all together. The only catch is the platforms you receive back will be in worse condition and provide your TST element with additional maintenance hours to an already high backlog!

The gift that keeps on giving into 2025 😊

Combat Engineer Vehicles (CEV)

Throughout 2024, TST also had their focus on getting our Vehicle Techs trained on the M1A1 Veh Maint and M88A2 Veh Maint courses, in preparation for IIS of the CEV fleet from Jul – Dec 25. The CEV fleet consists of an Armoured Breaching Vehicle (ABV) and the Joint Assault Bridge (JAB) and was part of HASPO Project L8160, now incorporated into Project L907.



Members of 18 CE SQN in front of 2 x ABVs fitted with different Front End Equipment (FEE) and a JAB in the middle, while they were in the US on course.

Of note there is also a requirement for Electronics Techs to maintain the ABV (pre-req M1A1 Turret Control Systems course); however, at the time we were losing our current Boffin and he wasn't getting replaced. It also looks like the sustainment training for CEV post 2025 will remove the M1A1 pre-req course, considering there will no longer be any in the system. So if any Boffins are keen to work on the ABV, request a posting to 3 CER.

The Fun Stuff

In Oct 24, the Regt held the annual 3 CER Regiment Ball, this was a Peaky Blinders themed event and allowed members of OSS, in particular TST, let their hair down and have a fun social night, with a few cheap drinks.

The workshops have also strived throughout the year to keep RAEME traditions alive through their fortnightly BBQs, Tool of the week nominations and ASM Golf Day.

This has left morale on a consistent high and rewards the members of the workshops after the tireless effort they put in week in and week out for the 3rd Combat Engineer Regiment.



Some members of OSS having a Ball.



ASM Golf Day Fancy Dress.

Overall, it was another busy year and the boss and I are both very proud to be part of this high achieving and dedicated TST team, who go above and beyond on a daily basis for the Regt

“Follow the CFN”

WO1 Paul Vonow – ASM
LT Rhys Brown – TST Comd

3rd Combat Signals Regiment



OSS – CFN Hall, CPL Wells, CFN Fisher, LCPL Rawlings, SGT Helbich, ASM, OC OSS.

With a change in Command at all levels for 2024, the enthusiasm and motivation to excel in all things communications was rampant. Everyone was keen on deploying to our first exercise of the year being EX BERTS WALK. High mobility and small nodal footprints was the theme, with WKSPs representing in a modified PMV-T and a GMM as our FRT vehicles. This meant the ASM could not bring his espresso machine but instead had to pack a lighter, smaller, modular and non-power consuming hand coffee grinder and AeroPress.

It would not be a bush trip without an incident, and with style it was the FRT vehicle that needed assistance; a failed LQ2 and QRV. Luckily the vehicle reached the top of the hill and Townsville Field Training Area (TFTA) before failure. This soon became a common theme with our Bushmaster fleet and the TP SGT, Jimmy Helbich set on a mission to determine a solution. Thanks to Jimmy's hard work and the influence of the 3 Bde ASM, all 3 CSR vehicles will have the LQ2 and QRVs replaced by the end of the year. With a few snapped PMV-L winch ropes from attempted self-recoveries, damage to fibreglass panels and brush bars, all in all, EX BROLGA WALK was a success.

All the training and experience from EX BROLGA WALK prepared our teams well for the year's main exercise being EX BROLGA RUN. OSS was fortunate to infill via barge at Lucinda port before heading up Mount Fox for another tour of the TFTA. This bush trip was not without controversy; OSS was in the thick of it with our only fuel asset TPA being turned away from the bulk fuel operators. It was turned away not once, but twice as our RQ struck deals to source another TPA from 4 Regt. Our step off to TFTA was delayed and our fuel resupply plan was looking grim. Our contingency plan was solid, drive back to Townsville, conduct a clean, fill up and return. Problem solved.

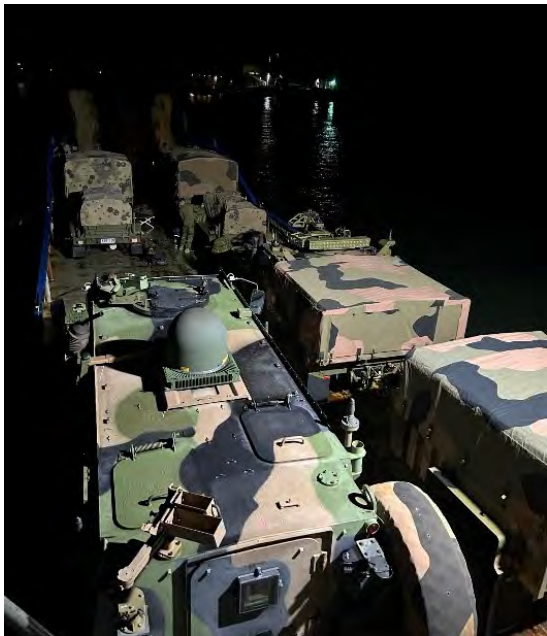
We were privileged to be involved in a battle effects scenario with Combat Training Center (CTC). Our FRT vehicle PMV-T sustained critical damage whilst harboured at PB Hadrian. The vehicle received indirect fire from a simulated mortar round and was deemed immobilised. Fortunately, the crew sustained minor injuries and returned to the fight... including the vehicle. Field routine

was tough going, as the waft of bacon and eggs in the morning spread through the position from the FRT vehicle. The tradition was shared by all in S5, the logistical node, with a lolly shop disguised as a stores module and MREs donated by the US Army. The EX finished strong with all Units and international partners uniting over a few cold beverages and watching the Origin on the big screen.

To unwind and recover from a busy year and show appreciation to families, the Unit held a family week out at Lake Tinaroo AKA EX BERTS FAMILY. Members and their families had the opportunity to travel and sight see the local area, kayak, and fish on the Lake. Workshop members, their families and their dogs were given this optional annual opportunity IOT relax, enjoy a few or more drinks and spend time with their families without taking annual leave. Member's that decided not to deploy on EX BERTS FAMILY continued on with the hard labour at the 3rd Brigade's premier workshop.

3 CSR RAEME Members 2024

OC OSS MAJ L Ingram, **2IC OSS** CAPT C Liik, **TST TP COMD** LT C MacLeman, **S4** LT L Stott, **ASM** WO2 D Koutsoukos, **TP SGT** J Helbich, CPL B Meres, CPL J Wells, CPL T Croker, LCPL A Rawlings, LCPL M Thomas, LCPL J Theunissen, CFN M Pelizzari, CFN B Cooney, CFN M Hall, CFN C Fisher, CFN B Negra, CFN H Lonsdale.



OSS Barging to Lucinda.



CFN Milo relaxing after a busy year on EX BERTS FAMILY.

3 RAR (K58) TSP

LT J Zacharin, TSP COMD

As we reflect on 2024, the efforts of the workshop stand out as a testament to the platoons resilience and staunchness. This year has tested the team's endurance, technical ability, and commitment in ensuring that the battlegroup is operationally postured to support both domestically and internationally.

With under 50% manning to start 2024, TSP hit the ground running certifying that the Battalion was maintenance ready and kicked off with Ex BLUEBELL lead by the ASM WO1 Maggenti. In the lead up to Initial Combat Communication Course (ICCC) and the Ex EVER READY Courses period, TSP Vehicle section worked tirelessly to ensure that vehicles were ready to support the course. Not to be left out, GE section was instrumental in the heavy weapon rotation for the battalion lead by CPL Moorhouse. Ensuring that they were always cool, EIR supported the Battlefield Management System (BMS) transition, this small amount of work was lead up training for when their aircon actually failed!



As we transitioned into the field phases, elements of Distro and TSP came together to establish K58 for Ex KAPYONG WARRIOR. Encompassing a mix of ECN's, skillsets and experience the platoon worked to finesse coy SOP's and work towards Army Training Level (ATL) 3, working on tactical integration of DP's and FRT's with not only the battlegroup call signs, but integrating and conducting crucial training with 3 CSSB to develop how K58 receives support from our rear dependency in the field. Ex KAPYONG WARROIR also saw TSP conduct their first pack lift in a few years in the field environment. CPL Kukas lead the charge ensuring he brought in the big guns with the GMM to support such a mammoth task.

Following ANZAC Day, Kapyong Day and a well earnt RSP, TSP kicked off Q2 with Ex BROLGA RUN & Ex BROLGA SPRINT. This saw K51 and K58 combine into a single platoon commanded by LT Ross. During these exercises, CFN Hucker became the on call RACQ for the battlegroup as he responded to frequent recovery requests, sometimes operating out of two vehicles as

he manoeuvred around the battlespace. Nonetheless he managed to bring a smile and morale to each task despite at times working on limited sleep.

Post the Ex BROLGA Series, OPIE TROPHY saw TSP support with four JNCO & Soldiers lead by CPL de Guzman. The section displayed lots of enthusiasm and managed to complete the competition with trademark smiles on their faces.

As we transitioned to support courses period, the tempo continued to rage. With ongoing support to FRT's and maintenance tasks as well as concurrent battalion activities TSP continued to maintain the battalion's equipment readiness.



To close out 2024, TSP deployed four members on Mentor Training Team (MTT) - C in support of the battlegroups international engagement in our near region and produced a fitting memorial sign in honour of those who fought at the Battle of Kapyong. This sign was given to A Coy to take and erect in the Kapyong Valley.

Despite the tempo and the platoon's determination and teamwork, the platoon managed to complete in excess of five thousands hours of scheduled maintenance, late nights and adhoc tasks. Over the year, the workshop supported more than 15 different courses, contributing to the broader training and operational goals of 3 RAR. The year saw many new faces arrive into the platoon, as we farewelled some familiar faces saying goodbye to SGT Griffin and CFN Mosher who were instrumental to the success of 2023. We also said goodbye to our platoon commander CAPT Fairbairn in May.



As we reflect on the successes of 2024, it is important to recognise the sacrifices made by every member of the workshop. To all the members of the workshop: thank you. Your efforts have not gone unnoticed, and your contributions have been invaluable. You have set an example for all those around you, and your hard work and commitment are deeply appreciated. As you move forward into another year of challenges and opportunities, carry the lessons learned and the bonds forged during 2024. The workshop's achievements this year are a testament to what can be accomplished through teamwork, dedication, and a relentless pursuit of excellence.

4th Regiment (RAA) TST

The year kicked off with a bang, as I was lucky enough to be invited to be a part of the support staff team for Ex Best By Test (BBT) in Hawaii USA. Ex BBT is a competition to find the premier M777 detachment, JFT (Forward observers) and ACSO (CP operators) within Schofield Barracks on the Island of O'ahu, the competitors were pitted against US Army operators from their same field.

My role was fairly straightforward, I would check the equipment for serviceability and functionality. The M777 was not in the best condition, even though it had just been deemed functional by some US Army maintainers, luckily I was able to tie in with a few US technicians whom I had met when they travelled to Australia for a live fire ex last year, they were more than willing to give me some consumables to get the gun to the standard I and the crew were happy with. The Australian contingent that competed in this event all showed great spirit in the face of a gruelling set of assessed tasks. I was honoured to be a part of this international engagement, having a few days of rec leave in Honolulu was an excellent end to the proceedings.



Back at 4 REGT the unit was gearing up for the first live fire exercise of the year shaking off the cobwebs from the end of 2023 and getting some much needed preparations squared away. With the maintenance module packed with ST &E and jack rats the 4 REGT FRT were ready to let the bombs fly. The exercise went off without too much trouble although inclement weather proved manoeuvring in the training environment can be tricky and it's always good to have a vehicle with a winch nearby.



The next big ticket item was Ex Chau Pha, CO 4 REGT informed us that this exercise was going to lead straight into the BDE exercises and then a CALFX straight after. This was not a normal thing for 4 REGT, usually our exercise duration is around 2 weeks. We were worried we were going to run out of jack rats, luckily we cleared some space in the medium maintenance module. Ex Cha Pha was a mix of technical shooting missions and tactical field operations.

The A1 FRT was kept busy conducting checks, adjustments and repairs as required. The dispersed operations that were being conducted by the gun line led to many vehicles copping some damage from the terrain, 3 CSSB recovery and FRTs was utilised a number of times and it was good to have a chat with a few RAEME members whilst they helped recover or repair our equipment. There were a number of good field repairs conducted.

The A2 FRT learnt a valuable lesson during this exercise, they were tasked to replace the hydraulic tank on a PMV-M, it was going swimmingly until a hydraulic fitting needed to be changed from the old tank to the new one, after a few hours of trying to release the fitting we accepted that with the tools available to us it was not going to happen, we requested support in the form of a massive shifter. The logistics chain had our back and we had the tool within a couple of hours and from there the job ran smoothly. I know that it's not always possible to take every tool imaginable however the benefit of keeping this tool in the module was undeniable. The take away from this, it's better to have it and not need it rather than need it and not have it.

It also raised morale that the shifter was painted in the Tri colour.



Left to right M777 US FSR Mr Rick Banning, CPL Wilden- Zahra, CPL Dias, CFN Kim and CFN Adam.

5th Aviation Regiment TST

Henry Jeffers - Junior Engineer Officer C SQN TST

Introduction. As 2024 draws to a close, the technical workforce at 5 Aviation Regiment has the opportunity to reflect on another busy year. The Regt closed out 2023 and started the new year providing support in Far North Queensland with evacuation and recovery efforts after the devastating Tropical Cyclone Jasper. That busy pace continued throughout 2024 including an Air Assault field training activity, participation in Exercise Vigilant Scimitar and support to a multitude of wider army exercises and activities.



In August, C Squadron Technical Support Troop (TST) completed Exercise Brahman Rebuild, achieving a CH-47F Chinook teardown, C-17 load, and rebuild. This exercise aimed to enable junior craftsmen to develop their maintenance experience with a focus on deployability, work with our RAAF counterparts and gain the technical knowledge to carry the torch into the future.

September 2024 saw the Regt depart Townsville on Exercise Helicon Luk. This activity saw four Chinooks deploy to Madang, Papua New Guinea (PNG) with the aim of achieving High Density Altitude flying operations in the remote highlands region. C Squadron TST were immediately operating in a challenging logistic environment with unreliable power and no access to ground support equipment (GSE). Eventually RAEME personnel were able to liaise with the local airliner, Air Niugini, to borrow GSE to make life much easier for the conduct of vital maintenance. The first week resulted in long maintenance days to rectify aircraft unserviceabilities, enabling the achievement of the required flying training. Despite this, spirits remained high among the men and women of the TST, with the Tri-colour flag frequently being flown from the aircraft being maintained.

Conclusion. Chinook deeper maintenance teams have been consistently working hard all year to provide the aircraft needed to support these activities, which enable the 5th Aviation Regiment to continue to provide a proven reliable aviation capability to the ADF.

Arte' et Marte'



6th Aviation Regiment

2024 has been a very successful year for the 6th Aviation Regiment (Regt) with a number of milestones being achieved within the UH-60M Black Hawk capability. The RAEME effort to achieve this has required both aviation and ground trades.

Much of UH-60M tooling is ‘locally manufactured’, and definitely falls into the remit of the ground workshop. This extra demand has highlighted some of the deficiencies with current machinery within the workshop and work is underway to improve this capability. The focus for this is not only to satisfy the UH-60M demand but also, to enhance the professional development of our ground trades by giving them access and training on contemporary manufacturing machines.

The Regt has seen the delivery of ten UH-60M since August 2023 and this requires maintenance support from the Regt to conduct the reception activities. The process has been refined over time and is now a very slick operation. The flying rate of effort (ROE) being achieved means aircraft A60-001 has completed its first ‘Phased Maintenance Inspection One or PMI-1’ (Deep Maintenance) earlier than anticipated. This is good news as it gives the maintenance workforce the exposure to more of the aircraft and builds on existing experience. The maintenance workforce (ground and air) is a mix of contractor (Lockheed Martin Australia (LMA)), and ADF and has been working very well under the current contract. The LMA team are fully embedded into the maintenance workforce and can be employed in any maintenance role within their domain. This flexibility gives the Regt the opportunity to manage ADF personnel respite periods or use LMA to surge the Flight Line capability when required.

The transition from one aircraft type to another requires a huge tooling change, especially when transitioning for a European (Metric) aircraft to a US aircraft (Imperial). The US Army use the Common Aircraft Tool System (CATS) to support their UH-60M aircraft. The CATS utilises toolboxes optimised for specific areas of the aircraft (General, Electrical, Powertrain etc) but these did not work well in an Australian application. To this end, the Regt have been trialling a Flyaway Tool Kit that combines some of the CATS tools into a tailored solution built on the Milwaukee PACKOUT system. The PACKOUT system uses several box configurations that can lock together to form a robust, transportable tooling system suitable for aviation. The trial is ongoing but if successful, the system will form the basis of the deployable tooling to support the UH-60M fleet.

The first eight UH-60M to arrive at the Regt came with a very basic specification, known as a ‘green aircraft’. Aircraft 009 and 010 arrived with rescue hoists fitted (as will all future deliveries) and all previous aircraft will be inducted into the ‘Retro-Fit Program’ to have their hoists, and a number of other modifications fitted. A second Retro-Fit Program will then modify the aircraft to bring them up to their Final Operating Capability (FOC) by 2030.

The Regt is still a little raw after last year’s incidents and was again under scrutiny during the Inspectorate General ADF (IGADF) inquiry into the Lindeman Island accident. The CO reduced the Rate of Effort (ROE) during these periods giving individuals the time they needed to attend the inquiry. The Regt also had the opportunity to honour their mates one year post incident, at the Bushman 83 Memorial. It was a fitting occasion and gave members of the Regt time to speak to the families of the fallen and remember happier times. Their families will always be a part of ours.

As a part of the ongoing professional development program for Engineers, the Regt has started a range in industry visits to expose junior engineers to systems engineering in the local industry. The first of these visits were to Turbosmart and Haltech. Both these automotive aftermarket

suppliers are global leaders in their markets and provided great insight into their developmental processes and some of the issues they had to overcome in recent years. You don’t need to be a car nut to appreciate that. Turbosmart have released a range of turbochargers for the first time, which is no small undertaking and got the Engineers excited with some computational fluid dynamics! While Haltech have released a range of Vehicle Control Units (VCUs) that combine Engine Control Unit (ECU), Transmission Control Unit (TCU) and Power Distribution Module (PDM). The PDM replaces traditional fuses and relays with logic controlled solid-state electronics, which opens many possibilities in an automotive application. This got the Boffins all hot under the collar!

The Regt’s RAEME personnel have attended and run a number of Spanner Club events throughout the year and can confirm the ‘Esprit de Corps’ is alive and well at Holsworthy! This year’s RAEME Birthday was no exception, with another great turnout. As always, we thank the companies and organisations that support these events by show casing their wares and donating prizes for the raffles.

7th Signal Regiment Workshops



ANZAC Day 2024: CPL K, CFN M, LT Currie, WO2 S, SGT Wilson, LCPL W, Sherriff, CFNT, CFN D, CPL C, MF, CFN M.

Somewhere, hidden between the hills of Toowoomba, lies a WKSP so secretive that the members don't even appear on the Green Tree phone directory. Sometimes, in the evening amongst the gentle strumming of banjos, you can hear the clinking of spanners. It formed either in the late cretaceous era or at least in 2023. The LT, Michael Currie, is the face of the WKSP and one of only two who may be named. The other is SGT Leighton Wilson CSM, who must be named as he needs to go and pick up his award from the Queensland Governor. It appears to be a busy WKSP, and it must be, as the ASM WO2 SF marched in, swiftly directed that any questions be put to SGT Wilson, and then disappeared doing potentially classified things. He hasn't been sighted for several months.

For a small, highly classified WKSP, you may assume that their time is predominantly occupied by weird, SIG knick knacks, doohickys and gizmos. However, instead it expends a large amount of energy overseeing truckies on drivers courses across the country. Locations have included Cape York, Old Coach Road, and a journey with PMV's through the centre of the desert. The desert trip featured LCPL G, the WKSP Metalsmith and Sherriff around these parts, who strode majestically aboard his PMV with sand flag in tow. The flag was rather large and tri coloured, and featured prominently on 4WD sites throughout Facebook. This hot topic raised its head at the CO's CUB, where it was ascertained that it is hard to obtain a RASIGS Corps flag in the Simpson Desert.



PMV GMV somewhere in the Simpson Desert.

EMEOPs is headed up by CPL C and a TPT Corps maintenance facilitator (The MF), who conduct highly classified call in/outs of TEWS, CLEWS and assorted PEWS. It seems that every letter of the alphabet, followed by 'EWS', appears to go through EMEOPs at some point or another. CPL D rears his head proudly, commander of the vehicle section, which is the backbone of any workshop and the Corps at large. CPL D has worked overtime at great expense to himself but nonetheless has managed to reduce his golf handicap this year. CFN M's Bodgy on his Patrol is nearing completion after 24 months as soon as he fits an interlock it will be G2G.



CPL T trialling EV EW Gwagon variant.

The Boffins rarely venture from the Boffice, and have managed to green sticker many a thing. The outstanding work by LCPL W makes up for the antisocial CFN T, who continues to upset tour guides, cooks, OPSWO's and most people who have the misfortune of running into him. CFN T is the current ASM golf day champion, which is a glimmer of hope in an otherwise disgruntled individual. CFN T is being replaced by CPL T, who is rumoured to be a much livelier individual, and is proficient at the Macarena. CPL T is also a renowned singer song writer; some say he once won connect four in 3 moves.

We are unsure of what happens in the RPS except we never have any issues and we get what we need. We asked Chat GPT EW what happens and it replied. In the heart of the bustling WKSP, two remarkable women, CPL T and CPL R orchestrate a symphony of efficiency and camaraderie that keeps the operation running smoothly. When a particularly elusive part goes missing, they launch into a dramatic re-enactment of a detective movie, complete with exaggerated accents and wild hand gestures

The ELEC Section is headed up by CPL K and CFN M, and between the pair they work tirelessly to keep the smoke contained wholly within a component's electrical confines. When not working tirelessly on the Unit's equipment, CPL K can be seen restocking highly classified consumables in the conference room. CFN M is currently assisting with multiple lines of enquiry, as to why the best soldiers in Army are all from Cunnamulla.

Somewhere, amongst the hills, lantana and associated piggeries the work continues.



Prototype testing.

9 CSSB

EXERCISE SOUTHERN TIGER 24

The purpose of Exercise Southern Tiger was to build relationships with the Malaysian Defence Force. This was achieved by maintaining an outstanding reputation and by building rapport and trust with the Malaysian soldiers, as our key security partners, now and into the future. The individual relationships built on this exercise directly support the Nations priorities in building International relationships.

During a 14-day exercise in August 2024 Malaysia’s Army participated on Exercise Southern Tiger 24. This was conducted across South Australia in Barracks at Edinburgh, Murray Bridge Range and the main field component was held at Cultuna Training Area.

This exercise was in conjunction with 10th/27th Battalion, 9 CSSB element A2 Echelon and also included other SERCAT 7 units located in the Edinburgh defence base. It’s the only time where multiple units and trades came together to show off our capabilities to the Malaysians in 2024.

When the Malaysians arrived in Australia, we were met with warm curiosity and with lots of question on our military tactics and hardware. The young and old tradesman soldiers from both armies gathered around to hear personal stories and share some iconic Australian food like ‘Peanut butter’ which was very popular and the not so popular food among the Malaysians ‘Vegemite’.

The highlight of the RAEME exercise came when 9 CSSB showed a mock rescue and a recovery of a G-WAGON which simulated an accident, where the vehicle had driven into a steep ravine. This activity also required some urgent medical casualties that 3 HB needed to treat with first aid and transport in an Army Ambulance.

Malaysians recovery and medical staff worked alongside the RAEME Recovery Technicians and Vehicle Technicians using a 45M Recovery Vehicle, assisting with the rescue of personnel and recovery of military hardware using the 45M crane.

CFN Stoyel said having this actual exposure to the 45M Recovery Vehicle in the field left him excited about his recovery role and working with the Malaysians, was a fun experience. It was interesting to work together as a team and understand how everything goes together and to see how our counterparts operate their trades in different armies doing the same job.

Malaysian Soldier SNR SGT Mohammed Arrayin said “there was no substitute for his experience and that this exchange of ideas and culture between the armies was extremely positive for him”. He felt that they got a bit of a chance to mentor and to be mentored using different military equipment in the field that they would never exposed to within Malaysia.



Malaysia’s Automotive Crew Badge.



4th Mechanised Battalion Unit.



Malaysian A2 Echelon Staff celebrating end of EX.



Visiting Malaysians end of EX.

Building 9 CSSB Recovery Capability

LCPL Webb

Developing capability and maintaining currency are can be difficult in the Reserve environment. The 9 CSSB Reserve Recovery Technicians were able to negotiate additional training at RAAF Base Edinburgh. Through this platoon lead initiative, the Recovery members were able to continue unit based Initial Employment Training (IET) that is dependent on access to serviceable recovery vehicles, that are no longer available at Warradale Barracks. The primary objective was to ensure IET training continued and was completed. The secondary objective was to maintain the currency of the section on the Land 121 Recovery Fleet, which resulted in an increase in morale.

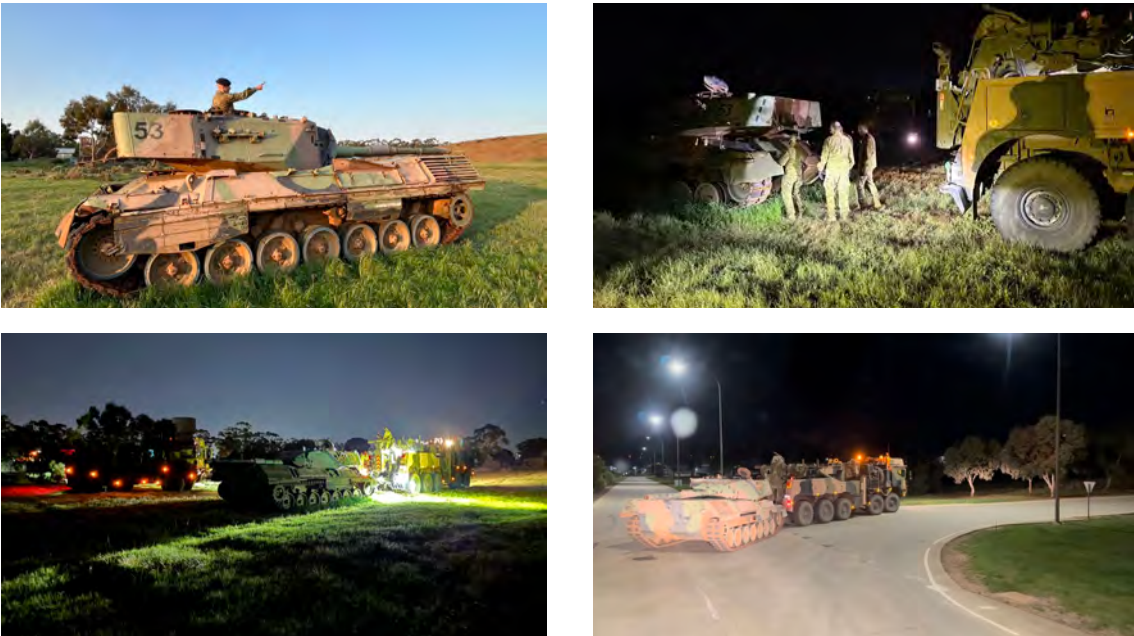
Without the opportunity to parade on Thursday evenings and selected weekends, training would have stalled for all Trainee Recovery Technicians and there would have been significant risk of the loss of currency for the qualified Recovery members.

The 9 CSSB Recovery Section has provided consistent capability both in trade tasks and through support to non-trade CSSB activities. Morale has been high as a result of the training tempo and progression of individual and section skills. The wider CSSB has benefited from dependable support for other CSSB activities from Recovery Section members which has maintained a high tempo in recent years.



The images captured represent some of the activity that occurred. Numerous live tasks were undertaken at RAAF Base Edinburgh supporting other units. Some examples include unloading crocs from long hall transportation and delivery to the Workshop; A-framing A vehicles that needed to be moved; and preparing flat racks for transport on HX77s. Apart from the live tasking's, numerous training activities occurred with many variants of lift tow hook ups; trailer loading and unloading; and thoughtfully planned lifting tasks.

Furthermore, operator maintenance tasks, non-techs and regular use of the Recovery Vehicles from the Reserve Recovery Technicians has contributed to improved reliability of the vehicles and readiness of the fleet for taskings. While not as exciting as the other tasks to perform, this element of regular use and maintenance is important.



I'm very appreciative of the dedication of SGT Turner who has diligently driven the training for our section, and I am proud to be part of the continually growing and thriving Reserve Recovery Section of 9 CSSB.

Arte' Et Marte'

9th Theatre Maintenance Company

Background – OC 9 TMC, MAJ Jeremy Fetter

The changing strategic landscape outlined in the Defence Strategic Review (DSR) and the National Defence Strategy (NDS) has precipitated numerous changes to Army's structure. For the 9th Force Support Battalion (9 FSB), this has been a streamline of focus to support sustainment along lengthy lines of communication. From a maintenance perspective, 2024 saw the formation of 9th Theatre Maintenance Company (9 TMC), which has been grown from the former 9th Logistics Support Company (9 LSC). The role of 9 TMC is to provide integral, close and general maintenance support to the Land Force, which differs from the previous role of 9 LSC, which performed an integral logistics support function for 9 FSB. Given this focus, 9 TMC is now responsible for generating and executing maintenance and recovery capabilities at the Operational Level, which requires linkage to the Strategic sustainment network.

Getting after this mission has required a foundational analysis of platforms, personnel, infrastructure and training systems. Assets and personnel take time to grow, so the initial efforts have been oriented to development of good training to meet our required mission. Throughout 2024, the team has been working hard along a glide path from basic infantry minor tactics through to maintenance training on large scale exercises, meanwhile supporting other important 9 FSB tasks, such as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission Army Community Assistance Program (AACAP). The notable activities for 2024 have been: Exercise Surus Crawl to hone infantry minor tactics; Exercise Bulldog Walk to conduct company maintenance; and participation on Exercise South Queensland Warfighter to execute maintenance as part of formation tactical actions. I am very proud of the achievements of our personnel who have consistently and enthusiastically operated in the spirit of Arte et Marte. But no one wants to hear an OC bang on about their team's achievements; below are some honest thoughts and views from the soldiers who actually did the work.



45M rotator being utilised on Exercise South Queensland Warfighter.

Article 1 – Vehicle Technician, CFN Rory Bullard

In April I was tasked with providing FRT support for AACAP. It was a five-day road move to Amata, South Australia from RAAF Base Amberley, Queensland. It was a great opportunity to see parts of Australia that I haven't seen before and to be a part of a program that supports the community.

Most repairs are conducted during first and last parades. Knowing what the common issues are with the vehicles taken on the road allows us to prepare our GMM with the likely tools and parts we'll need, which further affords a smoother diagnosis and repair during the journey. This was especially important with the time restrictions in place, as packets were required to leave at specific timings.

There were plenty of legs throughout the journey without phone reception, so it was critical that everyone had a thorough understanding of the convoy orders. Overall, the task was successful in supplying the 6th Engineer Support Regiment (6 ESR) with the supplies they required to complete

their objectives. It was also a great opportunity to see more of Australia and to take part in an initiative that supports local communities.

Article 2 – Distribution Operator, PTE James Raad

During both Exercise Surus Crawl and Exercise Bulldog Walk, our team provided a mobile armoury that allowed us to conduct on-the-move high security item (HSI) activities, making us more efficient in the field environment. Field training fosters adaptability and resilience by simulating real-life conditions. Infantry minor tactics and shakeout exercises ensure that we are better prepared to perform in our role, both mentally and physically. As a distribution operator, these exercises emphasise teamwork, problem solving, and decision-making under pressure, which enhances critical thinking—skills that cannot be fully developed in a classroom setting.

In 2024, 9 TMC has undergone an expansion in its Repair Parts Stores (RPS) capabilities in order to accommodate theatre support. By increasing the availability and variety of repair parts with the expansion, RPS is able to ensure that equipment and vehicles can be maintained and repaired more quickly and efficiently in the field. This helps to minimize downtime and keeps critical systems operational, which is essential for sustaining missions in theatre environments.

9 TMC - A year in review

2024 was an extremely busy year for the RAEME staff at 9 FSB. Due to the high tempo of the Unit, the year included multiple Exercise engagements, AACAP and the Army re-balance task to name a few. 9 Theatre Maintenance Company (9 TMC), formerly 9 Logistic Support COY, took a new face and became primarily a workshop company, with only a small RPS element. This also saw the collapse of the Close Maintenance Platoons (CMPs), which were located in Amberley, Townsville and Darwin. The full role of 9 TMC in an operational environment is still in the development stages and due to low staffing numbers, we currently sit at a platoon size (far from Company strength).

2024 marked a major change in leadership with the departure of the previous ASM, WO1 Mathew Dowd. His successor, WO1 Jason Peterson took the reins and jumped on board with great enthusiasm even though he was out of his 'littoral' element. MAJ Jeremy Fetter took over as Officer Commanding (OC) of 9TMC, and LT Rhys Thomas became the Workshop's Platoon Commander.

Exercises

During the first quarter of 2024, 9 TMC conducted a series of Exercises to brush-up on their basic soldiering skills (EX SURUS CRAWL) as well as revise their TTPs in a more mobile, CSST type role (EX BULLDOG WALK). The COY conducted FRT training and field based repairs, which was essential in preparing them for their upcoming deployment in support of 7 Brigade during the War Fighter Series in SWBTA.



7 BDE Warfighter Series.

EX DIAMOND RUN was the COYs (and BNs) primary Exercise for the year and provided 9 TMC with the opportunity to test their training, deploying two FSTs within Rockhampton and SWBTA.

FST 1 FRT

FST 1 would deploy within the Rockhampton showgrounds in a third line role (along with multiple other elements). The majority of trade based work came from the MHC FOVs which were continually doing road runs (via a notional barge and actual barge) to 'Shoalwater Island' (SWBTA). The training focus for the EX was to simulate two Sea Point Of Disembarkation (SPODs), on a small island that would allow the fighting force to be resupplied from the rear.



Ex Diamond Run FST1 HQ.



Ex Diamond Run FST1 Gym.

The Energy Techs were also kept busy trying to keep the catering refrigerators up and running, while the Weapons tech had a few minor small arms repairs. RAEME life for FST 1 was comparatively more easy then those in the bay – Fresh meals, card games, regular workouts in the deployable gym and showers were the daily norm at the showgrounds.

FST 2 on the other hand were not so fortunate. The bay was inundated with heavy rain for the first part of the Exercise which saw limited movement within the training area. 9 TMC Recovery Techs were kept busy pulling multiple 7 CSSB vehicles out of the mud!



Ex Diamond Run FST1.



Ex Diamond Run FST2 high morale.

FST 2 FRT

Once FST 2 finally moved into position, it was game on. Full cam and concealment was employed and the usual defensive routine was carried out. The largest task came, which was the digging of latrines! As you can imagine, a large area dug for human waste mixed with an equally large amount of rain does not bode well in any position.



Ex Diamond Run FST2 SGT Dakin brief.



Ex Diamond Run FST2 SGT Sabina Point.

For the majority of the EX the usual repairs were carried out by the Vehicle Techs and the Recovery Techs earned their pay by recovering multiple 7BDE Units vehicles. They were also on standby to assist any vehicle that got bogged coming of the barge at Sabina Point.

Being so far to the rear, FST 2 saw little enemy action for the EX, with the exception of an enemy drone dropping explosive ordinance on the second last day. This happened to take out HQs 16KV a which saw a loss of power generation within the position. Despite this and tumultuous, never ending rain, the morale was always high as the RAEME tradies got stuck in and got the job done.



CFN Bullard receiving bush SOM award from OC.

AACAP

AACAP infill kicked off in April and 9 TMC provided FRT support for the journey. CFN William Goddard lead the charge from RAAF base Amberley to Amata, SA. Numerous repairs were conducted on the HX81 fleet en route including selector shaft seals, hub seals and a broken EVB line. Will managed to repair all the vehicles and keep them going for the forward and return journey.

Ex-fill fell over the August/September period and again FRT support was required. Multiple Vehicle Technicians were required for the lengthy task, and again the MHC FOV didn't fail to disappoint with multiple breakdowns along the way. All the crafties involved in this activity enjoyed the experience and would often engage with the locals in the remote communities. It also provided them the opportunity to use their skillset as well as come up with intuitive ways of diagnosing and repairing faults.

Army rebalance

The Army rebalance is one of the biggest tasks that 26TPT SQN have seen in a long time. Not only were there a large number of trucks required, there were also multiple trips happening at once. This again saw the need for RAEME to step up and provide support as the vehicles travelled all over the countryside. The vehicle technicians were kept busy with minor roadside repairs with the occasional vehicle needing recovery.

9 FSB has the largest fleet of MHC within Army and the kilometres travelled for most of these vehicles, far outweighs anyone else (some trucks now well over 100 000kms!). This extensive amount of use therefore requires additional servicing and repairs and with such a small team of Vehicle Technicians (eight all up) presents a challenge in itself. The VTs have done an extremely good job this year and sacrificed a lot to keep these vehicles on the road, something that sometimes goes unnoticed. There were however, chances throughout the year for a bit of fun and excitement so everyone could unwind...

ASM golf day, End of year function and RAEME Birthday celebrations



9 FSB ASM golf day.

The highly anticipated ASM golf day kicked off with a blast late September. The theme, Hawaiian (naturally...) with teams of four (Ambrose style) and a few novelty holes, the day turned out to be a great event for everyone.



CPL Cooper enjoying the day.



9 TMC End of year function.

9 TMC's end of year function was Oktoberfest themed, which involved fancy dress and lawn bowls, followed by lunch at a German Beer house. There were a few sore heads the following morning.

To the end the year, 9FSB and 6ESR celebrated RAEME birthday at Amberley. Due to unforeseen circumstances, both units were unable to attend Enoggera's celebrations, however this didn't dampen the mood.

The day started with a BBQ breakfast followed by a spanner throw and tug-o-war competition, as well as multiple billy kart events. 6ESR were the winners for the day which concluded with some light refreshments at their boozier.



9 FSB & 6ESR RAEME



9 FSB & 6ESR RAEME

Compiled by:
SGT Ahlstedt
SGT Speizer
CPL Becke
CPL Goodwin
CPL Bernardo
CFN Goddard

ASEME

ASEME Spanner Club 18 Sep 24

Electrical and Electronics Systems Wing (EESW) conducted a Spanner Club for ASEME at North Bandiana on 18 Sep 24 to promote Esprit De Corps with the future crafties and foster interactions between local businesses, service providers and clubs. There were approximately 450 members in attendance, which were all involved in the school photo prior to the activities of the day.



The warm weather was perfect for playing dodgeball, although depending on which side of the field your team was on, the sun gave a distinct advantage by blinding the opposing team. The winner of the tournament was Vehicle Technology Wing (VTW).

CPL Hall enthusiastically manned a Remote Weapon System display, demonstrating some of the specifics of the ECN 421 Electronics Technician trade.



Other attractions included an extremely popular ice cream vendor, military supplies from Force Element, a display from MakerSpace, and raffle prizes supported by local businesses. Throughout the afternoon, a BBQ was supplied to feed the hungry apprentices and staff.

Special thanks go to Piggys Ice Cream for keeping up with the demand, and to Force Element for supplying raffle prizes.



ASEME trainees tackle 2025 Massive Murray Paddle for Legacy

Armament and Construction Wing (ACW) trainees from the Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering trained twice-weekly to compete in the 2025 Massive Murray Paddle, in support of Legacy Australia. The trainees were dedicated individuals who were keen to showcase their endurance and teamwork and also hoping to paddle through the competition without taking a plunge!



It's quite the feat to paddle for 415km across five days, which is why a little help from your friends is essential! The ACW trainees were supported by a team comprised of four members from Vehicle Technology Wing, one from Workforce and Training Group (ALTC) and Kristain Kemper from Everymans.

The trainees were not only excited to dip their toes into the race but were driven by a deeper cause. In the process they raised \$3500 for Legacy Australia, a charity supporting the families of veterans.

The journey from Yarrawonga to Koondrook resulted in, line honours on days four and five, a placing of first on time, and third on handicap.

A strong team with a strong result!

Well done to all!

Image and Information courtesy of Defence and ALTC News.



Norforce

CPL Jake Lindemann

I thought it would be an idea to get some insight into one of the lesser talked about units in Army. It's a unique beast with some of the most iconic Australian experiences and challenging maintenance obstacles. This is the view from a Boffin, who despite the stereotyping does not enjoy the "Ice box boffice", preferring to be out in the GMM or SRV on a dirt road in the middle of nowhere.

Maintenance

FRT's from Larrakeyah Barracks happen annually to each of the Forward Operating Bases (FOBs); located in Alice Springs (Central Australia), Broome (West Kimberley WA) and Nhulunbuy (East Arnhem Land). These are organised around the weather, flooded highways and the Op Resolute rotations throughout the year. FRT's are generally a two-week round trip to each location that includes roughly four days' travel for each. As you can imagine our GMM sees a fair bit of the blacktop and just as much very corrugated roads!

Once in location all the boys get stuck into getting the equipment FF and good to go, generally putting in 12 or more hour days to start with, to allow for the growth work that is always expected which the operators never seem to identify during NTI's. It's not uncommon for priority parts to be freighted into location within 24/48 hours to reduce equipment breakdown times and prevent the tradies having too much downtime. These parts are sourced by our RPS wizard CPL Webster who constantly wheels and deals for parts locally and internationally.

Being that NORFORCE plays a lot in the littoral space, the Fitters and VM's are a bloody resourceful bunch when they are not eating crayons, slightly jealous. Having both trades being



RAEME Gibb River Road WA- FRT Supporting Kimberly Vigilant Patrol.



GMM at the iconic Boab Tree between Fitzroy Crossing and Broome - CPL Coutts, CPL Lindemann, CFN Haigh, CFN Amy, CPL Ferguson, WO2 Porter



LPV TI and Repairs- Kimberly SQN Broome.



Camping- Redbank Gorge.

qualified on big and small boats is a god send and boy do they use their skills when maintaining the Regional Patrol Craft (RPC's), Tinnies and Zodiacs.

It's not all work and no play for the team though, with each FRT including a day of R&R to take in some of the local sights and activities.

Being a small workshop, it's a constant balancing act between courses and trade, especially marine courses, with limited SERCAT 5 support available. However, our strong ties with 1BDE and 10FSB see a fair few lads joining us on these FRT's to fill the VM and fitter roles. This is a massive help, when we are spread thin, supporting the NORFORCE activities across 1.8 Million km's of AO!!

All in all, my time so far at NORFORCE has been enjoyable, with an opportunity to see and experience sights, people and culture not generally available to the wider army.



Mitchell Plateau Falls WA - Vigilant Patrol.



ASM enjoying down time.

RAEME Aircraft Maintenance School (RAMS)

Historical Connections Reforged

Since the late 1960's, the Australian Army has provided technical servicing support to hundreds of aircraft flown domestically and overseas. Starting first alongside the RAAF, it wasn't long before our need outgrew their capacity, and with a formal handover of responsibility in the 80's, the requirement for a full scale aircraft maintenance school emerged. Situated at the home of Army Aviation in Oakey, RAEME Aircraft Maintenance School was formed as a sub-unit in 1989 under Officer Commanding MAJ R E Hoare, providing initial type training in support of Army Aviation.

Almost a decade later, following the formation of the Army Aviation Training Centre it was retitled Aero Skills Division Army Aviation Training Centre and then Rotary Wing Aircraft Maintenance School. This transition in 2003 from an Officer Commanding to a Commanding

Officer was under the leadership of LTCOL C I Hadzi. This marked a shift in the responsibility for the school as not only a source of excellence for training, but also a key provider of decision support for aviation commanders in matters more broadly related to maintenance and the utilisation of tradespeople.

In the 36 years since its formation, the school at Swartz Barracks, Oakey, has delivered world-class technical training to thousands of soldiers and Officers across almost a dozen different aircraft types. The School has held many titles throughout the years, however most would know it as the Rotary Wing Aircraft Maintenance School or more affectionately, RAMS. This name bears the legacy of tens of thousands of maintenance man hours, but it fails to recognize and honour the historic contribution of fixed wing and uncrewed aerial platforms that not only form our deepest roots, but also our rapidly accelerating future.

Influenced by recent conflicts and guided by a National Defence Strategy, Army Aviation continues to evolve its capability to suit a dispersed, non-permissive, littoral environment. This includes the introduction into service of new crewed platforms, but also sees critical investment into emerging uncrewed aerial systems, and an open mind towards fixed wing opportunities.

In recognition of both the changing landscape of Army Aviation and its rich heritage, the school has return to a previous name, that it believes better reflects its purpose, history, and future. During this year's birthday celebrations, Commanding Officer LTCOL Rick Watling announced that the Rotary Wing Aircraft Maintenance School would be formally renamed to the RAEME Aircraft Maintenance School (thankfully retaining its previous acronym by which we all refer).

The year in review

2024 has been a year dominated by the spectre of transition for RAMS. As the wider capability rapidly shifts towards a whole suite of new platforms in the form of the Integrator, UH-60M, and AH-64E, the school has been working diligently to prepare the training system to deliver qualified technicians in time.

Our year began with the continuation of Initial and Additional Type Training for



A Black Hawk on standby as a Chinook and two Apaches dominate the skies.

UH-60M delivered in location at 6 Aviation Regiment, preparing their workforce to meet a demanding IOC deadline. Constrained by speed of acquisition, the UH-60M Wing has developed and delivered brand new training with limited access to publications, tools, and even the aircraft itself. This pressure has led to innovation and resourcefulness, with the team repurposing the existing S-70 Maintenance Trainer, pioneering VR maintenance tools, and using our rapid fabrication cell to design realistic training aids.

Concurrently, RAMS has played a major role in defining the training system for AH-64E, setting the stage for a new training Wing and the commencement of Initial Type Training in 2026. With training devices not expected to arrive in Oakey before 2027, the AH-64E Wing is already set to face many of the same challenges felt by UH-60M. Thankfully, experiences borne from those hardships have allowed the school to identify known future issues, communicate our capacity, and ultimately begin to develop appropriate contingencies.

More positively, while we may not have the physical training aids for either UH-60M or AH-64E, both systems have received Virtual Maintenance Trainers that enable us to conduct complex troubleshooting and fault-finding in a replica cockpit environment. These are critical capabilities in the qualification of both Avionics and Aircraft Technicians because they enable instructors to expose trainees to the entire spectrum of possible faults in a system without being limited by the likelihood of them occurring on a real aircraft.

Transition also dominated the conversation when it came to workforce, with multiple parallel and interrelated plans reaching their conclusion this year. RAMS senior leaders have been instrumental in assisting with understanding the implications of these plans, addressing the risks and opportunities to not only training, but location, career, and capability. Some significant highlights include extracting positions from across the entire organization to implement an Aviation Support Battalion, adjusting Employment Specifications to better recognize and remunerate members, and developing pathways for Reservists and Industry to exploit the Total Workforce Model.



Mother duck leading the trainees for the ultimate egg launch.



Apache in flight.

It's not all business at RAMS though, we take great pride in balancing the stress and tempo of courses with regular social events that bring together the entire school. This year maintains the tradition of a weekly BBQ, and reinforces last year's initiative to conduct off-base sports activities each month. Most recently this saw the school running a loop of Picnic Point in Toowoomba, with a truly ruthless 150m incline at the back end of 5km. The school also celebrated its 35th birthday in July with Wings competing in sports, cooking, and the development of mechanical and definitely safe egg-launchers.

In a transitory environment marked by uncertainty, RAMS remains highly effective by providing a stable and healthy workplace staffed by passionate experts.



Preparing Banh Mi for the RAMS weekly BBQ.



Pushing through the heat during the RAMS birthday spicy wings challenge.



Teamwork, strategy, and a bit of splashing during water polo.



Ready, aim, launch! The egg launch challenge begins.



CO RAMS under fire during the Egg catapult challenge.

Special Operations Engineer Regiment 2024

CPL M

Employment within Special Forces (SF) can have the perception of being exclusive and difficult. It's viewed by many as the pinnacle of their career, working on the latest equipment with the latest technology. While it does offer many opportunities not available to units within Forces Command, an important note, is that nothing within all of Special Operations Command permits the omission of basic soldiering skills. In fact, the vast majority of the time, you are focused on mastering the basics. This year at Special Operations Engineer Regiment (SOER), we focussed on the three underpinning values necessary for mastering what it is to be posted to an SF unit. Being a good soldier, being a good tradie and being a good human.

Good soldiering at SOER means have a high standard of fitness, and of safe, reliable and proactive soldiering skills. There is a high level of integration with members of the workshop and the Special Forces Engineers (SFEs). At any point multiple tradies may be on call to respond on short notice efforts with the SFEs and are integrated into the small teams on target. This year our workshop qualified various members in tactical integration courses, airborne roping, parachuting, decontamination and enhanced combat shooting disciplines. We have a high level of trust from our leaders and external squadrons to get the job done well.



"SOER workshop and attachments complete CBRNE themed PT session."

Being a good tradesman at SOER means working mostly autonomously, managing workflows from EMEFIX to completion, and being trusted with good trade skills and holistic knowledge. Throughout the year, in addition to the regular unit maintenance, our tradesmen have been responsible for creating bespoke equipment such as training aids and Capability Development (CAPDEV) projects, managing CBRNE equipment, and utilising design and Advanced Manufacturing (AM) printing capabilities. Notably, tradespeople at SOER are not defined by their specific trades but are recognized as RAEME, requiring cross-functional training and broad holistic knowledge. This enables them to tackle any task that enters the workshop, fostering a versatile and adaptable workforce.

Beyond being a skilled marksman and technician, our strong relationships and acceptance by the SFEs promotes huge amounts of trust and freedom of action to be involved in, and run activities. Arguably the most important of the three values, is being a good person and good mate. We invest a great deal of time and effort into networking, culture and interpersonal communications that foster great relationships between all sub units. The SFEs are on first name basis with most workshop members and rely on us when they have issues about maintenance and equipment.

Some of our main achievements this year include multiple successful International Engagements and support to ongoing operations, complex engineering and certification activities, and development of revised LMSF SOPs to suit the unit's unique operating tempo. Our training,

objectives and outcomes are always mission focussed, to deal with current threats being experienced now, while also being forward thinking to counter emerging threats we may see in the future. On a lighter note, we also have been responsible for the delivery of unit training, FRTs, and hosting RAEME Birthday.



"A tradesman from SOER demonstrates weapon handling techniques to ASEME trainees as part of scheduled visit to Tobruk Lines."

Multiple times a year, ASEME trainees visit Tobruk Lines to learn about our operations and capabilities. We take them to the range and fire SF weapons, where most shoot more rounds in a day, than they have in their whole careers. We showcase our workshop and introduce them to some specialised equipment, technology and machines we maintain. To wrap up, we always finish with spending time together in a relaxed environment to experience the culture within a high performance workshop and esprit de corps.

As a workshop these values underpin what we do and how we operate, driving us to attract the finest individuals. We seek self-improving learners, dedicated leaders, and enthusiastic team players. At SOER's workshop, we pride ourselves on our exceptional abilities and culture, simply put: we're great at what we do.

AWARDS

2024 Craftsman of the Year (COTY) Recipients

| | Rank & Name | Unit |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| ARA | CFN Emma Cook | 1 Armd Regt |
| ARes | CFN Ashley Collins | 11 CSSB |
| Regional CFN of the Year | | |
| South Queensland Region | Rank & Name | Unit |
| ARA | LCPL Dale Gray | 7 SIG REGT |
| ARes | Nil Noms | |
| North Queensland Region | Rank & Name | Unit |
| ARA | CFN Darren Caddy | 5 AVN REGT |
| ARes | Nil Noms | |
| VIC/TAS Region | Rank & Name | Unit |
| ARA | Nil Noms | |
| ARes | Nil Noms | |
| NSW Region | Rank & Name | Unit |
| ARA | CFN S | 6 AVN REGT |
| ARes | Nil Noms | |
| SA Region | Rank & Name | Unit |
| ARA | CFN Anh Hao Kiet Phan | 16 Regt RAA |
| ARes | Nil Noms | |
| WA Region | Rank & Name | Unit |
| ARA | CFN S | SASR |
| ARes | Nil Noms | |
| NT Region | Rank & Name | Unit |
| ARA | CFN Brent Carmichael | 1 CSSB |
| ARes | Nil Noms | |



2024 National ARA Craftsman of The Year (COTY) – CFN Emma Cook 1AR, being presented her award by HOC RAEME Brig Ben Slaughter at the SA RAEME Birthday.



2024 North Queensland COTY – CFN Darren Caddy 5 AVN REGT, being presented his award by CO 3 CSSB LTCOL J Long at the NQ RAEME Birthday.



The SA Regional CFN of the Year Award was awarded to CFN Anh Hao Keit Phan from 16 Regt.

2024 Corps Awards

| Junior Regimental Award (Sub 2 SGT) | |
|--|--------------------|
| Rank & Name | Unit |
| CPL Benjamin O'Rouke | 2 Cav Regt |
| Regimental Award (Sub 2 WOCSS) | |
| Rank & Name | Unit |
| SGT Paul Batty | HQ AVN COMD |
| BRIG HLC Martins OBE Award (Sub 4 SGT) | |
| Rank & Name | Unit |
| CPL Bradley Ward | 1 RTB |
| Artificer of the Year Award (Sub 4 WO) | |
| Rank & Name | Unit |
| SGT Mitchell Bell | JLU(E) - Singleton |
| LT Peter Jennings Award (LOBC) | |
| Rank & Name | Unit |
| LT J | 6 AVN REGT |



2024 National Junior Regimental Award winner (Sub 2 SGT) – CPL Benjamin O'Rouke 2 CAV REGT, being presented his award by CO 3 CSSB LTCOL J Long at the NQ RAEME Birthday.

Robert 'Rawby' Sawford Two Federation Stars

On Wednesday, 20 November 2024, a remarkable milestone was recognised in a special ceremony at Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera. Robert Douglas Sawford, fondly known as 'Rawby,' was be presented with his two Federation Stars by the Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Simon Stuart AO, DSC.



A graduate of the 32nd Intake of Army Apprentices, Robert commenced his career in 1977 as an Electronics Tradesman, setting the foundation for over 45 years of dedicated service, retiring as a Major in 2022. The presentation of the Federation Stars acknowledges this extraordinary achievement and celebrates his commitment to the Australian Army and the Corps.

The ceremony took place at the Officers' Mess, Gallipoli Barracks, surrounded by his close family, BRIG Ed Smeaton representing HOC, MAJ Steve Howells (himself a recipient of a Federation star), OC 106 Fd WKSP MAJ Joel Buntine, RAQ Chair Peter Matthews amongst other guests. RSM-A WO1 Kim Felmingham read out Robert's distinguished service. Robert spoke fondly about his career and thanked the Chief of Army himself for presenting the award and recognising his enduring service within the Corps and the broader Army community.



A life of love and service

Capt Krysten Clifton (Army News 21 Nov 24)



Maj Wendi McAdie, second from left, and WO1 Andrew McAdie, right, are presented with their Federation Stars by Gen Michael Krause alongside their daughter, Clancy McAdie, left. Photo: Michael Banovic.

The Federation Star for 40 years of service is a great achievement for any Defence member, but to receive it alongside your spouse is rare.

Last month (Oct 24) at ALTC, Maj Wendi McAdie and her husband WO1 Andrew McAdie did just that.

Surrounded by their family, friends and colleagues, Maj-Gen Michael Krause made a special trip to present their stars in what he described as “one of the greatest honours anyone has ever given me”.

The couple who met, married and raised their daughter while serving, looked back with pride and gratitude.

WO1 McAdie accepted his medal acknowledging his daughter, Clancy.



WO1 Andrew McAdie in 1978.

“For missing me when I was away and putting up with me when I was home,” he said. “I would also like to thank my wife, Wendi, who has been my consult and my conscience.”

WO1 McAdie joined Army at 15 as a vehicle mechanic apprentice because he wanted an adventure. For him, being out bush getting seemingly doomed vehicles up and going with “nothing but fencing wire and chewing gum” was the icing on his cake.

Meanwhile, his future wife joined the Women’s Royal Army Corps (WRAAC), where pivotal change was afoot.

“In my career I have gone from being at WRAAC school, where women were not allowed to carry or use weapons, to being deployed to Afghanistan where I carried two weapons – a pistol on the side and a Steyr on the back,” she said.

It was some years before they crossed paths, though their first meeting which would prove to be unforgettable.

At 106 Field Workshop, Enoggera, a then young Cpl Andrew McAdie marched in and met a young Sgt Wendi Pannowitz – the chief clerk. As an unsuspecting Cpl McAdie filled out paperwork and said a brief hello to the OC, Sgt Pannowitz took aim.

“I walked up to him and I said, ‘first, stop leaning all over the bloody counter, stand up straight!’ ” Maj McAdie said.

“And I said, ‘and that was the OC of the workshop, you’re supposed to pay him compliments!’ And he went, ‘Well, yeah, okay.’ Then he went back to the workshops and I found out later that he said, ‘who’s the cranky old thing in there?’ ”

The next time they met was rappelling down a lighthouse, when Maj McAdie challenged WO1 McAdie to a race that would be contested to this day.

“We rappelled, raced each other to the ground and I won,” Maj McAdie said.

“He said it was because he had to dodge the windows, but he’ll tell you he won.”

But 32 years on, WO1 McAdie won’t concede.

“I still believe – and there’s always two sides to a story – I beat her butt,” he said.

Both looked back on their career highlights. WO1 McAdie’s best times were being posted to 5/7RAR, supporting the crew commander’s course, and his posting to 2 Cav Regt as Artificer Sergeant Major.

“We drove our ASLAVs from Darwin to Shoalwater Bay one year – there and back,” he said.

“Then we did it the next year to High Range. So, that was really good.”

Maj McAdie cited taking her first chief clerk role, deploying to Afghanistan and commissioning to major to become the Army personnel coordination detachment commander. Her role as section commander at Kapooka (inadvertently starring in the 1990 documentary Ladies in the Line), however, was Maj McAdie’s first milestone.

“It is a tough gig, but really rewarding,” she said. “As soon as the band starts, you will see the recruits – they grow three inches, they just stand up so straight. It’s a really great feeling.”

Of course, work and family is always a balance; one the McAdie’s worked hard at. Having Clancy in 1996, the priority was keeping a solid home base for her, though this meant lots of time spent with just one parent at home.



Maj Wendi McAdie in the mid-’80s.

Though Clancy may have joked her parents were so used to being apart they would get divorced when they had to live together again, the McAdie's soldier on. They lean on the values and behaviours that have brought them success in service and marriage; a deep empathy for the unique way of life that is Army, speaking the same language (yes, RATEL), sacrifice and, sometimes... a little yelling.

"When I was an apprentice, there was two classes of apprentices that didn't have to do subject one for corporal. I was one of them," WO1 McAdie said.

"So I was really worried when I did my subject one for sergeant about giving a drill lesson and all those things that you should have got taught on sub one for corporal."

"Wendi was a recruit instructor and she taught me everything I needed to know – this is how you give a drill lesson, this is how you do fault correction, shouting at me in the backyard. And then I got student of merit!" The pair will not be giving up service any time soon. Maj McAdie will hit compulsory full-time retirement next year, reducing her hours to part time to continue working in welfare and see changes from the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide come to fruition. She will also further her integration into local ex-service organisations, already being a Legatee and Wodonga RSL committee member.

WO1 McAdie has four years before compulsory retirement, though he has no plans to leave. Wearing both an APS hat and an Army hat, WO1 McAdie will only need to retire the latter.

"I get to work with fine young Australians and I get to work on the big toys," he said.

"So why would I stop?"

WO1 Rick Colefax and WO1 David Clarke Federation Star presentations

WO1 Jon Tynan

On Tuesday 26 Nov 2024 WO1's Richard 'Rick' Colefax & David Clarke were presented with their Federation Stars for 40 years service at ASEME by the HOC Brigadier Ben Slaughter. The presentation was at the welcoming BBQ for the teams for Inaugural St Eligius Trophy.



WO1 Rick Colefax, has a celebrated long and illustrious career in both full and part time roles. He is the first and only Recovery Mechanic become the first recognised Regimental Sergeant Major within the ECN but also an RSM with the longest tenure as the Corps RSM; 3 years which is no mean feat. Rick put everything he could into ensuring that the Corps soldier tradesman would be set up for success, whether at ASEME or out in the wider Army. Rick is calling it a day for his military career, he has bought a caravan and will be travelling Australia to wind down and relax. We the Corps wish you all the best, hope you can enjoy retirement and thank you.

WO1 Dave Clarke's commitment not only to the Army, but the Corps was also recognised. Dave has always stepped up to fill those roles that others either didn't want or couldn't do throughout his career, as can be seen by his long and varied career posting history.

For those not aware though, Dave also filled a critical role during a dark period in the Corps history, when we had no Corps RSM. The Corps RSM role has long been associated the with RSM ASEME. However, in 2006 a RAAOC Warrant Officer was posted into the RSM ASEME position; the Corps was stuck. Dave offered to break the mould and take on the role of Corps Warrant Officer, for those non-regimental people, this was a big step. Dave wielded all the power of the Corps RSM and help steer the Corps through the 2006 DFRT Ground Trade submission and a number of other challenges, for that we thank you. Dave transferred to the Reserve in 2007 and stepped back following this role, but found himself immersed in the Craftsman Magazine, a task which is thankless, yet every soldier and officer looks forward to reading; this is a role he still undertakes to this day. Dave was surrounded by his family and close friends who have been integral in his ability to maintain focus and determination to want to make the Corps great.



ASEME Trainee of the Year



CFN Alex Hicks ASEME Trainee of the Year, being presented his award by CO ASEME LTCOL Tim Soper.

82nd RAEME BIRTHDAY

South Australian RAEME Birthday

LT Kieran Poort

The honour of hosting the 82nd RAEME Birthday fell to 1 Armoured Regiment in its last year as an ACR. The birthday celebrations were kicked into overdrive as this was the last time many units will be in the state, as a number of unit workshops close their doors for the final time. The promise of a big event attracted serving and ex-serving members of the Corps, trade vendors, historical societies and a motorcycle club to RAAF Edinburgh. The Head of Corps, BRIG Benjamin Slaughter made the trip interstate to partake in the festivities.



The day commenced with tug of war, which saw a dominate performance from 1 Armd Regt, winning every match they played. 16 Regt came in second place after a close battle with 9 CSSB, who unfortunately lost every match taking up 3rd place.



Following the tug of war, traditional events were held such as the spanner toss, volleyball and a M1A1 road wheel roll. Members were surprised by the opportunity of paintball, as 1st Armoured Regiment's Workshop was turned into a paintball field. Following paintball, it was a medieval

showdown between WO2 Fletcher and CFN Sanders-Carter. CFN Sanders-Carter came out victorious unleashing all his built up rage from the year. The final event was the anticipated Go Cart race between each of the units which saw 9 CSSB take 1st place.

Following the events, BRIG Slaughter presented honours and awards, farewelled members of the Corps and announced the RAEME CFN of the year awards.



WO1 Stephen Burgess received his parchment of service for his dedicated service within the Corps.



WO2 Brian Dawes was given a fitting farewell and presented with his National Emergency Medal, Service Parchment for 35 years of service and his Appreciation of Service Certificate.



SGT Nathan Ramsay was also farewelled and was presented with his Certificate of Service for his commitment to the ADF throughout his career.



CFN Emma Cook from 1 ARMD was presented the ARA RAEME CFN of the Year Award and presented with a Soldiers Medallion for her continual efforts within the regiment, notably with her work on the M1A1 Fleet.



The SA Regional CFN of the Year Award was awarded to CFN Anh Hao Keit Phan from 16 Regt.



HOC Brigadier Ben Slaughter cutting the cake with the youngest member of the Corps at the SA RAEME Birthday.

Townsville RAEME Birthday – 5 AVN Regt

North Queensland RAEME Birthday 2024

5th Aviation Regiment took its turn this year to host the 82nd RAEME Birthday at RAAF Base Townsville. The day commenced with a welcoming address from CAPT Chris Payne, before RAEME members and guests lined up for a BBQ breakfast to prepare for the day of festivities. Activities on the day included a Chinook pull, Go-kart race, Show N Shine, Dyno, Volleyball, Drone racing, Spanner throw and Chain of Command relay.

Volleyball

1 RAR fought off stiff competition to emerge the victor in this year's volleyball competition.



Spanner Throw

CFN Wedel (2 RAR) was able to throw the spanner furthest with a distance of 16.46m, this was followed by CPL Couper (3 CER) with a distance of 16.33m and CFN Gandy (2 RAR) with distance of 14.94m.

Chinook Pull

The Chinook pull was hotly contested, with seconds separating the top teams. In the end, 3 CSSB was able to pull the 11,148kg aircraft across the line in 23.78 seconds, taking the win. A special mention to 4 Regt team who were unable to move the Chinook at all.



Go Kart

The Go-Kart racing was a close and dramatic one this year, with 3 RAR crossing the line with the fastest time.





Champion Workshop

The Champion Workshop of 2024 was awarded to 2 RAR TSP, winning by 1 point.

Show N Shine

Best In Show – Holden EH – WO2 Nicholas Neleman

People's Choice – Hyundai Excel – WO2 Nicholas Allen

Cyclone's Choice – Toyota Crown – LT Zhang

Best New School – Nissan Skyline R34 GTT – WO2 Evan Deards

Best Old School – Holden EH – WO2 Nicholas Neleman

Encouragement award – Hyundai Excel – WO2 Nicholas Allen

DYNO

Lowest HP – Harrison Lock, Toyota HJ60, 32.6kW, 179Nm. Time to go see Elite Performance and Tuning mate.

Highest HP – Shane Buckingham, Holden Colorado, 373kW, 843.9Nm

Highest Industry HP – CJ Van Aswegan, Elite Performance and Tuning, Ford Falcon, 807kw, 1400Nm

Innovation and Design

A new event for RAEME Birthday intended to provide an avenue for members to tackle workplace problems with innovative solutions.

Best Overall Design – 1 RAR WKSP with their bench mounted 3D shock absorber extender.

Best Technical Execution – 1 RAR WKSP 3D printed cup holders for Defence vehicle fleet.

Drone Racing Time Trial

Another new event this year, with winner CFN Bridgford (5 AVN) with a lap of 44.6 seconds.

Chain of Command Relay

The chain of command relay was a chaotic event, with no rules against interference, teams quickly got up to mischief to put other teams at a disadvantage. The 5 AVN team pulled through and won the event.



Monster Raffle

True to its name, the monster raffle this year had some monster prizes, including a Prusa MK4 3D Printer, a \$1000 JB Hifi voucher, holiday and dinner gift vouchers, drill sets, RAEME fire pit and signs, among many other items. Safe to say the winners were not disappointed.



Awards

Congratulations to the award winners this year, presented by CO 3 CSSB, LTCOL Long.

Junior Regimental Award – CPL Ben O’Rourke (2 CAV), for his performance on Sub 2 SGT (RAEME) at ASLO.

The Artificers Scroll – SGT Cottrell (3 CSSB).



NQ Regional Craftsman of the Year – CFN Darren Caddy (5 AVN).



Congratulations to the Craftsman of the Year runners up:

Kyle Hucker – 3 RAR

Mitchell Sydenham – 1 RAR

Alex Woodcroft – 2 CAV

Callum Brown – 2 RAR

Nathan Adam – 4 Regt

Jack Gardner – 10 FSB

Corey Bennet – 3 CSSB

David Gadsden – 3 CER

Finally, LTCOL Long cuts the RAEME cake with CFN Aleman to mark the end of the formalities.



RAEMUS Rover also made an appearance.

Overall the 82nd RAEME Birthday was a huge success. Thank you to all who attended for bringing the mateship, competitive spirit, and esprit-de-corps which makes RAEME great.

South East Queensland RAEME Birthday – 7 CSSB

On Friday 29 November 2024, 106 Field Workshop – 7CSSB, hosted the 82nd RAEME Birthday Celebrations. The day began at 20 REGT RAA parade ground with the Spanner Toss and Tug of War events. Sky morale from earlier in the day made Tug of War a slippery event, with the OJTs staying on their feet and taking the win.

From there the celebrations continued at 106 Field Workshop, where the Show and Shine, Rank Relay, and Spanner Cart Race event were held. As always, the cart race was an exciting event, with head on collision (with a bright yellow pole), runaway tyres, and challenging obstacles to overcome, but the first team over the line was 2/14 LHR, taking the win for the fifth consecutive year.



More than 30 vendors set up in the workshop with product displays and handing out freebees. We were fortunate to have Matt Stone Racing join us with both cars, running pit stop challenges throughout the day.



Some of the other vendors there on the day were, Brisbane Broncos, DeWalt, Redcliffe Dolphins, Ironside, Milwaukee, RAEME Association QLD, Snap On Tools, Trade Tools, Superior Engineering, and so much more.

It was an honour to have COL COMDT Piers Cambridge in attendance and be able to present CFN Ashley Collins (11CSSB) the ARES Craftsman of the year award, and cut the cake with the youngest Craftsman, CFN Harrison McQueen (8/9 RAR) born 2005.

A huge thank you has been extended to Brisbane Roar, QLD Reds, Big W, Defence Health, Revel Breweries, Iron Man 4x4, Wallabies, and vendors from the day, for donating over \$2000 worth of prizes for the raffle! It was a fantastic day had by all and plans are already underway for bigger and better next year!



UP THE SHOPS!

Wagga RAEME Birthday

The Wagga Regional RAEME Representative MAJ Charles Rose hosted the 82nd RAEME Birthday in the Wagga region on Friday 29 November. This year's event was held at the Wagga RSL with RAEME members from both 1 RTB and RAAF Wagga in attendance.

The venue provided an excellent opportunity for those in attendance to celebrate the proud history of the Corps during an extended lunch period that offered excellent food and drink, fine company and a chance to partake in bare foot lawn bowls.



The RAEME Birthday Shield was up for grabs on the day, however the typical RAEME challenges and activities (ie spanner toss, billy cart race, tug-o-war) were holstered for this year noting the off base location. A bare foot lawn bowls team knock-out challenge seemed appropriate for the festivities, with the combined trainee team of 1/24 Army AVTECH and 1/24 ATECH clearly displacing all other staff and trainee teams for this year's honours to hoist the shield.



CFN Kersten & CFN Arvanitakis - Winning team of the RAEME Birthday Shield for 2024.

The day was an outstanding success, and allowed all that attended to experience the esprit-de-corps and comradery that makes RAEME the great Corps that it is.

Lastly, a shout-out should be made to the RAEME Head of Corps Cell regarding the financial support provided to another RAEME Birthday through RAEME Corps funds disbursement. These funds go a long way in making a great day even better by rolling the money back into subsidising the RAEME Birthday activity for our members.

Arte' et Marte'

ASSOCIATIONS

ACT RAEME Association

RAEME Association ACT:

A Year of Connection, Commemoration, and Community in 2024

2024 was another remarkable year for the RAEME Association in the ACT, full of memorable moments, camaraderie, and a deep sense of shared history. From celebrating achievements to acknowledging our fallen comrades, the year was marked by activities that both honour our past and foster stronger connections across the RAEME community.

One of the year's highlights was the recognition of WO1 Jim Beaman's appointment as Army's first non-Regimental Tier C WO1. This historic occasion was a proud moment for RAEME and further cemented our Corps' standing within the broader Army community. We continue to applaud WO1 Beaman for his dedication and service, and it was fantastic to see so many members come together to celebrate this achievement.



WO1 Jim Beaman with RSM-A and CA.

Throughout the year, the RAEME Association hosted regular Spanner Clubs and luncheons, where members had the chance to reconnect, share stories, and enjoy the fellowship of like-minded individuals. These informal gatherings have become an important part of the RAEME experience, giving us all an opportunity to relax and enjoy the company of old friends while making new ones. Whether over a coffee or a cold beer, the camaraderie on display at these events underscored the strength and unity of our Corps.



Head of Corps briefing over lunch.

The RAEME community also came together for major commemorative activities at the Australian War Memorial; including Dedication Ceremonies for the Sufferings of War sculpture and a second sculpture of heroic nurse, Vivian Bullwinkel, who was married to a RAEME Officer, the late COL Francis West Statham. The Association was also delighted to experience a behind-the-scenes tour of the War Memorial with their "Big Things in Store" event.



Dedication of Sufferings of War Sculpture.



Vivian Bullwinkel Sculpture



AWM Big Things in Store.



ANZAC Day Contingent at the Australian War Memorial.

A standout moment was the National Veterans March on ANZAC Day, which saw a great turnout of RAEME members proudly marching to honour those who served before us. The presence of RAEME was felt across the Memorial, as members from all corners of Australia gathered to pay their respects and renew their bonds as brothers and sisters in arms.

We were also pleased to welcome new officers into RAEME this year, extending a warm and enthusiastic greeting to those beginning their careers in the Corps. Their fresh perspectives and energy are essential for the continued growth and success of RAEME, and it was wonderful to see the community embrace these new members with open arms.

In addition to our regional activities, we've kept in touch with our counterparts overseas. Reports from the EME Corps in the UK and Canada provided fascinating insights into their activities, creating opportunities for cross-nation dialogue and collaboration.

2024 marked a momentous occasion with the welcome of King Charles. RAEME was proud to capture a memorable photograph of His Majesty during his visit, cementing another moment in history that will be remembered for years to come.



King Charles III holding gifts received whilst visiting Parliament House.

Each edition of our monthly Newsletter, RAEME in ACTION was filled with plenty of humour, which remains a hallmark of our culture. The camaraderie of RAEME is built not just on shared service but on the shared laughs and the lighter side of life that we all appreciate. This year's editions included numerous contributions that made us smile while staying true to our identity as a Corps.

Another key focus of the year was delving into our rich history, particularly the formative years of RAEME. Through the pages of RAEME in ACTION, we took a trip down memory lane, reflecting on the Corps' evolution and the proud legacy of those who paved the way for us. This connection to our past provided a foundation for the future, reminding us of the values and traditions that continue to shape RAEME today.



RAEME in ACTION cover image – Jun 2024 edition.

Looking ahead, we also have exciting news on the horizon. The ongoing success of RAEME in ACTION and some of the other Association newsletters has sparked discussions about the potential for a single nationwide newsletter, combining input from all RAEME associations across Australia. This would allow members from all over the country to stay connected, share news, and engage in discussions on the issues that matter most to us all. The idea is still in its infancy, but it's an initiative that could bring even greater unity and strength to our community in the future should all other State Associations see benefit in a collaborative effort.

As we close out the year, we look forward to continuing to build on the connections that have made the RAEME Association in the ACT such a dynamic and inclusive community. Whether through regular events, commemorative activities, or simply sharing a laugh, it is the bonds between our members that make this Association truly special.

Here's to another year of service, camaraderie, and connection in 2025!

— **The RAEME Association ACT**

RAEME Association of Queensland

RAEME Association Queensland Chairman’s Awards 2024

Peter Matthews - Chairman

The RAEME Association Queensland Inc (RAQ) proudly recognises the significant contributions of our members, whose outstanding service is vital to the success of our Association. Each award recipient’s name is proudly displayed on our Honour Wall.

It is with great pleasure that I share the recipients of the RAQ Chairman’s Awards for 2024.

In July, I had the honour of presenting a Chairman’s Award to Kingsley Pocock, a Life Subscriber of the RAQ. Kingsley has served as our Membership Officer for many years, and his dedication to this role has been instrumental in the steady and impressive growth of our membership. His proactive efforts—communicating with members, organising mail-outs, promoting events, and personally reaching out to welcome and engage members - have set an exceptional standard for all of us.

Kingsley’s commitment was particularly notable during last year’s inaugural ‘Women in RAEME’ event, where he championed inclusivity and diversity within our ranks. Congratulations, Kingsley!



Kingsley Pocock (right) presented with a Chairman’s Award.

At the North Queensland gathering in Townsville in October 2024, I was also honoured to present Chairman’s Awards to three outstanding members: Brian Robb, Doug Merry, and Robert “Tank” Pontifex. Each of these individuals has shown remarkable dedication to the RAQ, and their contributions have significantly shaped our Association’s successes in North Queensland. Their support and commitment are invaluable to our Association’s continued growth. Congratulations, Brian, Doug, and Tank!



Top, left to right - Brian Robb, Robert ‘Tank’ Pontifex OAM CSM, Doug Merry, and Tank with his obligatory selfie, all receiving Chairman’s Awards.

On 1 December 2024, Adrian Butcher was honoured with the RAEME Association Queensland Chairman’s Award, recognising his exceptional contributions to the Association. Adrian joined as a Life Subscriber in 2019, holding Member Number 697. By 2020, he had taken on the vital role of Webmaster, a position critical to the Association’s communication, administration, and growth. His dedication and expertise have been instrumental in ensuring the smooth operation of the Association’s online presence, which serves as its backbone.



Adrian Butcher presented with a Chairman’s Award at the All Ranks Luncheon.

Since his appointment, Adrian has become a linchpin of the Association’s success. His achievements include managing the RNST handling system’s administration, updates, and outages, promptly assisting members with queries, and maintaining and expanding the Association’s web presence.

He has also elevated the Association’s social media engagement by establishing active Facebook and Instagram platforms and overseeing effective social media campaigns. Adrian’s unwavering commitment and innovative efforts have significantly strengthened the RAEME Association Queensland, making him a deserving recipient of this prestigious award.

On behalf of the members of the RAQ, congratulations Adrian!

Award recipients, confirmed by the Executive Committee, are presented with a Chairman’s Award Lapel Badge to signify their recognition.



Chairman’s Award lapel pin.

RAEME Association of SA

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR PRESIDENT

ON HIS PROMOTION TO WO1

On Saturday 30th November 2024 our President, WO2 John Prince attended the Army Compliance and Assurance (ACAU) dinner held at the Naval and Military Club of SA in Adelaide. During the evening his CO, LTCOL Jane Evans and BRIG C. P. Moore conducted the formalities and announced his promotion to Warrant Officer Class One.

John's wife Ellen assisted with his wardrobe change during the promotion ceremony.

The now WO1 John Prince has served for over 40 years in various workshops, trade and supervisory roles. This includes involvement in operations in East Timor (2001) and Iraq and Afghanistan (MAS Teams 2006 and 2007).

Because of the exceptionally long time he has spent in the military he has received the Defence Long Service Medal with 4 Clasps and numerous other medals. He is soon to be presented with the Federation Star.

His postings have been varied and numerous and include Bandiana, Brisbane, Townsville, Darwin, Sydney and finally Adelaide as the TRGWO at 9CSSB Workshops where he transferred to SERCAT5 and has held a variety of postings in South Australia since that time.

John has a multitude of other specialist skill including Professional Photographer and supporting Cadets for their team selection and development towards Chief of Army Cadet Team Challenge and Adventurous Training Awards.

WO1 John Prince has been happily married to Ellen for over 30 years and their 3 children all have an involvement with the services.

Congratulations WO1 John Prince, well done.



SA RAEME “SOLDIER OF THE YEAR” AWARDS

2024 celebrates the 20th Anniversary of the first RAEME - SA “Soldier of the Year” award presentation. The “Soldier of the Year” awards were never intended to compete with the RAEME “Craftsman of the Year” awards, but were intended to cover both Craftsmen and Corporals who were later achievers in their trade and acknowledge the great service they provide to the Corps. Since 2004 RAEME - SA has continued to provide two annual awards to recognise the performance of the best SERCAT 7 and SERCAT 5 Soldier (CFN or CPL) serving within South Australia.

All RAEME Craftsmen/Corporals posted to units located in South Australia are eligible for the award. The purpose of the Awards is to identify and recognise annually the most outstanding SERCAT 7 and SERCAT 5 RAEME soldier within South Australia. The award is judged for the period 1 January to 30 October each year.

Each year Unit OCs and/or ASMs are requested to forward nominations to the President of RAEME - SA. Nominations requested include details of:

- trade and regimental abilities
- involvement in extra activities including community activities, sporting bodies, hobbies, civilian studies, etc.
- any other outstanding attributes.

The President and Vice President, after consultation with the Senior RAEME Representative SA and relevant OCs, ASMs, select the winners for each category.

The winners of the awards are presented with an appropriately engraved trophy as well as a framed certificate signed by the President and Colonel Commandant / Senior RAEME Representative (SA) or senior, trade qualified, Association committee member in the absence of above. Presentation of both the SERCAT 7 and SERCAT 5 “Soldier of the Year” Awards are normally presented at the Corps Birthday activity or at an appropriate parade or ceremony. RAEME – SA also present a “Best Overall Cadet at 43 ACU” award every year.

The award winners for 2024 are:

SERCAT 7 - 8645725 CFN Ewan Gorman. ECN 146. 1CSST. Edinburgh Workshops with HOC RAEME BRIG Ben Slaughter and Tara Belton, Chief Executive Officer, RSL SA Branch



SERCAT 5 – 8302284 CFN Darren Beck. ECN 418. 9 CSST. 107 Field Workshops with
WO1 John Prince. President RAEME-SA



SA RAEME Association Honorary Life Membership
Doug Pammenter



RAEME Association of WA

Western Australia News - Avon Descent 2024

The Corps had two competitors in the race this year – MAJ Rob Reeves (currently 2IC WAUR but due to get back to the Wksp next year) and BRIG Amanda Williamson of 13 Bde.

BRIG Williamson, in a team with her brother Todd (Two Williamson's – 166), finished 4th overall and 4th in her category of 10hp Sports, with an average speed of 52.4 km/hr.

Rob in a team with Liam Walton (Aqua Bogans - 020) finished 23rd overall and 8th in his category of 10hp Super Standard, with an average speed of 27.1 km/hr. He did however lose a few places by stopping off at Bell's Rapids to help a mate who was in trouble.

Congratulations to both of them, who reckon they can improve their placings next year and have shown what the Corps is capable of. It may be game on....



Vale VX104343 BRIG Bert Barker

It is with great sadness we advise of the passing of a true legend of our Corps BRIG Bert Barker, on 15 June in Melbourne, aged 102.

He had been a resident in aged care at Banora Point on the Gold Coast, moving back to Melbourne to be closer to family, he was focused on making sure his wife Nona was settled in the Victorian retirement village with their daughter. They would have celebrated their 80th wedding anniversary on the 15th July and Nona herself, a WWII veteran, turns 100 on the 31st of October 2024.

BRIG Barker belongs to a rare cohort of servicemen, as he was an original member of our proud Corps at our foundation in 1942. He served in WWII on operations in PNG and through his many postings, his various commands, training and staff appointments over 33 years' service, it is clear he made a huge contribution to the Corps, the Army and the ADF. He served as Colonel Commandant 1 Military District from 1980 to 1984 before retiring.



EULOGY - BRIGADIER HERBERT W BARKER - 1 July 2024

My name is Garry Swan. I have known Brigadier Bert Barker for 65 years and have the utmost respect for him as a man and as a senior Army Officer. I am saddened by his passing and thank his ever-loving wife Nona and daughters for affording me this opportunity to draw on my personal recollections to present but a portion of his impressive army career. I consider it a privilege as one who has served with him, to speak and give due recognition to his distinguished service.

Bert Barker enlisted in the Australian Army in 1941 during World War 2, while studying for an Electrical Engineering Degree at Melbourne University and was posted into the Australian Army Ordnance Corps. In December 1942 he transferred into the recently formed Corps of Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (AEME), seeing postings in both NSW and Qld. In 1944 in the rank of Captain, he was posted to 1 Infantry Troops Workshop in Rabaul New Britain where he saw war service outside Australia. On return to Australia, he continued to serve in AEME until December 1948 when the Royal title was granted to form RAEME. Bert was a founding member of both AEME and RAEME and as he was only 20 when AEME was formed in November 1942, he would doubtless have been one of the last of those Corps founding members.

I first met Lt Col Barker in February 1959. I was a very young soldier having turned 18 only three weeks earlier, after graduating from the Army Apprentices School Balcombe as a Vehicle Mechanic in December 1958. In February 1959 I attended a three-week Vehicle Mechanic's Indoctrination Course at the RAEME Training Centre (RTC) located at Bandiana near Wodonga in Victoria.

I drove down from Brisbane arriving on a Sunday, moving into a basic old, unlined, open plan, timber pre-war hut with eleven other soldiers. I noticed that most of the buildings including the Other Ranks Mess Hall were old timber buildings. The course assembled on the Monday morning to receive an opening address by the Commanding Officer and Chief Instructor (CO/CI), who was introduced by the Regimental Sergeant Major as Lt Col Barker. We immediately noted that he was a young and pleasant RAEME officer for such rank, as we had just left the Army Apprentices

School where the introductory Commandant was also a Lt Col but of the Armoured Corps, much older and less welcoming. We immediately felt at ease on the first day of this first course of many we would be required to attend during our technical career.

During the course we learnt from staff that Lt Col Barker had much military experience, having joined the Centre in January 1959. Following war service, he had enjoyed a posting to the United Kingdom during the years 1950 to 1953 followed by a posting to 3 Base Workshops Broadmeadows and attendance at Army Staff College Queenscliff in 1956.

The course passed quickly, and we departed for our units with a greater understanding of the role of the Corps, the vehicles we would be required to repair and service and the ongoing courses we would be required to attend at the Centre.

Overall, we left with pleasant thoughts of our choice of Corps thanks to the efficient management of the Centre by the CO and his staff.

In March 1962 I applied for and was accepted into the Officer Cadet School Portsea for the twelve-month course from July 1962 to June 1963. I graduated as a Second Lieutenant into the Corps of RAEME and was posted to Northern Command Workshop at Bulimba Qld for six months. I married my fiancée soon after graduation and in January 1964 was posted to RTC for a twelve-month Junior Officers' Course. I was pleased to see the CO was still Lt Col Barker.

In 1962 the RAEME Corps Director Brigadier Bendall, observed that an increasing number of ex-army apprentices were graduating from Portsea as officers into the Corps. As the Corps was short of tertiary educated engineering officers, he saw an opportunity to capitalise on this influx, so instructed Lt Col Barker to produce a twelve-month Junior Officers' Course to develop their understanding of the role of RAEME in peace and in war and to improve their education standard with a view to tertiary study.

Lt Col Barker accepted this challenge with his customary zeal and the first course of ten young officers began in January 1963. The well-crafted course included corps training, field exercises, classes in all technical wings of the school, daytime attendance at Wodonga Technical School and night classes in the physics laboratory of the Electrical Wing. The course was a huge success with benefits to the Corps such as some Portsea graduates unexpectedly opting for RAEME as a career because of the education opportunity offered. The courses continued during the 1960s with many young officers going on to sponsored full time study at various institutions to secure their Diplomas, thereby providing qualified engineering officers for Corps responsibilities and future senior rank.

As well, following the course, some were selected for training at the British Army Aviation Centre at Middle Wallop in the UK to be trained as Aircraft Maintenance Engineers, to assume responsibility from the RAAF for the servicing and maintenance of army helicopters and light fixed wing aircraft. Significantly many also gained qualifications for attendance at the Royal Military College of Science at Shrivenham in the UK and selection for attendance at Army Staff College Queenscliff.

On arrival at Bandiana for the second of the Junior Officers Courses in 1964 as one of eleven, I immediately noticed that major improvements had been made to accommodations and facilities at the Centre. Among them were new double storey brick Other Ranks accommodation Blocks and a new Other Ranks' Mess. Warrant Officers and Sergeants were provided with new brick accommodation blocks and Sergeants' Mess. All improvements owed to the energy and drive of Lt Col Barker. As a young soldier in 1959 I can be excused for not noticing the location or build of the Officers' Mess at that time.

As I was married, I lived out in neighbouring Albury, but many of my officer peers were single so lived in at the Officers' Mess. On the 2nd of April 1964 the Officers' Mess was to have a Mess

President's Mixed Dining in Night when all officers were obliged to attend. However, that morning my wife was unexpectedly taken to the Albury Base Hospital to give birth to my first child. I then approached the Mess President who was the rank of Major, to request I be excused from the dining in night to visit my wife and new-born daughter in hospital. To my surprise the president refused my request advising I must attend the dining in night. Of course, I was most disappointed leaving my wife alone in hospital on such an occasion, as her parents lived in Brisbane.

Somehow Bert found out about the matter but said nothing to me. He must have been disappointed with what he heard, for next morning he called for his staff car, bought a bunch of flowers on the way and arrived at the hospital to visit my wife and daughter. I did not know of this until I was able to visit my wife that night. That compassionate act typified the man and the type of officer he was. He led by example, showing us subalterns how to act in future when we become commanders.

Bert had some interesting activities and passions as well. He was extremely safety conscious. We admired his personality but learnt very quickly not to leave our carry bags laying around unattended. His instructions to staff were that if they sighted any such bags, they were to be brought to his office so he could summon the owner.

Whenever he saw an unattended bag, he would abscond with it himself. Having been summoned to the CO's office, he would lecture us as to the potential dangers, as someone with evil intent could leave a bomb. We junior officers with a strange sense of humour, gave him the nick name of "Bert the bag-snatcher" and often privately referred to him as such. He was not aware of this until I informed him many years later during a lunch. He laughed.

During the one mixed dining in night, I was pleased to meet his wife Nona, who Bert had married on the 15th of July 1944, his bride of almost eighty years now, but as she sat at the top table our chats were brief as she circulated among us.

As CI, Lt Col Barker's main task was to train tradesmen for the repair, recovery and modification of army vehicles, weapons and equipment. To achieve this, he insisted on having the best technical training staff with the right attitudes while working tirelessly to upgrade quarters, facilities, training aids and test equipment so necessary to provide an environment conducive to learning. This strong insistence on well-staffed and resourced training set a high standard that ensured the ongoing professionalism of RAEME support to all Arms and Services.

Proficiency and progression of tradesmen was uppermost in his mind. Trade courses were carefully constructed to give tradesmen essential technical training on the ever-increasing need for the introduction of new military materiel and attendant technology, as well as qualifying them for subsequent promotion and selection for artificer courses. Many Warrant Officers were later selected for officer rank and subsequent senior appointments, but many also chose to stay 'on the tools', with each adding so much practical experience to the effectiveness of the Corps.

In April 1964 Bert was replaced by Lt Col Bruce Sefton as CO/CI of the Centre. We were sorry to see him go as he had contributed so much to the professionalism and reputation of the Centre and importantly, we liked him. He left the Centre so much better in all respects than he had found it. His new posting was as ADEME or Assistant Director of the Corps in Southern Command (Victoria) based at Victoria Barracks in Melbourne lasting for three years. I was on his staff for part of his term. In 1967 he was promoted to the rank of full Colonel and posted as DDEME or Deputy Director of the Corps in Eastern Command (NSW) based at Victoria Barracks in Sydney.

I lost track of him after this as the Vietnam War intervened and Colonel Barker was too senior to have been posted to Vietnam. The most senior RAEME posting in South Vietnam during the

conflict was for a Lt Col ADEME HQ AFV based in Saigon. The posting was upgraded from that of Major DADEME from the 1st of November 1968 on the raising of 106 Field Workshop at Nui Dat.

The next I heard of Bert was that he had been promoted to Brigadier in 1970 and appointed Chief Superintendent of the Army Design Establishment (known as ADE), at Maryibyrnong in Melbourne. The role of ADE was to provide technical and engineering services and advice to the Army, Department of Supply and Industry on matters concerning army equipment. His responsibilities included the Trials and Proving Wing at Monegeetta.

As Chief Superintendent of ADE with a military staff of 20 and many civilian engineering staff, Bert brought with him his expertise and foresight to the design and development of vehicles, weapons and equipment to provide the army with the best technology available at the time. Whitlam Government wisdom intervened in 1973 with a decision made to civilianise the unit. Consequently, in February 1974 responsibility was transferred from army to the Defence Science and Technology Organisation under the Chief Scientist, with the Chief Superintendent now being a public service scientist, ironically named John Wisdom. The unit title was altered to that of the Engineering Development Establishment (EDE), with the word design not appearing in the title. The greatly reduced army contingent was now headed by a Lt Col of unspecified Corps. Under civilian control major military acquisitions were purchased 'off the shelf' with certain essential modifications for army use.

Now approaching military retirement age and at the pinnacle of his career, Bert decided it was time to leave the army after a long and faithful career serving his country into his 33rd year. The highest rank possible within the Corps of RAEME was Brigadier, and he had achieved that rank. He retired in February 1974 at the age of 52, but as he was still fit and well, he decided to enter senior management in civilian life. With such an impeccable resume, he was quickly snapped up by a telecommunications company STC (Standard Telephone and Cable) and he enjoyed this, but not to the extent of his army service. So, Bert and Nona decided to retire in Tweed Heads where they could relax and enjoy their life's rewards.

Sadly, as Nona herself was a World War 2 veteran, her health began to deteriorate to the extent they decided to sell their home, place Nona in care and invest in a retirement home for Bert in the same complex. Bert chose to place her in care and invest in a retirement home in the same complex. Bert continued to visit and be with Nona daily, as his health remained quite stable even though he was approaching his centenary year.

2020 my wife Tracey and I living in Kirra, became aware that Bert was living close by in Banora Point, was quite physically mobile, and still drove his car even though he was 98 years of age. At that time Nona was not so mobile. I had not seen or heard of Bert for many years although I held many fond memories. We found his phone number and invited him over for lunch. With military precision Bert arrived strictly on time, finding our home with a keen sense of direction. We enjoyed a wonderful lunch and had him over for lunch twice more as he was such good company. We invited him for a fourth lunch but at the age of 102, he was not well enough to attend on that occasion, however we continued to stay in touch with him until in April 2024 Bert and Nona moved to an aged care home in Melbourne to be closer to their daughters.

Bert had many postings during his army career, but the one he will be best remembered for is that of CO/CI of RTC. He held the role for well over five years, the longest in the history of the Centre, and though he didn't know it at the time, he had trained many of those RAEME officers, artificers, Warrant Officers, senior NCOs and tradesmen who so effectively supported the Australian Army during the Vietnam War. When asked many years later, Bert stated that his most satisfying and personally rewarding posting during his career was that at RTC. His fitting farewell to the Corps was as Honorary Colonel Commandant in 1 Military District (Qld) for the period 1980 to 1984.

Bert was one of those magnificent men and women of the Second World War who served their country well and who we soldiers have the highest regard for. He was a true gentleman, a leader, professional and pleasant of manner with an air of dignity about him, apparent even at his considerable age. The Corps owes much to his service, and many members of the Corps owe the success of their careers both military and civil, to the quality of training received under his administration.

Bert's ultimate commander during World War 2 was US General Douglas MacArthur, Commander Allied Forces Southwest Pacific Theatre. In his retirement address to Congress in 1951, the General concluded his address with the words *"Old soldiers never die, they just fade away"*. Well, memories of Brigadier Bert will eventually fade from the minds of those members of all ranks of RAEME and other Corps who have served with him and benefitted from his tutelage in his many appointments. Until then, he will continue to be remembered fondly and with respect. I represent those members today, and with much appreciation simply say, thank you sir.

Rest peacefully now Brigadier Bert Barker, duty done.

LEST WE FORGET

Raymond Norman

Born on 3 May 1944 in Oakleigh, Victoria, Ray attended Swinburne Technical College and studied as a vehicle mechanic, before enlisting in the Australian Army. His dedication and leadership saw him serve on operations in South Vietnam from February 1970 to February 1971, attached to the 4th Field Regiment Light Aid Detachment, holding the rank of Sergeant. Ray's military journey was marked by distinction, including as the Corps Regimental Sergeant Major (RSM) in 1982. For his exemplary service as RSM - Logistic Command, Ray was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) in the Military Division in 1987. Later, Ray received his commission and ultimately retired as a Major, having dedicated over 30 years to the Army.



Ray's commitment to the Corps extended well beyond his military career. He served as Chair of both the RAEME Association Queensland and the RAEME National Association. As the driving force behind Operation Spanner Pack over the last decade, Ray oversaw the distribution of care packs to RAEME soldiers deployed globally. His contributions earned him Honorary Life Membership of the RAQ in 2015, followed by the prestigious Chairman's Award in 2018. Ray held RAQ Honorary Life Member No. 2, a testament to his early and enduring dedication to the Association.

Ray passed away on Tuesday 29 October 2024, at 80 years of age. Ray is survived by his wife Karen and family.

His legacy lives on in the Corps he so passionately served and in the RAEME family he championed.

Rest in Peace, Ray.

Vale’ 2024

January 2024

Trusselle Wayne
Stewart ‘Stewie’ Lawrence
Lamb ‘Chops’ Donald
Mclean Gordon
Olive ‘Tony’ Anthony
Wilson ‘Jack’ John
Gregory Allan
Myers ‘Greg’ Gregory

February

Keily ‘Pat’ Patrick OAM
Dupree ‘Les’ Albert
Bowen Roy
Poole Keith
Wilson Paul
Bleakney Roy
Andrews ‘Hanna’ Elvin
Walker Frank
Wright ‘Albert’ Patrick
Trinidad Michael

March

Warden Gary
Gray Rodney
Parrott Trevor

April

Byrne ‘Jack’ John
Anfruns David
George ‘Rick’ Richard
Carlyle ‘Jock’ Brian
Tootell Trevor
Watt ‘Bob’ Robert
Rogan ‘Bob’ Robert
Stack ‘Stacky’ Rowan
Coulson ‘Mick’ Michael

May

Elston Garry
Seddon ‘Mick’ Michael

June

Emslie ‘Ridgey’ Paul
Barker ‘Herb’ Herbert

July

Saul Ronald
Maher ‘Col’ Colin
Williams ‘Muso’ Stephen

Schmidt ‘Tony’ Martin

Batty ‘Sack’ Gary

Franklin ‘Slats’

McMullen George

Stanley ‘Stan’ Robin

Poor ‘Bluey’ Gregory

August

Bignell Ross
Brown Reginald
Powell ‘Doug’ Arthur (MAJ GEN)
McCormack ‘Grumpy’ Rodney

September

Moon David
Haidley David
Smith ‘Ranga’ Dennis

October

Reimers John
Scott ‘Scotty’ Shane
Norman ‘Ray’ Raymond
Camden ‘Terry’ Terrence

November

Wright ‘Joey’ Jason
(Kennedy-Radford)
Wright ‘Bob’ Robert
Gostelow ‘Lou’ Alan
Edwards Harley

December

Kranen ‘Judy’ Judith
(nee Mohy) OAM
Wadsworth ‘Bill’ William
Maggs Ross
Field ‘Tank’ Graeme

‘Arte et Marte”

Your Corps thanks you for your service.

‘Rest in Peace’

Editor’s Note: Apologies for any inaccuracies or omissions. Vale’ notices are compiled based on emails sent to the RAEME HOC Cell, entries on the RAEME Association newsletters/websites, and posts to the ‘RAEME’ and ‘RAEME Mates’ Facebook groups. As such the details supplied vary greatly.

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Download and save a Word version from the Corps Website, Information, Administration page.
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