



IN DOGS WE TRUST

We are the WAR DOG Team
and this is our story . . .

SUPPLEMENTARY CHAPTER

George Hulse

In Dogs We Trust

supplementary chapter

Doggies of the Royal Australian Air Force

The RAAF owns an enormous array of very expensive equipment. From small helicopters, to huge transport aircraft, to in-flight refuel planes to the most deadly fighter and ground attack aeroplanes on the planet. The protection and security of these assets is a non-stop 24/7/365 high priority imperative for the RAAF wherever they are located - inside and outside Australia. They employ a number of detection, deterrence and denial resources to help in the protection and security of these combat platforms. One of the most efficient and reliable base security resource is the RAAF military working dog team. These teams are 'out there' 24/7/365 providing an excellent and well proven detect - deter - deny capability wherever they are deployed - inside and outside Australia. You will see the term 'flight line' used in RAAF terminology. That means an imaginary line behind which the aircraft are housed, maintained and made ready for duty. This is a 'no-go' area for unauthorised personnel.

The following accounts are of RAAF dog teams on overseas operational duty. You may be surprised to find that despite my description above about RAAF dog team employment, RAAF dog teams have also operated out front of our infantry units in a combat zone. More as you read.

Corporal VANESSA WALLIS

Corporal Vanessa Wallis comes from the Ipswich area of Queensland and spent most of her formative years mixing city life and country living together. She had a love of animals, particularly dogs, from a very early age. When she was seven years of age, her school took her to see the RAAF Police Dog demonstration at the RAAF Base at Amberley. At the end of the demonstration Vanessa made up her mind that she wanted to become a military working dog (MWD) handler in the RAAF. After leaving school, Vanessa joined the RAAF and worked her way through the system until she attended a MWD course.

In the early 2000s there were very few female MWD handlers in the Australian Defence Force and so Vanessa had to dig deep to get through a predominantly male-oriented mustering. Females had to demonstrate personal strength, mental resilience and dedication to the job. She did so well that after she graduated from her MWD courses Vanessa was promoted both on her performance as a doggie and as a leader.

East Timor - 2006

In early 2006 the threat to peace and stability in East Timor had become an international issue. 382 Expeditionary Combat Support Squadron (382ECSS) was the standby unit to deploy at that time, and when the call came to deploy to East Timor, 382 ECSS mobilised. The mobilisation included six MWD teams in which

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Leading Aircraft Woman (LACW) Wallis was one of the personnel to go, with her dog AKYRA. LACW Wallis' group were airlifted to Darwin by C130 (Hercules) transport aircraft in May 2006. Using the Darwin climate, they trained and acclimatised for their on-movement to East Timor. This training included long distance marches with full combat loads in the heat of the day. When the order came for the dog unit to deploy to East Timor, Sergeant Shane 'Kiwi' Campbell and Corporal Brett Thompson spearheaded the RAAF dog asset to East Timor and set up arrangements for the remainder of the dog unit. The rest of the unit followed forty-eight hours later. This group included Corporal Brett, Corporal Allen, Leading Aircraftman (one stripe) Luckman and LACW Wallis. The group travelled by RAAF C130 aircraft and arrived at Komoro airport near Dili in East Timor just on midnight. As there were intelligence reports that there might be a chance of hostile fire being directed at the aircraft on its approach to the airfield, a 'tactical landing' was called for.

A tactical landing is a situation where the aircraft Captain has to descend the aircraft rapidly, scoot at wave/tree height to the airstrip, put the plane down as soon as possible, stop it as quickly as he can, unload the plane, reload the plane and then takeoff using its short take-off capabilities. And do all this with a time-critical degree of urgency. Pretty dramatic stuff. This is not what the doggies were expecting at all.

In Vanessa's words: "The four of us were on the back door of the aircraft and the dogs were in containers in front of us. We were fully kitted up for action with weapons, live rounds, Kevlar body protection and field packs. The loadmaster came to us at the rear of the aircraft and told us to 'prepare for action' and that we were about to land. His instructions included 'put on your helmets'. That was very difficult because the helmets were attached to the packs on our backs. The plane then made a sudden drop downwards, levelled out and put the landing gear down. So, we sat and looked at each other and wondered what the heck we had let ourselves in for. Immediately the aircraft touched down we were ordered to 'load', and on to our rifles went a full magazine. The aircraft had barely stopped when the cargo hatch was lowered and we told to get off quickly. After sitting in the cold of the Hercules from Darwin, the heat and the smell of East Timor hit us as a sudden surprise, given that most of us had never been outside Australia before. The Hercules kept its motors revving and the crew obviously wanted to load up again and then take off. Our gear and dogs were removed from the aircraft very swiftly by the air lift team. I had a problem moving because we had been sitting for a long time without the opportunity to move about, then the weight of the pack and the need to move quickly on numb legs and jump the twenty centimetres from the aircraft ramp on to the tarmac was a far bigger effort that I had imagined it would be. I was helped down from the ramp by some kind soul who could see my predicament. The dogs were still in their containers and the containers were lashed to a pallet. The pallet was removed by a forklift and we saw our dogs speedily disappear into the darkness. Sergeant Campbell and Corporal Thompson were there to receive us. They kept us together and reunited us with our dogs".

Although this may not have been what the dog teams expected, it is typical of what can happen when combat soldiers arrive in a war zone. They followed instructions and kept alert for the unusual. Expect the unexpected.

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Vanessa continues:

“The airport had been taken over by local people who looked like they were homeless. We had to walk over and around sleeping bodies all over the floors of the airport building. The dogs had to be held up short and dragged over the folk on the floor. We saw the local police guarding the entrances and parts of the airport as we moved outside into an area which had been allocated to us for the first night. We slept on the ground with dogs tied up short to us and weapons under us. When I woke up early next morning, I saw a crowd of people staring at us from outside the airport perimeter fence. I felt like an exhibit in a zoo. I needed to use a toilet and asked Corporal Thompson where it was. He laughed, and then took me to the toilet in the terminal. It was out of order and had been well patronised. It reeked, but I managed to use it without touching it by stretching my rifle out in front of me to counter-balance my body. I’ll bet the small arms instructors, back in my basic weapons training, didn’t think of that use for a firearm!”

The RAAF MWD section spent a few days in that area before being allocated a building in the airport precinct. Their initial job was to guard the evacuation centre so that foreign civilians, including Australians, could be air transported out of the country without the aircraft being swamped by desperate East Timorese people trying to get away. Other tasks included the removal of local people from areas which were needed by the security forces. The local people knew that the international troops were not about to open fire at them with firearms, so they were very slow to respond to demands to move on. However, when the dog section turned up they moved very quickly - they had a deep respect for large dogs, in particular, the German Shepherd.

There was a lot of gang violence, spontaneous riots and rock throwing going on at the time. Many of these incidents were pacified the moment the dogs arrived. This was handy when the large carparks adjacent to the airport were being cleared of people and illicit weapons were all over the place. Then there was the awkward job of keeping opposing civilian factions apart. Suspicious people and armed civilians were quickly identified and there is no doubt that the dogs were a boon in this role.

Eventually, a large tent city was constructed near the airport and the security duties became more intense. The tent city had to be patrolled and this included some villages adjacent to it. The villages were a conglomeration of housing built along what must have started out as a meandering footpath. There was precious little opportunity for town planning. Obviously, the people had been traumatised and they put up whatever shelter they could, wherever they could. Things like access routes through these villages at places ‘just happened’ without any consideration for direction or purpose.

There is a monolithic mountain feature which overlooks the airport and its runways. It provides excellent observation and with that, the opportunity to fire rifles at aircraft and the airport buildings. It was nicknamed ‘Megadeath’ and was the reason behind the concern of the aircrew the night Vanessa’s team arrived. This concern lasted several weeks until Megadeath was secured by the international security forces.

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Some RAAF MWD patrols assisted the Australian Federal Police while they patrolled the general area and eventually Army Military Police (MP) dogs arrived in the area also. However, they were unable to join forces because of the distance between the two groups. MP tasks were located in the city of Dili guarding the jails and other sensitive areas in the city, whereas the RAAF had been allocated security duties at the airport, some distance away.

The dogs had to be administered in line with AQIS quarantine protocols which included daily and bi-weekly medications and dipping every three days. This was to counter the possibility of pathogenic parasites being present in the dogs. Every dose, type of medication and dipping regime had to be annotated and certified in writing for monitoring by AQIS personnel. Vanessa was assigned the responsibility of packaging the medications for her compatriot handlers as well as reminding them of the timing for dips. The dry dog food was another issue for concern. It was packaged in twenty kilo bags and became an instant hit with the rats and mice. It was a constant battle to protect the dog food from the abundant vermin in the area.

Vanessa was about to make history

Vanessa went on a patrol with three Airfield Defence Group airmen (ADGs). Their task was to patrol an area near a village close to the airport. On arrival, the patrol saw a commotion going on between some local people and a man holding a firearm. The armed man saw the patrol coming and bolted off. The ADG commander gave the order to pursue him and so the three ADGs plus Vanessa and her dog AKYRA, gave immediate chase straight into the village. The ADGs began to close on the suspect because he had to run between civilians. The civilians began screaming and running for cover. However, the ADG commander was suspicious that the suspect might be running his patrol into an ambush. So he ordered his patrol to go to 'action' with their weapons. That means put a bullet into the breach and prepare to fight. Vanessa cocked her weapon and knew that she just might have to fight her way out of a dangerous situation. They continued the chase with adrenalin pumping, finger on the safety catch and AKYRA ready to go into action. There came a point in time when the patrol came close enough to crash-tackle the suspect, but just as he turned a corner, he ran straight into the arms of another group of soldiers from the international security forces. They captured him and lead him away. He was having a bad day. But the RAAF patrol breathed a collective sigh of relief as they 'made safe' their rifles.

Vanessa didn't know this at the time, but she is the first female combatant in the ADF to go to 'action' on war service (a bullet up the spout and ready to fight) in a contact situation and handling a military working dog. History was made.

Life for a female combatant

The accommodation for Vanessa afforded her no privacy and no chance of ever being on her own. She had no personal space. Despite this, she became confident in her safety while with her own group of doggies. She trusted all her fellow doggies without any possibility of doubt. Bathing was by communal shower arrangements and this was augmented with numerous packets of moist towelettes. In the early stages after arrival, the majority of meals were taken from combat ration packs and



Corporal Vanessa Wallis and AKYRA in East Timor 2006.

Image courtesy of Corporal V. Wallis.

these soon became monotonous. Some resourceful local purchases were made to augment the combat rations, such as locally produced bread and fruit. Eventually, a dining arrangement was opened and they received cooked meals. Luxury!

Vanessa was promoted to Corporal, instructed on courses at RAAF Base Amberley, served in Darwin and when her time was up, discharged from the RAAF. She lives in the Darwin area.

Warrant Officer BOB JENNINGS OAM

Warrant Officer Robert Jennings OAM (Bob) was born and christened in the Betoota Hotel near Birdsville in 1946. In 1977, an RAAF recruiting van caught Bob's attention because it advertised the need for dog handlers in the Air Force. Bob signed up.

Bob's dog training course was conducted at 7th Stores Depot in Toowoomba and he graduated from the ten week course as the honour student. On graduation Bob and Police Dog HOBO, were posted to RAAF Base Fairbairn in Canberra. Bob was promoted to Leading Aircraftman, and on completing their posting of two years in Canberra, Bob and HOBO were posted to Singapore.

RAAF Base Tengah in Singapore First Deployment – 1981

The RAAF took over areas of this base after the Royal Air Force had departed and handed the base over to the Republic of Singapore Air Force. There were areas where Australian security interests required Australian surveillance and protective measures such as RAAF Mirage and F111 aircraft. The Australian flight line was

exclusively patrolled during the night by RAAF security dogs and handlers. In those days, the handler was armed with a Browning 9 mm pistol and twenty rounds of ammunition, he had no radio and no immediate backup. Their area of responsibility included the flight line, headquarters buildings and any mission critical sheds which were nominated for security reasons. There was an outer perimeter of security provided by the Singapore Armed Forces, and because the Singaporeans did this work in such a very professional manner, the work for the RAAF dog teams, during Bob's two years there, reported no incidents of a security nature. However, poor HOBO had an encounter with a Cobra snake, and although HOBO ate the snake, he had been bitten at least sixteen times by the Cobra and died as a result of venomous poisoning. Bob re-teamed with an ex-Royal Australian Navy police dog REBEL. REBEL had a history of being a typical alpha male dog which meant that he (the dog) considered himself to be the 'pack leader'. His handler was merely a member of 'his' pack. This resulted in REBEL putting a couple of his handlers in hospital with severe bite wounds. It took a long time and a lot of dog savvy for Bob to win REBEL over. When Bob rotated out of Singapore in 1981, he challenged the system to bring REBEL back to Australia, but the expense and quarantine restrictions prohibited that. REBEL was put down. That event put a searing desire in Bob to change the system of rehabilitation of Australian military working dogs from overseas duty. The opportunity to do just that came Bob's way a few years later. It was cold comfort for Bob to be promoted to Corporal just prior to returning to Australia.

After his return to Australia, Bob was involved with tracking down two thrill-kill murderers (Baker and Hice) who had very recently escaped from Berrima Prison and the NT Police were in pursuit. The NT Police Tactical Response Group asked for RAAF MWD support, and after some local agreements had been firmed-up, the RAAF dog teams were added to the search effort. The trail was by now 48 hours old. However, a lady living in the Darwin area had suffered an illegal entry and she identified Baker as the culprit. Despite a large amount of contamination in the immediate vicinity of the house, the MWD team picked up a scent trail about 50 metres away from the house and began tracking the suspect. The trail led through the community dump, but this did not affect the dog's tracking capability, and the outcome was the successful re-capture of both criminals.

Bob was promoted to Sergeant and posted to the 2nd Stores Depot in Sydney as the Section Commander in 1988. Bob was in charge of two Corporals and ten LACs plus fourteen dogs.

There were several incidents where Bob's Section supported the NSW Police on law enforcement duties. This started after an incident where a NSW policeman was attacked by an offender with a pinch bar and then tried to escape through the 2 SD compound. But he ran straight into the jaws of a RAAF Security Guard's dog and apprehended. The attacked policeman actually had a police dog in his van but decided not to take him on his fateful patrol. The NSW police were very grateful and a long and useful affiliation commenced between both dog-oriented units. Bob reviewed what had happened that night and initiated a new facet of RAAF dog work he called "high impact dog teams". He cleared the idea with his Commanding Officer and trained his troops in the management of hostage rescue situations.

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Bob's personnel were very enthusiastic about this training and produced excellent results. The NSW Police contributed to the training by providing hostage scenario personnel and realistic training situations for the RAAF dog teams. Then one day a person with a distinctive military presence arrived at 2 SD to run an evaluation of the high impact dog team capability. He was important, but nobody was allowed to salute him or call him 'Sir'. But a 'Sir' he surely was. He set up a series of five evaluations based on Northern Ireland hostage situations and challenged Bob's teams to respond. They came through the evaluations with a 100% success rate. 'Sir' asked for Bob's training regime and supporting documents which he took away with him. Shortly afterwards, Bob was nominated for the Honour of the 'Order of Australia Medal' (OAM). He was invested with the OAM in 1989. Shortly after, Bob was promoted to Flight Sergeant and posted back to RAAF Amberley.

East Timor Second Deployment – 1999

The order to move to East Timor (ET) came at short notice. The Amberley Squadron was on stand-by and the Officer Commanding identified the need for eight dog teams to go. Bob selected his teams, arranged for all veterinary and administrative actions to be completed quickly and moved his dog teams to Townsville by road. Then a confusing event happened. On the way to Townsville, Bob received a number of telephone calls on his mobile phone from a number of members of the Air Force Police staff, including his 'old mate' the RAAF Provost Marshall, telling him that the MWD were not going to ET and that he should return to Amberley. Bob refused, whereupon threats against him were made. He referred the issue to his Officer Commanding who sorted the confusion out. On arrival at Townsville, Bob and his dog teams entered without incident and he received no further contact from the Air Force Police staff about the issue of dog teams going to ET.



The first deployment of RAAF MWD to East Timor.

Image courtesy of Bob Jennings OAM, 1999.

(Left to right). WO Bob Jennings OAM and MWD BANJO, Corporal Robbie Peters and MWD JESS, LAC 'Kiwi' Gregory and MWD ROCKY, LAC Anthony Baker and MWD SABRE, Sgt Andrew Floor and MWD MAX, Corporal Shane 'Kiwi' Campbell and MWD COBRA, LAC Jim Ingram and MWD KELLY, LAC Sam Evans and MWD BEAR, October 1999.

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As this was the first deployment of RAAF dog teams to ET there was no MWD related intelligence available. The dog teams were travelling with light scale equipment and trusted that the 'system' would bring the combat scale up to speed when they arrived at the base in ET. It was more hope than expectation, because things were moving fast and the MWD logistic plan had not been fully set-up by the time they arrived in-country. Perhaps that was the nature of the strange phone calls Bob received when they were en-route to Townsville? Who knows?

Bob's team flew by RAAF C130 aircraft direct from Townsville to the Commoro airport in Dili. The approach to Commoro was tactical and the personnel on board were ordered to load their weapons in case they needed to fight as soon as they deplaned on the ground.

As soon as the aircraft came to a halt, the personnel and MWD deplaned, and what they saw stunned them. In Bob's words: "The destruction of buildings and facilities by the Militia and Indonesian Forces was absolute. Nothing was left standing. We had no allocated area in which to consolidate our arrival and organise our teams into combat readiness. It was hot and humid and the place had the distinct aroma of the tropics. We moved to the side of the airfield, away from other units, staked the dogs out on chains and used the dog transporter boxes as kennels for the dogs. The personnel put up their hutchies (personal plastic shelter sheets), made ourselves as comfortable as we could and became immediately involved with the 'Surge Operation' to secure the airfield. But there was a big problem looming. We could only satisfy the AQIS protocols, as agreed in a joint Defence to AQIS Memorandum of Understanding, for 48 hours and if our gear did not arrive by then, we were going to be in breach of the MOU. Our dogs would be left behind in ET. How I would hate to do that now that we had an MOU with AQIS to bring them home. We needed a proper kennel area fast. We located an old, but now wrecked quarantine station near the airport and decided to locate our kennel complex in that. We had to clean and repair almost everything including removing finger graffiti off the walls made from human excrement as a farewell gesture of the Indonesian Army. After a lot of hard and careful work, we transformed a smouldering ruin into what other folk called the 'Taj Mahal'. My troops were good at 'borrowing and swapping' and much United Nations materiel transferred itself across the tarmac and found its way into my kennel area. The tactical situation was far from comfortable. There was the odd angry shot coming from suspected Indonesian military personnel dressed as civvies and the 'crack and thump' exercise lasted for many days (the 'crack' is the sound of a bullet passing nearby and the 'thump' is the sound of the weapon firing it). Some Indonesian military types, in uniform, were making a nuisance of themselves at the medical facility. When female staff were showering, these fellows would creep under the canvas tent walls and ogle the females. Four days after we arrived we were asked to put a stop to this invasion of privacy. So we took a couple of dog teams over to the ablution block, patrolled the area, and in addition, conducted dog attack training in full view of the Indonesians. The patrols identified where the Indonesians were housed, and this produced a confrontation. An Indonesian opened fire with a light machine gun – just eight or nine rounds. We deployed tactically in response to this contact but were restricted in responding (firing back) by lines of hospital tents. When the Indonesians saw the Quick Response Force and my own troops maneuvering toward

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them, they disappeared into their building. The subsequent investigation declared that the burst was an 'accidental discharge'. And the ogling stopped".

The initial insertion of Australians and other international forces into ET had many close encounters that were never reported in the international press. The aim was to placate many nations about the possibility of genocide occurring in ET and the presence of the international community there was to influence this outcome. Despite this, there were a few firefights between the international forces and units of the Indonesian Militia. Another problem was the intimidation of the ET civilian population by armed Indonesian soldiers on military trucks where they would line up on one side of their truck, cock their weapons and then point them at the civilians. This would cause immediate panic and the civilians would charge away from the scene, panic-stricken and traumatised. On more than one occasion, Bob's troops were asked to act as a shield between the armed Indonesians and the civilian population. In Bob's words: "We were asked to intervene between these groups, and on arrival the armed group on the truck stopped pointing their weapons at the civilians and pointed them at us. We pointed our weapons back at them. There was a deafening silence as we squared off against each other and my one thought was – 'don't even fart!' Just one shot would have started an avalanche of fire going both ways and nobody was going to survive that. Major-General Peter Cosgrove MC fixed that by telling the Indonesians that if any INTERFET troops felt threatened by the Indonesians, they could use lethal force to save themselves without gaining a clearance to fire from their HQ". That fixed the problem.

When it was time for the Indonesians to leave ET, they began to help themselves to the UN equipment in the UN compound. Bob's dog teams were deployed to dissuade this looting. The Indonesians were understandably terrified of the effects of an attack by a large dog and gave them a wide berth. The UN stuff was left alone after that.

On a night patrol through some primary jungle, which ran parallel to the airstrip, Bob had BANJO were on point duty for a RAAF Airfield Defence Group (ADG) patrol. BANJO stopped and would not continue. The lead personnel saw that he had baulked at a big shadow on the ground. On closer investigation, the shadow turned out to be a huge hole in the ground. It was filled with dead and decomposing animal parts and broken glass. A fall into that would have meant an immediate contact with all manner of infection. BANJO saved Bob, and almost certainly at least one ADG soldier at the lead of the patrol. Dogs are able to perceive the abnormal in their immediate area far better than humans, particularly at night.

Unusual situations were the order of the day in ET. A patrol from 5/7RAR, supported by a RAAF dog team, had detained a family that operated with the Indonesian Militia at a checkpoint. They were known to have murdered some local villagers and were trying to get away. The locals found out about this and arrived on the scene in their hundreds, many armed with machetes and home-made guns. There was a blood debt owing and they wanted a revenge payment. The 5/7 RAR patrol tried to nudge the crowd with their Armoured Personnel Carriers (APCs). But the locals swarmed the APCs and the crews had to 'button down' to keep the matter as safe as possible. The Militia family was initially protected by the dog and handler but

that was quickly going pear-shaped and needed back-up. The mob were beginning to become aggressive and threatened to charge the Militia family. Bob immediately sent two more dog teams to assist. The dog teams managed to maneuver the group into three large crowds and then they worked them back into their village. That this situation did not degenerate into something very nasty was a credit to everyone, including the villagers. No shots fired, no revenge killing, peace restored.

There were many instances of violence in ET. Bob was personally affected by the injuries he observed on children and women. There were instances of machete cuts that had festered, slashes that resulted in the loss of eyesight of one young child and gangrene in the arm of another. People were killed and their bodies thrown into water wells, children murdered and dumped into a pile like pieces of rubbish. ET was an unpleasant place to be during the troubling times of independence from Indonesia. Bob served in ET for four months before returning to Amberley.

East Timor Third Deployment – 2001

In January 2001, the Army's Royal Australian Corps of Military Police (RACMP aka MP) was tasked to deploy five MWD teams to ET. The Commanding Officer of the 1st Military Police Battalion needed to bring his MWD up to operational standards in a short period of time and sought RAAF assistance to do this. Bob was the person for the job and he asked for eight dogs from the MPs in order to guarantee at least five MWD teams to be combat ready in time. In two months, Bob produced three combat ready MP dog teams and was then tasked to take them himself to ET. Bob enlisted the assistance of one of his junior NCOs, Corporal David Towerton, and together they were 'Force Assigned' to 4RAR. They worked with 4RAR on ramp-up training in preparation for the deployment and arrived in ET in April 2001.

On his arrival back in ET, Bob had hoped for a huge improvement in the standard of life for the locals, but there was very little evidence of that. The East Timorese were still suffering from fundamental Third World problems and this disappointed him. The 4RAR team was assigned to Balibo, on the ET border with West Timor.

Bob commanded the MP dog unit and patrolled many times in some rugged areas. Their main task was tracking duty in support of Army Visual Trackers and Recon Platoon patrols. Bob handled a dog named JIP. JIP was also handled by a female MP, Corporal Carmen Thompson. It took a lot of effort through the Army chain of command to get her into the patrol area, but she proved to be an asset to the team. Although she was not authorised to become engaged in firefights with insurgents, Carmen was a trail-blazer for females in the Australian Defence Force by being the first female dog handler to handle a MWD on active service. Carmen was not involved in any incidents with the Indonesian Militia. (NOTE: *this is not to be confused with RAAF Leading Aircraftwomen Vanessa Wallis who became the first female in the ADF to handle a MWD on active service with a bullet in the firing chamber of her personal weapon during an armed pursuit of an insurgent when she operated as a member of a RAAF patrol. There was an expectation of being involved in a firefight during that engagement and Vanessa would have been expected and authorised to fight as a combatant with her dog at close quarter*).

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In the area of Balibo there are a number of caves which doubled as handy hiding places for fugitives. These had been occupied by people carrying firearms many times, including during WWII. Bob's team, including himself and JIP, would search the caves at random times and confirm that there was nobody in them. There was another area of old rice paddy which had been neglected and, as a consequence, the secondary growth had produced a jungle of lantana-like prickly bushes. 4RAR had the job of clearing this area as a potential hiding place for insurgents. This would have necessitated the Australian diggers spending a lot of time and effort slashing at the bushes with machetes. It would have been hard, uncomfortable and tedious work. Bob suggested that the MWD could search around the perimeter of this area and try to detect any human tracks leading into and out of the morass of vegetation. JIP detected a human track and on following it into the prickly mess, discovered a local timber worker who had set himself up in there. JIP indicated without attacking the man. He was not an insurgent, but it proved the value of one dog as a combat multiplier, cutting time and effort out of an otherwise rotten job for a company of infantry soldiers.

After four months in ET for his second deployment, Bob returned to Australia. There is a lot more to say about Bob in the History chapter.

Warrant Officer DAVID TOWERTON

Warrant Officer David Towerton was born in Brisbane in 1963. On 1 May 1984, he decided to enlist into the RAAF dog handler muster. He attended his 13 week recruit training at the RAAF Base at Edinburgh near Adelaide in South Australia, after which he graduated from the basic dog handlers course. In late 1984 Dave was posted to RAAF Base Amberley as a Security Guard and teamed-up with Police Dog RANJI. Their principal duty was the protection of military aircraft on the flight line, and they operated in cooperation with the RAAF Security Police. Dave worked at RAAF Base Amberley from late 1984 to December 1988 when he was posted to the RAAF Base at Butterworth in Malaysia. He was promoted to the rank of Leading Aircraftman.

Malaysia First Deployment – 1988

In 1988, there existed an on-going threat from communist terrorists (CT) who had operated in the Malay/Thai border area for many years. Due to the CT threat on RAAF assets at Butterworth, RAAF Security Guards were armed and on an operational footing. The main aircraft Dave's team protected were Australian maritime patrol aircraft. Dave was married with a daughter and all three lived in the Butterworth area for their two year tour of duty. In January 1991, Dave was posted to RAAF Base Darwin and promoted to Corporal. RANJI was not able to return to Australia due to Australian quarantine restrictions which were in operation in those days, and so remained in Malaysia as a Pool Dog. RANJI saw out the rest of his life as a MWD in Malaysia.

East Timor Second Deployment – 2001

In 2001, Dave was teamed-up with MORGAN. The RAAF deployed a dog Section, under the command of Warrant Officer Bob Jennings OAM, to East Timor in support of the 4th Battalion of The Royal Australian Regiment. They departed RAAF Base Richmond, staged through Darwin, and the same day, arrived in Dili. 4RAR and the RAAF dog teams conducted familiarisation training in the Dili area for about three weeks and then moved into the border area. The dog teams were attached to the 4RAR Reconnaissance Platoon (Recon Pl) and their primary function was to act in a tracking and early detection role (early detection means giving an alert to the presence of a person – civilian or military – to the front and flanks of infantry patrols). Tracker dogs had been a success during the Vietnam War while operating with infantry units in the jungle.

Here in East Timor, RAAF tracker dog teams were stationed at strategic points ready to be rushed to ‘hot spots’ by helicopter or other means. The Australian patrol zones were in the Balibo township area on the border between West Timor (Indonesian) and East Timor. On arrival into the operational area, the dog teams set up their accommodation and kennel facility then they dug in and made ready to fight should the need arise.

The intensity of operational duty increased as time went by. This was mainly caused when the infantry sections began to thin out due to illness and injuries. There were times when a patrol would be mounted with only five soldiers in it, instead of the optimal nine soldiers. At times, the RAAF dog section would be called on to join these fighting patrols and performed patrol duties as infantry soldiers.

When not on patrol duties, the dog teams were allocated to both Quick Response Force (QRF) notice to move of 30 minutes or on Immediate Response Force (IRF) notice to move of 15 minutes. The IRF requirement was designed to move a dog team immediately to a hot spot with minimal delay. A consequence of this was that the doggie had very little opportunity for rest. He needed his dog, his equipment, his weapon and himself ready to hit-the-deck-running at almost no notice. The dog teams rotated through these two response force duties every two days in the interest of sharing the pressure of the IRF requirement.

There was a perceived problem that the dogs would lose their motivation on patrols where they were not receiving rewards for good work. They just marched with their handlers on patrols with very little chance of following up a contact. However, the handlers found ways to keep their dogs motivated by using innovative training techniques both on the march and when they stopped for breaks.

There were occasions when some villages were infiltrated by Indonesian Militia sympathisers who would facilitate Indonesian incursions across the border at night to intimidate the villagers. 4RAR was aware of one such infiltration in the border village of Maliana. Dave recalls: “Our intelligence indicated that there were Militia in Maliana and our troops were required to interdict their movement. Our patrols were positioned in this place at night because the Militia were intent on reaping ‘pay-back’ on the folk loyal to the East Timorese authorities rather than their previous Indonesian masters. The decision was taken to set up an ambush between the village

and the border, while at the same time, continue another patrol's night location which had been set-up previously inside the village confines. The ambush was situated about 500 metres from the village. The dog team was located in the ambush. During the night, the patrol in the village reported that they had a positive detection of human movement heading for the village. This information came from a Thermal Imagery Device and a trip flare which had been set up at a junction point near the border. The village patrol was moved to investigate this crossing and so the ambush was lifted and moved in to support the village patrol to search the area. It was very dark and as we began the search, MORGAN alerted to something to our front. I told the patrol commander that the dog had an item of interest to the front and so the patrol was halted to give me a chance to confirm what MORGAN was alerting to. I pushed him further along and he then showed deep interest in something off to the right of the patrol. As I was moving forward to check my dog, a person stepped out from behind a tree to my front. The patrol went into a tactical response formation and challenged the person. The person came forward and confirmed that he was a village sentry keeping watch over an area on the perimeter of the village". The 4RAR lads were delighted with this detection and it demonstrated the value of a dog team on night patrols.

Maliana is situated in low country which has a river coursing through it. The river line was the border between East and West Timor and this feature constituted the Australian patrol line limit. An incident occurred in this area, as Dave recalls: "A helicopter patrol spotted some Militia resting up on the Indonesian side of the river, with what looked like a possible mission to cross the river line into East Timor. We were positioned in the area roughly opposite this group, but on the East Timor side. Our job was to locate and then monitor this Militia group. As we patrolled this area, MORGAN indicated that there was some movement on the opposite bank and we were able to confirm that the Militia group was still there. The patrol commander decided to position half a section to monitor the Militia group while the other half followed up to see if that group had been active on the East Timor side. MORGAN picked up a tracking scent and he led us toward a village. As we approached this village, we needed to cross a small river which had an expedient bridge made of logs and rudimentary tread-way planks with gaps between them. It was a bit tricky to cross because there was a 15 metre drop to the water. MORGAN was in his tracking harness and I had a long lead attached to that. I could see that he was ignoring the movement of the villagers in the area and was keenly following the scent that he had picked up earlier. And then drama! MORGAN looked up for a moment, and with that he fell off the plank. I quickly realized that this was not a good situation for him, but when the lead took up, I quickly heaved on it and prayed that the plastic buckles connecting me to my dog would not collapse. They did not, and I was able to haul him back on to the plank. He immediately put his nose down and continued to track as if nothing had happened. He led us into the village, through some huts and then strongly indicated on one particular hut where the Militia had been. This provided positive intelligence for our people which they later confirmed as correct. On our way back from the village, MORGAN indicated up a tree on the other side of the border where a Militia soldier was hiding as a sentry. We were able to indicate to him that we knew he was there."

In Dogs We Trust

On another occasion Dave was working with a rifle company which had detected 'sign' of TNI (Indonesian Regular Army) military boot marks in some mud. Dave recalls: "The infantry company requested a tracker dog team be inserted to assist them track the TNI personnel, but the HQ denied the request. This was a bit frustrating because I was on QRF and could have been there very quickly. More requests for the dog team followed over the next 24 hours at which time the HQ finally agreed to deploy us. MORGAN and I deployed on a helicopter together with another fighting patrol and on arrival at the tracking site, we joined up with the patrol on the ground. There then followed a peculiar, *unbelievable*, stand-off between the two patrol commanders as to whose patrol was going to conduct the follow-up tracking work using the dog team. The two patrol commanders discussed this point and finally agreed that the original patrol which had found the evidence in the first place would conduct the follow-up tracking duty. The 'sign' indicated that the TNI were probably headed for a village sympathetic to the Indonesians and close to the border. The commanders decided to have one patrol follow-up the boot marks while the other re-boarded the helicopters and flew into a cut-off position. This all happened at platoon level without the approval of their superior headquarters. It was not a good look for either patrol. Consequently, that group scored the label of 'the rogue platoon'. Even though the track was 24 hours old, MORGAN picked up the scent immediately and we went into fast pursuit of the TNI. The tracking was copybook. There was no contamination of the TNI bootmarks or human scent and the visual trackers were able to confirm that MORGAN was 'on-target'. This included times when the scent picture drifted up to eighty metres off the primary trail and MORGAN and I followed those slight detours with protective cover from the infantry patrol. We followed this scent for about five hours when we came to a very steep decline which led to a village, some two kilometres away. Our two visual trackers (both went to the Special Air Service Regiment subsequently) decided to approach the village by way of a steep re-entrant which had the advantage of cover from view rather than use the exposed track which followed a ridgeline. I had to lower MORGAN to the guys below me at times, and there were rocks falling on us from our mates above. It was a very steep decline. As we approached the village, we saw some villagers ascending this steep climb headed straight toward our patrol. The villagers were hunters and when they met the Australian patrol, there was some communication in the Tetum language before they moved on. We rested up for about 30 minutes during which time we saw a wild cat in the jungle, about the same size as a German Shepherd dog. When we started again, MORGAN led us through the village, ignoring several huts and finally arrived at a fence used to hold village animals. On passing through the fenced area, MORGAN indicated at a hut inside this fence. Two females opened the door and on searching the interior, the patrol recovered Australian military equipment. This was reported to the HQ. We noted that there were no young men in the village when we moved through it. The other patrol was in an overwatch position on an adjacent hill with a clear view of the village. Our patrol moved up the hill, married up with that patrol and formed a night observation point in sight of the village. A deception plan was adopted where the helicopters arrived and removed half the group plus the dog team, giving the appearance that the whole patrol effort had been lifted, but in fact, leaving the original patrol still on the ground to observe and report on any suspicious activity in the village. After the patrol, I was de-briefed by my boss WO Bob Jennings. He

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suggested that another plan could have been to cast MORGAN around outside the village in the hope of picking up the TNI scent where they had departed the village, and then follow that sign to confirm where they were headed. In hindsight, I think that Bob was correct, but at the time in the bush, I had to follow the decisions of the patrol commanders”.

Acquiring new techniques on the battlefield has been an ongoing phenomenon since the Stone Age. Sometimes, new ideas meet with unexpected resistance. Although tracking dog teams had been used successfully in Malaya, Borneo and Vietnam, here in East Timor, dog team capabilities were being challenged because of the lack of knowledge by some Australian military personnel about the capabilities of dog tracking teams. On one occasion, an Australian patrol had a fire fight with an Indonesian patrol about a kilometre or so from the border. A dog team was called for to confirm the movement of the Indonesian group. Dave and MORGAN were helicoptered to the contact site and having identified some Indonesian spent cartridges on the ground, MORGAN tracked the Indonesians through the bush to the border area which confirmed that they had returned to their own side. However, one of the patrol commanders was not convinced that the tracker team had followed up the original ‘sign’. He challenged Dave’s advice when MORGAN indicated the direction of movement of the Indonesians. Time was spent convincing this person that the Militia had extricated back to their side of the border. It was an old lesson re-learned. Have trust in the dog and the information being offered by the dog handler. In Dogs We Trust.

In November 2001, Dave and MORGAN returned to Australia by RAAF C130 air transport from Dili to RAAF Base Richmond. Dave went through de-brief at Holsworthy while MORGAN underwent his mandatory AQIS 30 day quarantine at Eastern Creek near Sydney in NSW.

Iraq Third Deployment – 2003

In February 2003, Dave was sent to Qatar, without his dog, to assist with the insertion of Australian troops into the Middle East Area of Operations on completion of the Australian operational phase in Iraq.

The main USAF air head in Iraq used C130 (Hercules) air transport aircraft. RAAF support was collocated with the USAF. This was an ‘extreme security’ base and there were several layers of security screening for all personnel and vehicles entering the area. One of the layers was the military working dog capability which provided explosive detection dogs (EDD) to screen people and vehicles in addition to dog team guard duty. Dave worked on security and intelligence duties which included personal security for the movement of senior commanders and VIPs. He was the advisor to his commander on the capabilities of dog teams and other force protection security aspects. With the easing of operational demand on air transport at Qatar, the coalition air capability was drawn down and in April 2003, Dave returned to Australia.

Afghanistan Deployments Four, Five and Six

Dave served in Afghanistan three times but not with a dog. He noted that the rules of engagement and orders for opening fire had changed each time that he rotated back in-country. He was aware that these combat control measures were an evolving requirement in a continuously changing battle space. The Army dog teams adapted very quickly to any changes made and it was obvious to Dave that dogs in the Combat Zone confer a significant combat multiplier effect to the force that uses them. This success resulted in an increased demand for dog teams in the ADF covering explosive and cache detection, general security duties, and specialist patrol work.

In early 2013, Dave was posted to RAAF Amberley and promoted to Warrant Officer. He was in charge of MWD training and employment at the School of Fire and Security Services in 2016. His major project in 2013 was to bring in the new mustering of 'Security Forces Dog Handler'. This is a program of continuous improvement within the RAAF and provides a targeted capability to protect the new weapons and combat support platforms being introduced into the RAAF.

Dave is exceptionally physically fit. He manages to win every long distance biathlon (dog and handler) events conducted by associate government canine organisations. He has a passion for the surf lifesaver movement and spends time with them in their self-less drive to help people enjoy surf swimming in safety.

Warrant Officer David Towerton served on six overseas deployments over a period of 32 years.

Corporal JAY LUCKMAN

Corporal Jay Luckman was born and raised in Adelaide, South Australia. He was accepted into the RAAF in September of 2003 and because of his previous Australian Regular Army experience, Jay was posted straight onto a dog course at RAAF Base Amberley.

East Timor First Deployment – 2004

382 Expeditionary Combat Support Squadron became the standby squadron just after the unit had returned from assisting in the Cyclone Larry devastation at Townsville in January, 2004. The warning to move to East Timor came when Jay was on night duty at 2300 hrs, and right there and then regardless of the time of night, the unit began its pre-embarkation procedure. A couple of days later they were on their way to Darwin in RAAF C130 transport aircraft with their combat gear and dogs. On arrival in Darwin they commenced ramp-up training for duty in a hot-humid environment. This took about two weeks and included lead-up training and intelligence briefings on what they might expect on arrival in ET. The advance party to secure the airfield at Comoro near Dili in ET included Army Special Forces personnel supported by RAAF dog section commander Sergeant Shane 'Kiwi' Campbell, Corporal Thompson and their dogs. Soon after, personnel from the RAAF Airfield Defence Group took over security of the airfield from the Army. A few days later the remainder of the dog group flew in to Comoro airfield. This group comprised

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LACW Vanessa Wallis, LAC Brett and LAC Luckman. They flew from Darwin to Dili by RAAF C130 aircraft. It was a tactical landing approach at night because they were potential threats on the ground near the airfield. They had been told that two local policemen had been murdered near the airport and feelings were running high. On approaching Comoro airport, the C130 performed a controlled nose-dive, flattened out at sea level, touched down, came to an abrupt halt with the ramp being lowered at the same time. As soon as the aircraft stopped, the loadmaster yelled at them to get off the aircraft. The motors were still at high revs, so they accepted that they should de-plane with some haste. They were stiff and cold from the flight and as they clambered on to the tarmac they felt the expected heat and humidity. And it was pitch dark. The dogs were in transportable dog boxes which were strapped to a pallet and this was forklifted off very quickly. Sergeant Campbell met his troops at the ramp of the aircraft and guided them to the terminal building.

That day, Sergeant Campbell took his teams into the kennel area and shortly afterwards, they began work in support of RAAF Airfield Defence Group foot patrols. The dog team often worked at the front of the patrol because the locals preferred to keep away from the German Shepherds and this conferred a degree of freedom for the patrol. The RAAF patrol was organised almost the same as an infantry patrol with a Corporal as commander, a LAC as a 2IC, some riflemen, communications equipment and a light machine gun.

High tech equipment also assisted the patrols. For example, the control tower at Comora airfield had night vision devices to monitor movement along the main supply route (MSR) which ran adjacent to the airfield. One night, the RAAF sentry who was monitoring the MSR identified a gang of twenty youths being led by a person acting as scout at the front. One of the gang members was identified as carrying a firearm. An interception patrol was quickly arranged which included Jay and his dog MAX, and they moved on to the MSR using night thermal vision devices for locating the gang together with night aiming devices fitted to their weapons should things turn ugly in the upcoming encounter. When the two groups were within metres of each other, the RAAF troops went to 'Action' (bullet in the chamber) some safety catches went to 'Instant' (ready to fire) and the night aiming devices switched on to emit a bead of infra-red light. Three ADGs aimed their red beams at the armed gang member and shouted a challenge. The gang turned and bolted back down the MSR with the armed person jettisoning his weapon. On recovering the weapon it turned out to be a home made shotgun.

There was a humorous side to the gangs at times. They imitated the Australian patrols by making fake Steyr rifles and grabbing a village dog (generally an emaciated non-descript semi-feral canine), tie a rope around its neck and then 'patrol' the MSR. It may have been fun for the gangs, but it could have had disastrous consequences had the international peace makers not maintained excellent discipline.

There were minor clashes and confrontations between rival gangs, groups and insurgents going on all the time. There were seven policemen murdered by a gang of thugs and intelligence reports indicated that the thugs were driving around in a white Nissan Patrol. This vehicle was sighted and stopped by a security force patrol, but things turned ugly very quickly. The place where they were pulled over was right in

front of the very village where the policemen had been murdered and their friends and family were quick to crowd the stopped vehicle seeking retribution. In Jay's words: "They had a crowd of three to four hundred people gathering quickly around the stopped vehicle and it was clear that we were not going to be able to control the deteriorating situation. Corporal Westling and I were on standby duty and we were called out immediately. We commandeered a vehicle from a local worker and drove to the incident site. We arrived on-site and moved with the dogs to the front of the ADGs. The commander of the group asked us to move the crowd back away from the vehicles. On a nod to each other Corporal Westling and I let the dogs go out to the end of the 3 metre lead and rushed the lead element of the crowd. The dogs were snarling, barking and lunging at the forward edges of the crowd and this had an immediate effect. However, just as MAX and I started to get the crowd moving away from us, I noticed that Corporal Westling and his dog were not keeping up. Then I looked at his dog. He decided that now was a good time for a 'dump' and was answering the call of nature. I was not impressed. Then he finished and resumed his lunge at the crowd. I had trained MAX on crowd control exercises in Darwin during our ramp-up training. I wondered then how he would go in the real thing. I was answered. He did far better in the real thing than he did in training. The villagers were in dread of the dogs and moved back just as quickly as they had arrived. The two dog teams pushed back the crowd at least 50 metres and gave the road patrol room to clear the thugs away from the area. In fact, the villagers just kept going. They must have thought that we would chase them all the way back into their village".

This was a classic case of a 'force multiplier' at work. Two dog teams moved a crowd that would have required at least a platoon of diggers to control. In other words, on that occasion, two dog teams equated to thirty-two men. The whole operation was a success. The thugs were captured with no loss or injury to them, there were no friendly force casualties and there were no casualties to the civilian population. A 'win-win-win' situation.

A couple of months later an American journalist decided to add some excitement to his story by creating a dramatic situation. He had spread the rumour that a very unpopular politician was about to be smuggled out of the country by air. This caused widespread unrest and numerous villagers arrived at the airport aboard about twenty trucks. They wanted a piece of the politician. Although the trucks were seen coming and the approach into the airfield narrow, many of these people managed to penetrate onto the airfield itself. There were about five hundred of them trying to rush the airport. The ADGs had formed a cordon to hold off the intruders and the dog teams were held to the rear of the ADGs. In Jay's words: "The locals were closing in on the ADGs and pushed toward them. But when I saw a local slap at the rifle of one of the ADGs I realised that we needed to remove that guy. I let MAX go for him and just as MAX was closing on him, the offender saw my dog coming at him, so he turned and bolted for his life. MAX did not bite him, but the demonstration of what could have happened had an immediate effect on the rest of the crowd. They started to move back. The ADGs cordon held and then Corporal Thompson arrived with his dog. We now confronted the crowd with a cordon of ADGs and two dog teams in reserve. But the push back began to stall. So the two reserve dog teams were ordered to conduct a rush forward. They went through the cordon, and when the crowd saw the dog teams

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coming, they turned and ran back down the road with us in pursuit. The journalist was on site creating the headline for his own story but missed out on sensationalising things in the way he wanted”.

One of the tasks for the ADGs and dog teams was to reassure groups of people being housed in a refugee camp run by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. It was camp city with Rafferty’s Rules. The refugee camp was close to the airport and it would have been tempting for rebel groups, gangs or insurgents to intimidate these families or to stage a demonstration in a high profile public place. Patrols with dogs around the camp reassured the refugees of the determination of UN forces to keep them safe.

Some rebel gangs considered that the people in the refugee camp were weak and treated them with contempt. The rebels would go to a deserted refugee house and burn it down. This created a problem for the Timorese firefighters who would arrive on site to put the fire out but were prevented from doing their job because they were confronted by the gangs who set fire to the house in the first place. Later, when RAAF fire appliances supported by ADGs and dogs attended a fire, the gangs were surprised when the RAAF ADGs arrested them and handed them over to the Australian Federal Police for further legal action. The dual effect of this was to diminish the incidence of house burning and to lessen the number of confrontations between the gangs and firefighters.

Jay’s tour of duty lasted for over three months and he and MAX returned to Australia in late August 2004. All the documentation for every dog listing veterinary concerns, treatment and medications were ready for AQIS inspection when the dogs returned to Australia. The dogs were air lifted back to Sydney where they spent one month in the AQIS quarantine station at Eastern Creek before being released back to the RAAF for further duties.

Flight Sergeant ALLAN GROSSMAN

Flight Sergeant Al Grossman was born in the township of Woodend in central Victoria. Al’s grandfather served with the Australian Army in WW I at Gallipoli, Belgium and France. Al’s father was a technician in the RAAF during WWII and served with the Catalina flying boats on the island of Morotai – he received a Mentioned in Despatches for rescuing a downed airman and getting badly burned himself in the process. Al was attracted to the RAAF when he saw dogs operating with RAAF security guards and wanted to be a part of that action.

First Deployment Malaysia – 1980

In October 1980, Al was posted to the Air Force Base at Butterworth in Malaysia with his dog MIKE. On arrival, Al was briefed on the threat exposure from insurgents or terrorists. The Malaysian Communist Party – the ‘Communist Terrorists’ – was still active in the north of Malaysia and contacts between them and the Security Forces occurred regularly. The RAAF dog teams were required to provide security for the Australian flight line which included fighter planes, transport aircraft and a

Search and Rescue helicopter pad. They had three areas to secure and the dog patrols would cover all three every night.

In addition to the flight line security duties, the dog teams also had an unusual 'side' job to perform. In the living accommodation of the Air Force staff in the Butterworth area, there had been a lot of theft committed by intruders. This theft had been made easier, in part, by some Air Force staff members forgetting to properly secure their accommodation when they arrived home – generally late at night after a night of partying. The thieves would gain access to the building, probably through an unlocked door, and then help themselves to wallets, jewelry, cash etc. The loss of cash was not a big thing in itself, but the loss of identification cards allowing access to all parts of the Air Base, was. So, the dog teams were asked to patrol the accommodation areas with the aim of tightening things up. The dog personnel were not allowed to take their personal weapon (a 9mm pistol) into the accommodation areas to avoid any misunderstanding between uniforms and civilians. In Al's words: "We formed surveillance groups of two or three dog teams near places where we had worked out the local intruders might gain access to the accommodation. When the intruders arrived, we came out of hiding with our dogs and detained them. The civilian Police were called, they always responded very quickly, and the intruders taken away. This measure worked well and the incidence of intruders diminished almost entirely".

The RAAF Dog Breeding Program

From 2001, Al was involved with the RAAF dog breeding and development program. At that time, the RAAF had started a scientific approach to the development of canines for the Australian Defence Force. Dogs were bred in the RAAF kennels using well researched breeding stock of both German Shepherd and Malinois dogs. He worked with pups from an early age right through until they became adults.

Al was promoted to Flight Sergeant and supervised the puppy foster program where pups are placed into foster care with carefully selected civilian families. The pups are placed with these families from the age of twelve weeks and stay with them until they reach seven months of age. This is an essential developmental stage for a canine and helps it to assimilate a non-military environment. However, during this period, the need to produce a combat ready dog is not neglected. The pups are introduced to a range of noises and environments of a combat nature as they develop into adulthood and this includes the range of battle noises experienced by combatants on active service. Exposure to civilian sounds is also covered by walking the pups through busy shopping centres and alongside busy roads. Naturally, not every pup becomes a qualified MWD in the ADF. The success rate, in 2010, was around 50%. The dogs that do not proceed to service in the ADF are those that fail to reliably perform at the very high standards of combat readiness required in the ADF. The dogs which do not become accepted into the RAAF are offered to Police and other ADF dog agencies.

Some pups are fostered on military bases around Australia where they receive a more intense form of training than the pups out in civilian families. The program brings these pups back to Amberley at twelve months of age and this group of dogs are

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seen to be at a significantly higher level of performance than those fostered through civilian homes. That's not surprising really, because this group of dogs has a constant backdrop of militaria every day of their early upbringing. Al was deeply involved in the observation, testing and recording of each stage of a pup's development through the foster program.

The International Working Dog Breeding Program

Al is a member of the International Working Dog Breeding Board which meets every two years. This is a science sharing symposium which looks very carefully at the genetic makeup of canine breeding lines with a view to maintaining world's best practice in the production of working dogs. All members maintain a telephone dialogue when the Board is not in session so that when they do meet, they have a common ground on which to direct their agenda. Their focus is on the pinnacle of contemporary thought, management aspects and the development of canine breeding programs around the world. One outcome from this process is the development of a 'Gene Bank' in the USA where semen from dogs with an excellent performance record on operations is stored for use by any member of the International Board.

Al would like to see the day when the dog breeding and training program at RAAF Base Amberley becomes the Australian point of reference for military working dogs. He would like to see the ADF dog breeding program become accepted as one of the centres of excellence, internationally, for the production of dogs and dog handlers in every form of canine-related military and law enforcement environments.

Al has contributed to the training, breeding and management of Special Forces dog teams.

Sergeant SHANE 'Kiwi' CAMPBELL

Sergeant Shane 'Kiwi' Campbell was born in Christchurch, New Zealand in 1966 and grew up in the rural community of Ashburton in the Canterbury area. Kiwi enlisted in the New Zealand Army in 1983 and became a 'clubbie'. The term 'clubbie' was a British Army idea to enlist 16 year old recruits from blue collar families and train them with the aim of fast tracking them through the ranks to Non-Commissioned Officer as quickly as they could be trained. New Zealand adopted this idea and Kiwi became a clubbie. Clubbie training was intense. Based at Waiouru, the clubbies were trained by seasoned NCOs and the expectations of them by their trainers were high.

On graduation from the clubbies, Kiwi was allocated to the Royal New Zealand Engineers (RNZE) as a Sapper. After qualifying as a combat engineer he went on to qualify as a plant operator and drove bulldozers, trucks, loaders, and scrapers.

In 1989, Kiwi discharged from the New Zealand Army and emigrated to Australia. He arrived in Melbourne with a wife, a six month old baby and a contract which had turned sour before he even set foot in Australia. Things were tough for the young family and Kiwi needed a job fast. He worked for a furniture removal company but found handling pianos was not a good idea for a person weighing in at 59 Kgs wringing wet and moved on to driving a truck for the next eighteen months.

He was promoted through the ranks of the company from truckie to Operations Manager but had to leave that company when it was sold. Kiwi went on to making hand-made springs and in 1992, joined the Royal Australian Air Force as a direct entry dog handler.

Direct Entry Dog Handler in the RAAF

Kiwi attended a ten week recruit course at the 1st Recruit Training Unit, RAAF Base Edinburgh near Adelaide in South Australia. On graduation, Kiwi was posted to the Security and Fire School at RAAF Base Amberley where he attended his twenty week basic dog handlers course. On graduation from this course, Kiwi was teamed up with Police Dog DIGGER and posted to the Police Dog Section at RAAF Base Amberley. The principal duties for Kiwi and his mustering were to patrol the Base and provide security duties on its perimeters and flight line. During this time, Kiwi was promoted to Leading Aircraftsman.

East Timor – First Deployment 1999

Kiwi was teamed-up with another dog named COBRA – a Belgian Malinois. They were deployed to East Timor on 2 October 1999. Eight MWD teams were needed in ET quickly.

The route from Amberley to ET included an initial road convoy from Amberley to Townsville. After a ten day wait in Townsville Kiwi with COBRA, in company with his boss, Warrant Officer Bob Jennings OAM and BANJO, and six other RAAF dog teams boarded a C130 transport aircraft and flew non-stop to Komoro airfield near Dili.

The dogs were housed in dog transporter boxes at the rear of the aircraft. When the aircraft landed, the handlers quickly unstrapped the dog boxes and manually transferred them on to the back of a Unimog truck, for transport to the RAAF HQ location.

A temporary ‘dog section’ was established opposite the Komoro airfield Control Tower next door to the Royal New Zealand Air Force Iroquois area. Every time an RNZAF Iroquois would land or move about, the chopper wash would send mountains of dust flying in the area. The handlers called their location ‘the dustbowl’.

Night One in country was not a good one for Kiwi. On arrival at their HQ, the dog handlers staked their dogs out next to the dog boxes and left their gear with the dogs. They then went in to the HQ for their 1800hrs briefing. At the completion of the briefing, Kiwi returned to the ‘kennel area’ to find that his dog had torn the door off the dog box, shredded his mosquito net to bits and broken a piece of her titanium canine tooth. She was not a happy puppy. Kiwi used a piece of canvas that night in a vain attempt to keep the mosquitoes off him.

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Kiwi Campbell and MWD COBRA East Timor 1999
Image courtesy of S. Campbell.

The dog teams patrolled security areas of Komoro airfield including the Indonesian para-military (TNI) HQ building. The TNI had been making a nuisance of themselves and the Australian dog teams were asked to include the TNI building in their area of responsibility. The Indonesians objected to having dogs in their area due to religious reasons and also an understandable a fear of the canine. COBRA demonstrated her dislike of the TNI with snarling bare teeth and she was given a great deal of space by the Indonesians.

Word had reached the dog teams that the Indonesian's had lodged a formal complaint with the INTERFET HQ, objecting to the ADF's use of dogs in ET. This complaint was immediately dismissed. However, during the afternoon of 5 October 1999, the TNI further demonstrated their 'displeasure' by opening fire (a short burst of rounds from a machine gun) in the direction of the dogs. Fortunately no one was injured, however the handlers and an ADG patrol who were in close proximity, were unable to return fire for broader safety reasons. The official response from the Indonesians was that the burst of fire was a result of a 'weapon malfunction'.

In January 2000, Kiwi was rotated back to the MWD Rejuvenation Project Team at Amberley via Republic of Singapore C130 and the dogs were sent to the AQIS Quarantine Station at Eastern Creek for their 30 day quarantine. COBRA was re-teamed with another dog handler and returned to ET a few months later. Kiwi re-teamed with RAVEN.

In September 2003, Kiwi and RAVEN were posted to 382ECSS at RAAF Base Amberley. Kiwi became the shift supervisor/ Duty Security Controller working shifts and controlling his staff, plus operating as a dog handler with RAVEN. His duties included patrolling, emergency response and policing duties. In 2006, Kiwi was promoted to Sergeant and became the SNCO in charge of the dog section.

East Timor - Second Deployment 2006

In 2006, the security situation in ET deteriorated when aggressive actions against the civilian population began. In May 2006, Kiwi took a team of dogs to RAAF Base Darwin for Force Concentration and then flew to Dili with one other dog team,

landing there on the second aircraft to arrive in the developing conflict. This time, it was a tactical landing where the RAAF C130 spiraled down to sea level on approach for landing, dropped to the airfield with a thump, huge rear thrust to a standstill, quick extraction of the load out of the aircraft, and then take off again as quickly as possible. The dog transporter boxes were the last part of the load to come off the aircraft so Kiwi and his Corporal Jason Thompson clung to each other over the dog boxes to allow the other personnel to get past them. Kiwi and RAVEN, and Jason and LEX, were a part of the initial deployment group.

Kiwi immediately deployed Jason and his dog to the evacuation centre located within the airport terminal. Kiwi remained with an ADG section for about three hours on the airmovement hardstand before moving forward to a roundabout on the Main Supply Route (MSR) to establish a vehicle check point (VCP) for the remainder of that night. Clearly two dog teams were not going to come close to the requirement for the necessary dog team support for this deployment and Kiwi waited anxiously for the remainder of his six dog teams to arrive. But, the air movement control was taken over by Army Movement Control staff who did not consider the transport of dogs as high priority.

Kiwi's dog teams sat in Darwin as a result waiting for space to become available on any aircraft which could lift them to Dili. It took some agitation by Kiwi in Dili and Leading Aircraftwoman Vanessa Wallis in Darwin before space was allocated to airlift the remainder of the dog team into their AO.

On arrival, Kiwi commanded the teams and allocated them in support of RAAF patrols which included airfield security, patrols on the perimeter, local area Kampongs and the evacuation centre at Komoro airfield.

The situation at the airport was intense. When Kiwi arrived there were about 4,000 Timorese people at the airport wanting to be either protected by the ADF or evacuated to Australia. In addition, there was a crowd of Australian and Foreign civilians who had been advised by the Australian government to leave East Timor as soon as possible. By the time the remainder of the dog teams arrived, the crowd had grown to more than 8,000 Timorese in the vicinity of the Airport. Some Timorese were in a very poor state of health including one man who arrived with shocking machete wounds. He was rushed to the Australian medical centre where he received immediate treatment and survived his ordeal. These sorts of incidents occurred several times. But that was the good news.

The local people were particularly cruel to each other. There were groups of youths armed with makeshift lethal weapons who would roam various areas at night and dominate their 'patch' by intimidation of local people and aggravation of the Foreign troops. There were incidents where ghastly attacks committed by one Timorese faction against another would create mayhem requiring the Australians to move in and re-establish as much law and order as they could. The dog teams were very effective in doing this and were a significant element in support of the ADF patrols and other organisations caught up in the mercurial turmoil and strife. The ADG units supported by the dogs managed to effectively dissipate many riots just at the point where they were being fomented. None of the rioters wanted to be bitten

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by a dog and would withdraw from the airfield area quickly when they saw the dog teams coming toward them.

As Australian troop arrivals continued, Kiwi's team began to support the Australian Federal Police (AFP). The AFP was the lead organisation managing the non-military security requirement in ET and they found the dog teams of significant value to their patrols and policing duties. In particular, many of the local gangs saw the AFP and multi-national police units as soft targets and would ambush them with darts, arrows and rock throwing. The sight of the dog teams had a calming effect on the behaviour of these gangs. The dog teams were used by the local police to assist them in the prosecution of high risk arrest situations. Kiwi also met up with the MWD teams from the Royal Australian Corps of Military Police (MP) who operated out of central Dili and were actively supporting Australian infantry units in Dili and on border patrols.

In August 2006, Kiwi's team was rotated out of ET and returned to RAAF Base Amberley. All the dogs were sent to the AQIS facility at Eastern Creek for their 30 day quarantine before returning to their units.

On return to Amberley, Kiwi resumed his role as SNCO in Charge and was busy managing and training dog teams for their job in security and policing duties on the base. In March 2008, Kiwi was deployed to ET again.

East Timor - Third Deployment 2008

This time, Kiwi took four dog teams to ET in support of security for the 5th Army Aviation Group - the Army helicopter assets positioned in ET. They provided flight line security at the Komoro airfield and also at the Forward Operating Base. The dog teams were required to provide continuous support for the aircraft, limited policing duties, emergency response and patrolling inside the local Kampongs. Kiwi considers that the local Kampong people felt reassured that the dogs were back in town and saw them as an asset of security for them. It was a confidence booster for the local folk and they had no hesitation in approaching the Australians for security assistance. The idea of providing security arrangements for village people was unique – it was an area of dog patrolling that had not been undertaken by previous ADF dog teams.

Kiwi included a nice sociological touch when 'winning the hearts and minds' of the locals. When he assigned his four dog teams on patrols in the local Kampongs he made sure that they took with them lolly pops and other gear for the village children. It was a great success. In their base area, the Australians organised games of soccer and touch football and made sure that the local people joined in the locals to demonstrate that the ADF had a sense of fun despite the serious nature of what they were there to do.

During this deployment, the Army decided to ration some beer to their diggers on the basis of a couple of beers roughly every six weeks or so. An internal email nominated the personnel who would receive the ration. But, the issuing Army officer of the unit forgot to add the RAAF doggies to the list of personnel who would receive the beer ration. Kiwi sent an urgent email to this officer pointing out that this fine

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Army tradition had excluded the RAAF doggies and asked that his dogs also be included. The Army officer responded by authorising the beer ration for all the RAAF doggies - and included their four dogs.

This tour of duty ended on 26 November 2008 when the team departed by civilian air charter to Darwin and then on to their respective bases by other civil air charters. The dogs went on to the AQIS facility at Eastern Creek for their 30 day quarantine inspections before returning to their units. Kiwi remembers this team as a very tight knit group of dog handlers who had very high standards of soldiering and were a delight to command.

Wing Commander ANDREW McHUGH

Wing Commander Andrew McHugh was born in Darlinghurst, Sydney. His family moved around NSW in his early childhood and he commenced primary school at Wagga Wagga and then moved on to Bathurst where he completed his secondary education. On leaving school in 1989, Andrew joined the RAAF into the Airfield Defence Group. In 1992, he moved into the Police Dog Handler muster and after graduating as a doggie in the RAAF, Andrew served at the RAAF unit at Kabala. In 1966, Andrew attended the officer course at the Royal Military College at Duntroon in Canberra and graduated at the rank of Pilot Officer in the RAAF.

Andrew was posted into a Ground Defence Officer's position in the Airfield Defence Squadron where he had command roles with the RAAF ground troops and the RAAF Police Dog muster.

Andrew has a philosophy about the choice of MWD to suit most MWD employments sometime in the future. He believes that eventually the ADF may very well produce an MWD that is capable of being trained across a broad number of roles, including the need of the Army combat engineer EDD. A possible candidate breed for this is the Dutch Shepherd. Certainly, the Malinois breed of dog is proving itself to be of value in areas including combat assault, EDD and base security work. There is much work to be done yet to provide such a capability to the ADF, but it is already a work-in-progress and time will tell if the philosophy comes to fruition. Then there is what Andrew refers to as a 'combat advantage' in intelligence terms on the enemy. An enemy soldier watching Australians push out into the battle space with a Cocker Spaniel at the lead knows that the lead team is there searching for explosive devices and caches. It's a give-away. A lead team pushing out with a Malinois or Dutch Shepherd is searching for anything and anybody. Enemy snipers would know this and may be a little unsettled if their position is upwind of a dog team whose role includes the detection and apprehension of enemy personnel. It becomes a psychological advantage conferred on an Australian lead element using a dog team.

Squadron Leader BRETT GREEN

Squadron Leader Brett Green was born on 26 April 1968 in Victoria. Brett moved with his family from Victoria to the Gold Coast in Queensland when he was

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12 years old and finished his education in, what he describes as, a wonderful school. It was wonderful because it had surfing as one of its subjects. On leaving school, Brett worked in the tourism industry on the Gold Coast and joined the Army Reserve in the Royal Corps of Australian Artillery. Brett wanted to join the Royal Australian Air Force from the time he left school, and his opportunity came in early 1991 when he signed on to become an electronics warfare operator. Completing his initial electronics warfare course at Kabala in Queensland, he was posted to Canberra where he operated in this category for three years. On posting to a tactical operator role at RAAF Base Richmond, Brett was given another opportunity to work with the Army. He was posted to HQ Northern Command in Brisbane and worked in the counter-intelligence agency of the Army's Intelligence Corps. He attended intelligence courses and worked with a number of Army units in this field. He was so good as an intelligence operator that he was encouraged to apply for a commission as an officer. Brett attended the officer's course and graduated at the rank of Pilot Officer.

On graduation as an officer in the RAAF, Brett was posted as a Security Police Officer which, in those days, had ownership of the command, control and management of all aspects of the military working dog capability in the RAAF. Brett was impressed with the MWD mustering. He had seen MWD teams at work at RAAF bases such as Fairbairn in Canberra, Richmond in NSW and Edinburgh in SA. He was particularly impressed by dog teams when he attended a MWD demonstration of 'Search and Protect'. This is where a dog is placed into a sit position while its handler goes forward to undertake search duties on a person who has been apprehended (peacefully) in an out-of-bounds RAAF area. Should the handler be attacked by this person, the dog immediately moves in and takes the attacker down, without a single word of command from its handler. A convincing demonstration of the quality of both the dog and its training. Brett saw interesting and challenging opportunities in the training and development of these MWD teams for RAAF security duties. This was to have a profound effect on Brett's future career choices.

Brett moved into the Assistant Security Officer at RAAF Base Darwin and was present when the Australian assistance to the Bali bombing attack happened in 2002. As a very observant ex-intelligence operative, Brett received unofficial information through his dog handlers that people had been moved through Australian airports heavily bandaged and under intensive medical care. Brett found out about this at about the same time as his Commanding Officer was being briefed about the Bali bombings from sources a whole lot higher than RAAF doggies. Brett recognised the value of a group of base security operatives who moved about all areas of an airfield and whose job it was to observe and report on anything and everything. An intelligence officer's dream.

Brett was posted to RAAF Base Townsville as the Base Security Officer for two years, and then as a counter-intelligence officer for another two years. With the value of the Bali bombings behind him, Brett made it his business to know all the doggies and their MWD very well. This became a two-way street of trust and communication. There is no formal course of training for officers in the MWD stream. An officer has to earn his spurs with the senior non-commissioned officers (Sergeants and Warrant Officers) before they will open up and share all their hard-earned information. In

the security game, trust and communication are paramount. Brett's words: "One of the Sergeants had been assessing me as if I were a specimen on a slide under the microscope. After some time, the Sergeant invited me into his office and announced that he had been watching and listening to me intently for a while and had concluded that even though I was a junior officer, I wasn't an idiot. I took that as a compliment and we began a long-term working relationship that helped me to forge a greater understanding of the value of MWD teams".

Brett also realised the incredible pulling value of the dog teams in the Public Affairs arena. He remembers a dog named SAM at RAAF Base Townsville that had become so popular with the citizens of Townsville that the local radio announcer would call a greeting to him on morning radio. SAM had appeared in the Townsville newspapers and was present at just about all interactions with the general public whenever appropriate. He was probably the best known identity on the whole RAAF Base, Townsville. The ultimate SAM experience occurred when a rumour went out that the RAAF was about to euthanize him. Concerned members of the public formed an 'SOS Group' (Save Our Sam) and intended to piquet the base with demands that he be set free. The Commanding Officer received calls from concerned civilians about the fate of SAM. The CO had to give assurances that the rumour was false. Brett recognised the power of this liaison with the civilian community and how a dog, an animal, can have such a charismatic effect on the psyche of the general community.

Brett recalls his security team working at the Avalon Air Show when the Australian F18A1 Super Hornet and the United States Air Force F22 Raptor aircraft were to be exhibited to the Australian general public for the first time. The show also coincided with the launching of the RAAF social media site. Shortly afterwards, the information technology technicians told Brett that the site had attracted twice as many hits of interest in the RAAF puppy program than it had for the Super Hornet.

The real value of the MWD teams was the central role of Detect-Deter-Deny capabilities in the security of RAAF Bases. These bases not only house billions of dollars worth of Defence assets but provide an almost instantaneous response to defence threats. Then there is the invaluable work done by RAAF assets during times of national duress when disasters strike and the Australian Defence Force swings into action to help out. The MWD teams contribute a significant capability in the security of these assets. Brett took this capability very seriously and looked forward to any opportunity that would increase his contact with the MWD community.

The opportunity came when Brett was posted to RAAF Base Amberley as the Officer-In-Charge of the MWD Training Flight at the rank of Flight Lieutenant. This was the position that Brett had aspired to for some time. It took him about a year in the category to get a good grasp of training methods and techniques and also the never-ending enticement to develop the capacity for dogs and handlers to become more efficient. The RAAF had for some time, conducted a breeding program and worked with the Customs dog capability in that area. But there was a lot more to it than that, and the RAAF recognised that it needed to expand its knowledge base and its dog programs to include a special to RAAF MWD. Brett was OIC in that area during its developmental stage and fully understood the big future that the dog program at RAAF Base Amberley offered.

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On promotion to Squadron Leader, Brett was posted to RAAF Base Richmond as OIC MWD. Two years later, Brett returned to RAAF Base Amberley as the OIC of security at the RAAF School of Security and Fire Services in 2012. His link with the MWD training and breeding program continued. He could have accepted a position in Canberra which may have had further promotional opportunities, but Brett wanted to stay in contact with the exciting progress that was being made at Amberley. There is some irony in this. When Brett was a Flight Lieutenant at Amberley a couple of years earlier, he had sat down over lunch with some contemporaries who gave him a friendly warning that if he stuck with the dogs, he would be stuck at the same rank for a very long time. What Brett didn't tell his mates was that he already had his promotion to Squadron Leader in his pocket anyway. However, he here was now some years later, still with the dogs and chances of promotion to Wing Commander being prejudiced – almost like a self-fulfilling prediction.

Brett's previous experience in the MWD muster provided an area of concern for him. He noticed that many of the doggies had developed muscular-skeletal issues as a result of man work training and lifting and carrying dogs. For example, there was a need to examine the physiology of the impact on the human body of being hit by a 30 Kg dog moving at 35kms/hr, as it latched on to an attack sleeve in training sessions – time after time. This observation was supported by a RAAF Workplace Health and Safety report which provided valuable instruction on the management of personal protective equipment, weight and balance stances, and other significant improvements to mitigate the risk of long-term injury to dog handlers. One outcome was a change in protective gear coupled with a gradual increase in the angles of incident between a trainee dog handler and a dog undergoing 'man work'. Man work includes a dog taking a one bight hold on to a person and apprehending them until security personnel take the person into their care or custody. Two SNCOs who were involved in this program included Warrant Officer David Towerton and Warrant Officer John Anderson – both exceptional doggies with a wealth of experience both on Australian bases and on overseas deployments in war zones. The training of dogs included improved signals of control and a more expanded palette of employment. This expanded employment included assisting the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) in its Combat Assault Dog program. This was an exciting and progressive time in the RAAF MWD category and was exactly what Brett wanted to be involved in.

Brett saw a Dutch Shepherd when he visited Afghanistan in 2013. He immediately went up to the dog and carefully approached him. The SAS Trooper handling him was a little taken back, naturally, but relaxed when Brett introduced himself as the OIC of the RAAF MWD School at Amberley. In the conversation Brett had with the SAS Trooper, he was left in no doubt that this breed of dog was worthy of deeper investigation as a combat ready MWD across the board, and not just exclusively with Special Forces Command. Every MWD produces a force multiplier effect on the ability of the Australian Defence Force to deliver its mission to the nation. The term, force multiplier, just means that an asset (in this case a dog) helps to deliver an outcome that is significantly higher at the sharp end compared to a human or a military unit operating without this asset.

Then there was a MWD named FAX. In two postings to the MWD School at Amberley, the one dog that stands out in Brett's memory is FAX. FAX was born and bred at RAAF Base Amberley and was an outstanding dog in a cohort group of high canine achievers. Brett chose to speak about FAX as his subject matter when he addressed a group of 1,800 students in the Ipswich area on the meaning of ANZAC Day. He chose to speak about FAX because he knew and admired that dog as if he were a fellow digger. He took them through FAX's birth, puppy foster program, training, graduation and posting to the SASR. Brett described the work conducted by the Combat Assault Dogs and FAX's achievements in the war in Afghanistan. Inevitably he arrived at that point where FAX was killed in action saving his handler's life. The emotional effect on his target audience was palpable. He had delivered a powerful message of sacrifice for your mates, your country and yourself. The uplifting moment came when Brett brought FAX's son on to the stage as a young MWD and that drove home yet another message of ANZAC Day. Sacrifice brings with it its own rewards in renewal and continuation. It would have been an ANZAC Day address that those kids would never forget.

But the FAX and Brett story doesn't stop there. The truth is that FAX did have developmental problems and needed some intense individual attention from an experienced RAAF doggie in Sergeant Ben Guerts. Ben was stationed at RAAF Base Pearce, near Perth, WA. He worked FAX up and brought him back to Amberley for further training, mainly man work. One day, one of Brett's doggies came into his office with FAX and asked his boss to look after FAX for a couple of minutes while he finished some business in the HQ. FAX sat at Brett's feet and they had a Squadron Leader to dog conversation. The Airman came back, took FAX over and then the three of them went to the kennels. Brett describes the actions of the Airmen as they dived out of FAX's way as 'a dog acting as a cane cutter of Airmen'. FAX had a reputation as a hard hitter with a tight bight and lightning fast reactions. Any wonder why they wanted to give FAX a clear line straight through them. The story gets better. Brett was to meet FAX again at Toowoomba on a RAAF march through the city. Brett was out front as the lead officer with his sword. FAX was with the lead marker, Sergeant Geoffrey Jarrett. Geoff's job was to act as a point of reference for the other members of the parade and, of course, keep FAX under complete control. FAX had other ideas. The moment Brett went through his drill of drawing his sword out of the scabbard and carrying it point upwards in his right hand, FAX saw that as a threat to his handler and immediately tried to disarm Brett. The remainder of the march had Brett hearing, feeling and knowing that a huge set of teeth were snapping a couple of inches behind his neck. Geoff knew that an attack on a Squadron Leader in full view of the general public was not a career enhancing move. Two things happened. Brett conducted the fastest RAAF march yet to be seen in Toowoomba and Geoff used up every sinew of energy saving his Squadron Leader. Both happenings worked. Brett was saved from FAX and Geoff graduated as a RAAF commissioned officer, and as at 2015, had achieved the rank of Squadron Leader. FAX had almost put an end to both aspirations.

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And the story still doesn't end there. Brett and FAX were actually good mates. Brett would visit FAX in the RAAF kennels and throw a ball for him. Brett would bring his children in to see FAX as well. All to the consternation of the Kennel Sergeant. But that was FAX. When he was required to work, he threw absolutely everything into it, but when he was not working he would 'poodle up' as Brett describes it. When Brett found out that FAX was eventually posted to the SASR, he was intensely proud of his canine mate. Little did he realise just what an impact on SASR operations in Afghanistan FAX was to have. When the news came through direct to Brett from the SASR that FAX had been killed in action, Brett was stunned. He phoned other doggies who had a close relationship with FAX and explained what had happened. The emotions were deep and raw. FAX was loved and admired in both the RAAF and the Army. Brett and FAX's handler in Afghanistan, 'J', decided to name a dog in the progeny litter of FAX. They decided that FAX's grandson should also be named FAX and he was posted to the SASR as a Combat Assault Dog. The bloodline continues.

Brett contributed 26 years to Australia's defence and passed away while still serving in September 2017.

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