



Combat Assault Dog KUGA

Combat Assault Dog (CAD) KUGA was born on 23 April 2007 in Adelaide, South Australia. KUGA was purchased at an early age from a private breeder by the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) and underwent initial training at RAAF Base Amberley. His strength of character was recognised early in his training and he was subsequently sent to the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) Perth for suitability testing and further training.

In early 2009, CAD KUGA completed the CAD reinforcement cycle and was posted to 1 SQN SASR together with his handler Trooper (TRP) JA. KUGA initially served within the roles of the Recovery Squadron for the remainder of 2009. In June 2010, he deployed to Afghanistan with 1 SQN. During this tour, KUGA performed exceptionally well with his endless drive to work and his courage being demonstrated numerous times.

KUGA again deployed to Afghanistan with 1 SQN in June 2011. On 26 August 2011, KUGA was part of a counter leadership mission alongside FE-A (Afghan Troops) in Khas Province Uruzgan. On landing from the helicopter, KUGA scouted ahead of the assault team and indicated an insurgent position. The handler, who at the time was situated across a small river, had not yet identified the position. KUGA swam close to the enemy position and was engaged at close range by intense automatic small arms fire. During his final approach to close with the insurgent, KUGA was shot and severely wounded.

During the ensuing intense firefight, his handler recalled KUGA. KUGA swam back across the river, although being severely wounded with both a broken leg and four gunshot wounds. He received initial first aid and then MEDEVAC to Tarin Kowt, forwarded on to Kandahar and later Germany for further treatment. After his initial recovery, KUGA was transferred to Murdoch University Veterinary Hospital, Perth.

After discharge from hospital, KUGA returned to SASR but succumbed to the severity of his wounds on 24 July 2012.

KUGA was handled by LCPL JA.

CAD KUGA was awarded the following:

- * Canine Operational Service Medal - clasp Afghanistan.
- * Canine Service Medal.