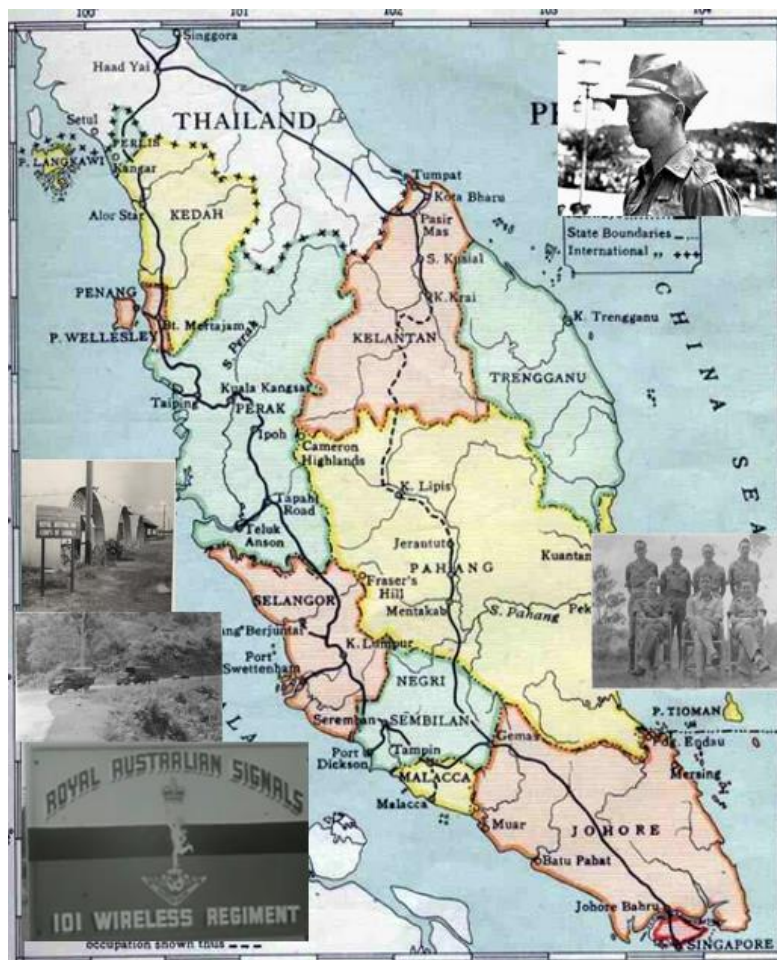


101 WIRELESS REGIMENT:

The Malayan Emergency 1951 – 1960



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PREFACE

Few people are aware that 101 Wireless Regiment was the first Australian Army unit to have troops on the ground during the Malayan Emergency. In past years the full knowledge of the unit and its activities were known only to a few, and even today, the full operational results of the unit are still not available for general publication.

The Story of 7 Signal Regiment 1939 - 1962¹ gives a brief insight into the history of the No 1 Detachment, 101 Wireless Regiment that deployed to Malaya. However, it is now felt that the full story of the Malayan Emergency should stand on its own.

When the unit arrived in Singapore in 1951 it was titled No 1 Detachment, 101 Wireless Regiment. In 1955, the title was changed to Wireless Troop (Type F), and in 1962 when 101 Wireless Regiment changed to 7 Signal Regiment, it again was renamed 121 Signal Squadron.

This Story draws on information and photos from many sources. Wherever possible throughout the text the source of the information is attributed as footnotes.

The authors have not been able to recover any official government documents that contain the full History of 101 Wireless Regiment and therefore had to rely on extracting information from an assortment of files held at the Australian National Archives, the Australian War Memorial and personal memories.

Some of the events may be slightly out of the correct date sequence due to no official written records being available, and that the memories of those who were there are now slightly faded. Fortunately War Diaries are available to cover the period when the unit was named No 1 Detachment but as the activities of the unit were classified the Diaries do not include full deployment or operational activities.

Relevant extracts of the Diaries have been included to provide a permanent and accurate record of the dates and activities. Where the extracts have not copied well a transcription has been provided.

Several personal anecdotes have been included to give a deeper insight into personnel of the unit.

The authors would like to acknowledge and thank Jack Fenton, Harry Freestone and Ted Baker for their continuous support and recollections used in this story. Without their memories this Story would not be possible.

It must also be stressed that the authors are not professional writers or historians, purely ex-members of the Regiment who believe that the various histories of the Regiment's operations should be told and preserved.

Bob Hartley

Barry Hampstead

January 2016

¹ Written by RW (Bob) Hartley and Barry Hampstead, October 2014. Copy held at the Australian War Memorial, Private Collection, MSS2282.

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CHAPTER 1

The Beginning



Overview

The Malayan Emergency was declared on 18 June 1948, after three [British] estate managers were murdered in Perak, Northern Malaya. The men were killed by guerrillas of the Malayan Communist Party (MCP)², an outgrowth of the anti-Japanese guerrilla movement which had emerged during the Second World War³.



Figure 1: Malaya

The Following is extracted from the Australian War Memorial (AWM) records:

The Malayan government was slow to react to the MCP at first and did not appoint a director of operations to counter the insurgency until March 1950. The new director planned to address the underlying economic, social, and political problems facing the Chinese community while, at the same time, bringing government control to the fringe areas where the MCP received much of its support. Before this plan was fully implemented, however, the situation deteriorated further with the assassination of the British High Commissioner in October 1951. The attack galvanised British resolve to meet the threat posed by the MCP; the Malayan government, in turn, stepped up counter-insurgency measures. Prolonged operations were undertaken against the communists in an effort to destroy their base of support in local communities and to drive them into the jungle, where it would be difficult for them to receive supplies from supporters.⁴

² Also referred to as Malayan Races Liberation Army (MRLA) and Malayan Peoples Liberation Army (MPLA).

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malayan_Communist_Party The MPLA had a General Headquarters controlled by a Central Military Committee which consisted of the politburo and some of the MPLA's regimental commanders and political officers. The most influential members of the politburo were Chin Peng, Yeung Kwo and Lau Lee.^[20] At this point the army had about 4000 soldiers, about 10% women. It was divided into ten Regiments, nine of which were predominantly Chinese and one of which was composed mostly of Malays and Indians.

⁴ <https://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/malayan-emergency/>



Figure 2: MCP bandits armed with M3 Rifles⁵

The following is extracted from Wikipedia:

At the start of the Emergency, the British had 13 infantry battalions in Malaya, including seven partly formed Gurkha battalions, three British battalions, two battalions of the Royal Malay Regiment and a British Royal Artillery Regiment being used as infantry. This force was too small to meet the threat of the "communist terrorists" or "bandits" effectively, and more infantry battalions were needed in Malaya. The British brought in soldiers from units such as the Royal Marines and King's African Rifles. Another effort was a re-formation of the Special Air Service in 1950 as a specialised reconnaissance, raiding and counter-insurgency unit.⁶

The book *GCHQ* [7]⁸, reported:

Locating the guerrilla headquarters in Malaya was easier said than done. In 1950 a sigint⁹-equipped Lancaster from the RAF's 192 Squadron was sent out to help in the hunt for the insurgents by tracking their radio communications. Later, undercover agents planted batteries with excessively high power on the guerrillas to damage their radios. When they were repaired, the workshops the guerrillas used were bribed to secretly modify the sets to give out a stronger signal. This gave the opportunity for sigint to achieve a direction-finding fix on the main guerrilla bases. Bombers from the RAF and the Royal Australian Air Force were standing by, and lightning raids were carried out on the deemed location of the signals. Avro Lincoln bombers dropped thousands of tons of bombs into the dense jungle at likely guerrilla locations. Their pilots were always impressed by the resilience of the jungle: their largest bombs vanished into the triple-canopied green foliage below them, and from the aircraft little impact was visible. It is not known how successful these operations were, but Ching Peng, the most important prize, certainly eluded them.¹⁰

⁵ <https://bigdogdotcom.wordpress.com/2009/11/21/the-butcher-of-malaya/>

⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malayan_Emergency

⁷ GCHQ. General Communications Headquarters. Renamed post-war British SIGINT service.

⁸ Aldrich, Richard (2010-06-10). *GCHQ* (p. 149). HarperCollins Publishers. Kindle Edition.

⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Signals_intelligence Signals intelligence (SIGINT) is intelligence-gathering by interception of signals, whether communications between people (communications intelligence—abbreviated to COMINT) or from electronic signals not directly used in communication (electronic intelligence—abbreviated to ELINT). Signals intelligence is a subset of intelligence collection management. As sensitive information is often encrypted, signals intelligence often involves the use of cryptanalysis to decipher the messages. Traffic analysis—the study of who is signalling whom and in what quantity—is also used to derive information.

¹⁰ Aldrich, Richard (2010-06-10). *GCHQ*. HarperCollins Publishers. Kindle Edition, Page 149.

During the mid-1950s GCHQ began to intercept what it believed to be wireless traffic between the MCP guerrilla leadership and the Chinese Communist Party in Peking. The Special Branch presented this intelligence to senior British officials in Kuala Lumpur with some delight as evidence of its theory of external direction, but only in a summarised form. Diplomats in Kuala Lumpur were sceptical, and asked to see the full transcripts of the transmissions. A major altercation followed, with the diplomats accusing the Special Branch of bending the evidence, while the policemen accused the diplomats of a lack of trust. The issue of exactly how close the MCP was to Peking was never resolved.¹¹

The book *Empire of Secrets*¹² reported:

By 1950 the Directorate of Forward Plans had deception officers stationed at British military headquarters in both Kuala Lumpur and Singapore, and as records only made available in 2011 reveal, their highly sensitive missions involved the elaborate use of camouflage to hide the location of security forces, as well as using radio transmissions to deceive insurgent forces about the location of their fellow fighters. In 1950 an electronic-reconnaissance-equipped Lancaster bomber was sent out to Malaya from RAF 90 Group, which tracked and scrambled the radio communications of guerrillas, and provided their location to ground forces¹³.

Templer^[14] ordered that more effort should be put into gathering 'live' intelligence, acquired primarily from human agents and SIGINT, but he also acknowledged the continued need for obtaining 'dead' intelligence, from sources such as captured documents or prisoners of war, which provided valuable background information but was not usually directly 'actionable'.¹⁵

The outbreak of the Emergency produced an 'information panic' in Malaya, much like those British colonial authorities had frequently experienced in India in the past. SIGINT obtained by GCHQ referred to by its wartime epithet as 'Most Secret Sources', provided some indications about guerrilla formations, derived from their intercepted radio communications.¹⁶

By recruiting couriers as agents and intercepting communications in this way, the Special Branch discovered a number of the most important 'Directives' that Chin Peng issued to his fighters. After their release, double agents were usually followed back into the jungle by Special Forces, typically Gurkhas and Malay trackers, who noted the location of guerrilla forces. Some of the most sophisticated methods for tracking insurgent forces were provided by SIGINT. When the Special Branch released double agents back into the jungle they were sometimes provided with radio sets specially

¹¹ Ibid, Pages 150-151.

¹² Walton, Calder (2013-01-31). *Empire of Secrets: British Intelligence, the Cold War and the Twilight of Empire*. HarperCollins Publishers. Kindle Edition.

¹³ Ibid, Page 200.

¹⁴ http://www.mindef.gov.sg/imindef/publications/pointer/journals/2003/v29n4/personality_profile.html

Lieutenant General Sir Gerald Templer arrived in Malaya on 7 February 1952 to take the reins of fighting the Malayan Emergency. The previous High Commissioner, Sir Henry Gurney, had been assassinated in a Communist ambush on 7 October 1951 while on his way for a weekend rest at Fraser's Hill. Gurney's murder was a huge shock to the British authorities as well as to the Malaysians and stern action was demanded from London. Prime Minister Sir Winston Churchill, who had just been returned to power, appreciated the crucial position of Malaya in Southeast Asia to the fight against international communism and the world's tin and rubber supply. He decided that a supremo would be appointed. General Templer would have the political authority as High Commissioner and effective control of the police and all services of the armed forces as Director of Operations (DirOps). No British soldier had been given such extensive powers since Cromwell, general and leader of the Parliamentary forces during the 17th Century English Civil War.

¹⁵ Ibid, Page 180.

¹⁶ Ibid, Page 176.

modified to transmit direction-finding (D/F) signals. Using these signals, security forces could triangulate the exact location of insurgents, who were then captured or killed by security patrols, or targeted for heavy bombing by the RAF.¹⁷

Australian Involvement in the Malayan Emergency

Australia's involvement in the Emergency began in 1950 with the arrival of RAAF aircraft and personnel in Singapore. The RAAF later expanded and operated out of airfields in Malaya.

101 Wireless Regiment Involvement

In 1950, 101 Wireless Regiment (101 Wrls Regt)¹⁸ was firmly established at Cabarlah in Queensland. The probable organisation of the Regiment is depicted in the following figure:

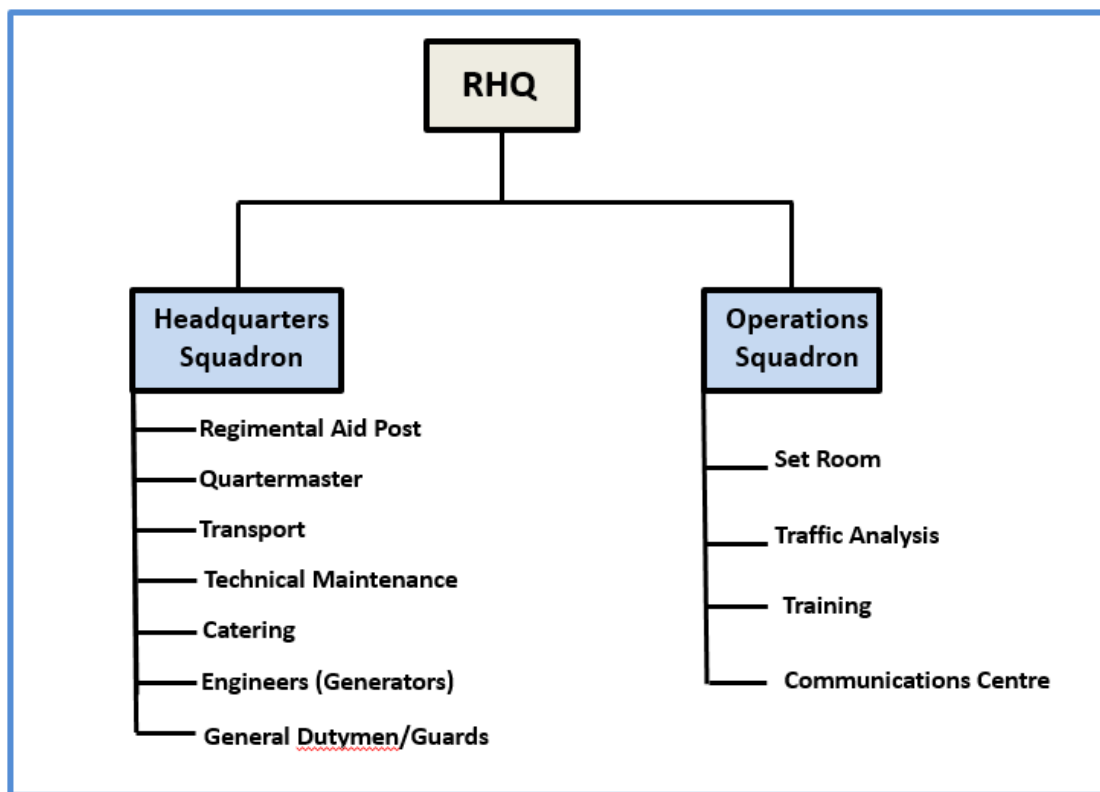


Figure 3: Possible organisation outline of 101 Wrls Regt circa 1950¹⁹

¹⁷ Ibid, Page 187.

¹⁸ 101 Wrls Regt was in its embryonic form, established in 1947 out of the remnants of the Australian Special Wireless Group which was active during WW2. The full story of the ASWG is contained in *The History of the ASWG 1939-1947* by RW Hartley and BV Hampstead. A copy is held at the AWM in the Private Collection under MSS2343. The ASWG conducted Sigint operations in both the Middle East and Pacific areas.

¹⁹ There are no records to confirm this outline. Drawn by Bob Hartley and confirmed by Jack Fenton's recollections.

Rumours of Overseas Postings

Jack Fenton²⁰:

When Capt O'Brien^[21] was asked if overseas postings were in the offing, he insisted on confidentiality, saying that he wanted a Staff Sgt operator with TA ^[22] ability to go overseas with the team when that not-too-distant time comes; that was the reason for keeping up analytical skills. A year later came the promotion but still no movement.

Yet another year, 1950, the Korean War began. Too few staff at AHQ knew of secret role of 101 Wireless Regiment, so did not consider giving it a guernsey. (Literature on USA signals intelligence efforts, in that war, portray it as next to useless, causing friendly casualties – perhaps we were lucky have our bleeding delayed until full bottle with experience in Singapore and Malaya).

No sign of any other overseas posting in that same year, so another approach to the Capt - if there was nothing offering abroad, then it would be worth considering matrimony. "Get married," the Capt advised, advice which was taken in January 1951. Early February, came the news, "A section to move to Singapore in about 6 weeks. It's war, so no families." Too late! This newly married man is staying put till new home is organised!

George Auger was persuaded to accept Sgt rank to do a few months overseas, thus George saved the day for Capt O'Brien's need for a TA Senior NCO. I won the day job running Traffic Analysis, perfect for a newlywed. It was reported that George took discharge a few months later, leaving us bereft of WWII ASWG operators.

²⁰ Jack Fenton Memoirs. Jack served with the ASWG at the end of WW2 and had a long career with 101 Wrls Regt/7 Sig Regt. He retired as a Major in September 1975.

²¹ 101 Wrls Regt Operations Officer.

²² Traffic Analysis.

CHAPTER 2

Singapore Deployment



Initial Deployment

On 23/24 February 1951, a section from 101 Wrls Regt under the command of Captain Dennis Seagar arrived in Singapore. The detachment was designated No 1 Detachment, 101 Wrls Regt, and became part of the Australian Observer Unit (AOU) for administrative purposes. All personnel were experienced Operator Special Wireless²³.

In the book *Emergency and Confrontation, Australian Military Operations in Malaya and Borneo 1950-1960*,²⁴ the AOU is mentioned. The following extract²⁵ is particularly interesting. It follows on from reports of the debates which took place as the British Government sought some form of military commitment by Australia in Malaya after the end of World War II:

Although the services felt unable to accede in detail to the British personnel requests, a small number of Australian servicemen were sent to Malaya, largely on an individual basis. For administrative purposes, and particularly for ensuring that Australian personnel posted to British units received their full entitlements of benefits and re-establishment rights, they were formed into the Australian Observer Unit, which was established at the end of February 1951. The Observer Unit was quite different from a normal military unit. It had no commanding officer, no administrative staff of its own and no transport, but existed merely as an administrative umbrella for the fluctuating number of Australian military personnel who were on attachment or loan to various corps in the British Army. The majority of the Australians were members of No.1 Detachment, 101 Wireless Regiment, for example the unit's strength stood at five officers and 26 other ranks. Two officers were attached to GHQ FARELF, one in intelligence, the other with the engineers, a third with the RAF in Hong Kong; another was on loan to the FARELF Training Centre; and the fifth was attached to the Signals Regiment at GHQ where he acted as Commanding Officer of the detachment from 101 Wireless Regiment. Of the 26 troops, three NCOs (all infantry) were on the instructing staff at the FARELF Training Centre; three RAEME personnel were employed in No 2 Station Workshops at Kluang in Malaya; one RAEME NCO was attached to HQ 63 Ghurkha Infantry Brigade ; while the remaining sixteen other ranks worked at the FARELF Signals base at Chia Keng, in Seletar.

Extract from the book *Signals - Swift and Sure - A history of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals 1947-1972*.²⁶

Shortly after the declaration of the 'Emergency', the 1st Australian Observer unit was raised and sent to Malaya. 1st Australian Observer Unit never functioned as a normal unit as the Australian Government was keen to have elements in Malaya but was not prepared to commit complete combat units for a land battle. It was formed to overcome difficulties that would otherwise arise in obtaining certain benefits and re-establishment rights resulting from service in Malaya. Its organisation was 'completely elastic' and could grow or contract with the arrival and departure of personnel. It had no Commanding Officer, no administrative or quartermaster

²³ In late 1953 the trade of Operator Special Wireless was changed to Operator Signals. An Op Sig was a Signals Operator trained in all aspects of communications with additional training and qualification in the interception of foreign communications.

²⁴ *Emergency and Confrontation, Australian Military Operations in Malaya and Borneo 1950-1960* by Peter Dennis & Jeffrey Grey.

²⁵ Ibid, Page 54, 55.

²⁶ *Signals - Swift and Sure - A history of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals 1947-1972*. John Blaxland. Page 78.

personnel, no transport of its own; in fact one of the normal things a unit is expected to have.

Extract from the book *Tiger Territory: The Untold Story of the Royal Australian Navy from 1948 to 1971*²⁷:

*By the mid-1950s Australian service personnel were being dispatched overseas to assist in the manning of British intercept stations in Hong Kong and Singapore: in fact, the planned overseas strength was 265 service personnel*²⁸.

Detachment Role

The basic role of the detachment was to be employed at the GCHQ station and conduct Sigint in support of the Australian and British operations in the Far East with particular emphasis against the MCP that was conducting the limited war in Malaya.

Detachment Operational Location

When the detachment arrived in Singapore it initially worked at the Phoenix Park²⁹ facility and later moved to the newly-built GCHQ station at Chai Keng 2 (CK2)³⁰ next to the CK1 RAF Receiving Station that was close to the RAF Base at Seletar.

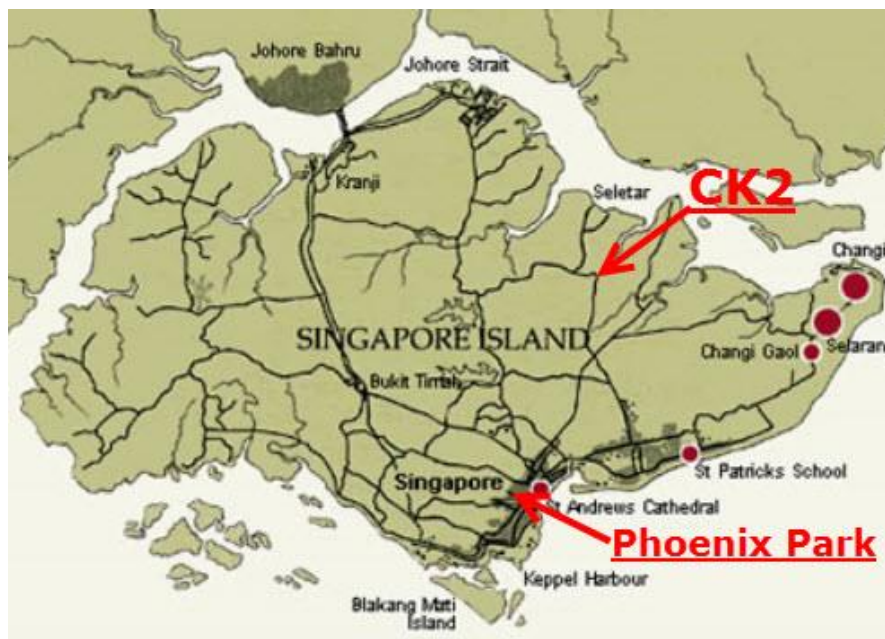


Figure 4: Detachment locations

²⁷ Pfennigwerth, Ian (2012-08-27). *Tiger Territory: The Untold Story of the Royal Australian Navy from 1948 to 1971* (Kindle Locations 2750-2753). Rosenberg Publishing. Kindle Edition.

²⁸ The majority of personnel in Hong Kong were RAAF.

²⁹ Phoenix Park was the nerve centre for British intelligence in the region, where the Security Intelligence Far East (SIFE) was located. SIFE collected, analysed and processed intelligence gathered in this region before submitting them to London.

³⁰ CK2 was initially manned by GCHQ and British Admiralty civilian operators.



Figure 5: Phoenix Park (2009)

RAF Chia Keng was a satellite station to RAF Changi. There were two sections making up the camp.....Chia Keng 1 (CK1) and Chia Keng 2 (CK2). CK1, as seen in the photograph, was the main camp whilst CK2 was a smaller section set amongst the trees at the top of the photograph. Chia Keng was positioned close to Paya Lebar and was just off the Yio Chu Kang Road. This road also led to RAF Seletar air base and the Royal Navy base at Sembawang. CK2 known as GCHQ.³¹

CK2, GCHQ, bungalow was along the Yio Chu Kang Road and about 100-200 yards past the main camp entrance going towards Seletar. It was tucked away into the "ulu" and set back from the main road (3 or 4 car lengths from the highway) with a small unpaved parking lot. The bungalow was quite large, painted cream with double front wooden doors. The windows were near the roof level and were translucent glass blocks-long and narrow strip windows. The unit was self-sufficient with generators and high tech equipment for that period. The equipment was used for breaking down codes etc. CK1's aerial farm fed CK2 with its ears so it is believed. CK2 was a British operation run by GCHQ UK.

³¹ <http://roverjag.webs.com/>



Figure 6: Chai Keng Receiving Stations³²



Figure 7: Chai Keng 2³³

³² Ibid.

³³ Photo courtesy Ted/Blue/Perce Baker ex Op Sig and OKC.

Equipment

CK2 comprised administration, set room, traffic analysis (processing), technical maintenance and communications areas.

The Set Room consisted of at least 30 intercept positions³⁴, each position comprising two intercept receivers, headphone and antenna switches, intercommunication, tape recorder, typewriter, frequency meter and logging material (wireless log, message pads³⁵).

The main intercept receivers in use at CK2 in the 1950s were the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) Reception Set AR-88 and HRO³⁶.



Figure 8: AR-88³⁷

Reception Set AR-88 was a high grade HF communication receiver, manufactured in the USA and Canada. Frequency range 525kHz-32MHz (AR-88D) or 73kHz-30.5MHz (AR88LF). AM R/T and CW. Powered by AC mains or separate 6V DC.

³⁴ In later years the building was extended and at least another 30 positons were added.

³⁵ Wireless Log F-Sigs48 and Message Form F-Sigs-49 or similar nomenclature, standard throughout the British Y Service.

³⁶ There were several derivatives of the HRO: AMR101, Kingsley AR7.

³⁷ <http://www.wftw.nl/rsets.html>



Figure 9: HRO Receiver with coils³⁸

The two most distinctive features of this radio were its use of a micrometer-type dial, and plug-in sets of tuning coils that slid into a full-width opening at the bottom of the front panel. The dial, designed by William Graydon Smith, allowed for continuous analog tuning while digitally indicating incremental progress over a range of ten full turns of the large tuning knob that tuned with velvet smoothness. Ten times the circumference of the dial is 12 feet (nearly 4 m), which allowed for great frequency resolution. The four standard sets of coils, A, B, C, and D, covered 14-30, 7-14.4, 3.5-7.3, and 1.7-4 MHz, respectively. Two other sets of coils, E and F, sold separately, covered 960–2050 kHz and 480–960 kHz, respectively. Before each radio left the factory, a technician custom calibrated a set of A, B, C, and D coils for that particular radio, a process that took nearly 4 hours. Each of the four main sets of coils also had bandspread modes set by moving screws that limited the frequency range to 28-29.7, 14-14.4, 7-7.3, 3.5-4 MHz, respectively, for amateur radio use.³⁹

³⁸ <http://www.radioblvd.com/National%20HRO.htm> The HRO found widespread use during World War II as the preferred receiver of various Allied monitoring services, including Y-Service stations associated with the code-breaking group at Bletchley Park (Station X) in England. An estimated 1,000 standard HROs were initially purchased by Great Britain, and approximately 10,000 total saw use by the British in intercept operation, diplomatic communications, aboard ships and at shore stations as well as for clandestine use.

³⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_HRO.

A Frequency Meter SCR-211 (BC-221)⁴⁰ was shared between approximately five intercept positions.

Note:

The frequency readout on the AR-88s and HROs were only approximate so the operators had to use a Frequency Meter SCR-211 (BC-221) to accurately calibrate the correct frequency



Figure 10: BC-221

The main tape recorder used to record high speed Morse and other unidentified transmissions was the Ferrograph.



Figure 11: Ferrograph Recorder⁴¹

⁴⁰ <http://radionerds.com/index.php/BC-221> The Frequency Meter Set SCR-211-(&) is a precision instrument designed to measure or radiate radio frequency impulses between 125 and 20,000 kHz. It is portable, completely self-contained instrument used mainly to calibrate field radio receivers and transmitters by direct comparison with the calibrated variable frequency oscillator of the frequency meter. Each meter contains a 1,000 kc crystal oscillator circuit which is used both as a source of accurate radio frequency signals at multiples of 1,000 kHz, and for calibrating the variable frequency oscillator of the instrument at a number of points. These points of frequency calibration are called "Crystal Check Points".

⁴¹ <http://www.schimmel.talktalk.net/tape/>

Each intercept position also had available a typewriter to copy message traffic. The typewriters had been modified to have upper case (capital) letters only.



Figure 12: Typewriter example⁴²

⁴² <http://www.museumoftechnology.org.uk/expand.php?key=1143>

Employment of Personnel

In April 1951, there were further discussions in Canberra on the employment of additional 101 Wrls Regt personnel for overseas duty⁴³, [some redactions]:

COPY

SECRET

Def.
48/301/140.

SS 294.

11th April, 1951.

MEMORANDUM FOR:-

The Secretary,
Department of the Army,
MELBOURNE. S.C.1.

101 WIRELESS REGIMENT - EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONNEL

Reference is made to my memorandum
No.XB/9 of 27th October, 1950.

2. It will be recalled that, in considering the recommendation of the Defence Committee contained in their minute No.15/1950, dated 9th February, 1950, the Minister for Defence approved, *inter alia*, that further detachments of personnel be despatched for duty . for periods not exceeding 12 months, within the annual allotment of funds made for this purpose by the Defence Department to your Department.

3. It is now found that certain high priority tasks which it is necessary to allot to 101 Wireless Regiment cannot be performed by that Regiment at its existing site, and it is therefore desired that, if available, an additional detachment of six operators and one radio mechanic be despatched

4. It is desired that this further detachment should be in operation as soon as possible, and if available, it would be appreciated if arrangements could be made for early movement of the party.

5. It is requested that early advice be furnished concerning the allocation of funds from the Department of Defence Programme Account to meet travelling costs, if any.

Figure 13: Employment of Personnel

⁴³ NAA A5954 2354/4 101 Australian Wireless regiment – proposed location and employment of personnel.

Singapore Tour of Duty

The memorandum displayed at Figure 13 indicates that the overseas posting period to Singapore was 12 months. The authors have not found any other records detailing the length of the tour of duty for Australian personnel. Perusal of the AOU War Diaries from October 1952⁴⁴ reveals some entries indicate that the norm was 12 months but there was a variance of tours from six months to two years⁴⁵.

Accommodation

The Detachment was initially accommodated at Tyersall Park, the home of the British General Headquarters (GHQ) Signal Regiment⁴⁶.



Figure 14: Entrance to Tyersall Park⁴⁷



Figure 15: Tyersall Park⁴⁸

⁴⁴ <https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm95/17/4/>

⁴⁵ It is probable that married unaccompanied personnel served one year and single personnel two years.

⁴⁶ Lord, Chris (2012-07-10). *The Royal Corps of Signals: Unit Histories of the Corps (1920-2001), and its Antecedents* (Kindle Locations 1985-1986). Casemate Publishers. Kindle Edition. The British Corps units on Singapore Island were under the command of the Chief Signal Officer, HQ Singapore Base District at Fort Canning. Under this command were: Singapore District Signal Regiment, based at Princess Mary Barracks. GHQ FARELF Signal Regiment based at Tyersall Park. GHQ FARELF Signal Regiment provided communications facilities, which linked the wide-spread forces in the Far East from Korea to Gan in the Indian Ocean.

⁴⁷ Photographs courtesy of Ted/Blue Baker.

⁴⁸ Ibid.



Figure 16: Tyersall ORs mess and shops from Detachment accommodation 1957⁴⁹

Married Quarters

For the first few years of the Detachment until approximately late 1955, no married quarters were available. Married personnel were unaccompanied.

AOU Administrative Officers

Extract from the book *Signals - Swift and Sure - A history of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals 1947-1972*.⁵⁰

Although the 1st Australian Observer Unit personnel worked under the British Army, there was still a deal of liaison and administration to be carried out on matters peculiar to Australian conditions of service such as pay and leave arrangements. These administrative duties were performed by Major G Sadler, followed by Captain Cattanach and then Captain (later Major General) J I (John) Williamson – a technically well-qualified Duntroon graduate of 1946. It was convenient for the 101 Wireless Regiment detachment commander to perform these duties as the detachment commander had the majority of Australian personnel under his direct command. The strength of the Australian Observer Unit in December 1952 was 5 officers and 25 other ranks, of these, one officer, Captain Williamson, and 15 other ranks were attached to the British General Headquarters Signal Regiment, which

⁴⁹ Photo Courtesy of Kevin Carter.

⁵⁰ *Signals - Swift and Sure - A history of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals 1947-1972*. John Blaxland, Page 79.

served the UK's General Headquarters Far Eastern Land Forces (GHQ FARELF) in Singapore

AOU War Diaries

The Australian War Memorial holds the War Diaries of the AOU from 17 October 1952 to August 1955.⁵¹ Some pertinent extracts that outline the chronological history of the unit are shown in the following pages.⁵²

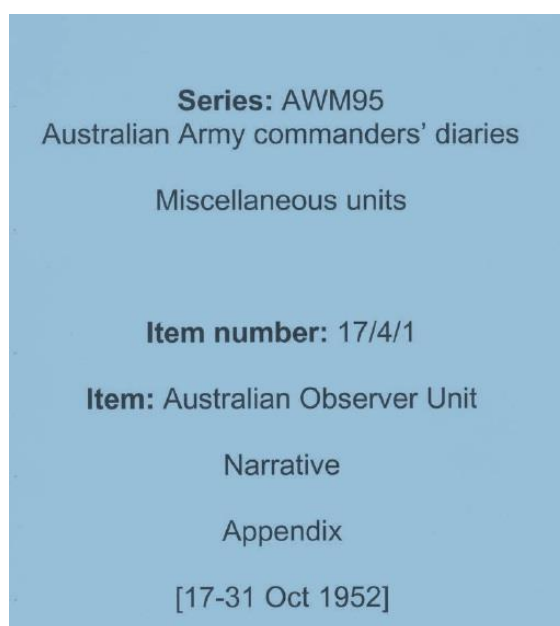


Figure 17: War Diaries Cover Page

The following is the first entry in the Diary:

Date	Summary of events and information
17 Oct 52.	1/112 Capt J.I. WILLIAMSON deplaned SINGAPORE to take over command of No 1 Det 101 WIRELESS REGIMENT from 1/8010 Capt C.J. CATTANACH.

Figure 18: Capt Williamson arrives in Singapore⁵³

17 Oct 52	1/112 Capt J.I. WILLIAMSON deplaned SINGAPORE to take over command Of No 1 Det 101 WIRELESS REGIMENT from 1/80101 Capt C.J. CATTANACH
-----------	---

⁵¹ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1029431](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201029431), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, Appendix (17-31 Oct 1952).

⁵² To provide authenticity and give a more precise timeline of the story, copies of the diary extracts are included. Many of the extracts do not copy well so for ease of reading a transcript appears below some of the extracts – they are not captioned.

⁵³ There is no record but it is assumed that Captain Cattnach replaced Captain Seagar as 101 Wrls Regt Det OC circa late 1951 early 1952.

No 1 Det 101 Wrls Regt Personnel

The following extract of the Strength State attached to the diary lists the personnel of No 1 Det 101 Wrls Regt⁵⁴:

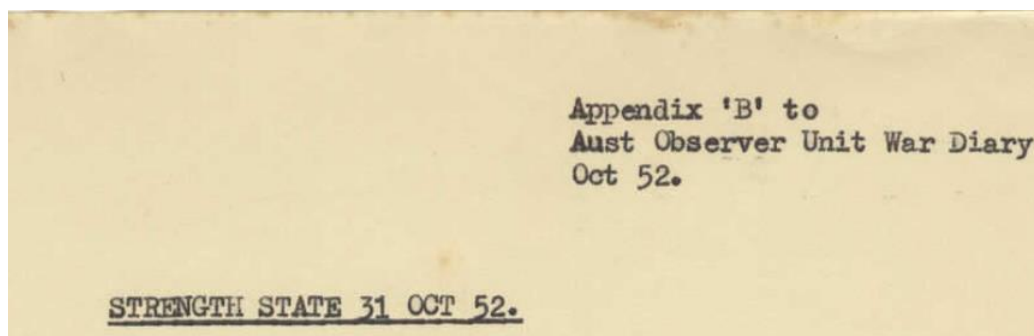


Figure 19: Strength State

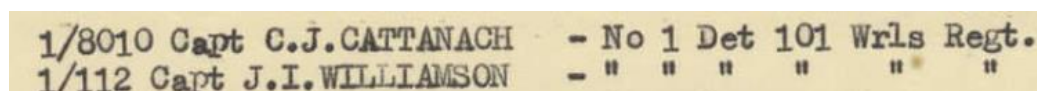


Figure 20: No 1 Det Officers

1/703 Cpl HUGHES W.E.	- R Aust Sigs att GHQ Signal Regiment.
3/10008 Cpl QUICKMIRE P.W.	- " " " " " " " "
6/122 Cpl WEBB J.G.	- " " " " " " " "
2/1210 Cpl TURNER R.C.	- " " " " " " " "
2/4713 Cpl ALLWRIGHT R.	- " " " " " " " "
1/9790 Cpl MITCHELL H.	- " " " " " " " "
2/1895 Cpl HOOKER J.D.	- " " " " " " " "
3/10678 Signm BUCKTON T.	- " " " " " " " "
1/715 Signm CASEY W.E.	- " " " " " " " "
3/2276 Signm DARKER W.H.	- " " " " " " " "
3/2735 Signm HARRIS R.G.	- " " " " " " " "
3/3366 Signm FINCHER H.W.	- " " " " " " " "
3/3147 Signm JORDAN C.C.H.	- " " " " " " " "
5/645 Signm KILLICK A.S.	- " " " " " " " "
2/10270 Signm PARSONS E.W.	- " " " " " " " "
2/4366 Signm ANSTEE M.G.	- " " " " " " " "

Figure 21: No 1 Det Other Ranks

⁵⁴ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1029431, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, Appendix \(17-31 Oct 1952\) Appendix B](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201029431%20AWM95%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit%20Appendix%20(17-31%20Oct%201952)%20Appendix%20B)

NCO Promotion Course

During the month, the AOU conducted a promotion course for all ranks:

18 Oct 52.	An NCO's promotion course for NCO's and potential NCO's of No 1 Det 101 Wireless Regiment and "on loan" ARA Signals personnel to GHQ Signal Regiment was commenced 13 Oct 52. Further details of the course are attached as an Appendix.
------------	--

Figure 22: Promotion Course⁵⁵

18 Oct 52.	An NCO's promotion course for NCO's and potential NCO's of No 1 Det 101 Wireless Regiment and "on loan" ARA Signals personnel to GHQ Signal Regiment was commenced 13 Oct 52. Further details of the course are attached as an Appendix
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<u>NCO's PROMOTION COURSE AND EXAMINATION</u> <u>HELD AT SINGAPORE OCTOBER 52.</u>		
1.	The class consisted of the following R Aust Sigs personnel.	
	3/1336 T/Sgt SAUNDERS B G	On loan British Army
	1/703 T/Cpl HUGHES W E	Attached " "
	1/9790 T/Cpl MITCHELL H	" " "
	2/46878 Cpl ALLWRIGHT R	" " "
	2/1895 T/Cpl HOOKER J D	" " "
	2/1210 Cpl TURNER R C	" " "
	2/2235 T/L/Cpl HARDY M	On loan " "
	2/3152 T/L/Cpl WEST K	" " " "
	5/645 Signm KILLICK A S	Attached " "
	1/715 " CASEY W E	" " "
	3/2276 " DARKER W H	" " "
2.	In addition to these members, two other personnel attended part of the course.	
	4/213 T/Sgt O'REILLY L D	On loan British Army, emplaned for Aust 21/10/52.
	6/122 T/Cpl WEBB J G	Attached British Army admitted Hospital.
3.	All personnel were on the posted strength of the Aust Observer Unit MALAYA.	
5.	The examinations were held on 27-28 Oct 52 and were in accordance with "Examination for Promotion to Warrant and Non Commissioned Rank in the Australian Regular Army 1948." The Board consisted of the following Officers -	
	1/8010 Capt C.J.CATTANACH	
	1/112 Capt J.I.WILLIAMSON	

Figure 23: Promotion Course attendees #1⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Ibid, Page 1.

⁵⁶ Ibid, Appendix A.



Figure 24: Promotion Course attendees #2⁵⁷

Caption: (Rear L - R) Wally Darker, Jack Hooker, Bill Casey, Ken West, Buck Mitchell, Max Hardy, Ray Allwright, Bernie Saunders, Snow Turner. (Front L-R) Bill Hughes, U/I Brit SGT, Bucky Gill (Brit), CAPT Williamson, CAPT Cattanach, Jock Thomas (Brit), Blue Killick

Captain Williamson Assumes Command

On 1 November 1952, Capt J I Williamson assumed command of No 1 Det, 101 Wrls Regt⁵⁸.

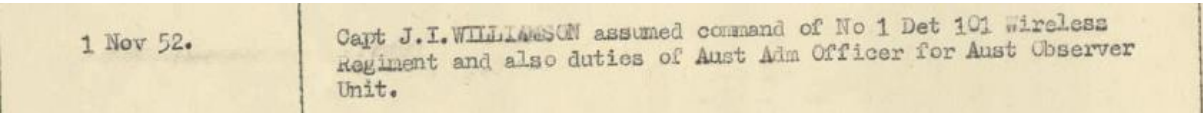


Figure 25: Capt Williamson assumes command

1 Nov 52	Capt J.I. WILLIAMSON assumed command of No 1 Det 101 Wireless Regiment and also duties of Aust Adm Officer for Aust Observer Unit.
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⁵⁷ 7 Sig Regt Archives.

⁵⁸ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1029265](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201029265), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders’ Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, Appendix (1-31 Nov 1952) Page 1.



Figure 26: Capt Williamson

Hong Kong Visit

During the period 6 to 12 November 1952, Capt Cattnach visited Hong Kong to inspect a 'sister' British unit⁵⁹.

6 Nov 52.	Capt CATTANACH left for HONG KONG on liaison visit to 367 Communications Unit RAF. Travel by RAF courier.
-----------	---

Figure 27: Capt Cattnach visit to Hong Kong



Figure 28: Capt Cattnach

⁵⁹ Ibid.

Commanding Officer's Visit

On 14 November 1952, Lieutenant Colonel SJ Hill, the Commanding Officer (CO) of 101 Wireless Regiment arrived for a visit⁶⁰.

14 Nov 52.	Lt Col S.J.HILL R Aust Sigs arrived TENGAH airfield SINGAPORE by RAAF Lincoln. Col HILL is CO 101 Wireless Regiment and came up for an inspection tour of Det stationed in SINGAPORE. Met by CO GHQ Signal Regiment Lt Col G.DUTTON and Capt WILLIAMSON.
------------	--

Figure 29: CO Visit



Figure 30: Lt Col Hill

Capt Cattanach Departs Singapore

On 24 November 1952, Capt Cattanach departed Singapore for Australia⁶¹.

24 Nov 52.	2/40013 Maj M. DARBYSHIRE and 1/8010 Capt C.J.CATTANACH embarked on SS "MERKUR" for return to Aust after their tours of duty in Malaya and Singapore respectively.
------------	--

Figure 31: Capt Cattanach departs

Additional Personnel

The war Diary for 29 November 1952 shows that Sergeant R Turner arrived to supplement the Detachment⁶².

2/1049 Sgt TURNER R. deplaned CHANGI airfield Singapore for 12 months tour of duty with No 1 Det 101 Wireless Regiment.

Figure 32: Sgt Turner arrives

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ Ibid, Page 2.

⁶² Ibid.

AOU History

Attached to the War Diary as Appendix B was a letter from Capt Williamson detailing the history of the formation of the AOU and some of the problems associated with compiling the War Diaries⁶³.

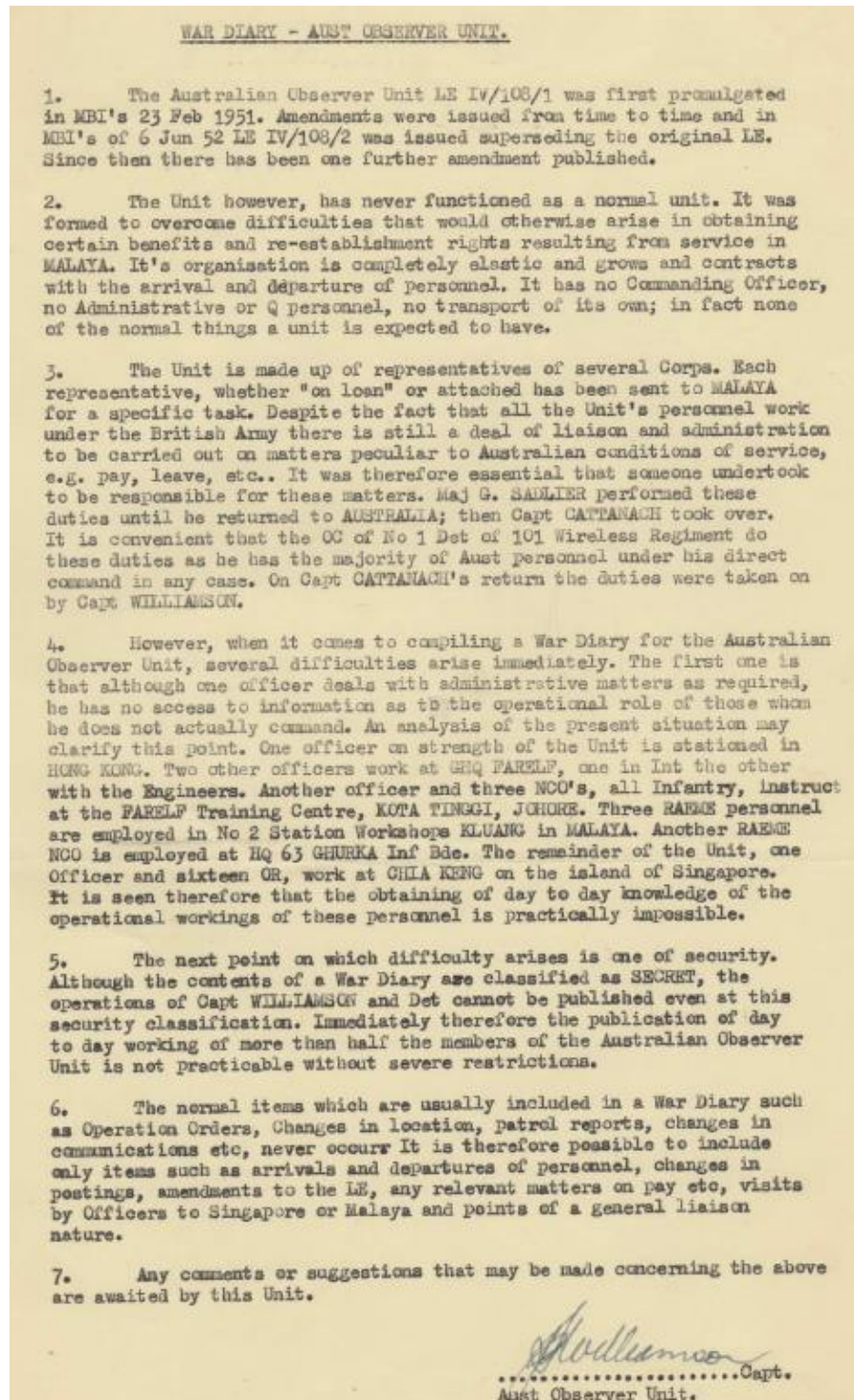


Figure 33: War Diary November 1952 Appendix B

⁶³ Ibid, Appendix.

Extracts from the above letter.

3. The Unit is made up of representatives of several Corps. Each representative, whether "on loan" or attached has been sent to MALAYA for a specific task. Despite the fact that all the Unit's personnel work under the British Army there is still a deal of liaison and administration to be carried out on matters peculiar to Australian conditions of service, e.g. pay, leave, etc. It was therefore essential that someone undertook to be responsible for these matters. Maj G. SADLER performed these duties until he returned to Australia; and then Capt CATTANACH took over. It is convenient that the OC of No 1 Det of 101 Wireless Regiment do these duties as he has the majority of Aust personnel under his direct command in any case. On Capt CATTANACH's return the duties were taken on by Capt WILLIAMSON.

The remainder of the Unit, one Officer and sixteen OR, work at CHIA KENG on the island of Singapore. It is seen therefore that the obtaining of day to day knowledge of the operational workings of these personnel is practically impossible.

5. The next point on which difficulty arises is one of security. Although the contents of a War Diary are classified as SECRET, the operations of Capt WILLIAMSON and Det cannot be published even at this security classification./ Immediately therefore the publication of day to day working of more than half the members of the Australian Observer Unit it is not practicable without severe restrictions.

Intelligence Officer

The War Diaries do not indicate that there was an Intelligence Officer or other Intelligence Non Commissioned Officer (NCO) assigned to No 1 101 Wrls Det. However, in later entries of personnel arriving in Singapore it was noted that an Australian Intelligence Officer was employed at GHQ, most probably Phoenix Park.

Cpl Hughes Departs

On 6 December 1952, Cpl Bill Hughes⁶⁴ departed for Australia⁶⁵.

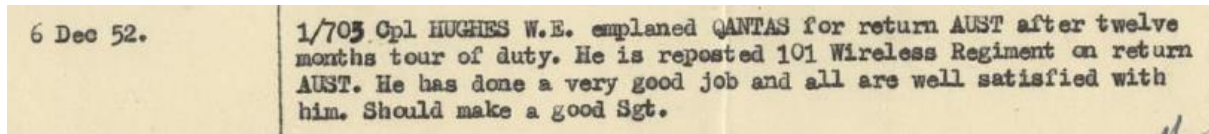


Figure 34: Cpl Hughes departs Singapore

Visitor to CK2

On 8 December 1952, the CO of GHQ Signal Regt FARELF⁶⁶ visited CK2⁶⁷

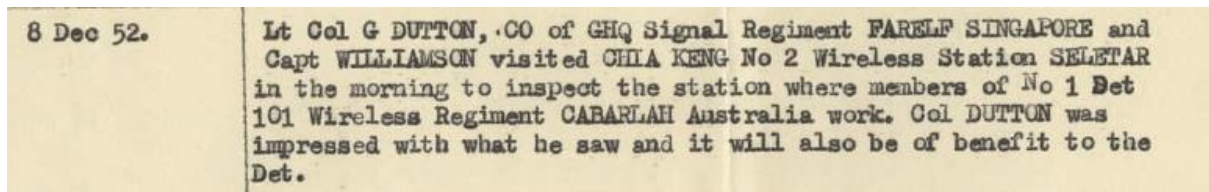


Figure 35: CK2 Visit

Request for Clerical Support

On 16 December 1952, Capt Williamson wrote a letter ^[68] to AHQ Melbourne with an application to add a Sergeant Clerk to the establishment⁶⁹. On 5 February 1953, advice was received that the request could not be met at this time.

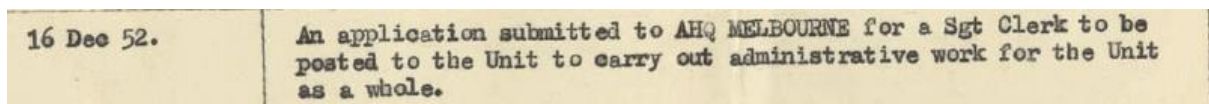


Figure 36: Request for clerical support

Observance of Christmas Day

Christmas day functions 1952⁷⁰.

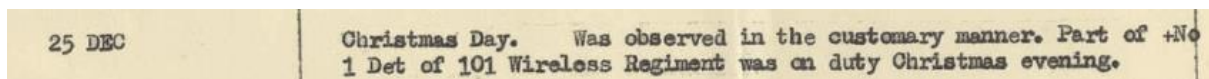


Figure 37: Christmas Day

⁶⁴ Bill Hughes served the majority of his military career with 101 Wrls Regt/7 Sig Regt and retired from the Army as a Major circa 1978

⁶⁵ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1029276](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201029276), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, Appendix (1-31 Dec 1952) Page 1.

⁶⁶ FARELF: Far Eastern Land Forces.

⁶⁷ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1029276](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201029276), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, Appendix (1-31 Dec 1952) Page 2.

⁶⁸ Copy of letter too poor to insert or fully transcribe.

⁶⁹ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1029276](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201029276), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, Appendix (1-31 Dec 1952) Page 2.

⁷⁰ Ibid, Page 4.

Sport

On 3 January 1953 the War Diary indicated that Perc Killick and Rocky Harris had been selected for the Royal Signals Rugby Team⁷¹. In subsequent years members of the Detachment continued to be selected for British sporting teams.

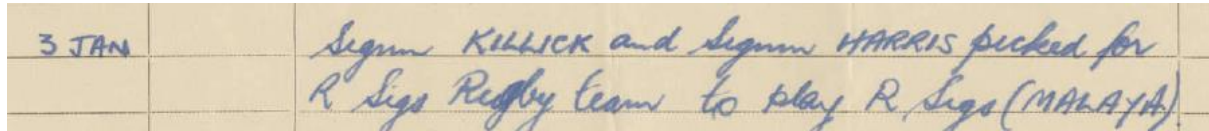


Figure 38: Rugby Players



Figure 39: Perc/Blue Killick

Malaya Conference

On 23 January 1953, Capt Williamson attended a conference held by the High Commissioner Malaya. It is believed that was the first meeting to consider that personnel from the detachment would be sent to operate in Malaya⁷².

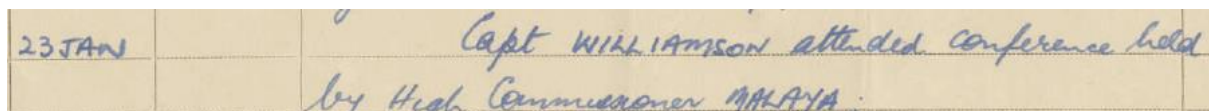


Figure 40: Meeting in Malaya⁷³

⁷¹ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1028114](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201028114), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, Appendix (1-31 Jan 1953) Page 1.

⁷² Attendances at conferences at Kuala Lumpur became regular events for the OC AOU/101 Wrls Regt Det. Although there are no records available, it is believed that the OC may have been a member of the Federal War Executive Committee.

⁷³ Ibid, Page 3.

Strength Return

The following is the Other Rank Strength return for January 1953:

<u>OR ATTACHED.</u>			
2/1049	Sgt TURNER R	ATT GHQ	Signal Regiment
2/4713	Cpl ALLWRIGHT R	" "	" "
2/1895	Cpl HOOKER J D D	" "	" "
1/9790	Cpl MITCHELL W H	" "	" "
2/1210	Cpl TURNER R C	" "	" "
6/122	Cpl WEBB J G	" "	" "
2/4366	Sigmn ANSTEE M G	" "	" "
3/10678	Sigmn BUCKTON T	" "	" "
1/715	Sigmn CASEY WE	" "	" "
3/2276	Cpl DARKER W H	" "	" "
3/3366	Sigmn FINCHER H W R	" "	" "
3/2735	Sigmn HARRIS R C	" "	" "
3/3147	Sigmn JORDAN C C H	" "	" "
5/645	Sigmn KILLICK A S	" "	" "
2/10270	Sigmn PARSONS E W	" "	" "
Total OR attached		15	

Figure 41: Other Rank Strength Return for January 1953⁷⁴

Malaya Operations

During the period 18-20 February 1953, Captain Williamson attended further conferences in Kuala Lumpur in reference to the Detachment conduction operations in Malaya⁷⁵.

18 Fe 53	Capt J.I. WILLIAMSON absent on duty in KUALA LUMPUR.
20 Fe 53	Attended conferences etc at Police HQ in connection with operations in MALAYA.

Figure 42: Kuala Lumpur Conference

18 Fe 53	Capt J.I. WILLIAMSON absent on duty in KUALA LUMPUR. Attended conferences etc at Police HQ in connection with operations in MALAYA.
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Change of Personnel

In February 1953, there were several signals relating to the change of operator personnel. The No 1 Det, 101 Wrls Regt strength remained at one Officer and 16 Other Ranks.

Replacement Operators

On 12 March 1953, three operators arrived from Australia as replacements⁷⁶.

⁷⁴ Ibid, Appendix.

⁷⁵ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1028115](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201028115), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (1-28 Feb 1953) Page 3.

⁷⁶ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1028116](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201028116), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (1-31 Mar 1953) Page 1.

2/4075	Sigmn	PEACOCK R L	-	Att	GHQ	Signal	Regt
3/10810	"	ADAMS A J	-	"	"	"	"
1/1921	"	OWBRIDGE W G	-	"	"	"	"

Figure 43: Replacement Operators

On 11 April 1953, three operators returned to Australia and on 13 April another operator arrived⁷⁷.

11 Apr	0700	Cpls MITCHELL, TURNER and Sigmn PARSONS emplaned SINGAPORE for RTA by QANTAS.
--------	------	---

Figure 44: Three operators depart Singapore

13 Apr		Cpl REID J. arrived 12 Apr from Australia by QANTAS.
--------	--	--

Figure 45: One further replacement arrives

More Conferences

On 20/21 April 1953, Capt Williamson attended another conference at Police HQ, Kuala Lumpur⁷⁸.

20 Apr		Capt WILLIAMSON moved to KUALA LUMPUR for conference at Police Headquarters there.
--------	--	--

Figure 46: Police HQ Conference

Replacement of Operators

On 21 April 1953, Cpl Jack Hooker departed Singapore after completing two years service⁷⁹.

21 Apr		Cpl HOOKER J.D.D., attached to GHQ Signal Regiment, emplaned for Australia by QANTAS after completing two year tour of duty. Soldier is for leave and reposting to 101 Wireless Regiment.
--------	--	---

Figure 47: Cpl Hooker departs Singapore

21 Apr		Cpl HOOKER J.D.D. attached to GHQ Signal regiment, emplaned for Austrlia by QANTAS after competing two year tour of duty. Soldier is for leave and reposting to 101 Wireless Regiment
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⁷⁷ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1028117](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201028117), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (1-31 Apr 1953) Page 2.

⁷⁸ Ibid, Page3.

⁷⁹ Ibid.



Figure 48: Jack Hooker

ANZAC Day

The ANZAC Day tradition continued for many years⁸⁰.

ANZAC DAY. There was a Dawn Service held in Singapore at the Cenotaph which was attended by The Officer administering the Government, the Australian Commissioner to MALAYA, the Flag Officer commanding Malayan Station, The GOC Singapore Base District, the Air Officer Commanding RAF MALAYA, members of the Australian and New Zealand communities in Singapore, and detachments of the RAAF and ARA. This Unit provided a party of 1 Officer and 13 OR plus 4 OR for a Guard of Honour in conjunction with the RAAF. The ceremony commenced at 0600 hrs and lasted approx 1 hour. Wreaths were laid by Government as well as Service Chiefs the Aust Observer Unit and the RAAF. There were no further organised ceremonies for the remainder of the Day.

Figure 49: ANZAC Day

Strength Return

The following is the Other Rank Strength return for April 1953⁸¹:

⁸⁰ Ibid.

⁸¹ Ibid, Appendix 1.

<u>OR Attached</u>				
2/1049	Sgt TURNER R.	-	att	GHQ Signal Regiment
2/4713	Cpl ALLWRIGHT R.	-	"	" " " "
6/122	Cpl WEBB J.G.	-	"	" " " "
2/4366	Sigmn ANSTEE M.G.	-	"	" " " "
3/10056	Cpl REID J.	-	"	" " " "
3/10678	Sigmn BUCKTON T.	-	"	" " " "
1/715	Sigmn CASEY W.E.	-	"	" " " "
3/2276	Cpl DARKER W.H.	-	"	" " " "
3/3366	Sigmn FINCHER H.W.R.	"	"	" " " "
3/2735	Sigmn HARRIS R.C.	-	"	" " " "
3/3147	Sigmn JORDAN C.C.H.	-	"	" " " "
5/645	Sigmn KILLICK A.S.	-	"	" " " "
2/4075	Sigmn PEACOCK R.L.	-	"	" " " "
3/10810	Sigmn ADAMS A.J.	-	"	" " " "
1/1921	Sigmn OWBRIDGE W.G.	-	"	" " " "
Total attached - 15				

Figure 50: Strength Return for April 1953

Another Conference

Capt Williamson attended another conference at Kuala Lumpur on 13/14 May 1953⁸².

Additional Personnel

On 18 May 1953, five more operators arrived in Singapore as replacements⁸³.

18 May 53.

The following personnel are due to arrive by QANTAS from Australia today according to advice received.

1/9786 Sgt STEWART G.G.
2/2514 Cpl BETTENS J.
3/10703 Sigmn McMILLAN M.J.
3/2873 Sigmn REID P.F.
1/2433 Sigmn GRACE E.G.

These are replacements for members of No 1 Detachment 101 Wireless Regiment who have completed tours of duty in SINGAPORE.

The above personnel deplaned SINGAPORE at 1350 hrs.

Figure 51: Operator Replacements

Replacement Operators

On 3 June 1953, five operators departed for Sydney⁸⁴.

⁸² [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1028118](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201028118), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (1-31 May 1953) Page 3.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1028119](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201028119), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (1-30 Jun 1953) Page 2.

3 Jun	Cpl ALLWRIGHT, Cpl DARKER, Signn KILLICK, Signn CASEY, and Signn ANSTEE emplaned for SYDNEY by QANTAS.
-------	---

Figure 52: Departing Operators



Figure 53: Ray Allwright



Figure 54: Wally Darker



Figure 55: Bill Casey

Parliamentary Visitors

During the period 13 to 17 June 1953, the Minister for the Army, Mr Francis, the Secretary for the Department of the Army, Mr Sinclair, and the Minister's private secretary visited Singapore and Malaya⁸⁵.

Additional Sigint Personnel for Singapore

In June 1953, there were several high level discussions in Canberra concerning the employment of additional operators in Singapore. The following files are inserted as contained in the NAA file⁸⁶. [*Some appear to be out of sequence, and there is much redaction.*]

⁸⁵ Ibid, Pages 2, 3, 4.

⁸⁶ NAA: NAA A5954 2354/4 101 Australian Wireless Regiment – proposed location and employment of personnel.

TOP SECRET

SIGNAL PERSONNEL

PREVIOUS DECISIONS BY THE MINISTER FOR DEFENCE

1. MINISTER'S APPROVAL OF 23RD OCTOBER 1950

The Minister approved that :-

(1)

(ii) when a technically suitable permanent station for 101 Wireless Regiment is ready for occupation, the above disposition of personnel be reviewed;

(iii) in principle detachments of personnel being despatched for duty for periods not exceeding 12 months within the annual allotment of funds by the Defence Department to the Department of the Army for this purpose.

2. MINISTER'S APPROVAL OF 1ST MAY 1952

"I approve of the employment of a party up to ten members of the Australian Army Signals detachment to carry out the reconnaissance as recommended. This approval is given on the understanding that no increase is involved in the total strength of the Army detachment of fifteen, and that no additional commitment is implied in respect of the outcome of the reconnaissance."

3. MINISTER'S MINUTE OF 30TH SEPTEMBER 1952

1. "My minute of 1st May, which directed that there should be no increase in the total strength of the Army detachment of fifteen sent from 101 Wireless Regiment, qualified my approval of 23rd October 1950, which approved in principle the despatch of further detachments

2. The approval of 23rd October, 1950, was given as an interim step because of commitments of 101 Wireless Regiment which cannot be effectively carried out at Cabarlah.

3. There would appear to be some lack of co-ordination between the build-up of 101 Wireless Regiment and the effective employment of the operators, unless they can be sent. This involves additional expenditure of £310 per head.

Figure 56: Additional Personnel - Page 1

2.

4. In addition to other considerations of Policy involved, the provision of an increased allotment for Defence Signals Branch activities is basic to the acceptance of the commitments outlined in the Review. The financial aspect of an allotment is bound up with the submission made by you to the Treasurer for the allocation of the Defence Votes for 1953/54 and 1954/55.

5. It will be noted from a separate file that the Minister for the Army, who is proceeding to Borneo for the unveiling of the War Memorial, is going on to Singapore to inspect Army units there, and that General Sir Charles Keightley, Commander-in-Chief, Far East Land Forces, intends to discuss Signal Intelligence activities with him.

6. The considerations governing a decision on the Assistant Secretary's submission appear to be :-

- (i) Whether a further commitment for 10 operators should be accepted for the reasons stated by the Assistant Secretary or whether this should be governed by the larger question of employment overseas of up to 65 operators for each Service. The latter is the substance of your previous decisions attached.
- (ii) Whether any views that the Minister may wish to submit to you as the result of his visit to Singapore should be awaited.

*Dependent on the need and
the funds available.*

P. M. B.

11.6.53

F. E. S.

Secretary

10/6/1953.

Figure 57: Additional Personnel - Page 2

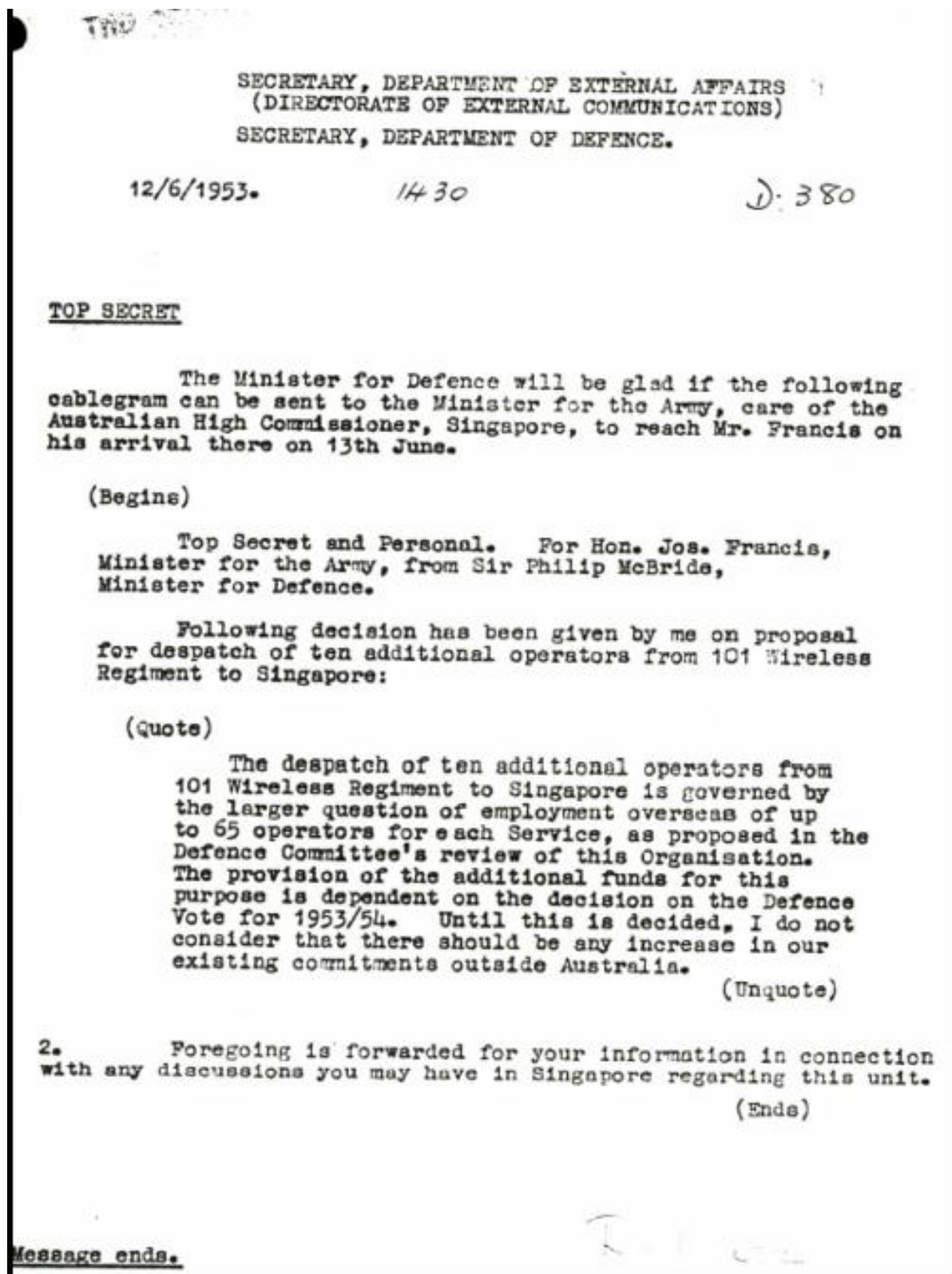


Figure 58: Additional Personnel - Page 3

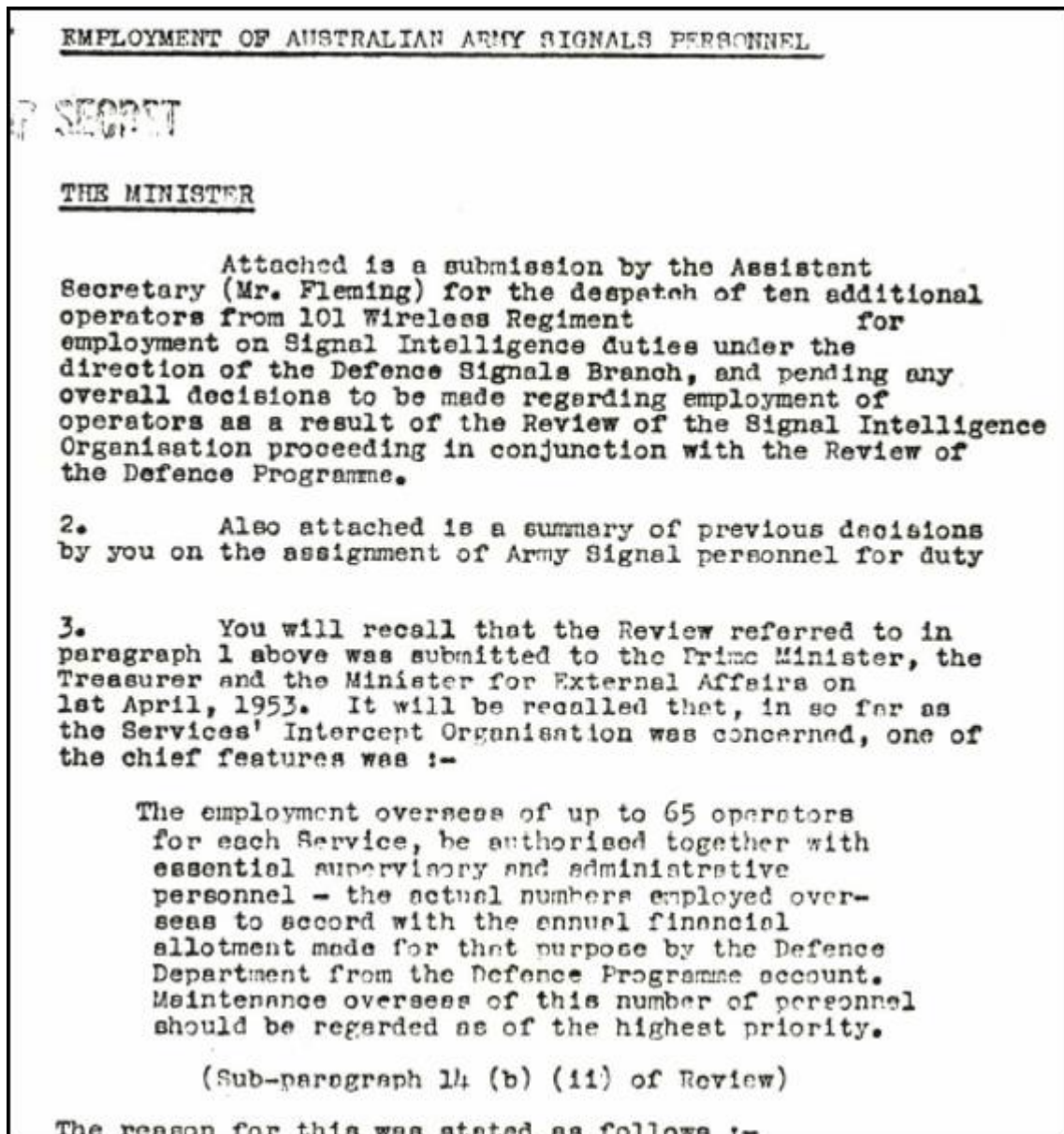


Figure 59: Additional Personnel - Page 4

[Remainder redacted]

More Conferences

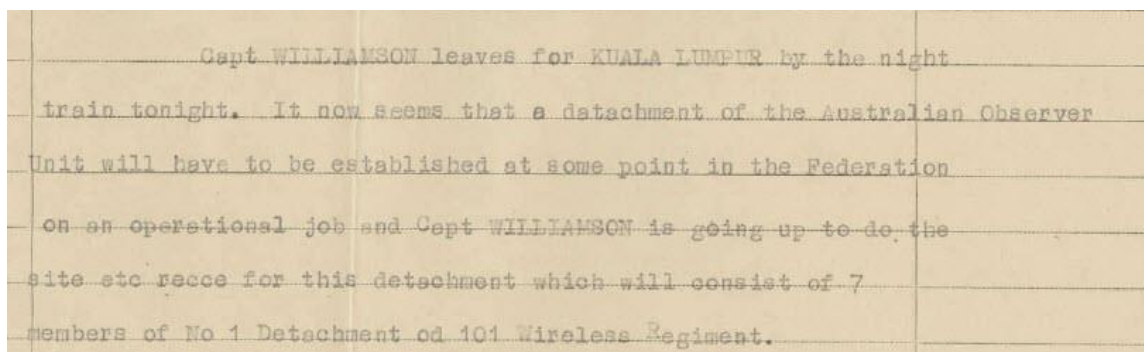
On 29 June 1953, Capt Williamson travelled to Kuala Lumpur to attend another conference⁸⁷.

In July 1953, more discussions were again held regarding the possibility of seven members of the No 1 Det, 101 Wrls Regt to travel to, and operate in, Malaya.

⁸⁷ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95/17/4 RCDIG 1028118, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-30 Jun 1953\) Page 8.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095/17/4%20RCDIG%201028118%20AWM95%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit%20(1-30%20Jun%201953)%20Page%208)

Detachment into Malaya Imminent

On 5 August 1953, Capt Williamson travelled to Kuala Lumpur to finalise arrangements for the detachment of personnel to Malaya⁸⁸.



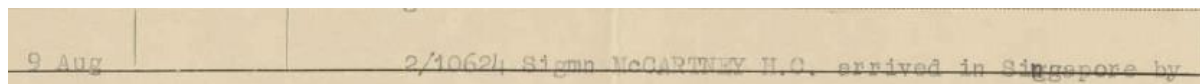
Capt WILLIAMSON leaves for KUALA LUMPUR by the night train tonight. It now seems that a detachment of the Australian Observer Unit will have to be established at some point in the Federation on an operational job and Capt WILLIAMSON is going up to do the site etc recce for this detachment which will consist of 7 members of No 1 Detachment of 101 Wireless Regiment.

Figure 60: Details of Detachment

5 Aug 53		Capt WILLIAMSON leaves for KUALA LUMPUR by the night train tonight. It now seems that a detachment of the Australian Observer Unit will have to be established at some point in the Federation on an operational job and Capt WILLIAMSON is going up to do the site etc recce for this detachment which will consist of 7 members of No 1 Detachment of 101 Wireless Regiment.
6-7-8 Aug		Capt WILLIAMSON was absent, on duty in KUALA LUMPUR and PAHANG state during this time and returned to Singapore on 8 Aug.

Replacement Operator

On 9 August 1953, Sigmnn McCartney arrived from Australia as a replacement operator⁸⁹.



9 Aug 2/10624 Sigmnn McCARTNEY H.C. arrived in Singapore by

Figure 61: Replacement Operator

9 Aug		2/10624 Sigmnn McCARTNEY H.C. arrived in Singapore by...
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Probable Movement and Location

On 11 August 1953, the AOU received news concerning the location and movement of the detachment into Malaya⁹⁰.

⁸⁸ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/11 RCDIG 1029433, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-31 Aug 1953\) Page 2.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017%2F4%2F11%20RCDIG%201029433%2C%20AWM95%2C%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders%27%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units%2C%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit%2C%20(1-31%20Aug%201953)%20Page%202)

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid, Pages 3, 4.

11 AUG 53		News was received from Federation authorities today as to the probable location of the detachment in the Federation.
		Confirmation of this location should be through by Thursday 13 August and the party is being prepared to move on the night train on Friday 14 August.

Figure 62: Probable location and movement

11 Aug 53		News was received from Federation Authorities today as to the Probable location of the detachment in the Federation. Confirmation of this location should be through by Thursday 13 August and the party is being prepared to move on the night train on Friday 14 August
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Accommodation Problems

On 13 August 1953, Capt Williamson received word that there would be difficulties with accommodation and delays were expected. On 14 August, Capt Williamson subsequently travelled to Kuala Lumpur to fix the problems and returned on 16 August with a positive result⁹¹.

13 AUG 53		A delay over the detachment accomodation has occurred. Capt WILLIAMSON will be leaving on tonights train for KUALA LUMPUR to straighten out the difficulties which seem to have cropped up.
-----------	--	---

Figure 63: Delays expected

13 Aug 53		A delay over the Detachment accomodation has occurred. Capt WILLIAMSON will be leaving on tonights train for KUALA LUMPUR to straighten out the difficulties which seem to have cropped up.
-----------	--	---

16 AUG 53		Capt WILLIAMSON returned from KUALA LUMPUR by train this morning. The accomodation problem has been settled now after consultation with RAF and Federation authorities and after a further recce of the FRAZERS HILL area by helicopter, kindly lent by the RAF for this purpose.
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Figure 64: Problem sorted

16 Aug 53		Capt WILLIAMSON returned from KUALA LUMPUR by train this morning. The accomodation problem has been settled and now after consultation with RAF and Federation authorities and after a further recce of the FRAZERS HILL area by helicopter, kindly lent by the RAF for this purpose.
-----------	--	---

⁹¹ Ibid, Page 4.

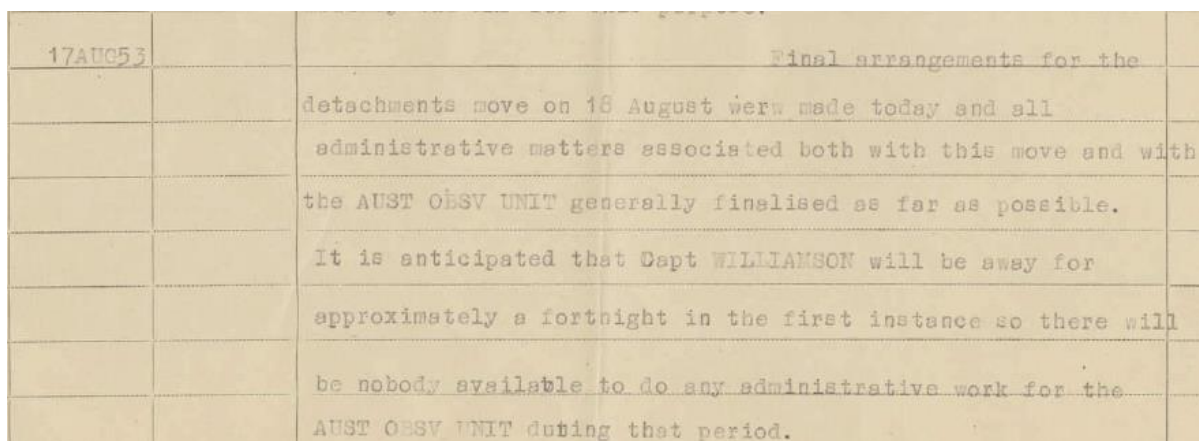


Figure 65: Final arrangements

17 Aug 53		Final arrangements for the detachments move on 18 August were made today and all administrative matters associated both with this move and with the AUST OBSV UNIT generally finalised as far as possible. It is anticipated that Capt WILLIAMSON will be away for approximately a fortnight in the first instance so there will be nobody available to do any administrative work for the AUST OBSV UNIT during that period.
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Detachment Departs

On the evening of 18 August 1953, the first detachment departed for Kuala Lumpur⁹².

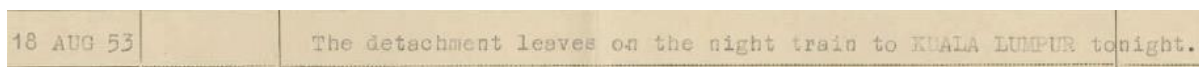


Figure 66: Detachment departs Singapore

18 Aug 53		The detachment leaves on the night train to KUALA LUMPUR tonight
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Operator Departure

On 21 August 1953, Signman Fincher departed Singapore for Australia⁹³.

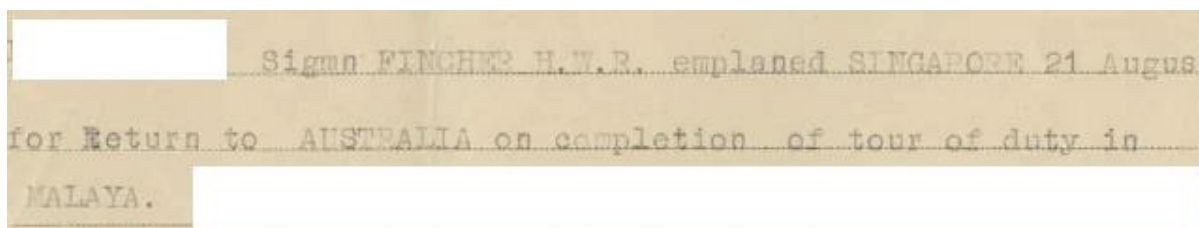


Figure 67: Sigm Fincher departs

21 Aug 53		Sigmnn FINCHER H.W.R emplaned SINGAPORE 21 August For return to AUSTRALIA on completion of tour of duty in MALAYA.
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⁹² Ibid, Page 6.

⁹³ Ibid, Page 7.

Return from Malaya

On 29 August Capt Williamson returned from Malaya with the news that approval had finally been received for the posting of an Administrative Sergeant to the AOU⁹⁴.

29 AUG 53		Capt WILLIAMSON returned to SINGAPORE this morning.
		Notification has been received that approval has been given
		for the posting of an admin Sgt to AUST OBSV UNIT. This

Figure 68: Admin Sgt approved

29 Aug 53		Capt WILLIAMSON returned to SINGAPORE this morning. Notification has been received that approval has been given for the posting of an admin Sgt to AUST OBSV UNIT.
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Strength Return

The following is the Other Rank Strength Return for August 1953⁹⁵:

2/1049	Sgt	TURNER R.	-	GHQ	SIG	REGT
1/3377	Sgt	STEWART G.G.	-	"	"	"
2/2514	Cpl	BETTENS J.	-	"	"	"
6/122	CPL	WEBB J.G.	-	"	"	"
3/10703	SIGMN	McMILLAN M.J.	-	"	"	"
3/2873	"	REID P.F.	-	"	"	"
1/2433	"	GRACE E.C.E.	-	"	"	"
3/10056	CPL	REID J.	-	"	"	"
3/10678	SIGMN	BUCKTON T.	-	"	"	"
2/10624	"	McCARTNEY H.C.	-	"	"	"
3/2735	"	HARRIS R.G.	-	"	"	"
3/3147	"	JORDAN C.C.H.	-	"	"	"
2/4075	"	PEABOCK R.L.	-	"	"	"
3/10810	"	ADAMS A.J.	-	"	"	"
1/1921	"	OWBRIDGE W.G.	-	"	"	"
Total OR attached - 15						

Figure 69: Strength Return for August 1953

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid, Appendix 1.

CHAPTER 3

Malaya

Deployments



Overview

From 18 August 1953, 101 Wrls Regt Det Singapore, (AOU) deployed small groups to Malaya in an attempt to locate and intercept any low powered communications nets that may be used by the MCP. The group operated in several locations: Fraser's Hill, Brinchang, Kroh, Penang Hill, Sungai Patani, and finally Batu Uban on Penang Island. These deployments remained until 1963.

British Uniforms

When the Detachment was deployed to Malaya they were all issued with British uniforms and webbing equipment as there was no suitable Australian equipment available for use in the tropics. This practice continued until approximately 1969.



Figure 70: British type webbing



Figure 71: British Issue Trousers⁹⁶

⁹⁶ AWM REL25559.002 Trousers: Corporal E Baker 101 Wireless Regiment / 7 Signals Regiment. British Army issue 1950 Pattern jungle green cotton drill trousers with green plastic buttons. The trousers have a concealed four button fly, and the waist is adjusted by a pair of cross-over straps connecting to chromed buckles at the hips. No belt loops are present. There are a pair of slash pockets at the hips and inset rear pockets secured by button flaps. The right hand pocket button has been replaced with one made of black plastic. On the left thigh is a large cargo patch pocket with a single buttoned flap. Inside the rear waistband is a green cotton maker's label printed in black with the words 'TROUSERS, DRILL, GREEN. 1950 Pattern. SIZE 2 Height 5ft. 3ins. to 5ft. 4ins. Waist 31ins. to 33ins. Seat 37ins. to 38ins. Leg 29 1/2L J. Compton, Sons & Webb Ltd. London. 1957' and a Broad Arrow marking. The service number 3077 is also written in black ink inside the waistband.



Figure 72: British Issue Jacket⁹⁷

Fraser's Hill

On 2 June 2012, R.G. (Rocky) Harris sent an email to Barry Hampstead⁹⁸ outlining the establishment of the first detachment at Fraser's⁹⁹ Hill.¹⁰⁰

Rocky wrote¹⁰¹

Furphies were flying around CK2 about late May 1953 that a detachment would soon be sent somewhere up country to try and locate any CT transmissions or, if, in fact, there were any CT transmissions to be had. It had long been suspected that in a perfect CT world, there would be High Frequency Morse radio transmissions presumably between Malaya and, probably, China. By mid-July, we knew who would be going and did not find out where until about a fortnight before leaving.

Prior to date of departure, those who did not possess jungle greens received issues of same from GHQ Sig Regt Q Store at Tyersall Park barracks. We all received issues of green basic pouches and appropriate webbing. The day before departure we were all issued with Mark V .303 rifles and ten rounds of ammunition. For the uninitiated, meaning anyone you may circulate this to, the Mark V .303 was the same as the Mark III .303, the model used by Australian troops at that time and the mark IV, used by the Brits, except it had a shorter barrel, the barrel had a flash eliminator and it was lighter.

⁹⁷ AWM REL25559.001 Safari-style 'Aertex' jacket: Corporal E Baker 101 Wireless Regiment / 7 Signals Regiment. Short sleeved British Army issue jungle green 'Aertex' cotton 'safari' jacket. The jacket is closed by four brown plastic buttons with no provision for a fastening at the collar. Shoulder straps are also secured by brown plastic buttons. The sleeves have no cuffs, and may have been modified from a standard long sleeved example. Each carries a cloth formation patch below the shoulder. On the right is a printed cotton patch featuring a winged shield on a light and dark blue background, the badge of HQ Far East Land Forces (FARELF). The left sleeve carries an embroidered 'AUSTRALIAN MILITARY FORCES' Rising Sun badge in gold, red and black cotton on an olive green background. Below the formation patch on each sleeve are a pair of corporal's rank chevrons made from white cotton tape sewn onto green Aertex cotton backing. The two breast patch pockets are pleated and have pointed button flap closures. The waist pockets are unpleated have large unsecured flaps. An external belt forms an integral part of the back of the jacket, and unusually, the loose ends have been retained in place, although the buckle has been removed. A green cotton label stitched under the right hand waist pocket reads: 'JACKETS BUSH (S.C.C 15) GREEN, 1950 Pattern Size 5' Below this are further size details, the manufacturer's marking 'GUISE (Leeds) Ltd.', a Broad Arrow, and the date '1954'. The size marking '5' is also stamped in black ink above the label. 'SCC 15' relates to the British standard camouflage colour, Number 15 being a jungle green.

⁹⁸ In June 2012 Barry Hampstead wrote an article titled *When you drink the water...* In the article he discussed the history of the AOU, Malaya Detachments and enclosed several articles from personnel who served in Singapore and Malaya. Several extracts from the article are included in following paragraphs.

⁹⁹ Also seen as Fraser's Hil, Fraser's Hill, I and Frazers Hill on some maps and publications.

¹⁰⁰ One of the early Op Sigs deployed on detachment. Later transferred to the RAAF.

¹⁰¹ From an e-mail sent by R.G. (Rocky) Harris to Barry Hampstead & Jack Fenton on 2 June 2012.

On the day of departure, all (excepting Sgt Turner, for obvious reasons) were issued with leather wristbands carrying brass sergeants' stripes. We were informed it was to facilitate living in Sergeants Mess accommodation anywhere we went. We were listed as T/Sgts. I don't think Rex was very overwhelmed with this because he remarked to us when handing them out 'not to get any strange ideas.'

On the evening of August 18, after our evening meal, the eight of us comprising Capt. Williamson, Sgt. Rex Turner, Cpl. Jack Bettens (tech), Cpl. Charlie Jordan, Sigs Tommy Buckton, Rocky Harris, Graham Owbridge and Bob Peacock were transported to Singapore railway, boarded the train, which, from memory departed at about 2100. Our equipment had already gone to KL and was waiting for us there.

The train trip was exceedingly slow as the train stopped at many towns and sometimes in between towns, probably for security reasons. Passengers on the train consisted mainly of Brit servicemen but there were a number of civilian passengers as well. During the journey, two Brit Army Captains who were, I guess, in charge of safety and security, moved throughout the train delegating sentries to be posted at the ends of each passenger carriage. The passenger carriages were similar to the old Queensland 'red rattler' with platforms at the end of each carriage. There were first, second and third class carriages. Officers rode first class and we rode second.

We eventually arrived at KL round about dawn and were quickly driven to Malaya Sig Regiment Headquarters and quartered in the Regiment's Sergeants Mess. Being very tired, most of us went to bed and slept for a couple of hours. Being quartered in the mess proved a bit awkward for me because I was a month of my 21st birthday but looked about 18 and it drew many questions from the Brit 'old and bold' as to how one so young could be a sergeant. I told them I was actually 26 and my looks were the result of clean living. Captain Williamson suggested very strongly we did not venture out of the barracks that night for obvious reasons and also the fact that we had a long day ahead of us tomorrow. We stayed in the mess that night and were entertained by the Brits and their wives and had a very enjoyable time.

The next morning, as previously arranged, we assembled outside the mess at 0730. Our equipment had already been loaded on to a truck (lorry, in Brit speak) and there was another truck to carry the other six of us. Captain Williamson rode 'shotgun' in the truck carrying the equipment while Rex did the same in our truck. We set out just after 0800 with two scout car escorts, one in the lead and one at the rear. Captain Williamson had advised us that we would stop at a place called Kuala Kubu Bahru, about 40 miles north of KL to obtain clearance for the trip on the Ipoh road and change escorts. We arrived there just after 0900 and were taken to the Sergeants mess of the 1st Battalion Queens Own Royal West Kents, who were stationed there, for a cup of tea and sandwiches. I think the good Captain had pre-arranged this.

After a short break, we were joined by our two relief escort scout cars, manned by Gurkhas, and proceeded north. Flat country for a while until we commenced our ascent into the highlands. Some half hour after commencing our ascent along a narrow winding road, our small convoy stopped, apparently at the behest of our good Captain who must have had some local knowledge and a sense of history. The very bend in the road where we stopped was, in fact, the spot where the British High Commissioner to Malaya, Sir Henry Gurney, his wife and entourage were ambushed and assassinated by the CTs some 20 months earlier in October 1951. This is a story of poor organisation, broken down escort scout cars and positioning of the truck carrying escort troops. I will not go into that here. Someone took photographs, Rex

Turner, I think, and I have a copy of it - a small three" by two" print. We continued on, past the Ipoh turn off where there was a small unoccupied sentry post, able to house about a dozen men and then on to a narrower, steeper and more winding road and eventually on to the RAF facility at Frasers Hill. More of the RAF facility, later.

We were greeted by the Commandant, Flt. Lt. George Rideout, somewhat similar in demeanour and persona to a cross between Captain Mainwaring of 'Dad's Army' and Colonel Klink of Hogans' Heroes. We were shown to our building, a grey brick bungalow which was to serve both as accommodation and set room. It sat on the edge of a bit of a cliff and was not accessible from the south or west. We unloaded the trucks quickly as they had to return to KL as quickly as possible, threw our personal gear in our rooms and had a quick lunch. After unpacking our equipment and storing it in the front enclosed verandah of where our set room was to be, Captain Williamson indicated he wanted to get straight onto erecting two rhombic aerials immediately outside our bungalow to the east. We accomplished this before nightfall. Captain Williamson and Jack Bettens did just about all of the positioning work as they seemed to be the only ones who knew what they were doing and what was required. The rest of us hung onto to guide ropes, held pliers, screwdrivers, etc., or fetched this and that, generally trying to make ourselves useful. After that, we had our evening meal and we all retired relatively early because we were a bit tired after a long day and with the knowledge we would have to get about setting up the set room early next morning. This was completed by mid-afternoon and we conducted tests by 'surfing the bands'. Everything worked first up which was a great relief. We commenced working in earnest at 1200 the following day.

We had two shifts: 1200 to 1800 and 1800 until 2359. Being five operators, two sets were manned during the afternoon and three at night. The five of us took turns at the third operator at night. It took a bit of juggling but we got it right pretty quickly. In our bungalow, there were three bedrooms Graham (Rigor Mortis) Owbridge, Bob Peacock and this writer slept in the largest one, Charlie Jordan and Jack Bettens in a slightly smaller one and Rex had a smaller room to himself. There was also a smallish kitchen. We used this as our dining room on all occasions, carrying our meals up from the camp galley, about 30 metres away under a covered walkway. It gave us a bit of privacy and we were grateful for being kept away from the great unwashed [¹⁰²] during working hours although those off duty mingled with them in the recreation hall, which served also as a mess hall and during the evening where there was often some good 'home-made' entertainment.

With airmen and airwomen coming and going every fortnight there was always a good chance you would run into a 'smart alec'. Once such 'smart alec' was a certain SAC (senior aircraftman) who mentioned one night that he was a ground radio tech. He asked us what we were doing there and our stock-in-trade answer was that we were a relay station for the Army Wireless Chain. To the vast majority of the great unwashed the Army Wireless Chain explanation would not mean a thing but it sounded plausible and usually satisfied most. However, this bloke replied that all he could see were a receiving rhombics which, as it happens, were quite visible from the rec hall. Jack Bettens was with us and quick as a flash he retorted "Of course you wouldn't see our transmitting antenna. It's half a mile down the hill on the western side of our bungalow in a small clearing strung up between trees, it's quite hard to see". "Oh, said the SAC. That's quite a clever place to put it". "Definitely" said Jack. Pretty clever answer,

¹⁰² Uncleared for access.

actually. Jack knew quite well that apart from being out of bounds to those other than us, access to the western side was physically impossible.

Frasers Hill was a magnificent experience mainly because of the people involved. We were a team. We got on terrifically well together. There were no petty squabbles or arguments. We supported one another and it was a great working environment. No big set rooms with RSs telling you what to do. No dog watches and everyone believing they were doing something important. I was very sad to leave.

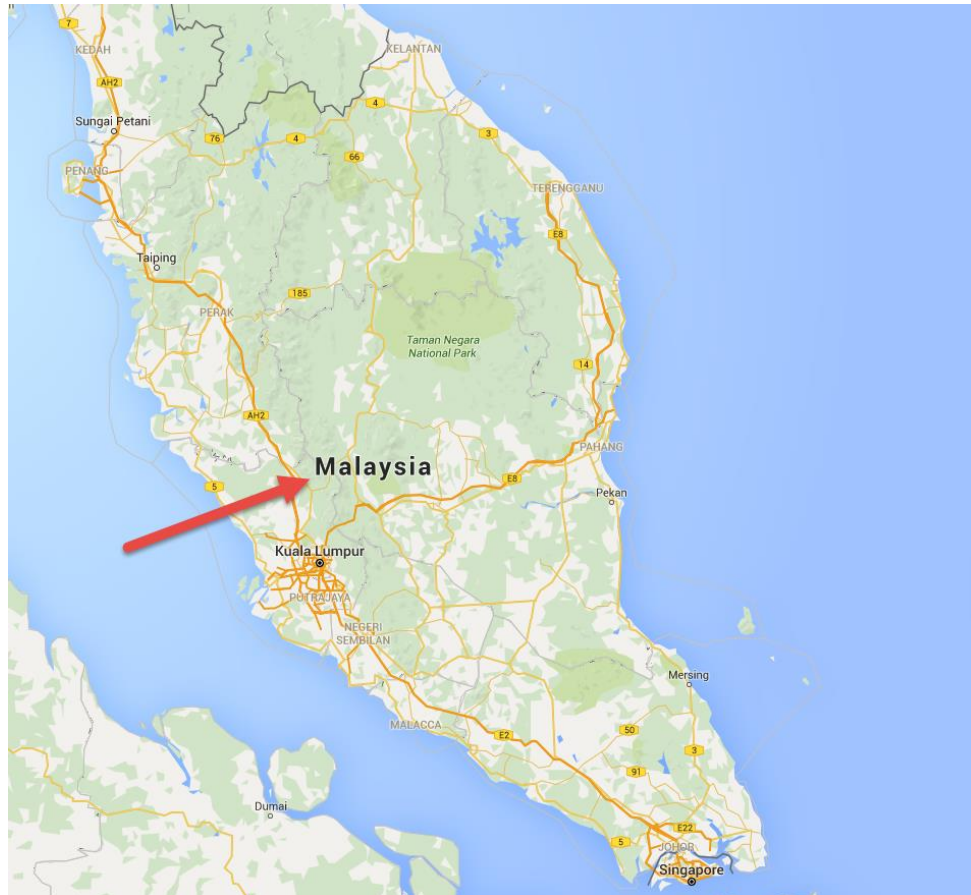


Figure 73: Location of Frasers Hill¹⁰³

¹⁰³ On 2015 roads, Frasers Hill is 116 km by road and a travel time of approx. 2 ½ hours.



Figure 74: Trucks with the Detachment's gear on the road to Fraser's Hill¹⁰⁴

Note armoured car escort at the rear



Figure 75: Operations and accommodation building¹⁰⁵

¹⁰⁴ Photo courtesy of Rocky Harris.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

Jack Fenton wrote¹⁰⁶:

The attached layout is more imagination with the larger spare table at the end bearing wave meter, a Hallicrafter used after 2400 when a Short-wave Hit Parade rewarded us for our efforts. It had a bunch of odds and sods, antenna gear, dirty cups ...

The other side was my bunk, private storage and a tall-boy for ammo and weapon/s which I kept locked and held the only keys - the same for the doors, locking the Operators and intruders out as I became Set Room docos and One-time Pad gear night-watchman also daytime/off-duty custodian. I had a shelf of signals bits that looked like a heap of debris.

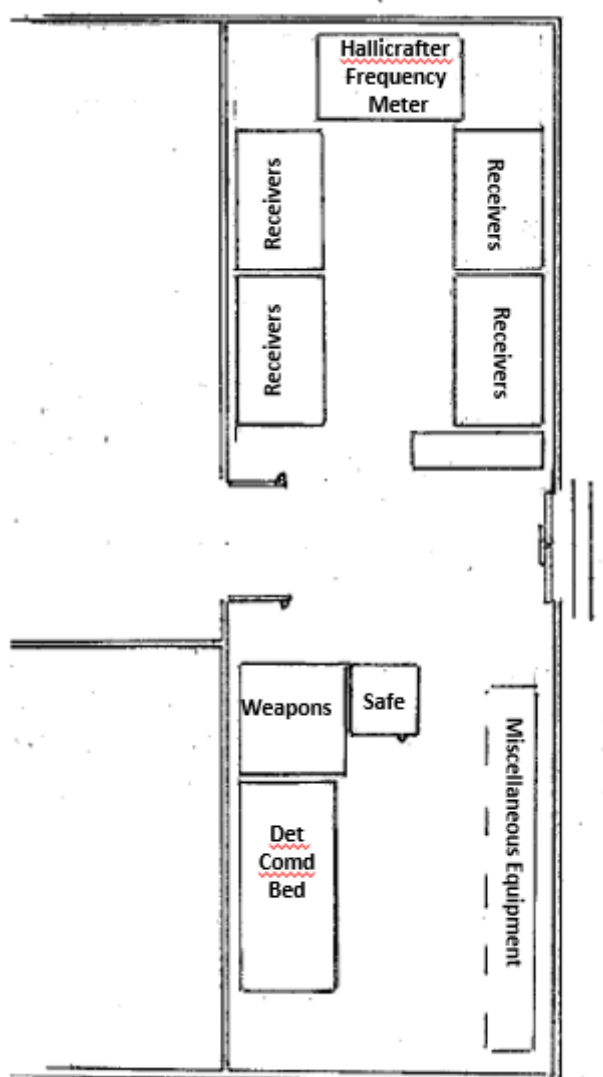


Figure 76: Operations Area Layout

¹⁰⁶ Email to Bob Hartley 2 Oct 2015.



Figure 77: Hallicrafter (SX-28) Receiver¹⁰⁷

Equipment

It is believed that the Detachment had available RCA AR-88¹⁰⁸ and AMR010 Receivers¹⁰⁹, SCR-211 Frequency Meter¹¹⁰ and Ferrograph Tape Recorders¹¹¹.



Figure 78: AMR101^{112 113}

¹⁰⁷ <http://www.radioing.com/museum/rx3.html>

¹⁰⁸ See Figure 8.

¹⁰⁹ Also known as Kingsley AR7 and is a clone of the US HRO Receiver.

¹¹⁰ See Figure 10.

¹¹¹ See Figure 11.

¹¹² The AMR101 (AR7) is a communications receiver covering LF and HF bands. It was made in Australia during 1940 and bears an extremely close resemblance to the National HRO receiver. The receiver has a tuning range from 138 kcs to 25 mcs.

¹¹³ <http://www.tuberadio.com/robinson/museum/AR7/>



Figure 79: AMR101 Tuning Coils¹¹⁴



Figure 80: Erecting antennas¹¹⁵

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.



Figure 81: Capt Williamson and some operators¹¹⁶

Sgt Rex Turner, Rocky Harris, Graham Owbridge, Bob Peacock
Tommy Buckton, Capt Williamson, Charlie Jordan



Figure 82: Rocky Harris and Graham Owbridge¹¹⁷

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

Weapons

The soldiers were armed with the British No 5 Mk I .303 inch rifle, 1945¹¹⁸.



Figure 83: No 5 Mk1 .303 Rifle

Role

The role of the Detachment was to search for, intercept, identify and locate MCP transmissions operating inside the Malayan Federation plus any external link the MCP may have to outside agencies.

This was an exacting role as the operators had to continually search the HF spectrum and with no background knowledge of the required transmissions, identify and discard all other transmissions.

Communications

The Detachment did not have any integral communication equipment to communicate with Singapore. They used the normal in-country Military Communication Network provided by either the British Army or RAF for urgent operational and administrative traffic. Classified operational traffic was encrypted by One Time Pad¹¹⁹ (OTP) with a special code book. All raw intercepted material was passed back to Singapore by safe hand¹²⁰ through the normal military system. This type of communication was extant for all deployments.

¹¹⁸ <http://www.nam.ac.uk/online-collection/detail.php?acc=1983-05-36-1> During operations in the Far East the British Army was convinced it needed a lighter, handier rifle for use in the jungle. Developed from 1944 onwards, the No 5 was basically a lightweight and shortened version of the No 4 Rifle, with a large flash eliminator on the muzzle. It continued in use after World War Two (1939-1945) but problems with the fearsome recoil and the zeroing of the sights meant it was not a popular weapon. Although declared as obsolete in July 1947 it continued to be used in Malaya in the 1950s, where the American M2 carbine supplemented it.

¹¹⁹ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/One-time_pad. One-Time-Pad (OTP) is an encryption technique that cannot be cracked if used correctly. In this technique, a plaintext is paired with random, secret key (or pad). Then, each bit or character of the plaintext is encrypted by combining it with the corresponding bit or character from the pad using modular addition. If the key is truly random, at least as long as the plaintext, never reused in whole or in part, and kept completely secret, the resulting cipher text will be impossible to decrypt or break

¹²⁰ Safe Hand (person to person) courier services are endorsed for the carriage of official information up to and including the level of TOP SECRET, including accountable material where deliveries of consignments are to be made directly to a nominated agency representative or their nominated alternative.



Figure 84: Example of a OTP

OC Visit to Detachment

During the period 1 to 18 September, Capt Williamson visited the Detachment¹²¹.

1 Sep 53)-(Capt WILLIAMSON was away on duty in Central MALAYA
18 Sep 53		during this period on the same task mentioned in last month's
		Diary. Therefore it was not possible to maintain the diary as
		a day to day account. A summary of the main points which occurred
		during this period follows :-

Figure 85: Capt Williams absence

1 Sept 53		Capt WILLIAMSON was away on duty in Central MALAYA
-		during this period on the same task mentioned in last month's
18 Sep 53		Diary. Therefore it was not possible to maintain the diary as
		a day to day account. A summary of the main points which occurred
		during this period follows:

OC Replacement

During Capt Williams absence the AOU was notified that his replacement would be Lt DC Mitchell¹²².

1.	Notification was received that 3/10081 Lt
	D.G. MITCHELL is to be posted to Aust Observer Unit MALAYA
	vice Capt J.I. WILLIAMSON. He will assume command of No 1
	Detachment 101 Wireless Regiment.

Figure 86: Replacement OC

¹²¹ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/12 RCDIG 1029434, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-30 Sep 1953\) Page.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/12%20RCDIG%201029434,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-30%20Sep%201953)%20Page.)

¹²² Ibid.

		1. Notification was received that 3/40081 Lt D.G. MITCHELL is to be posted to Aust Observer Unit MALAYA vice Capt J.I. WILLIAMSON. He will assume command of No 1 Detachment 101 Wireless Regiment.
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Orderly Room Clerk

On 2 September 1953, the AOU was advised that SSgt Ancliffe would be posted in as an Orderly Room NCO¹²³.

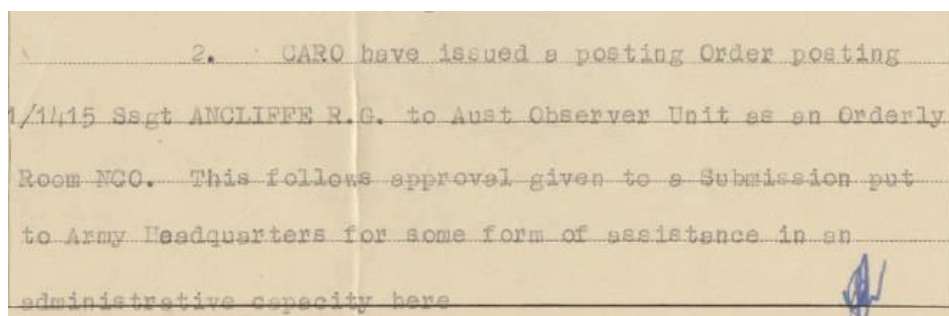


Figure 87: Orderly Room Clerk

2. CARO have issued a posting Order posting 1/1415 Ssgt ANCLIFFE R.G. to Aust Observer Unit as an Orderly Room NCO. This follows approval given to a Submission put to Army Headquarters for some form of assistance in an administrative capacity here.
--

New OC Arrival Date

On 24 September 1953, a signal was received stating that Lt Mitchell would depart Sydney on 12 October¹²⁴.

24 Sep	A signal received today said the Lt MITCHELL will be emplaning SYDNEY on 12 Oct for SINGAPORE.
--------	--

Figure 88: Lt Mitchell arrival date

24 Sep	A signal received today said the Lt MITCHELL will be emplaning SYDNEY on 12 Oct for SINGAPORE.
--------	--

OC Visit to Pahang

On 5 October 1953, Capt Williamson visited the Detachment again¹²⁵.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ Ibid, Page 3.

¹²⁵ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/13 RCDIG 1029435, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-31 Oct 1953\) Page 1.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/13%20RCDIG%201029435,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-31%20Oct%201953)%20Page%201.)

5 Oct		Capt Williamson caught night train to KUALA LUMPUR to visit detachment stationed in PAHANG.	
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Figure 89: Visit to Pahang

5 Oct		Capt Williamson caught night train to KUALA LUMPUR to visit detachment stationed in PAHANG.
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New Officer Commanding

On 13 October 1953, Lt DG Mitchell arrived to assume command of the Detachment and handover commenced on 14 October¹²⁶.

13 Oct		Lt D.G. Mitchell deplaned SINGAPORE today to assume command of No.1 Detachment 101 Wireless Regiment vice 1/112 Capt J.I. WILLIAMSON. ETD of Capt Williamson for Aust is 2 Nov 53.	
14-15 Oct		Handover of No.1 Detachment and Aust Observer Unit commenced	

Figure 90: New OC arrives

13 Oct		Lt D.G. Mitchell deplaned SINGAPORE today to assume command of No. 1 Detachment 101 Wireless Regiment vice 1/112 Capt J.I. WILLIAMSON. ETD of Capt Williamson for Aust is 2 Nov 53.
14-15 Oct		Handover of No. 1 Detachment and Aust Observer Unit commenced

Officers Visit Malaya Detachment

On 18 October 1953 Capt Williamson and Lt Mitchell departed Singapore to visit Malayan authorities and the 101 Wrls Regt Det¹²⁷.

18 Oct		Capt Williamson and Lt Mitchell entrained Singapore on the night train to KUALA LUMPUR on a weeks liaison visit to the Federation.	
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Figure 91: Officers visit to the Federation

18 Oct		Capt Williamson and Lt Mitchell entrained Singapore on the night train to KUALA LUMPUR on a weeks liaison visit to the Federation.
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¹²⁶Ibid, Page 2.

¹²⁷ Ibid.

Officers Return, Promotion and Arrivals

On 23 October 1953, the two officers returned from the visit to the Federation, Staff Sergeant Bob Antcliffe¹²⁸ arrived as the Admin Clerk for the AOU and Lt Mitchell was promoted to Captain¹²⁹.

23 Oct		Capt Williamson and Lt Mitchell returned from KUALA LUMPUR at 0800 hrs.
		1/1415 S/Sgt ANTCLIFFE R.G. deplaned CHANGI SINGAPORE at 1530 hrs and assumed posting of Orderly Room Sgt Australian Observer Unit.
		Received signal promoting 3/40081 Lt D.G. MITCHELL to T/Capt., to date from 15 Oct 53. Authority AHQ MS 7252 of 20 Oct 53.

Figure 92: Officers return from the Federation

23 Oct		Capt Williamson and Lt Mitchell returned from KUALA LUMPUR at 0800 hrs. 1/1415 S/Sgt ANTCLIFFE R.G. deplaned CHANGI SINGAPORE at 1530 hrs and assumed posting of Orderly Room Sgt Australian Observer Unit. Received signal promoting 3/40081 Lt D.G. Mitchell to T/Capt., to date from 15 Oct 53. Authority AHQ MS 7252 of 20 Oct 53.
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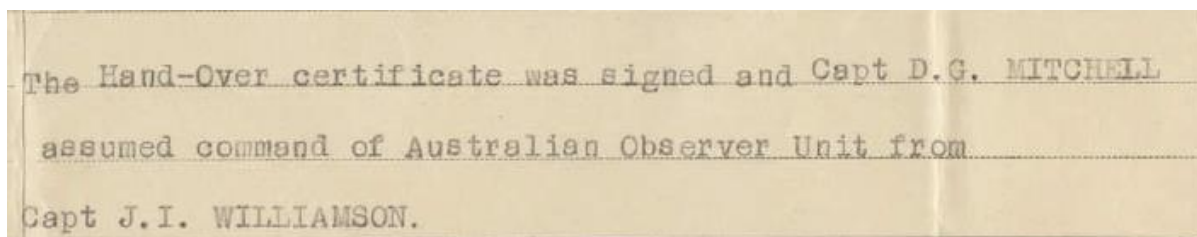
Figure 93: Bob Antcliff

¹²⁸ SSgt Antcliffe was an Operator Special Wireless from the Regiment.

¹²⁹ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/13 RCDIG 1029435, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-31 Oct 1953\) Page 3.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/13%20RCDIG%201029435,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-31%20Oct%201953)%20Page%203.)

Change of Command

On 28 October 1953, Capt Mitchell assumed command of the AOU and Det 101 Wrls Regt¹³⁰.



The Hand-Over certificate was signed and Capt D.G. MITCHELL assumed command of Australian Observer Unit from Capt J.I. WILLIAMSON.

Figure 94: Capt Mitchell assumes command

Operator Signals Trade

Meanwhile in October 1953, the trade of Operator Special Wireless was changed to Operator Signals (Op Sig) with a pay grade of Three Star.

Strength Return

The following is the Other Rank Strength Return for October 1953¹³¹.

<u>Officers</u>				
1/112	Capt J.I. WILLIAMSON	-	Attached GHQ Signal Regiment	
3/40081	Capt D.G. MITCHELL	-	" " " "	
<u>OR Attached</u>				
1/1415	S/Sgt ANTCLIFF R.G.	-	GHQ Signal Regiment	
2/1049	Sgt TURNER R.	-	" " "	
1/3377	Sgt STEWART G.G.	-	" " "	
2/2514	Cpl BETTENS J.	-	" " "	
6/122	Cpl WEBB J.G.	-	" " "	
3/10056	Cpl REID J.	-	" " "	
3/10703	Sigmn McMILLAN M.J.	-	" " "	
3/2873	Sigmn REID P.F.	-	" " "	
1/2433	Sigmn GRACE E.C.K.	-	" " "	
3/10678	Sigmn BUCKTON T.	-	" " "	
3/2735	Sigmn HARRIS R.G.	-	" " "	
3/3147	Sigmn JORDAN C.C.H.	-	" " "	
2/4075	Sigmn PEACOCK R.L.	-	" " "	
3/10810	Sigmn ADAMS A.J.	-	" " "	
1/1921	Sigmn OWBRIDGE W.G.	-	" " "	
2/10624	Sigmn McCARTNEY H.G.	-	" " "	
Total Attached		-	16	

Figure 95: Strength Return for October 1953

¹³⁰ Ibid, Page 4.

¹³¹ Ibid, Appendix 1.

Captain Williamson Departs Singapore

On 4 November 1953, Capt Williamson departed Singapore¹³².

4 Nov	1/112 Capt J.I. Williamson emplaned Singapore 0900GH for
	Sydney and thence onward movement 101 Wireless Regiment
	CABARLAH, Queensland.

Figure 96: Capt Williamson departs Singapore

Federation Visit

On 5 November 1953, Capt Mitchell departed Singapore for one of his many monthly visits to the Federation to attend conferences and visit the Detachment¹³³.

5 Nov	Capt Mitchell entrained at 1915 hrs for KUALA LUMPUR on
	liaison duty to the Federation Authorities.

Figure 97: Capt Mitchell liaison visit

Jack Fenton Posting

On 10 November 1953, the AOU received notification that SSgt Jack Fenton was to be posted to the unit to relieve Sgt Rex Turner¹³⁴.

10 Nov	Received signal advising that 1/421 S/Sgt J.E. Fenton
	would be posted to this Unit as a relief for Sgt Turner
	who is due to return not before 5 Dec

Figure 98: Jack Fenton Posting Order

Visit to Federation, Again

On 16 December, Capt Mitchell flew [*normal transportation was train*] to Kuala Lumpur on a liaison visit with Federation authorities¹³⁵.

¹³² [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/14 RCDIG 1029436, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-30 Nov 1953\) Page 1.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/14%20RCDIG%201029436%20AWM95%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit%20(1-30%20Nov%201953)%20Page%201)

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ Ibid, Page 2.

¹³⁵ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/15 RCDIG 1029437, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-30 Dec 1953\) Page 1.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/15%20RCDIG%201029437%20AWM95%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit%20(1-30%20Dec%201953)%20Page%201)

16 Dec	Capt Mitchell emplaned 0715 hrs (Malayan Airways) for KUALA LUMPUR on liaison visit to Federation Authorities.
--------	--

Figure 99: Capt Mitchell Visit

Jack Fenton Arrives

On 19 December, Capt Mitchell returned to Singapore and Jack Fenton arrived.¹³⁶

19 Dec	Capt Mitchell arrived KALLANG Airport from KUALA LUMPUR at 1330 hrs.
	1/421 T/S/Sgt FENTON J.E. R Aust Sigs deplaned Singapore at 2200 hrs, ex Australia via QANTAS for attachment to this Unit.

Figure 100: Jack Fenton arrives

Jack Fenton Assumes Command of Federation Detachment

Soon after arrival and being issued with equipment and clothing, Jack Fenton travelled to the Federation to assume command of the Detachment vice Rex Turner. Jack was accompanied by Capt Mitchell¹³⁷.

22 Dec	Capt MITCHELL and S/Sgt FENTON entrained 1915 hrs for KUALA LUMPUR for temporary attachment to HQ Malaya and liaison visit.
--------	---

Figure 101: Jack Fenton moves to the Federation

Travel into Malaya

The main means of transportation to the Malayan detachment was by train. All military members who travelled on the train were required to undertake guard duties on the front of the train and in carriages. On the occasion of his first trip into Malaya, Jack Fenton, being the senior non-commissioned person on board, was given the 'honour' of being appointed the Draft Conducting NCO.

Jack Fenton¹³⁸:

[After being appointed, Jack said] Well, better gimme a look at the manifest. Wow! Two Brit Infantry Sgts and over a hundred troops just back from the Korean War! Needing guidance on how to handle so many Brit crunchy vets, I sought, and found, the Draft Conducting Officer - in the train bar. The Royal Medical Corps Captain couldn't oblige with a single clue as he nervously prescribed himself whiskies for his

¹³⁶ Ibid.

¹³⁷ Ibid, Page 5.

¹³⁸ Jack Fenton Memoirs.

condition. 'You carry on, Staff. Just carry on.' No choice but to bung on side and look purposeful. The RTO obligingly summoned the Brit Sgts for an O Group with the Draft NCO. My orders? 'Well, let's see. Right. Magazines, ten rounds. In pockets, not weapons. OK?' The Sgts seemed to think that there should be more. 'Ah, yes, mm,' a sudden inspiration: 'Post two armed sentries at both ends of all carriages, say, for two hours at a time.

The terrorists often had great fun blowing up railway lines so the authorities took precautions. About a mile ahead of every train, ran another engine pushing a flat-top on which was a load of ballast. If the flat-top was blown, its engine-driver used his SCR536 Walkie-Talkie¹³⁹ to warn the following driver. But it seems that Malayan Railways' R/T comms were no better than Aust Sigs'. The first that the passengers knew that the line had been sabotaged was when they were decked as their engine ploughed up the tender behind the front engine.

A Sgt suggested, 'How about we get down and deploy around the train, Staff?' 'Exactly my plan, do it.' And they did. Some desultory shots came in from the dark tree-line. We all let loose a fusillade back. Absolutely useless but, like getting one's word in during a slanging match, it felt good. All went quiet; time to give the good Doctor Captain a sitrep. 'You just carry on, Staff!'

Despite their lousy comms, the railways were well organised with engineers, cranes, gang of fettlers, replacement rails and engine arriving promptly. A well-armed party also came and took over from the valiant, besieged defenders. In less than 2 hours, the train was on its way again.



Figure 102: SCR536

¹³⁹ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SCR-536> The **SCR-536** was a hand-held radio transceiver used by the US Army Signal Corps in World War II. It is popularly referred to as a walkie talkie, although it was originally designated a "handie talkie".



Figure 103: Derailed carriages¹⁴⁰

Handover Complete

On completion of the handover Capt Mitchell and Rex Turner returned to Singapore on 31 December 1953¹⁴¹.

30 Dec	Capt MITCHELL and Sgt TURNER entrained KUALA LUMPUR for
	Singapore, arriving Singapore 0815 hrs 31 Dec 53.

Figure 104: Handover complete

Strength Return

The following is the Other Rank Strength Return for December 1953¹⁴².

¹⁴⁰ <http://www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/205189717>

¹⁴¹ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/15 RCDIG 1029437, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-31 Dec 1953\) Page 6.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017%2F4%2F15%20RCDIG%201029437,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders%27%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-31%20Dec%201953)%20Page%206.)

¹⁴² Ibid, Appendix 1.

<u>OR Attached</u>					
1/1415	S/Sgt ANTCLIFF R.G.	-	Attached	GHQ	Signal Regiment
1/421	S/Sgt FENTON J.E.	-	"	"	"
1/3377	Sgt STEWART G.G.	-	"	"	"
2/1049	Sgt TURNER R.	-	"	"	"
6/122	Sgt WEBB J.G.	-	"	"	"
2/2514	Cpl BETTENS J.	-	"	"	"
3/10056	Cpl REID J.	-	"	"	"
3/10678	L/Cpl BUCKTON T.	-	"	"	"
3/3147	L/Cpl JORDAN C.C.H.	-	"	"	"
3/10703	Sigmn McMILLAN M.J.	-	"	"	"
3/2873	Sigmn REID P.F.	-	"	"	"
3/2735	Sigmn HARRIS R.G.	-	"	"	"
3/10810	Sigmn ADAMS A.J.	-	"	"	"
1/2433	Sigmn GRACE E.C.K.	-	"	"	"
1/1921	Sigmn OWEBRIDGE W.G.	-	"	"	"
2/4075	Sigmn PEACOCK R.L.	-	"	"	"
2/10624	Sigmn McCARTNEY H.C.	-	"	"	"
Total Attached		-	17		

Figure 105: Strength Return for December 1953

CHAPTER 4

1954



Rex Turner Departs Singapore

On 5 January 1954, Sgt Rex Turner¹⁴³ returned to Australia¹⁴⁴.

5 Jan	2/1049 Sgt R TURNER emplaned (BOAC) for SYDNEY having completed
	12 months tour of duty in MALAYA.

Figure 106: Rex Turner departs Singapore

1954 Visits

On 14 January 1954, Capt Mitchell continued his visits to the Federation¹⁴⁵.

14 Jan	Capt Mitchell departed by plane for KUALA LUMPUR on liaison
	visit to Federation Authorities.

Figure 107: Another visit

New Locations

In early February there were discussions and reconnaissance regarding other locations for the detachment to operate¹⁴⁶.

7 Feb	Capt Mitchell, Sgt Stewart and Signm Reid entrained 1915 hrs
	Singapore for Kuala Lumpur on Federation liaison and temporary
	duties in Malaya.

Figure 108: Liaison Visit

25 Feb	Capt Mitchell and Cpl Bettens entrained 1915 hrs for Kuala
	Lumpur on temporary attachment to Federation authorities.

Figure 109: Temporary attachment

¹⁴³ Soon after returning to Australia, Rex retired from the Army and had a long career with the Defence Signals Directorate.

¹⁴⁴ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/16 RCDIG 1029438, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-31 Jan 1954\)](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/16%20RCDIG%201029438,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-31%20Jan%201954)%20Page%201.) Page 1.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, Page 1.

¹⁴⁶ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/17 RCDIG 1029439, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-28 Feb 1954\)](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/17%20RCDIG%201029439,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-28%20Feb%201954)%20Page%201.) Page 1.

MCP Communications

There are no official records of MCP communications being intercepted. However, Jack Fenton has related a story of one occasion when they were successful.

Malaya, 1953-54, Supreme Commander, General Sir Gerald Templar has had no results from our search from Frasers Hill. UK Womens Air Force are up on leave nearby. At 2030 hours local one of the five operators wants to go to the NAAFI to check them out. The other three operators and I locate transmissions that we recognize as only Chinese, Siamese, Vietnamese and many other countries – (no Malay Communist Party) - which we log very briefly, just to provide evidence that we are really searching.

Suddenly, in booms a [callsign] NIX calling 38K at signal strength of 5/5 on 7160khz. The jerky operator is using normal Chinese callup procedure. We've never heard one so loud, but he gives up and goes down. Signal strength is enough out-of-character to follow up at the same time tomorrow but with no expectations.

Next night, acting Sgt Eric Grace finds [callsign] NIX, still 5/5, contacting 38K - sending "like a bat out of hell," says Ecky. NIX tells of movement up through well-known places in northwest Malaya, with emphasis on BALING and terminating in PATANI in Thailand. Well done Eric! The possible closeness of NIX's ground-wave, and mention of an apparent route to a secure area out of the war theatre impel us to drastic action.¹⁴⁷

The OC RAF is absent; besides, I am not authorized to use his sole RAF telephone before 0800 local (restricted to sending OTP - safe signals by voice to CK2). We sweet talk/threaten duty guard, RAF Cpl Nandals, and commandeer the phone, spend ages going from switchboard to switchboard, bluffing with "Immediate, Authority of General Templar", down to CK2 in Singapore and, after an hour or so, contact the Brit Duty Officer.

The fragility of veiled speech is weighed against the urgency of the information (not to mention that we'd been told that Templar had a case of whisky for the first MPC intercept). Memory is vague but I think it goes 'picking up shopping items including eggs costing 71 dollars 60 cents but suspect some seem to be bad so we'll maintain a 24-hour watch over them to see if any hatch'. Someone remarks that the best of Brit talent might have migrated to Australia but some smart ones remain - the Duty Officer twigs.

The bad news is that Alexander Leaven has complaints from the RAF Command of my forcing entry, besides previously being rude to Air Officers. Then there is the matter of breaching security. He lets me off asking me to be kind to RAF officers in future and not to use veiled speech, unless the matter is as urgent as

¹⁴⁷ The authors have been trying to confirm the actual date of this event, but to no avail. Jack Fenton mentioned in an email on 23 Oct 15: *Graham Bennett came up to FH about the time we logged an item attracting attention. He heard it a few days later at a much reduced strength/readability which we inferred as movement away from us, so the station moved, following the direction indicated by the target in Ecky's text. Never heard again. [Graham Bennett first moved to the Det in Malaya on 26 Mar 1954.]*

the NIX case. What a Stirling bloke! And the whisky? That never was a deal, only an initiative of CKII (Mongrels!) and he won't compensate. Still upcountry at the Sharp End, Eric Grace is now our new gun operator but, due to security rules, his triumph is kept sub-rosa so long that even our closest colleagues, such as Rusty Godley, do not get to hear of it.

Frasers Hill closes down and the Detachment moves to Brinchang, closer to BALING. I report to the (UK) Government Communications Officer at Phoenix Park, Alex Leaven. The good news is that friendly, military activity has intensified in the north-west as Eric's information is partially verified by local agents. (Months later, Gen Templar announces that he has finished his part in the war, that it has begun its slow, attrition stage and has no need of him, so he retires. Later still, the guerrilla leader, Chin Peng, comes out of BALING jungle for peace talks and, ultimately, peace as he retires to PATANI area).

The book *GCHQ*¹⁴⁸, reported:

During the mid-1950s GCHQ began to intercept what it believed to be wireless traffic between the MCP guerrilla leadership and the Chinese Communist Party in Peking.

Reconnaissance of Locations

On 8 March 1954, Capt Mitchell visited the Federation Authorities and the Detachment. From 9 to 19 March Capt Mitchell and L/Cpl Buckton conducted a reconnaissance of other locations for future Detachments¹⁴⁹.

8 Mar	Capt Mitchell departed by plane 0715 hrs for Kuala Lumpur on liaison visit.
9-19 Mar	Capt Mitchell and L/Cpl Buckton (from det in Malaya) departed on liaison tour of the Federation of Malaya as agreed upon by the Federation authorities. This tour continued until the 19th when L/Cpl Buckton returned to the detachment and Capt Mitchell by plane to Singapore.

Figure 110: Reconnaissance

Move to Brinchang

It is probable that during late March the Frasers Hill Detachment moved to Brinchang¹⁵⁰.

¹⁴⁸ Aldrich, Richard (2010-06-10). *GCHQ* (p. 149). HarperCollins Publishers. Kindle Edition.

¹⁴⁹ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/18 RCDIG 1029440, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-31 Mar 1954\) Page 2.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/18%20RCDIG%201029440,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-31%20Mar%201954)%20Page%202)

¹⁵⁰ The authors have not been able to find any information of how the Detachment was set up at Brinchang.

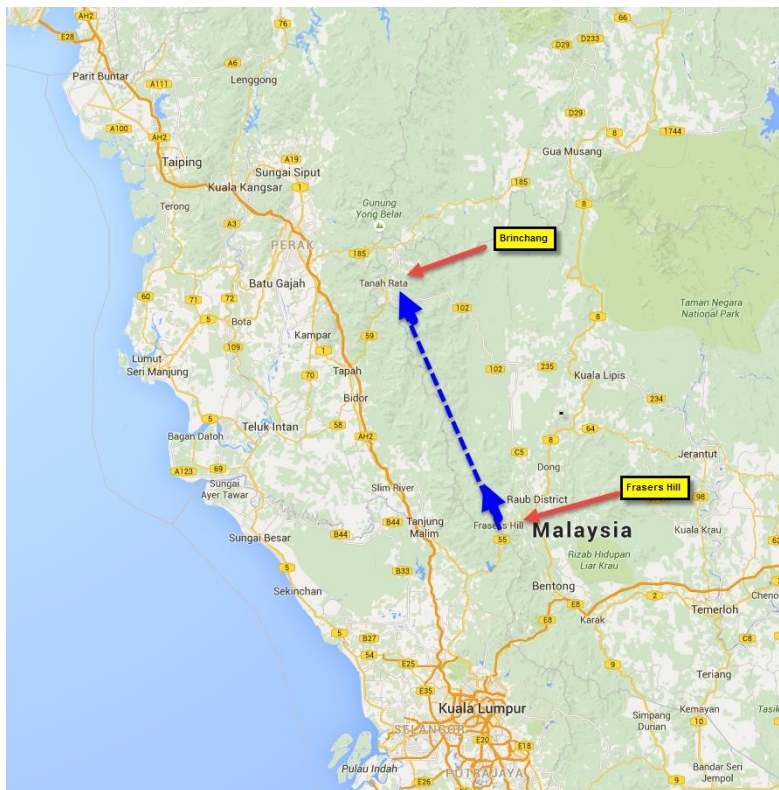


Figure 111: Brinchang Location¹⁵¹



Figure 112: Brinchang circa 1950s¹⁵²

¹⁵¹ 2015 Road conditions show travel from Frasers hill to Brinchang 200 km taking approximately 3 ¼ hours.

¹⁵² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Time_Tunnel_%28museum%29

New Arrivals

On 17 March 1954, two relief operators arrived from Australia¹⁵³.

17 Mar		3/1801 Cpl BENNETT G.M. and 2/11019 Sigmn McKINVEN D. arrived
		from Australia by RAF Courier plane, for attachment to Aust
		Observer Unit. Also on same plane was 2/2435 Cpl LISH R.B.

Figure 113: Relief Operators

Capt Williams to Depart

On 20 March 1954, bookings were made for Capt Williams to return to Australia on completion of his tour¹⁵⁴.

20 Mar		Provisional booking on SS Charon from Singapore on 3rd June
		to Australia was made for Capt Williams whose tour ends on
		that date.

Figure 114: Capt Williams to return to Australia

Proposed Replacements

On 24 March 1954, the AOU received notification of further replacement operators¹⁵⁵.

		Received signal that Sigmn Lea and Godley (reliefs for Adams
		and Peacock) were due to move not later than 29th March and
		that Adams and Pescock were to emplane for Australia not
		before 5th April.

Figure 115: Replacement Operators

Capt Mitchell and Reinforcements Depart for Kuala Lumpur

On 26 March 1954, Capt Mitchell flew to Kuala Lumpur to arrange reception and transportation for six operators to arrive at Kuala Lumpur as reinforcements on 27 March. Five operators arrived on 27 March and were transported to the Detachment¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/18 RCDIG 1029440, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-31 Mar 1954\) Page 3.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/18%20RCDIG%201029440,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-31%20Mar%201954)%20Page%203.)

¹⁵⁴ Ibid, page 4.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, page 5.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid, page 6.

26 Mar		Capt Mitchell departed on 0715 plane for temporary liaison duties in Malaya. Upon arrival in Kuala Lumpur arrangements were made for the reception and transportation of the six reinforcements and equipment for the detachment in Malaya. The following members entrained 1915 hrs for Kuala Lumpur for temporary duties in Malaya. Cpls Bennett, Bettens, L/Cpl Jordan, Sigm McMillan, Adams.
27 Mar		Above party duly met by Capt Mitchell in Kuala Lumpur were moved to the site of the detachment.

Figure 116: Reinforcements for Malaya Detachment

26 Mar		Capt Mitchell departed on 0715 plane for temporary liaison duties in Malaya. Upon arrival in Kuala Lumpur arrangements were made for the reception and transportation of the six reinforcements and equipment for the detachment in Malaya. The following members entrained 1915 hrs for Kuala Lumpur for temporary duties in Malaya. Cpls Bennett, Bettens, L/Cpl Jordan, Sigm McMillan, Adams..
27 Mar		Above Party duly met by Capt Mitchell in Kuala Lumpur were moved to the site of the detachment

Malaya Reconnaissance

On 3 April 1954, three operators returned from Kuala Lumpur. It is probable that these three operators and Capt Mitchell were reconnoitring sites for future detachments¹⁵⁷.

3 Apr		Cpl Bettens, L/Cpls Buckton and Jordan returned from Kuala Lumpur by train 0800 hrs. Received signal authorising extension of tour for 14 days (approx) of L/Cpl Jordan.
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Figure 117: Operators return from Kuala Lumpur

3 Apr		Cpl Bettens, L/Cpls Buckton and Jordan returned from Kuala Lumpur by train 0800 hrs. Received signal authorising extension of tour for 14 days (approx) of L/Cpl Jordan.
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¹⁵⁷ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/19 RCDIG 1029441, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-30 Apr 1954\) Page 1.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/19%20RCDIG%201029441,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-30%20Apr%201954)%20Page%201.)

Replacement Operators

On 6 April 1954, notification was received that two operators were to depart Australia for Singapore.¹⁵⁸

6 Apr		Received signal that Sigmn Lea and Godley were due to depart
		for Singapore by RAF Courier, Hastings plane from Mallala on
		14 April.

Figure 118: New operators

6 Apr		Received signal that Sigmn Lea and Godley were due to depart for Singapore by RAF Courier, Hastings plane from Mallala on 14 April.
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More Conferences

On 12 April 1954, Capt Mitchell attended a conference at GHQ. The meeting was probably concerning further detachments into Malaya. On 15 April Capt Mitchell left for Kuala Lumpur for an extended visit.¹⁵⁹

12 Apr		Capt Mitchell attended a conference at GHQ - outcome of which
		was another liaison visit to the Federation Authorities was
12 Apr	cont:	indicated. This visit will commence on 15 April and probably
		end on 10 May.
15 Apr		Capt Mitchell departed by plane 0715 for Kuala Lumpur on
		liaison visit and special duties.

Figure 119: Kuala Lumpur extended visit

12 Apr		Capt Mitchell attended a conference at GHQ - outcome of which was another liaison visit to the Federation Authorities was indicated. This visit will commence on 15 April and probably end on 10 May.
15 Apr		Capt Mitchell departed by plane 0715 for Kuala Lumpur on liaison visit and special duties.

Change of Operators

On 15 and 16 April 1954, there was a changeover of operators at Singapore¹⁶⁰.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, Page 3.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, Page 4.

15 Apr	cont:	3/3147 L/Cpl Jordan C.C. H. R Aust Sigs, emplaned for Australia on QANTAS at Kallang Airport, for RTA on completion of his two year tour of duty with this unit.
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Figure 120: LCpl Jordan departs

15 Apr	cont	3/3147 L/Cpl Jordan C.C.H. R Aust Sigs, emplaned for Australia on QANTAS at Kallang Airport, for RTA on completion of his two year tour of duty with this unit.
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16 Apr		5/1902 Sigmn Lea P. and 2/5177 Sigmn Godley D.R. both R Aust Sigs, arrived by RAF Courier plane at 1700 hrs at Changi Airfield for posting to this unit on 12 months tour of duty.
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Figure 121: Signalmen Lea and Godley arrive

16 April		5/1902 Sigmn Lee P. and 2/5177 Sigmn Godley D.R. both R Aust Sigs, arrived by RAF Courier plane at 1700 hrs at Changi Airfield for posting to this unit on 12 months tour of duty.
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Anzac Day

On 25 April 1954, AOU members attended ceremonial services for Anzac Day at the Singapore Cenotaph.¹⁶¹



Figure 122: Anzac Day 1954¹⁶²

Some of those on parade were (white puggarees):
Standing: Don McKinven, Rusty Godley, Peter Lea, Jim Reid, Jack Bettens and Bob Antcliff (2nd from right).
Kneeling: Graham Bennett, Graham Stewart, Rocky Harris

¹⁶¹ Ibid, Page 5.

¹⁶² Photo courtesy Rocky Harris. Some of those on parade were (white puggarees):
Standing: Don McKinven, Rusty Godley, Peter Lea, Jim Reid, Jack Bettens and Bob Antcliff (2nd from right). Kneeling: Graham Bennett, u/l, Rocky Harris.

Probable New Detachment Locations

In the period 10 to 21 May 1954, Capt Mitchell attended several conferences¹⁶³ in Singapore and Malaya¹⁶⁴.

		Capt Mitchell arrived from Kuala Lumpur by plane at 2000 hrs.	
11 May		Capt Mitchell attended conference at 1000 hrs and again 1500 hrs at GHQ.	
12 May		Capt Mitchell attended conference with CSO FARELF, 1120, and again at GHQ 1500-1800.	
13 May		Worked in office and Singapore generally on Admin matters.	
14 May		Capt Mitchell departed for HQ Malaya and Federation Authorities on liaison visit by plane 0700 hrs.	
		Movements advise that Capt Williams now returning by BOAC to Perth on 22 June.	

Figure 123: Conferences

10 May		Capt Mitchell arrived from Kuala Lumpur by plane at 2000 hrs.
11 May		Capt Mitchell attended conference at 1000 hrs and again 1500 hrs at GHQ.
12 May		Capt Mitchell attended conference with CSO FARELF, 1120, and again at GHQ 1500-1800.
14 May		Capt Mitchell departed for HQ Malaya and Federation Authorities on liaison visit by plane 0700 hrs.
		Movements advise that Capt Williams now returning by BOAC to Perth on 22 June.

Recce Party Returns

On 17/18 May 1954, the reconnaissance party returned to Singapore¹⁶⁵ and notification received that five additional operators were departing Australia for Singapore¹⁶⁶:

17 May		5 members of Unit returning from temporary duty in Malaya to Singapore on train from Kuala Lumpur entrained 2000 hrs.
18 May		Members from Recce party return by train arriving 0800 hrs Singapore complete with all equipment.
		Received signal advising 5 Sigmn leaving Australia by QANTAS for Singapore 22 May.

Figure 124: Recce Party returns

17 May		5 Members of Unit returning from temporary duty in Malaya to Singapore on train from Kuala Lumpur entrained 2000 hrs
18 May		Members from Recce party return by train arriving 0800 hts Singapore complete with all equipment.
		Received signal advising 5 Sigmn leaving Australia by Qantas

¹⁶³ These conferences were most probably in respect to Detachment personnel operating in new locations in Malaya.

¹⁶⁴ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/20 RCDIG 1029266, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-31 May 1954\) Page 2.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017%2F4%2F20%20RCDIG%201029266,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders%27%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-31%20May%201954)%20Page%202.)

¹⁶⁵ Reconnaissance area or personnel involved not mentioned or located by authors.

¹⁶⁶ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/20 RCDIG 1029266, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-31 May 1954\) Page 3.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017%2F4%2F20%20RCDIG%201029266,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders%27%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-31%20May%201954)%20Page%203.)

		For Singapore 22 May
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Penang Hill Deployment

It is believed that the following diary extract¹⁶⁷ refers to a Detachment being deployed to Penang Hill on Penang Island.

25 May	The following members departed at 0500 hrs by 3 ton vehicle to pick up stores and equipment, thence entrain at 0800 hrs for a site in the Federation of Malaya to conduct a recce:- i/c Capt Mitchell. 2 i/c Cpl Reid, Sigmn McKinven, McCartney, Godley, Lea, Machin and Cpl Bettens. ETA at site of recce 1200 hrs on 26 May.
--------	--

Figure 125: Recce Party departs

25 May	The following members departed at 0500 hrs by 3 ton vehicle to pick up stores and equipment, thence entrain at 0800 hrs for a site in the Federation of Malaya to conduct a recce :- I/c Capt Mitchell, 2 i/c Cpl Reid, Sigmn McKinven. McCartney, Godley, Lea, Machin and Cpl Bettens. ETA at site of recce 1200 hrs on 26 May
--------	--

Hugh (Jock) McCartney¹⁶⁸ later wrote an article for the 7 Sig Regt Association Newsletter¹⁶⁹.

After the closure of the Frazer Hill Det, a new Det was formed consisting of Sgt Jim Reid, Sigs Rusty Godley, Peter Lee, and yours truly Jock McCartney. Our destination was to be Penang Hill where none of us had been before.



Figure 126: Penang Island Location

¹⁶⁷ Ibid, Page 4.
¹⁶⁸ Hugh (Jock) McCartney an Op Sig who retired as a Warrant Officer Class 1 circa 1976.
¹⁶⁹ Barry Hampstead *When you drink the water...*, June 2012, Pages 29, 30.



Figure 127: Looking at Penang Hill from the main city of Georgetown¹⁷⁰

Arriving on the island at Georgetown we were to discover that the only way up the hill was by cable railway constructed in two sections meaning we had to manhandle all our equipment etc. twice going up the hill. Arriving at the top we found that the only transport on the hill was a Police vehicle which they were not about to loan us, so conning the loan of a two wheeled barrow from the railway people we finally got our stuff to our destination which turned out to be a British Public Service change of air guesthouse consisting of about five or six bedrooms all en-suited, a large dining room plus lounge and a huge verandah from where we had a view down to Georgetown and across the strait to Butterworth and Kedah Peak. The place was staffed by a cook and his two wives who acted as our Amahs. The cook was given a monthly allowance by Phoenix Park to feed us during our stay but as usual it seldom arrived on time so we had at times pretty lean pickings.



Figure 128: Penang Hill Police Station¹⁷¹

¹⁷⁰ Photo Courtesy of Blue Baker.

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

We set up shop in one of the bedrooms and after a couple of weeks Jim Reid would stand in and give the day bloke a chance to go into town. The trains ran about one every hour with the last leaving the bottom about 8.30pm which meant if you missed it you would have to spend the night in town and get the first one up in the morning leaving at about 6.30am.

A quick tour around the top of the hill showed that there was a small kiosk which sold just about everything apart from grog, quite a few other bungalows and a Governor's mansion plus the main Police station. For our supplies Jim Reid would make a trip to Minden Barracks if he could con some transport from the Scottish Regiment that was in barracks at the time. Once we had settled in our gallant couple Rusty and Peter decided one day they would try and find a track through the Zulu into Georgetown. After a couple of hours they both arrived back a bit out of breath and white around the gills, it transpired they found a track but on rounding a corner came face to face with a couple of Chinese looking blokes in some form of uniform and having looked at each other in dismay both groups about turned and took off in opposite directions.

Another incident occurred when Peter Lee had gone into town and on the way back up on the train found another couple of obviously English gentleman in the carriage with him who immediately started asking some very pointed questions about what we were doing on the hill. When he told Jim about it he asked Peter to describe the man which he did, describing one of them as one armed bald old coot, well, when Jim heard this he almost had a heart attack telling Peter the man he described was no less a person than Lt General Bourne who was Templers¹⁷² replacement and was having a bit of R & R at the Governor's Mansion.

Promotions

On 1 June 1954, there were several promotions within the Detachment¹⁷³.

3 June		Received signal promoting 3/10056 Cpl Reid J to T/Sgt for
		duration of the Recce in Malaya of which he is i/c, and
		3/1801 Cpl Bennett G.M. to T/Sgt to date from 17 May 54.

Figure 129: Promotions

Part of Recce Party Returns

On 3 June 1954, two personnel of the Recce Party returned to Singapore¹⁷⁴.

¹⁷² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gerald_Templer On 22 January 1952, Winston Churchill appointed General Templer as the British High Commissioner in Malaya to deal with the Malayan Emergency. Working closely with Robert Thompson, the Permanent Secretary of Defence for Malaya, Templer's tactics against the communists were held up as a model for counter-insurgency. In military terms Templer concentrated his efforts on intelligence. When Templer left Malaya in 1954 the situation had dramatically improved, though the rebels remained a force to be reckoned with.

¹⁷³ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/21 RCDIG1029267](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/21%20RCDIG1029267), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (1-30 Jun 1954) Page 1.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

3 June		Cpl Bettens and Sigmn Machin arrived Singapore railway station on return from Recce in Malaya.
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Figure 130: Part of Recce Party return

Change of Personnel in Singapore

On 5 and 16 June 1954, four operators departed for Australia¹⁷⁵.

5 June		The following members emplaned for Australia via QANTAS on completion of tour of duty in Malaya. 1/3377 Sgt Stewart G.G. 3/10703 Sigmn McMillan M.I.J. 3/2873 Sigmn Reid P.F.
16 June		Visited RAF Changi. L/Cpl Buckton emplaned for Australia on completion of his tour of duty travelling via QANTAS.

Figure 131: Operators depart Singapore

New OC Arrives

On 17 June 1954, Capt A K Barkell arrived in Singapore as the new OC for the Unit¹⁷⁶.

17 June		2/35001 Capt A.K. BARKELL R Aust Sigs, deplaned Changi Airport 1800 hrs. Posting will be O.C. Australian Observer Unit vice 3/40081 Capt D.G. Mitchell R. Aust Sigs.
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Figure 132: Capt Barkell arrives



Figure 133: Capt Barkell

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, Pages 1, 2.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid, Page 2.

Sporting Event and Officer's Travel

On 29 June 1954, Rocky Harris continued with his sporting prowess and captains Mitchell and Barkell departed Singapore for a liaison visit¹⁷⁷.

29 June		Sigmn Harris R. G. participated in Corps sports, winning	
		100 Yds and 220 Yds running events and receiving two cups as trophies.	
		Capt Mitchell and Capt Barkell emplaned Kallang 1430 hrs for	
		Kuala Lumpur on liaison visit to Federation Authorities.	

Figure 134: Rocky Harris sporting trophies and Officer's visit

29 June		Sigmn Harris R.G. participated in Corps sports, winning 100 Yds and 220 Yds running events and receiving two cups as trophies. Capt Mitchell and Capt Barkell emplaned Kallang 1430 hrs for Kuala Lumpur on liaison visit to Federation Authorities.
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Liaison Visit

On 1 July 1954, captains Mitchell and Barkell visited Federation Authorities at Kuala Lumpur as part of their handover and later travelled by train to Penang to visit the detachment and returned on 11 July¹⁷⁸.

1 Jul		Capt D.G. MITCHELL and Capt A.K. BARKELL made a liaison visit	
		to HQ MALAYA, KUALA LUMPUR. They entrained for PENANG that	
		evening.	

Figure 135: Liaison visit

1 Jul		Capt D.G. MITCHELL and Capt A.K. BARKELL made a liaison visit to HQ MALAYA. KUALA LUMPUR. They entrained for PENANG that evening.
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Jock McCartney continued:

After a month or so our new boss arrived, Capt A.K. Barkell¹⁷⁹, bringing with him a brilliant piece of GCHQ strategy involving a brand new transistor radio which had been doctored with a built in oscillator which activated when the set was switched on¹⁸⁰. It transpired that the brains down in Singers were aware of a double agent in the police on the hill who had an in, into the local CT organization and was happy to

¹⁷⁷ Ibid, Page 3.

¹⁷⁸ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/22 RCDIG 1029268, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-31 Jul 1954\) Page 1.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/22%20RCDIG%201029268,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-31%20Jul%201954)%20Page%201.)

¹⁷⁹ Assumed command of the Detachment on 14 July 1954.

¹⁸⁰ Walton, Calder (2013-01-31). *Empire of Secrets: British Intelligence, the Cold War and the Twilight of Empire* (p. 187). HarperCollins Publishers. Kindle Edition: *After their release, double agents were usually followed back into the jungle by special forces, typically Gurkhas and Malay trackers, who noted the location of guerrilla forces. Some of the most sophisticated methods for tracking insurgent forces were provided by SIGINT. When the Special Branch released double agents back into the jungle they were sometimes provided with radio sets specially modified to transmit direction-finding (D/F) signals. Using these signals, security forces could triangulate the exact location of insurgents, who were then captured or killed by security patrols, or targeted for heavy bombing by the RAF.*

feed this set into them. This was duly done or so we were told and a speaker watch was kept on the freq. But to no avail. When our new O.C. returned to Singapore he arranged to a couple of reliefs to come up and give us a small break, they were Jock Muirhead followed by Don McKinven.

After about three months or a little longer we were recalled again with no success in locating or even hearing the Chin Peng radio. Jim and Rusty went across to Sungai Petani and I plus our gear regretfully returned to Singapore.

Sig Godley Rejoins

On 1 July 194, Sig Godley rejoined¹⁸¹ the recce party in Malaya¹⁸².

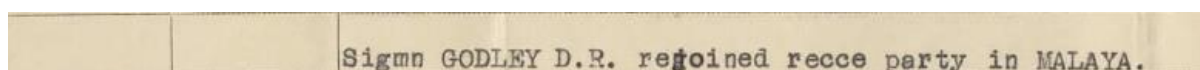


Figure 136: Sig Godley re-joins

1 Jul	Sigmn GODLEY D.R. rejoined recce party in MALAYA.
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Change of Officer Commanding

On 14 July 1954, Capt Barkell assumed command of the AOU and Det 101 Wrls Regt¹⁸³. Capt Mitchell returned to Australia on 20 July.

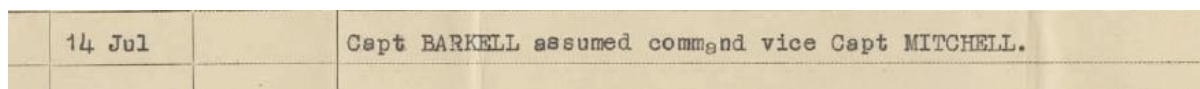


Figure 137: Capt Barkell assumes command

14 Jul	Capt BARKELL assumed command vice Capt MITCHELL.
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Change of Personnel Notification

On 22 July 1954, advice was received that two operators would be posted in as reliefs¹⁸⁴.

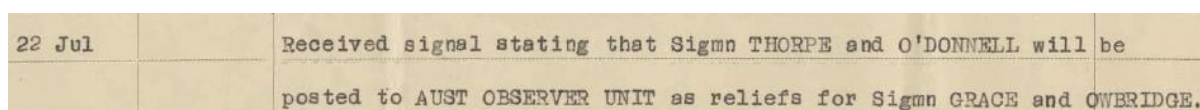


Figure 138: Relief Operators

22 July	Received signal stating that Sigmn THORPE and O'DONNELL will be posted to AUST OBSERVER UNIT as reliefs for Sigmn GRACE and OWBRIDGE
---------	--

¹⁸¹ There is no mention in the Diaries of Sig Godley departing the Recce Party.

¹⁸² [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/22 RCDIG 1029268](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/22%20RCDIG%201029268), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (1-31 Jul 1954) Page 1.

¹⁸³ Ibid.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid.

August Rotations

During August 1954, there were several changes in Detachment personnel and rotations into Malaya¹⁸⁵.

8 Aug		1/1073 Sigmn MACHIN L.A. departed for MALAYA on temporary duties. 2/11019 Sigmn McKINVEN D. returned from temporary duties in the Federation.
16 Aug		Sigmn MACHIN L.A. returned from temporary duties in the Federation.
		Capt BARKELL departed for temporary duty in MALAYA.
25 Aug		Sigmn MACHIN left on temporary duty in MALAYA.
27 Aug		Sigmn LEA & GODLEY returned from temporary duty MALAYA.
		3/4343 Sigmn O'DONNELL F.W. and 1/900141 Sigmn THORPE E.W. arrived from Australia.
28 Aug		Capt BARKELL returned from temporary duty MALAYA.
29 Aug		Sigmn MACHIN & McCARTNEY returned from temporary duty MALAYA.

Figure 139: August rotations

8 Aug		1/1073 Sigmn MACHIN L.A. departed for MALAYA on temporary duties. 2/11019 Sigmn McKINVEN D. returned from temporary duties in the Federation.
16 Aug		Sigmn MACHIN returned from temporary duties in the Federation.
24 Aug		Capt BARKELL departed for temporary duties in the Federation.
25 Aug		Sigmn MACHIN left on temporary duty in Malaya.
27 Aug		Sigmn LEA and GODLEY returned from temporary duty in Malaya. 3/4343 Sigmn O'DONNELL F.W. ad 1/900141 Sigmn THORPE E.W. arrived from Australia
28 Aug		Capt BARKELL returned from temporary duty in MALAYA.
29 Aug		Sigmn MACHIN & McCARTNEY returned from temporary duty MALAYA.

RAAF Bombing Run

In September 1954, several members of the Detachment were able to accompany the RAAF on bombing runs into the Federation¹⁸⁶.

1 Sep		Capt A.K. BARKELL and S/sgt ANTCLIFF R.G. made a liaison visit to No.1 (b) Sqn RAAF. They accompanied members of this unit on a bombing and strafing strike against terrorist strongholds in the Federation.
-------	--	--

Figure 140: RAAF Bombing Run

1 Sep		Capt A.K. BARKELL and S/Sgt ANTCLIFF R.G. made a liaison visit to Nos 1 (b) Sqn RAAF. They accompanied members of this unit on a bombing and strafing strike against terrorist strongholds in the Federation.
-------	--	---

¹⁸⁵ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/23 RCDIG 1029269, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-31 Aug 1954\) Page 1.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/23%20RCDIG%201029269,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-31%20Aug%201954)%20Page%201.)

¹⁸⁶ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/24 RCDIG 1029270, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-30 Sep 1954\) Pages 1-3.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/24%20RCDIG%201029270,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-30%20Sep%201954)%20Pages%201-3.)

Harry Freestone wrote of his trip with the RAAF¹⁸⁷:

Capt Barkell arranged for Blue McLeod and myself to participate in an Air Strike with 1 Squadron RAAF Tengah. We were to go along as "Observers".

From the start nothing went too well. Early morning transport never happened and when we fronted the Transport WO at Tyersall Park (GHQ Signal Regt, Royal Signals) and were informed "Barkell has a motorbike for this sort of thing". Eventually a truck was supplied and we arrived at Tengah Airbase just as the crew of the two Lincoln Bombers were coming out from briefing. They knew nothing about our visit but said we could come "for the ride" anyway.

Regulations said we must have a parachute and all the crew were wearing harness and carrying their chutes. They found a harness that fitted Blue, but for me, and on the short side, the only one available belonged to a 6 ft off duty pilot. This was tossed, along with a parachute into the aircraft with the worrying remark "as long as there is a chute for every body its okay". He meant every body too, not everybody.

We duly took off with me standing next to the wireless operator, a position I had for the next five and half hours. The Lincolns headed for Kuala Lipis where they were to bomb and strafe CT camps in the jungle around the town. There was a recce run and the pilot pointed out a patch in the jungle that hopefully was crawling with terrorists that were to be obliterated.

The planes were carrying 14 bombs that were unloaded into the jungle, two at a time, in 7 runs. The "crump" of the bombs could be felt in the aircraft.

The next part of the operation scared the hell out of me. The pilot took the plane down to treetop height and all their guns opened fire into the scrub. I can still see those treetops just under my feet. This wasn't a fighter but a huge Lincoln bomber and if I hadn't been so frightened I would have liked to remind the skipper of this fact. The aircrew might have been inured to this sort of thing, but I certainly wasn't.

After the strike was completed the two Lincolns headed back to Singapore low over the sea but close to the coast. The skipper seemed to enjoy flying as low and as close as he could to sampans that must have blown over with our slipstream. I recall seeing the boatmen waving to us or perhaps shaking their fists.

We were wearing ear-phones and were privy to all the communication going on. Tengah advised there was a dangerous crosswind. During the landing I stood behind the pilot and the whole time he talked to himself with words like "easy does it" "no sweat" "what are they worrying about".

Needless to say we made it okay but had to miss the debriefing as we were due to start shift at 1300 at CK2. We arrived late anyway and were severely admonished by the British Civilian Shift Supervisor. Just what we needed after 5 and half hours as guests of those airborne madmen. (I still have the occasional bad dream about being in low flying aircraft).

¹⁸⁷ Email from Harry Freestone to Barry Hampstead.



Figure 141: Lincoln Bomber A73-33 of No 1 Squadron RAAF on a bombing mission over the Malayan Jungle.
Two 500 Pound Bombs can be seen falling from the aircraft.¹⁸⁸

Changi High Frequency Direction Finding Site

During the early 1950s, a High Frequency (HF) Direction Finding (DF) Station was established at the RAF Changi Air Base. The HF DF shack was situated alongside the runway and contained a DFG 26/4 Adcock Direction Finding System. GCHQ civilian personnel from CK2 manned the station and when required on watch travelled from CK2 to Changi by car. In later years 101 Wrls Det members manned the station and were accommodated in the RAF Changi Barracks.



Figure 142: Changi Airfield location

¹⁸⁸ <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/P01616.003/>



Figure 143: Aerial view of Changi 1950 looking north towards the Straits of Johore¹⁸⁹



Figure 144: Changi DF Complex¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ <http://www.rafchangi.com/archives/18-ch-1701-1800/ch1797/>

¹⁹⁰ Photo courtesy Kevin Carter.



Figure 145: Changi DF Hut¹⁹¹

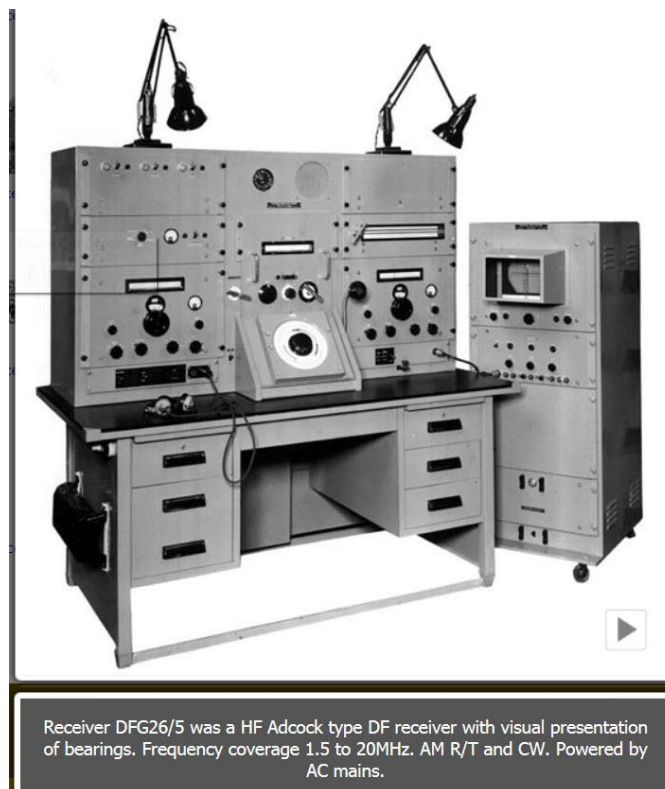


Figure 146: Internal equipment similar to this¹⁹²

¹⁹¹ Photograph courtesy of Ted/Blue Baker.

¹⁹² <http://www.wftw.nl/rsets.html>



Figure 147: View of the airfield from the DF Hut¹⁹³



Figure 148: Changi Accommodation Blocks¹⁹⁴

¹⁹³ Photograph courtesy of Ted/Blue Baker.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

Changi DF Training

On 12 September 1954, Cpl Reid was detached to CHANGI for a short [DF] course^{195 196}.

12 Sep	Cpl REID was detached to CHANGI to undergo a short course
--------	---

Figure 149: Changi Course

12 Sep	Cpl REID was detached to CHANGI to undergo a short course
--------	---

First Troop Marriage in Singapore

On 2 October 1954, Signalman Rocky Harris married a British WRAC member who was posted to Singapore. This was the first marriage to occur of a member of 101 Wrls Regt while serving overseas. In later years it became common place for members to marry while serving in Singapore. It is believed that Signalman Harris was not entitled to a married quarter and had to fund his own accommodation. Fortunately this situation was rectified in later years when married personnel with families were posted to Singapore.

2 Oct 54	3/2735 Sigmn HARRIS R.G. married Pte MORGAN A. at TANGLIN Garrison Church. The bride was formerly a member of the WRAC's. All members of the unit in SINGAPORE attended the ceremony and the reception.
----------	---

Figure 150: War Diary entry¹⁹⁷

2 Oct 54	3/2735 Sigmn HARRIS R.G. married Pte MORGAN A. at TANGLIN Garrison Church. The bride was formerly a member of the WRAC's. All members of the unit in SINGAPORE attended the ceremony and the reception.
----------	---

Additional DF Training

On 18 October 1954, members of the unit were detached to [DF training] Changi¹⁹⁸.

18 Oct 54	O.C. and two members of the unit were detached for duty to CHANGI.
-----------	--

Figure 151: Changi detachment

^{195 195} [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/24 RCDIG 1029270, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-30 Sep 1954\) Page 2.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/24%20RCDIG%201029270%20AWM95%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit%20(1-30%20Sep%201954)%20Page%202)

¹⁹⁶ It is believed that this was the first Direction Finding Course.

¹⁹⁷ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/25 RCDIG 1029271 AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-30 Oct 1954\) Page 1.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/25%20RCDIG%201029271%20AWM95%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit%20(1-30%20Oct%201954)%20Page%201)

¹⁹⁸ Ibid.

18 Oct 54		O.C. and two members of the unit were detached for duty to CHANGI.
-----------	--	--

Group Photograph

On 26 October 1954, a representative from the British DPR¹⁹⁹ photographed members of the unit²⁰⁰.

26 Oct 54		Representative from British DPR photographed members of the unit in SINGAPORE area. Negatives plus photos will be forwarded when they are received.
-----------	--	---

Figure 152 Unit Photographs

26 Oct 54		Representative from British DPR photographed members of the unit in SINGAPORE area. Negatives plus photos will be forwarded when they are received.
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It is believed that the following group photograph of all the available members of the Detachment was one of the photographs taken.

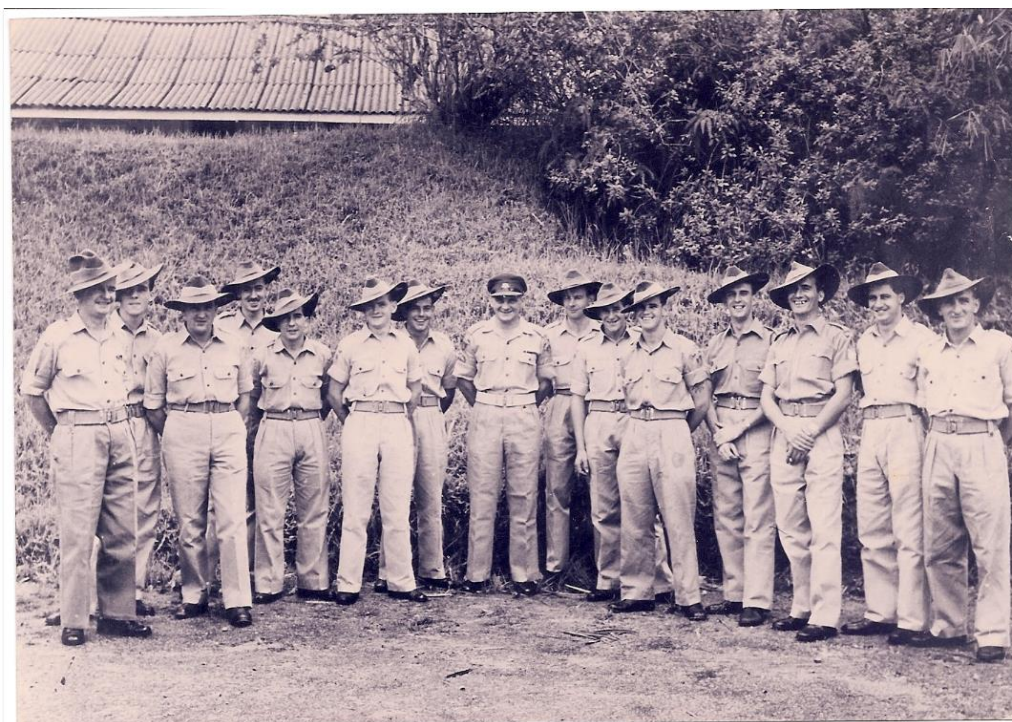


Figure 153: Group photograph

From left: S/Sgt Bob Antcliff, Sig Peter Lea, Sig Don McKinven, Sig Frank O'Donnell, Sig Harry Freestone, Sig Blue McLeod, Sig Len Machin, Capt Barkell, Cpl Graham Bennett, Sig Rusty Godley, Sig Rocky Harris, Sig Jock Muirhead, Cpl Jock Reid, Sig Jock McCartney, Sig Harry Hurene.

¹⁹⁹ Directorate of Public Relations.

²⁰⁰ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/25 RCDIG 1029271 AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-30 Oct 1954\) Page 2.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/25%20RCDIG%201029271%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-30%20Oct%201954)%20Page%202.)

More DF Training

DF training was becoming commonplace for Detachment members. On 27 October 1954, three more members worked at the site²⁰¹.

27/31 Oct		O.C. and three members of the detachment worked in the
		CHANGI area.

Figure 154: More DF Training

27/31 Oct		O.C. and three members of the detachment worked in the CHANGI area.
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Change of Administrative Clerk

On 4 November 1954, Sgt Rodwell arrived to replace Bob Antcliffe as Orderly Room Sergeant²⁰²:

4 Nov 54		2/10009 Sgt RODWELL D.S. arrived at CHANGI to replace
		S/Sgt ANTCLIFFE R.G. as Orderly Room Sgt for Aust Observer
		Unit.

Figure 155: Change of clerk

4 Nov 54		2/10009 Sgt RODWELL D.S. arrived at CHANGI to replace S/SGT ANTCLIFFE R.G. as Orderly Room Sgt for Aust Observer Unit.
----------	--	--

DF Employment

On 15 November 1954, Sgt Reid was detached to Changi²⁰³.

15 Nov 54		3/10056 Sgt REID J. was detached to CHANGI.
-----------	--	---

Figure 156: Sgt Reid to Changi

15 Nov 54		3/10056 Sgt REID J. was detached to CHANGI.
-----------	--	---

²⁰¹ Ibid.

²⁰² [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/26 RCDIG 1029272, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-30 Nov 1954\) Page 1](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/26%20RCDIG%201029272,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-30%20Nov%201954)%20Page%201)

²⁰³ Ibid, Page 2.

Defence Committee Agendum 1/1954

On 23 November 1954, the Acting Secretary of the Defence committee issued a copy of the Joint Intelligence Committee Report regarding the future employment of service personnel.²⁰⁴

Agendum No. 4/1954(S)	
Copy No. 1	
<u>DEFENCE COMMITTEE AGENDUM (S)</u>	
Attached for consideration is Copy No. 13 of Joint Intelligence Committee (S) Report No. 1/1954 relative to the above subject.	
(Sgd.) G.E. BLAKERS, Acting Secretary, Defence Committee.	
23.11.1954	
<u>Distribution:</u>	<u>Copy No.</u>
Secretary, Department of Defence.	1
Chief of the General Staff.	2
Chief of the Naval Staff.	3
Chief of the Air Staff.	4
Secretary, Defence Committee.	5
Departmental file.	6
Controller, Joint Service Organisations.	7
Secretary, Joint Intelligence Committee.	8

Figure 157: Defence Committee Agendum

²⁰⁴ NAA: MP1185/10, 5068/1/3 101 Wireless Regiment Employment at Darwin and Singapore.

TOP SECRET FROTH 32

TO BE KEPT UNDER LOCK AND KEY AND NEVER TO BE REMOVED FROM THE OFFICE UNLESS TRANSMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH REGULATIONS

NOTED FOR ACTING SECRETARY OF DEFENCE COMMITTEE - 10/11/54
No. 4/1954(1)

Introduction.

As for J.I.C.(S.) Report No. 1/1954.

Comments.

2. I have nothing to add to the operational aspect of the J.I.C.(S.) Report.

3. Finance available for Army intercept purposes under the Three Years' Programme would permit the provision of the additional 15 operators. Provision was made in the Army Programme for 30 operators by 30/6/55 and funds were provided on the basis of an average strength of 24 for the whole year. With the present strength of 16, this would permit employment of an additional 15 for six months. Even assuming approval now administrative arrangements necessary as a preliminary would prevent operators from being established before 1st January - that is, within the last six months of the financial year.

Suggested Action.

4. It is suggested that the Defence Committee might -

- (i) recommend as in (a) and (b) of J.I.C.(S.) Report;
- (ii) note that financial provision is available in the Army Programme to meet the cost involved.

A. J. Kennedy

25.11.1954

Figure 158: JIC Report

Reproduced extract

Comments

2. *I have nothing to add to the operational aspect of the J.I.C (S.) Report.*

3. *Finance available for Army intercept purposes under the Three Years' Programme would permit the provision of the additional 15 operators. Provision was made in the Army Programme for 30 Operators [redacted] by 30/6/55 and funds were provided on the basis of an average strength of 24 for the whole year. With the present strength of 15, this would permit employment of an additional 15 for six months. Even assuming approval now administrative arrangements necessary as a preliminary would prevent operators from being established [redacted] before 1st January – that is, within the last six months of the financial year.*

Suggested Action

4. *It is suggested that the Defence Committee might –*

- (i) recommend as in (a) and (b) of J.I.C. (S.) Report:*
- (ii) note that financial provision is available in the Army Programme to meet the cost involved.*

The following letter was on the file and is possibly part of the Joint Intelligence Committee response.²⁰⁵ [several redactions]

THE MINISTER:

The question of Service operators in the Australian Sigint Organisation being employed overseas has previously been examined by you in two main contexts :-

(a) Your approval of October, 1950 for detachments of Army operators to be employed - as qualified in May, 1952 and September, 1952 by your direction that there should be no increase in the total strength of the Army detachment of 15.

(b) In April, 1953 you wrote to the Prime Minister forwarding, inter alia, Defence Committee recommendations that "the employment overseas of up to 65 operators for each Service be authorised together with essential supervisory and administrative personnel - the actual numbers employed overseas to accord with the annual Defence allotment made for that purpose by the Defence Department from the Defence Programme account. Maintenance overseas of this number of personnel should be regarded as of the highest priority".

You concluded that the question should be governed by the larger question of employment overseas of up to 65 operators from each Service, "dependent on the need and the funds available". (References are on file X 8/13 Tab 'A').

2. In Minute 5/1954(S) of 26th November, the Defence Committee has considered the effect of the operator position (Tab 'B'). A summary of the factors reported is :

(- pages)

Figure 159: Acting Secretary Report - Page 1

²⁰⁵ Ibid.

The operators are available in and are within the approved strength of 101 Wireless Regiment, Cabarlah.

3.

(a)

(b) Recommended that, as an interim urgent measure, 15 intercept operators be sent

(c) Noted that financial provision is available in the Army Programme to meet the cost involved.

4. As indicated by the origin of the Sigint Organisation in 1946-47, by the circumstances of the present consideration of this subject, and by the dates of previous considerations, of, and separate from.

However, as the latter question is now under consideration and as the separate question of the policy of employment of Australian operators overseas was referred to the Prime Minister in April 1953, it is suggested that if you concur in the Defence Committee recommendations, the Prime Minister's approval to the despatch of 15 additional operators to Singapore be sought.

Submission.

5. It is suggested that you might note the

Figure 160: Acting Secretary Report - Page 2

....
Defence Committee recommendations for the employment of 15 additional Army intercept operators and endorse them from the Defence aspect. A proposed letter to the Prime Minister is attached. In view of the nature and significance of the matters brought to notice in the Defence Committee Minute, it is suggested that you might also wish to mention the matter verbally to the Prime Minister.

L. O. Cheldan
Acting Secretary

29/1/1954

Approved
29/1/54
P. M. Breda
Minister for Defence

Figure 161: Acting Secretary Report - Page 3

My dear Prime Minister,

In my letter of 1st April, 1953 on the future development of Joint Intelligence, one of the proposals included was the recommendation of the Defence Committee that, to permit interception of primary targets, employment overseas of up to 65 intercept operators from each Australian Service with necessary supervisory and administrative personnel, should be authorised. The 65 operators referred to would be part of the strength of 135 operators for each Service already approved for employment on the mainland.

2. To meet a particular situation I had previously approved that a detachment of not more than 15 Australian Army personnel could be employed on intercept tasks

3. The Defence Committee has now reported to me that 15 additional Australian intercept operators are urgently required

The Defence Committee recommended that the additional 15 operators be despatched as an interim urgent measure. Funds and operators are available.

4. I endorse the proposal from the Defence viewpoint. However, as it is in principle connected with the general question of overseas employment of operators which I have already referred to you, I feel it necessary to seek your concurrence, pending any decision on the general policy question.

5. This matter, of course, arises independently of and is not connected with other proposals under consideration by the Government regarding a strategic reserve.

Yours sincerely,


(P.A. McBREIDE)
MINISTER FOR DEFENCE

The Rt. Hon. R.G. Menzies, C.H., Q.C., M.P.,
PRIME MINISTER.

TOP SECRET

Distribution:
No. 1 - Prime Minister
No. 2 - File X 8/13.
No. 3 - Miss Turner.
No. 4 - Mr. Fleming
No. 5 - Mr. Fleming

Figure 162: Acting Secretary Report - Page 4

Personnel Changes

In December 1954, there were several changes of personnel²⁰⁶.

4 Dec 54		1/1414 S/Sgt ANTCLIFF R.G. RTA on completion of tour.
19 Dec 54		1/421 S/Sgt FENTON J.E. left for AUSTRALIA on completion of his tour of duty.
23 Dec 54		2/2090 Cpl WATTERSON K.T. arrived at CHANGI as a reinforcement for the unit.

Figure 163: Personnel changes

3 Dec 54		1/414 S/Sgt ANTCLIFF R.G. RTA on completion of tour.
19 Dec 54		1/421 S/Sgt FENTON J.E. left for AUSTRALIA on completion of his tour of duty.
23 Dec 54		2/2090 Cpl WATTERSON K.T. arrived at CHANGI as a reinforcement for the unit.

²⁰⁶ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/27 RCDIG 1029273, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-31 Dec 1954\) Page 1.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/27%20RCDIG%201029273,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders%27%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-31%20Dec%201954)%20Page%201.)

CHAPTER 5

1955



Hospital Admissions

During January 1955, there were several admissions to BMH²⁰⁷ for various ailments.

Staff Changes

In January 1955, there were two changes of staff²⁰⁸.

8 Jan 55		3/2231 Sigmn WOODS W.L.G. arrived from AUST.
17 Jan 55		Sigmn HARRIS R.G. returned to AUSTRALIA on completion of tour.

Figure 164: January 1955 staff changes

8 Jan 55		13/2231 Sigmn WOODS W.L.G. arrived from AUST.
17 Jan 55		Sigmn HARRIS R.G. returned to AUSTRALIA on completion of his tour.

101 Wrls Regt CO Visit

On 1 February 1955, Lt Col Dixon, the CO of 101 Wrls Regt arrived for a visit²⁰⁹ accompanied by Maj Glass, R Signals²¹⁰.

	5 FEB 55		Lt.Col. A.H. DIXON, MBE, ED, R Aust Sigs, and Major J.McD. GLASS, MBE, R Sigs arrived from AUSTRALIA.
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Figure 165: CO Visit

5 Feb 55		Lt. Col. A.H. DIXON MBE, ED, R Aust Sigs, and Major J. McD GLASS, MBE, R Sigs arrived from Australia
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Figure 166: Lt Col Dixon, MBE

²⁰⁷ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/28 RCDIG 1029274](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017%2F4%2F28%20RCDIG%201029274), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (1-31 Jan 1955) Pages 1, 2.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/29 RCDIG 1029275](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017%2F4%2F29%20RCDIG%201029275), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (1-28 Feb 1955) Page 1.

²¹⁰ Major Glass is noted as being OC of the British No 1 Special Wireless Unit in 1947. He was probably on a visit to Australia.

6 FEB 55		Lt.Col. DIXON, Maj GLASS and Capt BARKELL visited Federation
		and returned on 7 FEB 55.

Figure 167: Visit to Federation

6 Feb 55		Lt. Col. DIXON, Maj GLASS and Capt BARKELL visited Federation and returned on 7 FEB 55.
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12 FEB 55		Lt.Col. DIXON and Maj GLASS returned to AUSTRALIA.
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Figure 168: Return to Australia

12 Feb 55		Lt. Col. DIXON an Maj GLASS returned to Australia
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New Party Departs Singapore

On 16 February 1955, seven personnel departed Singapore on temporary duty in Malaya²¹¹. It is believed that these personnel formed the first Detachment at the Brigade of Gurkhas Camp, Sungei Patani²¹². [see names below].

16 FEB 55		A party of seven Corps Sigs personnel left on temporary
		duty in MALAYA.

Figure 169: Personnel move to Malaya

16 FEB 55		A party of seven Corps Sigs personnel left on temporary Duty in MALAYA.
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Establishment Increase

On 24 February 1955, the 101 Wrls Regt Detachment AOU strength was increased by eight operators²¹³.

²¹¹ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/30 RCDIG 1029275, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries 7Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-28 Feb 1955\) Page 1.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/30%20RCDIG%201029275,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%207Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-28%20Feb%201955)%20Page%201.)

²¹² Also seen as Sungai Patani.

²¹³ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/29 RCDIG 1029275, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(1-28 Feb 1955\) Page 2.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/29%20RCDIG%201029275,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders'%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(1-28%20Feb%201955)%20Page%202.)

24 FEB 55		Capt BARKELL returned from Federation. Eight rfts to Aust Obs Unit arrived from AUSTRALIA. Details are :-
		2/10028 CPL DAY J.W.
24 FEB 55		3/10197 CPL COCKBURN A.
		1/2952 SIGMN RUSSELL G.B.
		2/4533 SIGMN WICKS R.S.
		7/102 SIGMN RUSSELL A.G.
		3/3770 SIGMN SMITH R.S.
		2/5559 SIGMN PARLE R.A.
		2/10992 SIGMN BODDY F.P.

Figure 170: Reinforcement operators

24 FEB 55		Capt BARKELL returned from Federation. Eight rfts to Aust Obs Unit arrived from AUSTRALIA. Details are :- 2/10028 CPL DAY J.W. 3/10197 CPL COCKBURN A. 1/2952 SIGMN RUSSELL G.B. 2/4533 SIGMN WICKS R.S. 7/102 SIGMN RUSSELL A.G. 3/3770 SIGMN SMITH R.S. 2/5559 SIGMN PARLE R.A. 2/10992 SIGMN BODDY F.P.
-----------	--	--

On 3 March 1955, another eight operators arrived²¹⁴.

3 MAR 55		Following members deplaned SINGAPORE :-
		1/730 S/Sgt HUGHES W.E. 5/2583 Sigmn KIDSON G.H.
		3/4980 Sigmn COLE S.J. 2/5831 Sigmn STEWART J.D.
		2/6859 Sigmn COLEMAN K.T. 3/4700 Sigmn TURNLEY C.J.
		3/3647 Sigmn FOX R.N.G. 1/3237 Sigmn WALSH J.E.

Figure 171: Eight more reinforcements

3 MAR 55		Following members deplaned SINGAPORE: 1/730 S/Sgt HUGHES W.E. 5/2583 Sigmn KIDSON G.E. 3/4980 Sigmn COLE S.J. 2/5831 Sigmn STEWART J.D. 2/6859 Sigmn COLEMAN K.T. 3/4700 Sigmn TURNLEY C.J. 3/3647 Sigmn FOX R.N.G. 1/3237 Sigmn WALSH J.E.
----------	--	---

Personnel Changeovers

On 10 March 1955, Sgt Bennett returned to Australia²¹⁵:

²¹⁴ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/30 RCDIG 1029277, AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, \(3-30 Mar 1955\) Page 1.](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/30%20RCDIG%201029277,%20AWM95,%20Australian%20Army%20Commanders%27%20Diaries%20Miscellaneous%20Units,%20Australian%20Observer%20Unit,%20(3-30%20Mar%201955)%20Page%201.)

²¹⁵ Ibid.

10 MAR 55	3/1801 Sgt BENNETT G.M. returned to AUSTRALIA
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Figure 172: Sgt Bennett departs Singapore

10 Mar 55	3/1801 Sgt BENNETT G.M. returned to Australia.
-----------	--

On 31 March 1955, Cpl Watterson departed for duty in the Federation²¹⁶

31 MAR 55	2/2090 Cpl WATTERSON K.T. left SINGAPORE for temporary duties in the Federation.
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Figure 173: Cpl Watterson deployed to the Federation

31 Mar 55	2/2090 Cpl WATTERSON K.T. left SINGAPORE for temporary duties in the Federation.
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Sungei Patani

As mentioned above, it is believed that the Sungei Patani Detachment commenced operation circa February 1955.



Figure 174: Location of Sungei Patani

²¹⁶ Ibid.



Figure 175: Camp sign²¹⁷



Figure 176: Do not enter²¹⁸

²¹⁷ Photos courtesy of Brian Borland and Blue Baker.

²¹⁸ Ibid.



Figure 177: Camp Headquarters²¹⁹

Harry 'Pedro' Freestone wrote²²⁰:

I was in the initial party and stayed for 4 months and then went back in 1956 for another 3 months.

The first 4 months we operated from the DF trailer (Elsie) and then moved into a nearby Nissan Hut.

I don't think a diagram would be needed to describe the setup in the hut. On one wall there was a folding table with an AR88 and a freq meter. On the other side of the room was another table for the supervisor. There would have been a safe somewhere as we had a seldom used OTP cypher link to Singapore via the Ghurkha comms system.

The raison d'être for the SP station was to find any Bandit activity and so was tasked only with a general search. Any "suspect" transmissions located would have required activation of the OTP link. (I reckon this would cause considerable "angst" to some poor little Ghurkha operator).

The station stayed at SP for some time after I left so there may have been some upgrading of capabilities of which I am unaware.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ Email to Bob Hartley 2 October 2015.

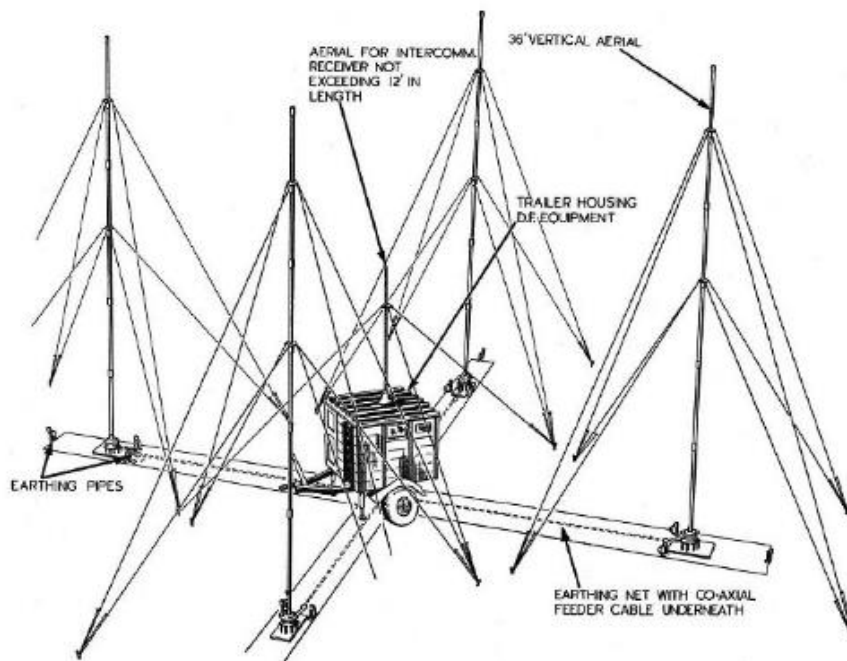


Figure 178: Mobile DF "Elsie"²²¹

²²¹ Ibid.

Wireless for the Warrior - Compendium 2

DF Station Adcock No. 1



General view of DF Adcock No. 1 station. Note the employment of two 60ft earth nets combined with coaxial feeder cables laid underneath, in order to eliminate horizontal pickup. This arrangement, replacing the buried feeders normally used with this type of aerial system, allowed a rapid setup of the station.

DF Station Transportable Adcock No. 1

DATA SUMMARY

Purpose: Transportable U-Adcock direction finding station.

Year of introduction: 1943

DF Receiver: Reception Set R106 DF No. 2 with Goniometer No. 3. Intercommunication receiver Reception Set R106.

DF Frequency Coverage: 0.9-10MHz in four ranges: 0.9-2.05MHz, 2-4MHz, 3.5-7.3MHz, 7-10MHz.

Type of Aerial: Shielded U-Adcock using four 36ft vertical aerials. The four aerials are situated at the N, S, E and W corners of a square, the diagonals of which measure 40ft. No sense aerial was required as a vertical pick-up was provided in the goniometer unit. A vertical aerial was placed on the roof of the trailer for use with the intercommunication receiver.

Power Supply: 110-230V AC mains using Supply Unit Rectifier No. 5, or 6V DC using Supply Unit Vibratory No. 2. **Consumption:** AC 40-50W; DC 8A (DF receiver only).

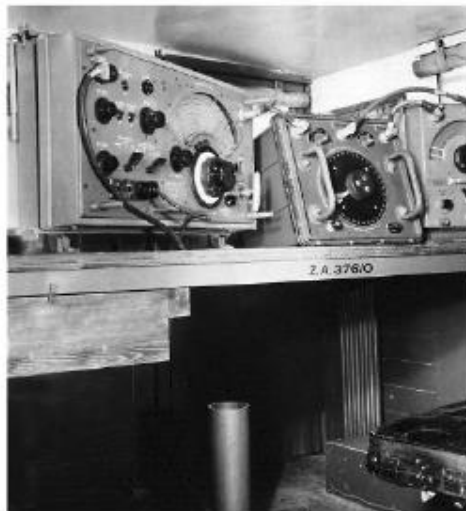
Note: DF Station Transportable Adcock No. 1 and later Nos. 2 and 3 were self-contained DF stations to obtain an indication of directional bearings of a distant transmitter within ground range or on low angle sky wave transmissions (minimum range 200 miles). The actual bearings were read by the goniometer unit, using the aural method. The station was operated from a Trailer 10-cwt 2-wheeled DF, similar as used with DF Station Mobile B/C No. 2 and 2A, but with a very different fitting of equipment. The stations were a supplement to the commercial Marconi DF stations already in use in the Army which were due to their construction unsuitable for transportable use and rapid setup.

During transport the aerial gear was carried in transit cases which were normally stowed in the Lorry 3-ton 4x4 GS towing vehicle. A trained crew of five men could set up and calibrate a station within five hours.

Figure 179: Elsie Specifications #1²²²

²²² Descriptions from *Wireless for the Warrior* by Louis Meulstee Compendium 2.

Wireless for the Warrior - Compendium 2



DF Station Adcock No. 3



External view of trailer (above) and composition of DF equipment comprising Reception Set R206 Mk.5 (left), Goniometer No. 4 (centre) and Adaptor Frequency Range No. 1 Mk.2 (right) as seen from the rear.

DF Station Transportable Adcock No. 3

DATA SUMMARY

Purpose: Transportable U-Adcock direction finding station.

Year of introduction: First development 1945. Production: 1951/52.

DF Receiver: Reception Set R206 Mk.5 with Goniometer No. 4. The lowest frequency range required the use of an Adapter Frequency Range No. 1 Mk.2, slightly modified. Intercommunication (also known as DF Control) receiver was a Reception Set R209.

DF Frequency Coverage: 300kHz-15MHz in six ranges: 0.3-0.6MHz, 0.55-1.1MHz, 1.1-2.2MHz, 2.2-4.8MHz (LF aerial), 2.2-4.8MHz (HF aerial) and 4.8-15MHz.

Type(s) of Aerial: Shielded U-Adcock using four 24ft vertical aerials for use on frequencies 2.4-15MHz (also known as HF aerial system), or four 70ft vertical aerials for use on frequencies 0.3-4.8MHz (known as LF aerial system). The principal construction of the aerial systems was similar to the previous No. 1 and 2 stations. A vertical aerial mounted on a base on the roof of the trailer was used for the R209 receiver. A lightweight 36ft Adcock aerial system for tropical use was developed in 1945/46, replacing the normal masts of the Adcock No. 1 and 3 stations where lightness was essential, or in tropical or flooded conditions.

Power Supply: Power Supply Unit No. 33 operated from a 12V accumulator, or 100-250V, AC 40-60Hz; separate 6V accumulator for R206.

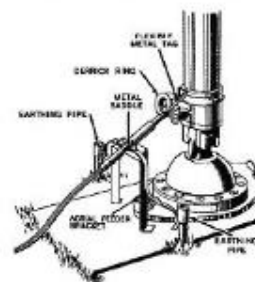
Consumption: 12V 5A; AC mains: 70W. (DF receiver with Adaptor Frequency range No. 1 Mk.2 only)

Note: DF Station Transportable Adcock No. 3 was a post-war version of the No. 2 Adcock station using a different DF receiver and a tropicalized goniometer unit. A number of trial models were constructed in 1945. Envisaged for use in the Far East the equipment was tropicalized, but due to the end of the war further development stopped. It was not until 1949 that new trials were conducted, resulting in production in late 1951.



View of rear and off-side of the towing vehicle (Lorry 3-ton GS Cargo 4x4 Austin) loaded with aerial gear transit cases (left).

A detailed view of aerial mast base insulator (Mast Base DF No. 5) and earthing arrangements (right).

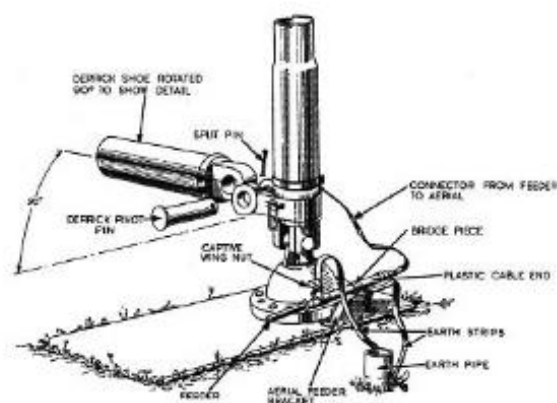


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Figure 180: Elsie Specifications #2

Wireless for the Warrior - Compendium 2

DF Station Adcock No. 2



The aerial mast base insulator and coaxial feeder connection arrangements of the 70ft masts differed considerably from the 36ft masts (left).

DF Station	Frequency coverage	Aerial type	DF Receiver	Goniometer	Adapter Tel.	Intercom rec.
No. 1	0.9-10MHz	36ft	R106 DF No. 2	No. 3	No. 2	R106
No. 2	0.48-5/0.9-10MHz	70ft/36ft	R106 DF No. 2	No. 3	No. 2	R106
No. 3	0.3-4.8/2.4-15MHz	70ft/24ft	R206 Mk.5	No. 4	No. 3	R209

Overview of features and functionalities of DF Stations Adcock Nos. 1, 2 and 3.

DF Link

A radio-link was normally used for communication between the DF station and the DF control centre. The transmitter was housed in a vehicle located about a mile from the DF station. The receiver was in the DF trailer from which the transmitter could be remotely controlled. As an alternative, communication could also be maintained by means of a telephone.

Adaptor Telephone No. 2 was a switchbox which connected the AF output of the Reception Set R106 DF No. 2 and the intercommunication receiver or telephone line to the operator's headphones in the transportable Adcock No. 1 and 2 stations (right). It was also used with DF Station Mobile B/C Nos. 1, 2 and 2A (trailer version only).



Adaptor Telephone No. 3 was functionally similar, but designed for connecting to Reception Set R206 Mk.5 as used with DF Station Transportable Adcock No. 3. It allowed, similarly to the Adaptor Telephone No. 2, simultaneous reception by the DF operator of a signal received on the DF equipment and a signal picked up by the distant controlling intercept station. But in addition it enabled rapid comparison of the two signals by means of split headphones. A functionally similar variation of Adapter Telephone No. 3 was used with DF Station Mobile B/C No. 2A truck version, known as Telephone Adapter Unit depicted on page 265.

Figure 181: Elsie Specifications #3

Note: Elsie did not have a DF communications link



Figure 182: Detachment area²²³



Figure 183: Detachment sign²²⁴

²²³ Photos courtesy of Brian Borland and Blue Baker

²²⁴ Ibid.



Figure 184: Tom Buckton and Bill Jacobsen outside the Operations Building²²⁵



Figure 185: Antenna farm²²⁶

²²⁵ Ibid.

²²⁶ Ibid.

Equipment

The AR-88 Receiver was the main intercept receiver used at the detachment.

Transport

The Detachment did not have its own dedicated transport.

Harry Freestone recalled²²⁷:

This was the Unit Transport.



Figure 186: Harry Freestone and Jock Reid with the unit transport 1955

We had a 3 ton truck briefly but lost it for speeding past the married quarters.

Even so we still got into bother with the bike. Blue McLeod tried to salute an officer while riding to work. He failed badly and ended up in the monsoon drain with the bike atop.

As a result an instruction was published in the next Part II Orders on "how to pay a compliment to an officer whilst mounted on a bicycle". In summary, you were to free wheel, sit at attention and give the officer a brief eyes right/left and resume peddling. The hands were not to leave the handle bars.

²²⁷ Email from Harry Freestone to Bob Hartley 16 October 2015.

Life at Sungei Patani

Barry Hampstead²²⁸:

Extracts from *Ted Baker Remembers - Service at Sungei Patani 1956-57*:

We had a very decrepit bicycle which was used by us to travel from the billet to our work. The latter was a Nissan hut which housed the radio equipment. Not far from the hut was our radio aerial. It was at the edge of a small air strip used for emergencies. Just before I arrived the work was done in what was called a radio shelter.

This was a small type of caravan, about half the size of a normal caravan, which housed the radio equipment and had its own aerials. Attached to it was an electrical generator which powered the equipment.

It was about two miles from our billet to the Nissan hut and the operator coming off shift had to ride to the billet and the operator coming on shift would then ride back. The operator on shift would have to ride back for meals. The shifts we had to work were beyond belief. We began at midnight, worked nine hours, went to sleep, then worked from six to midnight then started again at nine next morning until six at night. We then had a two and a half day break before we started again at midnight. As an example, if one started at midnight on a Monday night you worked until nine am Tuesday morning, slept, started again at 6 pm until midnight Tuesday, slept, worked again at 9 am Wednesday morning until 6 pm that day. You were then off from Wednesday afternoon at 6 pm until midnight Friday night. It was incredibly tiring and did not really give one a proper rest. We were monitoring special tasks such as Viet Cong and Burmese guerillas at set times and when not on those tasks were on General Search on set down frequencies.

Barry Hampstead²²⁹:

Ted Baker (who served at Sungei Patani - late 1956/early 1957) has mentioned the following:

'Near to Sungei Patani was Kedah Peak, a very high mountain with a top shaped like rabbit's ears. A year or so previously, two of our men had been taken to the top by helicopter with a small section of Gurkhas. They were 'Aussie' Adams and Mac McMillan, both UK-enlistees. They hoped to hear terrorist radios but did not hear anything. They were there for a fortnight.'

²²⁸ Barry Hampstead *When you drink the water...*, June 2012, Page 33.

²²⁹ Ibid, Page 5.

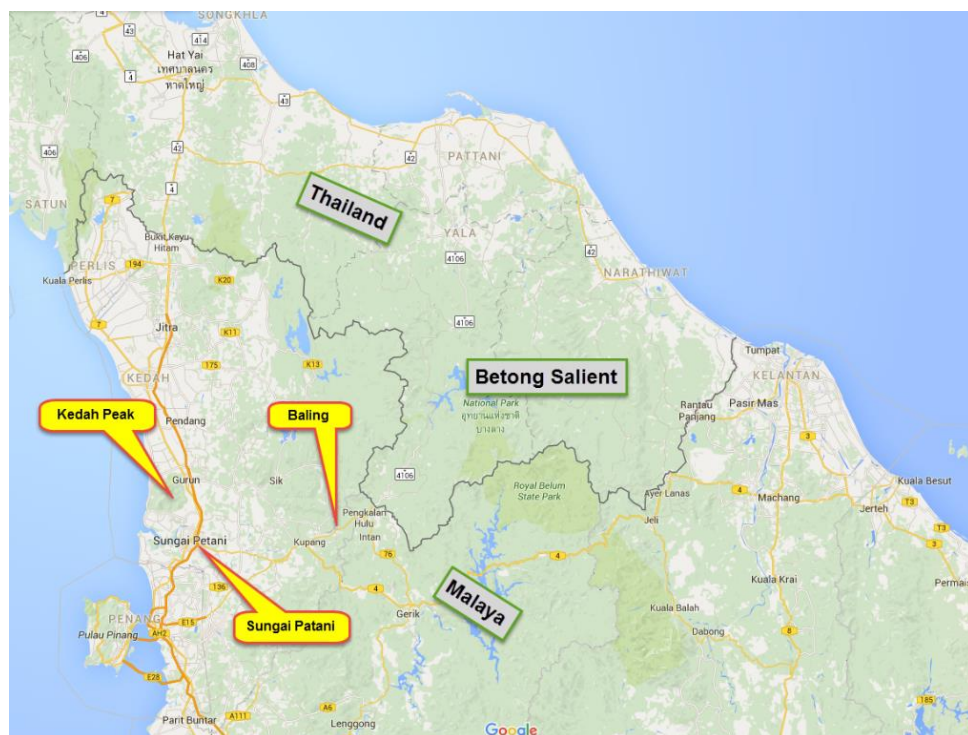


Figure 187: Sungai Patani, Kedah Peak and Baling locations



Figure 188: Kedah Peak 2015²³⁰

²³⁰ <http://www.urbanhealth.com.my/health/healthy-getaways/>

Personnel Changes April and May

In April and May 1955, there were several personnel changes.

2 APR 55		2/5177 Sigmn GODLEY D R returned to SINGAPORE on completion of temporary duties in MALAYA.
13 APR 55		2/35001 Capt A.K. BARKELL and 3/10056 T/SGT REID J. returned to SINGAPORE on completion of a temporary attachment.
14 APR 55		2/5177 Sigmn GODLEY D.R. and 5/1902 Sigmn LEA P. returned to AUSTRALIA on completion of a 12 months tour in MALAYA.

Figure 189: Personnel changes - April 1955²³¹

2 APR 55		2/5177 Sigmn GODLEY D R returned to SINGAPORE on completion of temporary duties in MALAYA.
13 APR 55		1/35001 Capt A.K. BARKELL and 3/10056 T/SGT REID J. returned to SINGAPORE on completion of temporary attachment.
14 APR 55		2/5177 Sigmn GODLEY D. R. AND 5/1902 Sigmn LEA P. returned to AUSTRALIA on completion of a 12 months tour in MALAYA.

6 MAY		Captain Barkell, Sgt Rodwell, L/Cpl Machin and Sigmn Woods left Singapore for temporary duties in the Federation.
8 MAY		Sgt Rodwell returned from temporary duties in the Federation.
14 MAY		Captain Barkell returned from temporary duties in the Federation.
		L/Cpl Machin, Sigmn Hurene, and Sigmn Freestone returned from temporary duties in the Federation.
23 MAY		6/717 Sigmn Freestone returned to Australia on completion of 12 months tour in Malaya.
24 MAY		L/Cpl Machin left for temporary duties in the Federation.
26 MAY		1/3077 Sigmn Baker ER arrived from Australia.
28 MAY		L/Cpl Machin returned from temporary duties in the Federation.

Figure 190: Personnel changes - May 1955²³²

6 MAY		Captain Barkell, Sgt Rodwell, L/Cpl Machin and Sigmn Woods left Singapore for temporary duties in the Federation.
8 May		Sgt Rodwell returned from temporary duties in the Federation
14 MAY		Captain Barkell returned from temporary duties in the Federation.

²³¹ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/30 RCDIG 1028109](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/30%20RCDIG%201028109), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (32-29 Apr 1955) Page 1.

²³² [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/30 RCDIG 1028110](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/30%20RCDIG%201028110), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (6-31 May 1955) Page 1-2.

16 MAY		L/Cpl Machin, Sigm Hurene, and Sigm Freestone returned from temporary duties in the Federation.
23 MAY		6/717 Sigm Freestone returned to Australia on completion of 12 months tour in Malaya.
24 MAY		L/Cpl Machin left for temporary duties in the Federation.
26 MAY		1/3077 Sigm Baker ER arrived from Australia.
28 MAY		L/Cpl Machin returned from temporary duties in the Federation.

Corporal Baker Memoires

As shown above, on 26 May 1955, Cpl ER Baker arrived in Singapore as a reinforcement to the Unit. He has since written a few articles on his deployments²³³.

I was posted to Singapore in May 1955.

There were twenty-four of us, a captain, a staff sergeant operator, a sergeant running the orderly room, and a number of corporals. Bill Hughes was the staff sergeant operator and he was in charge of a shift of army men. Sergeant Rodwell, a UK-enlistee in the Australian Army, was the orderly room sergeant. We were camped at General Headquarters (GHQ) Signal Regiment in Tyersall Camp in the suburb of Tanglin.

We were allotted two huts which had been specially fitted up with four showers to a hut. The British huts did not have showers.

We worked at a place called Chia Keng Two (CK2) on the north of the island. It was a beautiful brick building, all ground floor, with glass bricks for windows which allowed a surprising amount of light into the various rooms. To our mind the shift hours were very odd. We would start on evening shift at 1pm and work until 10pm. for two evenings. We would then swing over, as we called it, and start the next day at 7.30am until 1pm for two mornings. We then had a 30-hour break until 10pm on the next day when we started night shift. We did two nights until 7.30am each morning and started the following day at 1pm. to start all over again. The day between mornings and night shift (dog watch) was counted as a stand-down and the full day between night shift and evening shift was counted as a stand-down day.²³⁴

Except for one clear day we actually worked seven out of eight days and we felt we could never get a proper rest.

²³³ Ex - WO1 E. R. Blue/Percy/Ted BAKER *Some Random Thoughts of my Service with 7 Sig Regiment 1954 – 1963 at Cabarlah and Singapore/Malaya*. Contained in a CD compiled by Brian Borland titled *7th Signal / 101 Wrls Regt Unofficial History CD Date 18-10-11* held by several ex-members of the Regiment.

²³⁴ This shift system later changed to four shifts working an eight day cycle of two evenings, two mornings and two night shifts with two days stand-down. One shift would work a fortnight of day watches before going into the 2x2x2 cycle. Hours of operation for each shift were 1300-2200, 0730-1300 and 2200-0730 this system was still in use until CK2 closed in 1971.

Personnel Changes June

The following personnel changes occurred during June 1955²³⁵:

4 JUNE		2/10724 Sigmn HURENE H. emplaned for AUSTRALIA on completion of tour of duty in MALAYA.
8 JUNE		1/730 S/Sgt HUGHES W.E. left for temporary duties in the Federation.
19 JUNE		1/730 S/Sgt HUGHES and 3/3165 Sigmn McLEOD T.R. arrived Singapore from temporary duties in the Federation.
25 JUNE		1/1075 L/Cpl MACHIN L.A. was married at Singapore. Various members of the unit attended the ceremony and reception.
30 JUNE		1/3387 Sigmn JACOBSEN W.E. arrived from AUSTRALIA.

Figure 191: Personnel changes - June 1955

4 JUNE		2/10724 Sigmn HURENE H. emplaned for AUSTRALIA on completion of tour of duty in MALAYA.
8 JUNE		1/730 S/Sgt HUGHES W.E. left for temporary duties in the Federation.
19 JUNE		1/730 S/Sgt HUGHES and 3/3165 Sigmn McLEOD T.R. arrived Singapore from temporary duties in the Federation.
25 JUNE		1/1075 L/Cpl MACHIN L.A. was married at Singapore. Various members of the unit attended the ceremony and reception.
30 JUNE		1/3387 Sigmn JACOBSEN W.E. arrived from AUSTRALIA.

Personnel Changes July/August

The following personnel changes occurred during July and August 1955:

19 JUL 55		Capt A.K. BARKELL and Sigmn McCARTNEY H.C. left SINGAPORE on temporary duty in the Federation.
28 JUL 55		Captain BARKELL, Cpl WATTERSON K.T., Sigmn THORPE E.W. and Sigmn McCARTNEY H.C. returned from the Federation.

Figure 192: Personnel changes - July 1955²³⁶

19 JUL 55		Capt A.K. BARKELL and Sigmn McCARTNEY H.C. left SINGAPORE on temporary duty in the Federation.
28 JUL 55		Capt BARKELL, Cpl WATTERSON K.T., Sigmn THORPE E.W. and Sigmn McCARTNEY H.C. returned from the Federation.

²³⁵ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/30 RCDIG 1028111](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/30%20RCDIG%201028111), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (4 – 30 June 1955).

²³⁶ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/30 RCDIG 1028112](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/30%20RCDIG%201028112), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (1-28 Jul) .

19 AUG 55		7/102 Sigmn RUSSELL AG entered the Federation on temporary duty.
23 AUG 55		1/2952 Sigmn RUSSELL G.B.R. returned from the Federation.

Figure 193: Personnel changes - August 1955²³⁷

19 AUG 55		7/102 Sigmn RUSSELL AG entered the Federation on temporary duty.
23 AUG 55		1/2952 Sigmn RUSSELL G.B.R. returned from the Federation.

Note

The above entry was the last of the AOU War Diaries

²³⁷ [https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm 95 17/4/30 RCDIG 1028113](https://www.awm.gov.au/view/collection/records/awm%2095%2017/4/30%20RCDIG%201028113), AWM95, Australian Army Commanders' Diaries Miscellaneous Units, Australian Observer Unit, (1-31 Aug 55).

Wireless Troop Type F

In late 1955, additional Australian Military units were posted to Singapore and Malaya, in particular 2RAR²³⁸. As a consequence the AOU was disbanded and the No 1 Det, 101 Wrls Regt was re-designated Wireless Troop (Wrls Tp) Type F, 101 Wrls Regt, with an establishment of one officer and approximately 30 other ranks²³⁹ and became part of the Far Eastern Land Force (FALELF).



Figure 194: FARELF Shoulder Patch

The following graphic is an extract from a Department of Defence letter dated 15 Oct 79²⁴⁰ titled: *ALLOTMENT OF UNITS FOR SPECIAL DUTY*. The document shows the progression of unit titles.

15	Det 101 Wrls Regt- absorbed by Aust Observers Unit (Sigs Personnel) absorbed by Wrls Tp (Type F) Det 101 Wrls Regt	29 Jun 50	27 May 63
			/(also known
- 2 -			
Serial	Unit	From	To
15 (Contd)	(also known as Det F Tp Malaya, 101 Wrls Regt) absorbed by 201 Sig Sqn		

Figure 195: Extract of Allotment of Units for Special Duty

²³⁸ <https://www.awm.gov.au/unit/U60566/> 2RAR arrived in Malaya on 19 October 1955. While in Malaya, the battalion was stationed at Minden Barracks, in the foothills on the eastern side of the island. Although Minden was the nominal home of the battalion while it was in Malaya, it rarely spent any length of time there. Operations through the jungle lasted for days or even weeks at a time, and breaks between operations were brief.

²³⁹ The War Diary extract of 24 Feb 55 states that the establishment was increased in 1955 by at least 12 operators.

²⁴⁰ http://www.vrb.gov.au/service_eligibility/vietnam01.pdf

War Diaries Cease

No War Diaries for the new unit designation have been located. It is assumed that the Diaries were discontinued for security reasons.

Baling Detachment

Jack Fenton recalled²⁴¹:

About a month prior to the Baling Talks Billy Hughes, Ecky et al, went up to listen to the CPM delegation (but the CPM delegation did not have radio).

Extract from *Alias Chin Peng - My Side of History*²⁴²: [This Author's highlighting]

*About a month before the Baling talks were scheduled to begin, a special emissary from Siao Chang [²⁴³] arrived at my Betong headquarters after an overland journey from China. He had travelled for many weeks on a two-fold mission. Having completed a **radio technician's course** in Peking, part of his task was to get our **wireless operational** so we could begin **communicating directly with Siao Chang** in the run-up to the peace talks.*

Jack Fenton:

The link was soon functioning [²⁴⁴] in time for the talks and continued to function long after. Chin Peng himself later went to Beijing, Hanoi, and other places and used the radio link while in Beijing to issue instructions back to his HQ (in the Betong Salient in Thailand over from the border with Malaya).

CK2 would surely have monitored the link and the GCO would have passed it on to contacts for the Special Branch in a sanitised format - little wonder they couldn't oblige the Diplomats in KL for clear copy!

Extract from *Alias Chin Peng - My Side of History*²⁴⁵: [Author's highlighting]

*In our preparatory discussions back at Headquarters and in our **radio communications** with Siao Chang in Peking, not for a moment did we believe that the British would be prepared to grant independence within the 18 months being suggested by the Malays. When we learned of the "if possible" aspect we interpreted it as a carefully manipulated 'out' for Britain.*

²⁴¹ Email to Bob Hartley October 2015.

²⁴² *Alias Chin Peng - My Side of History* Paperback: 492 pages Publisher: Media Masters (August 8, 2003) Language: English ISBN-10: 9810486936 ISBN-13: 978-9810486938.

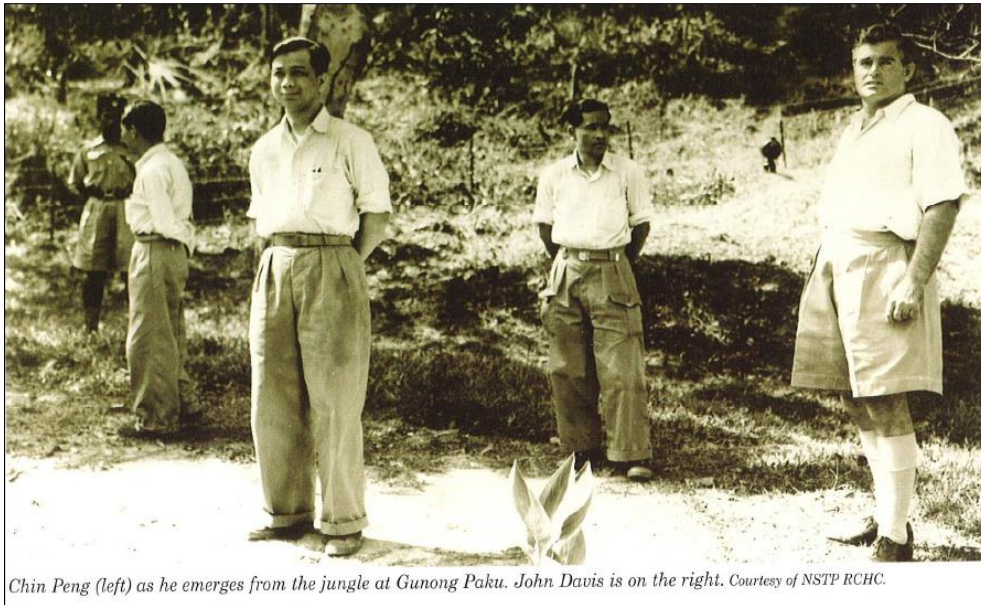
²⁴³ Siao Chang was one of the leaders of the MCP. Ching Peng had sent him to China (Peking) as his emissary.

²⁴⁴ It has not been determined whether the Detachment was intercepting this link.

²⁴⁵ *Alias Chin Peng - My Side of History* Paperback: 492 pages Publisher: Media Masters (August 8, 2003) Language: English ISBN-10: 9810486936 ISBN-13: 978-9810486938 Page 137.

Baling Peace Talks

On 28 and 29 December 1955, peace talks were convened in the Baling English School in Baling, Kedah, between the Government of the Federation of Malaya and the Communist Party of Malaya. Full details of the talks can be found at the National Archives²⁴⁶.



Chin Peng (left) as he emerges from the jungle at Gunong Paku. John Davis is on the right. Courtesy of NSTP RCHC.

Figure 196: Chin Peng²⁴⁷

Barry Hampstead²⁴⁸:

Eric Grace, in an email to Harry Freestone, Jack Fenton and this writer on 4 June 2008, gave brief detail about the small sub-detachment from Wrls Tp which operated in the Kroh [Perak] and Baling [Kedah] areas under the auspices of B Company of 2 RAR²⁴⁹ - sometime after the 1 January, 1956. An extract appears below:

Peace Talks .You will probably recall that Peace Talks were arranged to be held at Baling between Malayan Prime Minister Tengku Abdul Rahman and Chin Peng, leader of the MCP.

Mission: The powers to be decided that they would like soldiers from Wireless Troop Type F Malaya to ascertain if Chin Peng or the MCP would be using any Radio Communications before and after the talks at Baling.

Detachment to B Company, 2 RAR stationed at Kroh on the Thai Border:-

W02 Bill Hughes
Cpl Eric Grace

²⁴⁶ <http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/docs/SEA-China-interactions-Cluster/TheColdWarInAsia/1955%20Transcript%20of%20the%20Baling%20Talks.pdf>

²⁴⁷ Ibid.

²⁴⁸ Barry Hampstead *When you drink the water...* , June 2012, Page 6.

²⁴⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2nd_Battalion,_Royal_Australian_Regiment In the late 1950s and early 1960s, 2 RAR undertook two tours of Malaya during the Malayan Emergency, the first between October 1955 and October 1957 and the second between October 1961 and August 1963.^[3] The battalion arrived in Malaya for its first tour on 19 October 1955 and was once again attached to the 28th Commonwealth Infantry Brigade Group as part of the British Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve (FESR) along with British and New Zealand troops.

*Cpl Jack Parker
Cpl Shorty Roberts plus one other [possibly Sig Max Patterson]...*

We spent 6-8 weeks with B Company 2RAR since we were scheduled to travel around the Baling area with elements of 2RAR. [Eric goes on to describe the rifle shoot between Wrls Tp and 2RAR personnel.] Another win for Wrls Tp.

Work: *We had a site at B Company HQ, however, we also travelled with a Section from B Company by truck around the Baling area. We used the old Receivers that ran on Batteries - we had to change to coils and guesstimate the Freqs because in those days we needed a Freq meter to check a Frequency. Unfortunately, we didn't find any evidence that Radio Communication was used between elements of the MCP during the Talks between Tunku Abdul Rahman and Chin Peng.*

Results. *The talks were unsuccessful and after that Chin Peng went further into Thailand and he didn't really come out until his final surrender in the 1990's.*

Extract from *Alias Chin Peng - My Side of History*²⁵⁰: [This Author's highlighting]

Throughout our post-Baling deliberations we had kept in touch by radio with Siao Chang in the Chinese capital.

and

*On receiving news of the Thai suggestion, Siao Chang immediately **radioed** me in Peking. I happened to be in hospital at the time undergoing my health check. I readily agreed to see whoever was tasked to meet meet me. By now the channel for communications was directly from the Thai military to CPM headquarters and the initiative for negotiations was gaining momentum. Siao Chang agreed to venture from Headquarters to meet the Thai military in Haadyai. A special bungalow was arranged for our five-person delegation. As Siao Chang was ill, he was accompanied by a nurse. Also in attendance was our interpreter who could speak fluent Thai. Siao Chang brought along a **radio transmitter** to keep in contact with Headquarters.*

Singapore Married Quarters

In 1955, after the arrival of the extra Australian Army Units, married quarters became available and wives joined their husbands. Married personnel with families were then posted to Singapore. Most were accommodated in the Serangoon Gardens Estate. Houses were mainly stand-alone or semi-detached bungalows. The type of house allocated depended upon rank and number of children. All accommodation furniture, linen, electrical white goods, cooking utensils and crockery were provided. The only other incidentals families had to purchase to make a comfortable living area were entertainment goods.

²⁵⁰ *Alias Chin Peng - My Side of History* Paperback: 492 pages Publisher: Media Masters (August 8, 2003) Language: English ISBN-10: 9810486936 ISBN-13: 978-9810486938.

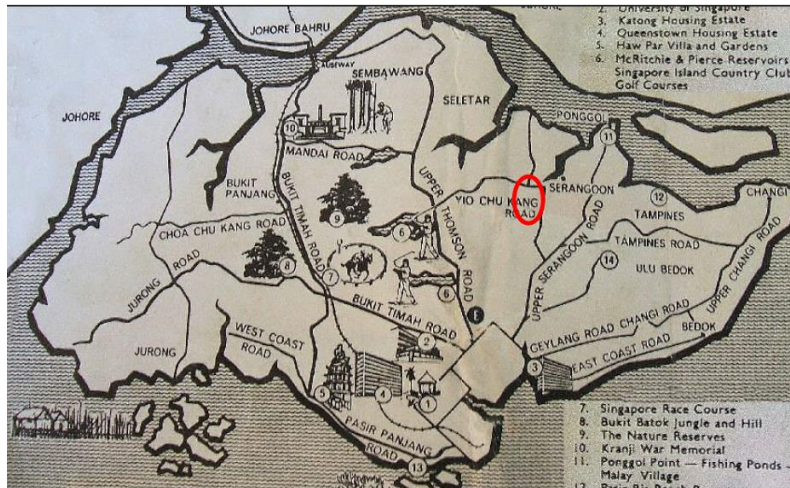


Figure 197: Serangoon Gardens Estate Location



Figure 198: Serangoon Gardens Shopping Centre²⁵¹



Figure 199: The Captain's Cabin Bar was a favourite meeting place²⁵²

²⁵¹ http://www.singapore.co.uk/HTML/singapore_in_the_sixties_5.html

²⁵² Ibid.



Figure 200: Typical semi-detached Married Quarter

Domestic Help

As part of the conditions of service for married personnel in Singapore each family was allocated additional finance for the employment of an amah²⁵³ and gardener.

²⁵³ An amah is a female domestic helper who is normally responsible for all household duties.

CHAPTER 6

1956



Posting Duration

From 1956 onwards, the posting time to Singapore was a minimum of two years with an option of extension to three.

Establishment Increase

In late 1955/early 1956, there were indications that the establishment in Singapore was going to be increased. The authors have found the following document regarding the increase²⁵⁴.

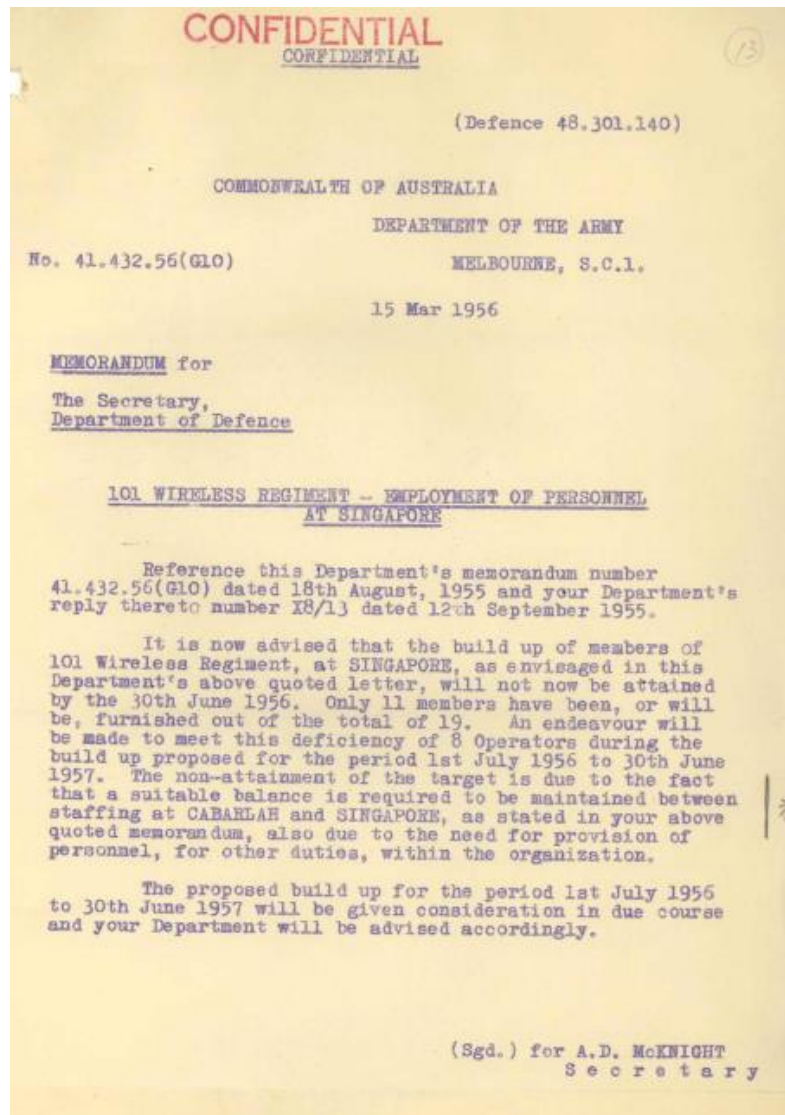


Figure 201: Secretary, Department of the Army Letter

It is assumed that there was an approved increase of 19 personnel but only 11 could be posted at that time.

²⁵⁴ <http://recordsearch.naa.gov.au/scripts/Imagine.asp?B=462000>

Singapore Riots

In October 1956 there were a series of riots in Singapore:

Wikipedia Reports:²⁵⁵

*The **Chinese middle schools riots** were a series of riots that broke out in the Chinese Singaporean community in 1956, resulting in 13 people killed and more than 100 injured.*

In 1956, after Lim Yew Hock replaced David Marshall as Chief Minister of Singapore, he began to take tough measures to suppress communist activities with the support of the British Governor and Commissioner of Police.

In September, Lim Yew Hock deregistered and banned two pro-communist organisations: the Singapore Women's Association (SWA) and the Chinese Musical Gong Society. The Singapore Chinese Middle School Students Union (SCMSSU) was also dissolved.

In protest, students gathered and camped at Chung Cheng High School and The Chinese High School. They sat-in over the next two weeks, organising meetings and holding demonstrations. On 24 October, the government issued an ultimatum that the schools be vacated. As the deadline approached, riots started at the Chinese High School and spread to other parts of the island.

The government decided to take action. On 26 October 1956, the police entered the schools and cleared the students using tear gas. Forced out from the schools, the students headed for the city. They overturned cars and damaged traffic lights. They also threw stones and bottles. Over the next five days, 13 people were killed and more than 100 were injured.

Some nine hundred people were arrested, including Lim Chin Siong, Fong Swee Suan and Devan Nair. They were released in 1959 when the People's Action Party, led by Lee Kuan Yew, won the 1959 general election to form the government as Singapore gained self rule.

Ted Baker wrote the following about the Singapore Riots²⁵⁶

Singapore Riots October 1956

It was October 1956 and we were carrying out our normal duties at CK2 while living at Tyersall Barracks. There had been serious tensions between the Singapore government and Chinese high school students and some bus unions with some of the latter being communist sympathisers. Lim Yew Hock, the Singapore Chief Minister had arrested a number of suspects and trouble was brewing.

²⁵⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chinese_middle_schools_riots.

²⁵⁶ Email to Bob Hartley 23 October 2015.

I had returned to Tyersall after shift at 10.30pm and several of us went to Tanglin for a drink. It was a bit weird as there were very few people about and we were unaware that a curfew had been imposed. The next evening a riot broke out and all our operators were ordered to CK2. I was on shift and about 5pm the rest of the Tyersall operators arrived bringing all their personal items. They also brought the personal goods of the ops on shift.

Our OC, Captain Conder, had collected the personnel from the barracks in a truck and drove via the back roads to Yio Chu Kang Road which led to CK2. On the way through a rubber estate they were almost held up by several rubber trees placed across the road.

The OC ordered the driver, Sig Jim Meehan, to put his foot down and drive over the logs. As he did so the truck was showered with stones and bottles.

We were told we would be sleeping at CK2 until further notice and had to sleep on the floor in the men's toilet when not on shift. The civilian operators stayed at their homes under guard for several days but then resumed their usual shifts but came in a bus from their residences at Poulden Court near Seletar Air Base under heavy guard.

For the next 8 to 10 days the single men worked the night shifts and the married ops the day shift. One major point during this period was the marvellous hospitality of the married operators towards the single operators. We were allowed to stay for odd periods in their homes in Serangoon Garden Estate which for the whole period of the riots had a number of helicopters flying overhead and police vehicles patrolling the estate intermittently.

The riots ended suddenly as soon as units of the Brigade of Gurkhas arrived over the Causeway. Thirteen people were killed including a sailor from an RN ship, 123 injured and over 70 cars torched (mainly European owned) plus a large number of traffic lights destroyed.

We did not do any official monitoring of the Singapore Police Radio network but unofficially had their Car Radio Control on a loud speaker for long periods particularly at night. There were 80 police cars on duty and the control officers were unbelievably competent. We were amazed at how one officer was able to move the vehicles so quickly to the trouble spots as soon as he became aware of an incident.

The cause of the riots was put down to the large number of Chinese speaking graduates from the two main Chinese schools who were well educated but could not get a decent job in Singapore because most large businesses and the public service only employed English speakers and this was their way of complaining.

and

During this period, and it was a Sunday if I recall, I was working at CK2 in the afternoon when I saw Signalman Ernie Parsons, a UK enlistee, and a bit of a character, walk out of the front door of CK2 and shut the door. I told Sergeant Brian (Mo) Richards who was acting as Supervisor. He was worried as there was a curfew in place all over Singapore and of course Ernie Parsons did not have permission to go out. We were all armed with Sten Guns with ten rounds of ammunition.

Mo Richards ordered Signalman Aussie Adams and myself to get our arms and follow him. He was also armed. We ran out on to Yio Chu Kang Road where Mo stopped a

car driven by an RAF NCO and commandeered it. He decided that Ernie would have gone back towards the North and told the driver to go that way. I don't know how he knew this but sure enough there was Ernie walking along the side of the road just near the hospital about a mile or so north of CK2.

Mo ordered us to keep our guns on Ernie and shoot him if he ran away. I felt this was a bit bizarre and Aussie sidled up to me and said under his breath "I can't shoot Ernie". I agreed. All the same we kept our guns trained on Ernie but with the safety catch on.

Fortunately, Ernie did not seem to mind and quietly got into the car with us and returned to CK2. Mo said he was going to charge Ernie but this did not happen. This was probably because he did not know what to charge him with. Ernie told me he had to get out of CK2 because he was suffering from claustrophobia.

I don't know whether Mo told Captain Conder who was our OC but I don't think anything was ever done about it.

Award to Bill Hughes

In November 1956, Warrant Officer Class 2 William Edward Hughes was gazetted as being the recipient of the Member of the British Empire (MBE) Medal for Service in Malaya.

The following citation was found on the AWM Web Page:²⁵⁷

NAME	HUGHES, William Edward		
Award	MBE	Reg.No. 1/730	Rank W/O. Class II Service AMF
Recommended by Governor-General on			
Promulgated in London Gazette on			
Promulgated in Commonwealth of Australia Gazette on			
Citation (G. H. File)	For service in Malaya		
Insignia received from London	G. H. File		
Insignia presented by			
At	On	G. H. File	
Address of recipient on presentation date			
9 Tavistock Avenue, Serangoon Garden Estate, Singapore, Malaya.			
Remarks			
Other Awards			

1276,
RCDIG1068965

Figure 202: Bill Hughes Notice #1

²⁵⁷ https://static.awm.gov.au/images/collection/items/ACCNUM_LARGE/RCDIG1068965/RCDIG1068965--393-.JPG

From the *It's An Honour* Web Page:²⁵⁸

Name:	HUGHES, William Edward
Award:	The Order of the British Empire - Member (Military)
Post-nominal:	MBE(M)
Date granted:	30 November 1956
State:	n/a
Suburb:	n/a
Postcode:	n/a
Country:	n/a
Citation:	For service in MALAYA.

Figure 203: Bill Hughes Notice #2



Figure 204: MBE Medal

Malaya Detachments

Rotation of personnel to Malaya continued throughout the year.

²⁵⁸ http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/Honours/honour_roll/search.cfm?aus_award_id=1090056&search_type=simple&showInd=true

CHAPTER 7

1957 – 1959



Single Accommodation

In approximately 1957, the GHQ Signal Regiment moved to Princess Mary Barracks and the Detachment living accommodation was also relocated.



Figure 205: Princess Mary Barracks 1958²⁵⁹



Figure 206: Princess Mary Barracks late 1970s

²⁵⁹ Photo courtesy of Dave 3807 www.arrse.com.uk. Accommodation right hand barrack top floor.

Operations

Operations at CK2 and Malayan Detachments continued from 1957 through 1960.

Changi DF Site

Members of the Detachment continued to play a very active role at the Direction Finding site at Changi when not deployed into Malaya or on duty at CK2.

Blue Baker later wrote²⁶⁰:

DF Shack and Operations

The DF shack was in the middle of RAF Changi airfield. There was a main airstrip used by large aircraft and another airstrip which was built at right angles across it. Our shack was in the centre or corner about fifty metres from each airstrip. It was a very small building about four yards square surrounded by an earth mat. The latter was a web of wires about twenty yards in diameter and held up with insulators about a foot above the ground. There was a covered wooden walkway leading from the shack to the edge of the earth-mat. Outside the earthmat was a toilet and a small storeroom which housed a refrigerator in which we could keep food or cool drinks. We worked similar shifts to those at CK2 station to which we were connected by line. If an operator at CK2 wanted to DF a signal they would contact Switchboard at the station who would call me up and give me the frequency and send down the radio signal. I would have this in one ear and then try and find the frequency and match it in the other ear. As soon as I had the correct signal I would DF it and report the result to the station. This became very interesting when the boffins of the Long Range Technical Search became involved. They would try and find out in what direction a range of strange noises heard on the radio were coming from. There were such things as Multitone, Multiplex, Pulse and others I forget. The Russians were using pulses to start up their ICBMs which they were testing. To confuse anyone listening in they would send a pulse to one station in one place which would relay it to another area which would trigger the missile.

Accommodation

We lived at first with a British Air Formation Signals Regiment [²⁶¹]. This had been arranged by our former OC who had visited the AFS adjutant and bought him a beer. We were not put on the strength of RAF Changi which was to cause a problem later on. We were not allowed to wear uniform and had a special chit to sleep at any time (being on shift work) and to get a meal at any time. The cookhouse served meals 24 hours a day because of the nature of an active RAF Station where aircraft were going and coming all the time. The British Army used to look after all cable and aerial lines

²⁶⁰ Ex - WO1 E. R. Blue/Percy/Ted BAKER *Some Random Thoughts of my service with 7 Sig Regiment 1954 – 1963 at Cabarlah and Singapore/Malaya.*

²⁶¹ 19 Air Formation Signals Regiment: Lord, Chris (2012-07-10). *Royal Corps of Signals: Unit Histories of the Corps (1920 - 2001) and its Antecedents: Supplementary Volume* (Kindle Locations 6528-6530). Casemate Publishers. Kindle Edition . The unit was formed in November 1943. It moved to Comilla, India, where in January 1945, it provided communications for the Combat Cargo Task Force, a RAF/USAF force, responsible for supporting the Chindits and other forces in Burma. In July 1946, the unit moved to Singapore where it remained, supporting the Far East Air Force, until November 1971.

for the RAF and that is why this regiment was at RAF Changi. The AFS orderly room personnel did not like us much and often woke us up for no reason. Our chaps decided to move to the Leave Centre at Telok Paku. This was a centre set up by the British Army at an old gun emplacement which was used by British Signals men who wished to have a holiday for a few days or weeks from serving in Malaya. They had to pay one dollar a day but had all meals and quarters free. Unfortunately, our OC found out about it and ordered our chaps back to AFS.



Figure 207: Telok Paku Leave Centre circa 1956²⁶²

As with our previous experience our main complaint at Changi was getting paid. We had to go to Tyersall Barracks to pick up our pay each fortnight. As I had a car I was able to do it easily although it was 22 miles each way. Others had to catch a bus to Singapore City and another from there to Tyersall Park a round trip of sixty miles and it took four or five hours depending on the buses. When we got our new OC his admin officer would come down and pay us in person which was great.

Security

We were told not to let anyone into the DF Shack so a couple of times we had a situation which was funny to us but not to others. I was on duty one morning when I heard the tramping of feet on the walkway and a heavy knock on the door. Spread along the walkway were twelve RAF officers with an Air Vice Marshal at the head. "What is this place, I want to inspect it", the AVM said. "I am sorry, sir but I can't let you in", I said. He was a bit non-plussed and turned to a Squadron Leader next to him and asked him what it was. The squadron leader did not know and said he would have to find out. They then trooped off and got into a number of landrovers and drove away. I had a call the next day from the Squadron Leader who turned out

²⁶² <http://www.rafchangi.com/archives/18-ch-1701-1800/ch1701/>

to be the Base Security Officer and he said he understood my problem and not to worry.

Trust in Operators

Sometime in early 1957 I was working the 'Direction Finding' complex at Changi Singapore with three others namely; Operator's Signals Harry (Pedro) Freestone, Kevin (Coke) Coleman, and Teddy Blacker. On information received from CK2 Singapore our Southeast Asian Intelligence Control Station, we were asked to D/F the transmissions of the Russian top rated Sverdlov Class cruiser 'Ordzhonikidze' (8000 tons 70 Kilometers per hour 4x3 152 mm Guns) which was moving from the Black Sea in Europe through the Suez Canal and then south to Mirny, the Soviet Base in the Antarctic. We tracked it as it moved south towards the entrance to the Malacca Straits and then its D/F radio bearings went 'Flat', i.e., the bearing line was too broad anything up to 90 degrees. When transmissions are sent from a location close to the receiving D/F station the bearings are so wide they cannot give a true bearing or a sensing direction. A day or so later 'Coke' Coleman was again the first to intercept it and found a very good bearing that put the Russian cruiser east of Singapore and moving north.

We passed this new location to CK2 and they advised GCHQ at Bletchley Park in Gloucestershire, England (The worldwide British Signal Intelligence gathering centre where the original request had come from.). They informed CK2 who then informed us that this was not possible as the Cruiser was going to Mirny in the Antarctic. However, each one of our operators had found the same thing; the transmissions were coming from the northeast and the ship was heading north.

As it has happened many times in the past our OC Captain Neil Condor made the cardinal sin of not believing the men on the ground. He ventured down to Changi and gave us a tongue-lashing and said we were incompetent and must be doing something wrong. We checked again and the signals were definitely coming from the northeast. We were again told that we were wrong in that we were registering the 'reciprocal'. We, the Operator Signals staff believed the 'Ordzhonikidze' coming from the Suez Canal in the west, had turned south, down through the Malacca Strait and sailed very close around Singapore and then headed north. This was why the bearing went so flat, i.e., as it went very close to Singapore. GCHQ's assumption was that the 'Ordzhonikidze' would have sailed south of Sumatra and continued south to the Antarctic. Because all the Operator Signals staff 'stuck to their guns' and reiterated that the signal was definitely coming from the northeast, the local authorities sent a RAF Sunderland flying boat out over the ocean, northeast of Singapore and there was the 'Ordzhonikidze' sailing north. It was going to Vladivostok via Vietnam and not south to Mirny in the Antarctic. We never got an apology. (Probably because we didn't need to know or because they were too embarrassed to give it.) Each of the Operators involved had to write a report on what had happened on the orders of, I think, the CO of CK2 Colonel Banham. We were not amused.

The 'Ordzhonikidze' was later given to Indonesia along with some Destroyers as a good will gesture during the 'Cold War'.

I won't go into a detailed description of carrying out a sensing of a D/F task but just say that when a D/F of a transmission is required a number of pieces of equipment are used e.g. goniometer, oscilloscope, etc. By using these equipments the signal is 'sensed' and the required direction from which the transmission signal is determined. The odd thing about D/F is what my instructor used to drill into me. "The signal is

coming from where it isn't". This only means that the direction the strong signal is heard is not the direction of the transmitter to the receiver but 90 degrees either side of it depending on the sensing.



Figure 208: 'Ordzhonikidze'²⁶³

Further recollections from Blue Baker²⁶⁴.

When I first went to RAF Changi I was billeted at Hut 139 with 19 AFS Regt [²⁶⁵]. This was an Air Formation Signals Regiment which looked after all the telegraph, telephone and cable work used by the RAF in a particular area, in this case the RAF Base.

It was a three story building and we were on the second floor with the orderly room of the regiment on the ground floor. On each of the second and third floors there were sixty men in four rows. For some reason the orderly room staff did not seem to like us very much because when they had an inspection of the barracks each morning they invariably came to our corner and if there was any one of us still in bed they would lift the bed and drop it and demand to know why we were in bed. Fortunately we had been issued with the following special chit to cover these occasions.

²⁶³ <http://gcaptain.com/maritime>

²⁶⁴ Email from Ted Baker to Bob Hartley 9 Nov 15.

²⁶⁵ See earlier footnote.

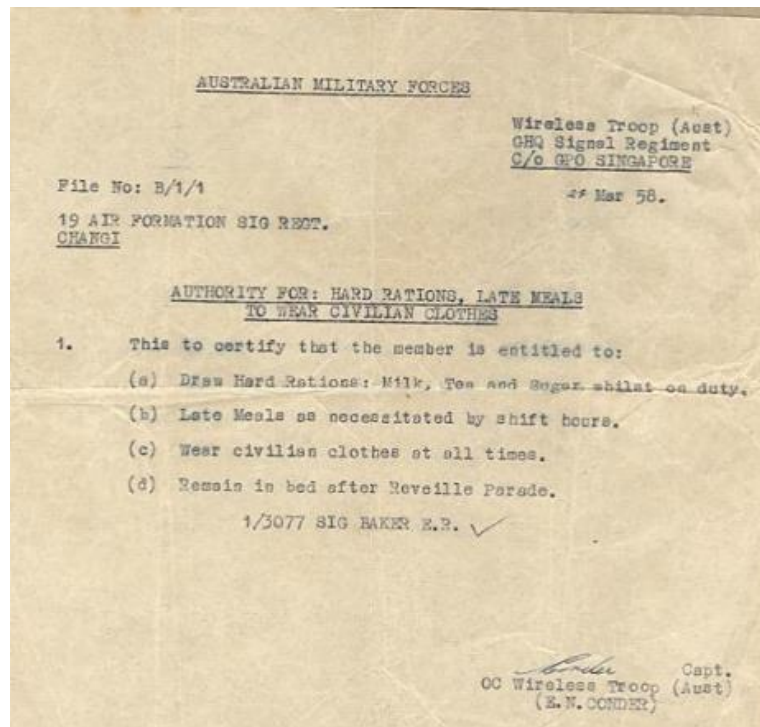


Figure 209: Chit for Changi Personnel

AUTHORITY FOR: HARD RATIONS, LATE MEALS
TO WEAR CIVILIAN CLOTHES

1. This is certify that the member is entitled to:
- (a) Draw Hard Rations: Milk, Tea and Sugar whilst on duty.
 - (b) Late Meals as necessitated by shift hours.
 - (c) Wear civilian clothes at all times.
 - (d) Remain in bed after Reveille Parade.

1/3077 SIG BAKER E.R.

One of the main problems was noise. With all those men getting up in the morning and on weekends it was very noisy. Also there were a number of Rediffusion loudspeakers. Rediffusion was a radio station which sent its broadcast via cable. It was very popular throughout Singapore with the local population. When the men came in for morning tea or afternoon tea they turned it on and left it on at full blast. It was very difficult to get to sleep or remain asleep particularly off dog watch. One morning Jim Walsh was so incensed at the noise he tore the speakers from the wall and went back to bed.

After I had left, four of our men, including Stan Cole and Ted Royal, got sick of the continued annoyance and moved down to the Signals Leave Centre at Telok Paku. This had been set up to house Signals personnel who had come down from the Federation on leave and was a cheap place to stay. It was rationed in the normal way but had extra rations and cost a dollar Malay per day. Our men thought this was wonderful as they were right on the beach with a bar and parties every so often.

Eventually, Captain Conder came down to see if everything was OK and could not find his men. When he did he ordered them back but after considering the complaints he allowed them to live in the barracks allocated to the New Zealand 41 Squadron of Bristol Freighters [²⁶⁶]. This was much more convenient and we got on well with the Kiwis.

When I returned for my second posting at Changi I was settled in with the New Zealanders. When I left I had a small problem with my blankets, sheets and bedding. I was told to return it to the RAF Quartermaster's Store. When I tried to leave it there they refused to accept it as it had not been issued to me. I did not know what to do with them so, after a lot of argument I left them on the counter and ran outside and into a friend's car and drove off.

We were very impressed with the meals at Changi which were of a very high standard and were served every day over a twenty-four period. This suited us with the odd timing of our shifts so we were able to get a meal whenever we wanted or required it. Unfortunately, the Australian Army had neglected to arrange payment for the meals.

On one occasion the Catering Officer asked me to go with him to see the Station Commander, a Group Captain. It must have looked pretty odd to the Commander as we used to wear shorts, a floral or hawaiian shirt and flip flops and sun glasses when we went to work. We arrived there and the Commander had about five officers around him. To cut a long story short he accused me of owing him 16,000 meals over the last eight years or so since we had been at Changi. I told him I was going back to Australia the next week but suggested he contact the head of the Australian Army in Singapore for some relief. The catering officer and the cooks thought it was a great joke. Every time I went to the mess to get a meal the sergeant cook would shout out to everyone "Look at this chap, he owes us 16,000 meals" and all the cooks and servers would laugh their heads off.

Officers Commanding

There is no record of when Captain Barkell departed Singapore. Best guess is that he was replaced by Captain E.N Conder²⁶⁷ in late 1956/early 1957.

Change of Living in Accommodation

In 1958, the living-in accommodation for single personnel was moved to RAF Seletar. The top floor of a three story block was allocated to the Australian living-in personnel.

²⁶⁶ http://www.wikiwand.com/en/No._41_Squadron_RNZAF **No. 41 Squadron** was a transport unit of the Royal New Zealand Air Force (RNZAF). The squadron was formed in 1944, and conducted transport flights in the south Pacific during World War II. It remained active after the war, and flew supplies to the New Zealand occupation force in Japan. Three crews from the squadron participated in the Berlin Airlift during 1948 and 1949, and one of its flights was temporarily based in Singapore from 1949 to 1951. From 1955 the entire squadron was stationed at Singapore, from where it participated in the Malayan Emergency, Indonesia–Malaysia confrontation and Vietnam War. Detachments of No. 41 Squadron were also based in Thailand from 1962 to 1965. The squadron was disbanded in 1977.

²⁶⁷ Note that Captain Conder signed the Changi Authority on 24 Mar 58.



Figure 210: Main Gate RAF Seletar



Figure 211: RAF Seletar Location of Australian Personnel

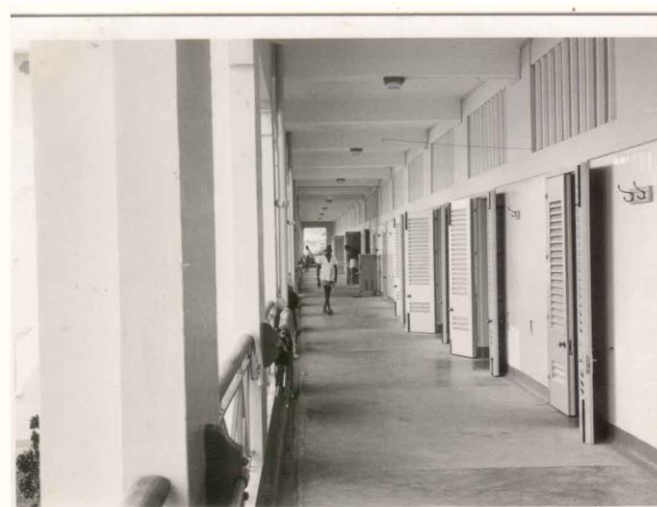


Figure 212: Veranda and rooms

The living-in members employed a 'Boot Boy' for the domestic duties, i.e. bed making, cleaning, cleaning boots and laundry collection.



Figure 213: Old Nick

Just outside the base was the village of Jalan Kayu. Jalan Kayu provided a great assortment of shops, restaurants and bars.



Figure 214: Jalan Kayu main street

Manpower increases

In 1958, there was a steady increase in personnel posted to Singapore.



Figure 215: A very dapper WO1 Jack Fenton²⁶⁸

Departing Sungei Patani

Barry Hampstead reported²⁶⁹:

1959 MOVEMENT OF DETACHMENT FROM SUNGEI PATANI TO BATU UBAN PENANG ISLAND By Eric Grace

Lieutenant Des Overstead [later LT COL] was the young officer sent up from the Squadron in Singapore to complete the shift. A very good young officer who ran into the usual position of young officers with the Gurkha Brigade – a Brigade with stacks of young Lieutenants.

The Brigade of Gurkhas was very good to us and looked after us very well. We were well treated and considered staff by the RSM and Senior NCO's. We were invited to all their parades etc!

80 Foot Mast: I had been in charge of the Detachment the last time we dropped it to replace the Light on the top which was required as a warning light to Aircraft. We always need a section of Gurkhas to help us lower the mast because of its weight when it got to the point of balance.

The ropes had been laying in the store and both Lt Overstead and I weren't too keen on using them, however, we could NOT obtain any replacement ropes.

I laid out the rig, set the ground anchor and lined my ops and Gurkhas around the L shape of the Ground Anchor. Lt Overstead insisted on holding onto the rope on the rig side of the Ground Anchor and when the first rotten rope went through my hands

²⁶⁸ 7 Sig Regt Archives.

²⁶⁹ Barry Hampstead *When you drink the water...*, June 2012, Pages 37, 38.

I yelled out for him to let go. He didn't and when the second rope broke, he went flying in the air like a shanghai – how he missed the rig, I don't know to this day. I did have visions of having to explain the loss of a Lieutenant. Fortunately, he was okay. I thought I was going to be a very temporary SGT if my promotion came through.

New Location

In 1959, the detachment relocated from Sungei Patani to Penang Island. The detachment operational area was located at an old WW2 Japanese communications site at Batu Uban. Accommodation and messing was provided at Minden Barracks. The Batu Uban building was surrounded by a tall wire fence with three strands of barbwire along the top angled elements. A lockable double gate was at the entrance.



Figure 216: Location of Batu Uban on Penang Island

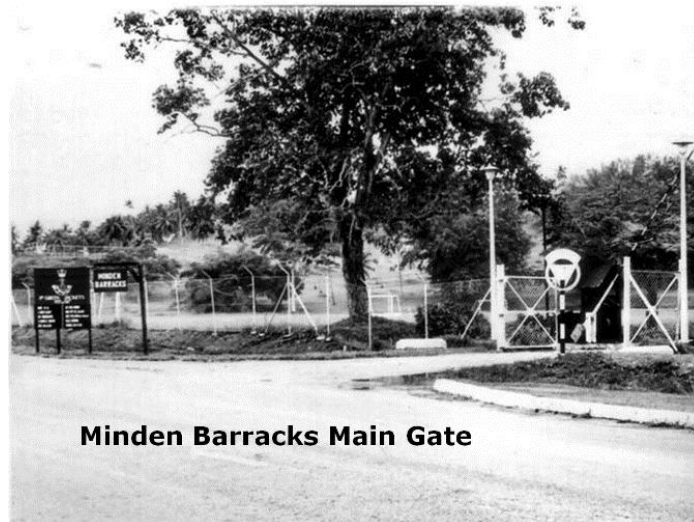
Barry Hampstead reported²⁷⁰:

Eric Grace:

Ferry to Penang: We had a Malay Driver driving the Truck and he almost backed up into the drink, so we promptly got out of the truck and never got into it again until he was on dry land.

Minden Barracks: Lt Overstead covered all arrangements there for food and accommodation etc. He did a good job of it.

²⁷⁰ Barry Hampstead *When you drink the water...*, June 2012, Page 37.



Minden Barracks Main Gate

Figure 217: Minden Barracks

Batu Uban: The area had been assigned for British Officers Married Quarters and the good ladies thought we would cause problems in the area. In fact it was quite the opposite, we worked 24 hours a day and the kids thought we were great. Many of their husbands were serving in Malaysia and of course we were polite to them and they really accepted us.



Figure 218: Batu Uban front gate and building²⁷¹

²⁷¹ Photo courtesy Kevin Carter.



Figure 219: Operations Area Top Floor



Figure 220: Batu Uban side view²⁷²

Batu Uban: We had thoughts of having to put up our 80 foot mast, however, I got Sago our Bearer to climb the Japanese Radio Mast, Indian style, and located halyards etc. from which to hang our Aerial System, home-made switching boxes were courtesy of Tech Boffin Willis.

Cobras: We got a rude shock under the building; cobras had been breeding there since the Japs left at the end of WW2. Sago got another job of getting rid of them for us.

The Set Room was at the far left of the building and usually had three intercept positions. The next three rooms along the veranda were for administration and a sleeping area for the overnight (2300 – 0600) piquet (one of the evening watch operators).

²⁷² Ibid.

In the downstairs area, there were rooms for the Boot Boy (Sago), stores and guard dog. Most of the other areas were not used. There were too many active ghosts.

Equipment

The main intercept receiver in use at the station was the AR88. There also was an old HRO receiver available for backup.

As for previous detachments, there were no dedicated communications facilities. Administrative and OTP encrypted operational traffic was passed via the normal Military system. All intercepted material was sent to Singapore by the military safe hand courier.

Antennas

The antenna field at the station was a compromise between security and effectiveness. The main antennas were dipoles or long wires strung between masts in the compound and a single mast on the other side of the main road. It was fortunate that the Detachment was able to site the antennas in the direction of the expected targets for best reception. Two other antennas were available: a long vertical rod at the end of the building and a long wire strung under the eaves of the building.

There was the constant problem of some of the local population having a greater need of the copper wires of the antenna than the Detachment. On several occasions operators found that their targets went suddenly quiet, and after investigation, found that the wires on the outside antennas had been removed. The acquisition of a dog assisted in aiding detection of any unwelcome visitors.

Transport

The Detachment had no dedicated transport, push bikes were used for travel between Batu Uban and Minden Barracks. After a short time, the transport section in Minden Barracks provided a vehicle and driver at shift changeover. It was fortunate that several of the single members took their private cars to Penang.



Figure 221: Batu Uban Transport

From Left: Don McKinven, Jack Hooker, Ray Hyland, Ray Pratt, Eric Grace

Personnel

The Detachment normally consisted of a Warrant Officer/Sergeant as I/C, a Sergeant/Corporal as 2 I/C and eight other ranks (Op Sigs). A technician was regularly despatched from Singapore for technical assistance.

Accommodation

Initially the Detachment members were accommodation in the large British accommodation blocks and after a while, attap²⁷³ huts were built for the Detachment that was well away from the main British Barracks.

Military Police Area

The attap huts were located close to the administration area of the Australian Military Police (MP) responsible for activities on Penang Island and nearby Butterworth. It was very fortunate that the Detachment was given approval to use the messing and recreation (Bar) facilities of the MPs. The members of both Detachments melded together well.

²⁷³. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Attap_dwelling. Named after the Attap Palm, which provides the wattle for the walls, and the leaves with which their roofs are thatched.



Figure 222: Accommodation area #1



Figure 223: Detachment accommodation area #2



Figure 224: Ablution block on the right

Deployment Cycles

Normally, single personnel were detached to Batu Uban for three months and married personnel two. Most of the single personnel extended their tours.

Married Quarters

After a short time, when two British married quarters in Minden Barracks were allocated to the Detachment and two families moved to Penang Island from Singapore. There was only one change of families before the station closed.

CHAPTER 8

END OF MALAYAN EMERGENCY



Emergency Over

As the threat continued to dissipate, the Malayan government officially declared the Emergency over on 31 July 1960. 1RAR remained in Malaya until October the following year, when 2RAR returned for a second tour.²⁷⁴

Overview and Casualties

When Malaya became an independent federation in August 1957 with Tunku Abdul Rahman as Prime Minister, the avowed anti-colonialism of the communist cause became meaningless. Indeed, the new government was now able to call the struggle against the guerrillas the “People’s War”. The struggle itself was effectively over by 1958 when the last significant group of guerrillas still at large in Malaya surrendered at Telok Anson in Perak, and others fled north into the remote areas near – and across – the border with Thailand. The Malayan government did not, however, declare an end to the State of Emergency until 31 July 1960. By that time 6,700 guerrillas, 1,800 Malayan and Commonwealth troops, and more than 3,000 civilians had lost their lives in the conflict.²⁷⁵

Lasting 13 years, the Malayan Emergency was the longest continuous military commitment in Australia's history. Thirty-nine Australian servicemen were killed in Malaya, although only 15 of these deaths occurred as a result of operations, and 27 were wounded, most of whom were in the Army²⁷⁶.

Phantom Unit

The AWM Webpage²⁷⁷ lists the Australian Military units that were involved in the Malayan Emergency. The No 1 Det, 101 Wrls Regt and Wrls Tp Type F are not mentioned, although they were the first Army Unit deployed to the Federation and remained throughout the Emergency.

Operational Results

As mentioned earlier, the prime role of the Detachment/Troop when deployed to the Federation was to search for, intercept, locate and report on the MCP communications. It is believed that this task was only successful on probably two occasions and then only briefly. The personnel involved were not deterred by the lack of success and always maintained an extremely high level of professionalism in their activities.

The lack of success was mainly attributed to the MCP rarely communicating by radio.

When not involved in the MCP tasks the Detachment/Troop supported and conducted other national tasking.

²⁷⁴ <http://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/malayan-emergency/>

²⁷⁵ <http://se-asia.commemoration.gov.au/background-to-malayan-emergency/causes-and-description.php>

²⁷⁶ <http://www.awm.gov.au/atwar/malayan-emergency/>

²⁷⁷ <http://www.awm.gov.au/units/malaya/>

Mention in Books

A few books have mentioned Sigint and the unit in the Malayan Emergency. The following are two examples:

*Tiger Territory: The Untold Story of the Royal Australian Navy from 1948 to 1971*²⁷⁸

Military sources included information collected by army patrols, and aerial reconnaissance. Another source of information came from signals intelligence (Sigint). Initially, the MRLA had no radio communications, as it struggled with equipment left over from World War II. Chin Peng was not unaware of the advantages of radio, but, until the Chinese trained one of his cadres in radio maintenance and returned him to Malaya in 1955, there was little he could do to establish a communications network. However, the British could not be certain that a CT radio network did not exist, and a watch was kept by the British–Australian Sigint station in Singapore to identify one should it emerge. The Australian component of operators had begun to arrive in 1950, as part of the responsibilities this country had accepted under the Commonwealth Signals Intelligence agreement of 1946, later formalised internationally by the UK–USA Agreement of 1947. The RAN supplied intercept operators and linguists for this task, and from 1955 small parties of Australian sailors were embarked in British and Australian warships for patrols along the Malayan coast. These were searching for CT transmissions at frequencies and powers not able to be intercepted in Singapore. As the claim was later to be made that Australian warships were continually involved in seeking out and intercepting CT communications during the Emergency, this is a good point at which to consider its accuracy. If he is to be taken at his word, from late 1956 Chin Peng on the Malayan/Thai border was in regular and apparently reliable, radio communication with China. This would have required transmissions to be at High Frequency (HF) or below, at frequencies easily intercepted by British Commonwealth fixed intercept stations. Besides the jointly manned British station in Singapore, there were Australian stations in Darwin and the Cocos Islands, as well as the British station in Hong Kong. The power of the CT transmitter might have been low enough to make interception at some of these sites problematic, but this gap in reception would have been better covered by a deployed army tactical interception station somewhat closer to the border, rather than occasional coverage by patrolling warships. In his submission to the 1999 Mohr Inquiry

In his submission to the 1999 Mohr Inquiry into repatriation benefits (see Chapter 7) Commodore Clarke, who had been the Communications Officer of HMAS Warramunga in 1958, made the statement that: ‘The “Third Wireless Office” was activated on a continuous basis at sea in the Malayan/Singapore area except in the Singapore Dockyard’. The communications division in Warramunga was Clarke’s responsibility, but he may not have been privy to the tasking of the Sigint personnel because he lacked the ‘need-to-know’ qualification. Based on the author’s background in the subject, it seems more plausible that the naval operators were tasked on Indonesian or Chinese targets rather than looking for Chin Peng and his CTs. This was a common and routine intelligence collection task for all Australian warships. Therefore, the Far East Strategic Reserve (FESR) Association’s assertion that RAN intercept activity was routinely directed at the CTs also seems unlikely to be

²⁷⁸ Pfennigwerth, Ian (2012-08-27). *Tiger Territory: The Untold Story of the Royal Australian Navy from 1948 to 1971* (Kindle Locations 911-929). Rosenberg Publishing. Kindle Edition.

correct. A probable solution to this conundrum was provided in a separate submission to the Mohr Inquiry by Allan Moffatt, a telegraphist posted to HMAS Anzac in 1957. He noted that the ship had, on occasion, hosted a two-man special intelligence collection team. When they were aboard, they virtually lived in the 3rd wireless office, carrying out whatever duties that was [sic] required, i.e. intercept and monitoring. Unfortunately, we were not allowed in there when they were doing this work, and when they left the ship at different times to join HMAS TOBRUK (or some other Royal Navy ship), all their work, some equipment was taken with them. They also if I remember correct would proceed to some place in Singapore on arrival, carrying their analyse [sic] by safehand ... If my memory serves me correctly, the equipment in the HF/DF was a FH4 set.³⁰ This seems a more likely scenario. The periods during which Anzac (and Tobruk) were deployed off the Malayan coast coincided with an increase of radio traffic between Chin Peng and his Chinese masters after the establishment of reliable communications, and following an abortive 1955 meeting with Tunku Abdul Rahman. The FH4 referred to by Moffatt was a direction-finding receiver operating in the bands most likely to have been used by the MRLA. The layperson may be excused for thinking that this discussion of signals intelligence minutiae has only passing relevance to the story; in fact it represents the development of an important RAN capability, not just in supporting operations in Malaya but in meeting a wider Australian responsibility in the Asian theatre. It was also the resurgence of a capability the RAN had last exercised in 1938.

FH4²⁷⁹

Frequency Range: 1 to 25 MHz
Manufacturer: Plessey

Some notes about the FH-4 are provided by John Wise:

In the RN, outfit FH4 was being used ashore in 1943 and did not get accepted for shipborne use until later.

According to the FH4 handbook BR 1569, the system had five RF ranges: 1 to 2, 2 to 4, 4 to 8, 8 to 16 and 16 to 25 MHz with an actual RF coverage of 0.96 to 25.5 MHz, hence five sets of plug-in coils for the early sets. There were three IF stages all running at 450 KHz, although not stated, there is an equation which suggests that the low frequency oscillator tracks high. So if the RF was turned to 5 MHz then the LO would have been at 5.450 MHz. The test oscillator also operated at 450 KHz, so it would not directly interfere with any RF signal but it would be immediately accepted by the IF stages, regardless of the tuned frequency. An elegant solution.

According to BR 1569, the system is designated FH4, the 4th High Frequency DF system using a B-T frame coil antenna. The individual components of which are the receiver - FHB (APW 6142 - without gyro, APW 6142A - with a gyro), the Power Supply Unit - PSU for FHB (APW 6143), the Voltage Regulator (APW 5981) and the Frame Coil - S25B (AP W6118A).

AP = Admiralty Pattern, and subject to confirmation, W = Wireless, a designator which was dropped by 1950.

It appears that at least four aerials were associated with the FH-3 and FH-4 HF DF systems. They are designated S16, S18, S25 and S25B. The only difference between the S16 and S18 is their size. The S16 was crossed diamonds with a 3 foot aperture, usually fitted on top of a pole structure. S18 had a 4.5 foot aperture and was often

²⁷⁹ <http://jproc.ca/rrp/fh4.html>

integrated into a mast structure. The S16 had a short 'spike' on top - this was not a sense aerial but a lightning conductor. S16 was used on corvettes, frigates, destroyers while S18 was fitted to cruisers, carriers, battleships and depot ships.

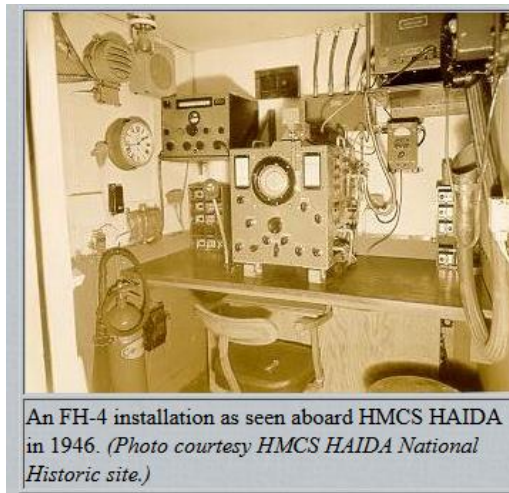


Figure 225: FH-4

*Signals - Swift and Sure - A history of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals 1947-1972.*²⁸⁰

From 1951 to 1959, 101 Wireless Regiment also maintained a detachment in Singapore and Malaya as part of 1 Australian Observer Unit. The detachment was a Wireless Troop Type F and included one officer and 15 other ranks from the Regiment. The detachment 'roamed around the jungle doing tactical intercept of Communist Terrorists (of which there were not a great deal)'.

²⁸⁰ *Signals - Swift and Sure - A history of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals 1947-1972.* John Blaxland, Page 81.

Time Line

The following is a consolidated timeline for main events:

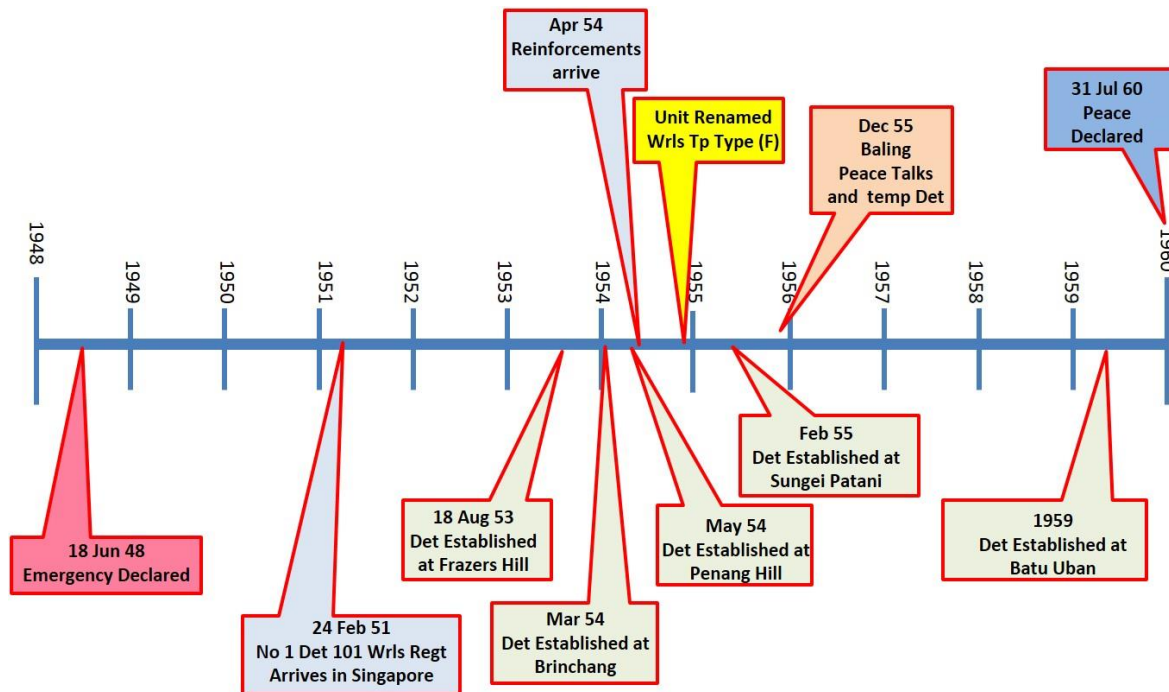


Figure 226: Timeline

Nominal Roll

Contained in Annex A is a Nominal Roll of all 101 Wrls Regt personnel who served in Malaya during the Emergency.

General Service Medal

All military personnel who served for the recognised period of 30 days in Malaya during the Emergency are entitled to wear the General Service Medal (1945) with the Clasp Malaya.



Figure 227: GSM with Clasp

The Australian Active Service Medal 1945-1975

In December 1997, the Australian Government established the Australian Active Service Medal 1945-1975 that recognises service of Australian Defence Force and certain other persons in prescribed warlike operations such as the Korean War, the Malayan Emergency, the Indonesian Confrontation and the Vietnam War. Subsequent awards to the same person are made with an additional clasp.



Figure 228: AASM



Figure 229: Clasp

Australian Service Medal 1945–1975

The Australian Service Medal was authorized on 13 September 1988 to recognise prescribed service in peacekeeping and non-warlike operations prior to February 1975. It is awarded with a clasp to denote the prescribed operation, and subsequent awards of the medal are made in the form of additional clasps.



Figure 230: ASM

Pingat Jasa Malaysia Service Medal

The Pingat Jasa Malaysia Service Medal (PJM) was established on 3 March 2004. It is a medal given by the King and Government of Malaysia. The medal recognised service by members of the Malaysian Armed Forces during the Malayan Emergency, Second Malayan Emergency, and the Indonesia–Malaysia Confrontation.



Figure 231: PJM

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AUTHORS

R. W. (Bob) Hartley, AM

Major (Rtd) Royal Australian Signals

Australian Regular Army: 1957 - 1992

Army Reserve: 1994 – 1995

*101 Wireless Regiment
(Including Singapore/Malaya)*

*7 Signal Regiment
(Including Borneo/South Vietnam
and other detachments)*

*Operator Signals
Analyst Special Duties*

*Served in most ranks from
Signalman to Major within the Regiment
(Less 2nd Lieutenant and Lieutenant)*

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B.V. (Barry) Hampstead

WO1 (Rtd) Royal Australian Signals

Australian Regular Army: 1955 – 1978

*101 Wireless Regiment
(Including Singapore/Malaya)*

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*Operator Signals
Analyst Special Duties*

*Served in all ranks from
Signalman to Warrant Officer Class 1*

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ABBREVIATIONS

Admin	Administration	MCP	Malayan Communist Party
AFS	Air Formation Signals	MP	Military Police
AHQ	Army Headquarters	MQ	Married Quarters
AOU	Australian Observer Unit	NAA	National Archives of Australia
ARA	Australian Regular Army	NCO	Non Commissioned Officer
ASWG	Australian Special Wireless Group	OC	Officer Commanding
AVM	Air Vice Marshall	OKC	Operator Keyboard and Cipher
AWM	Australian War Memorial	Op Sig	Operator Signals
BMH	Brithish Military Hospital	ORs	Other Ranks
Brit	British	OTP	One Time Pad
Capt	Captain	QM	Quartermaster
CARO	Central Army Records Office	RAAF	Royal Australian Air Force
CK	Chia Keng	RAF	Royal Air Force
CO	Commanding Officer	RCA	Radio Corporation of America
Comms	Communications	Recce	Reconnaissance
Cpl	Corporal	Regt	Regiment
CT	Communist Terrorist	Rfts	Reinforcements
D/F	Direction Finding	RSs	Radio Supervisors
Det	Detachment	RTO	Rail Trasportation Officer
DF	Direction Finding	S/Sgt	Staff Sergeant
DPR	Directorate of Public Relations	SAC	Senior Aircraftman
FARELF	Far Eastern Land Forces	Sgt	Sergeant
Flt Lt	Flight Lieutenant	Sig	Signalman
GCHQ	Government Communications HQ	Sig	Signals
GHQ	General Headquarters	Sigint	Signals Intelligence
HF	High Frequency	Sigmn	Signalman
I/C	In Charge	Sitrep	Situation Report
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee	T/Sgt	Temporary Sergeant
KL	Kuala Lumpur	TA	Traffic Analysis
LCpl	Lance Corporal	WO	Warrant Officer
Lt	Lieutenant	WRAC	Womans Royal Army Corps (British)
Lt Col	Lieutenant Colonel	Wrls	Wireless

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**ANNEX A to
101 Wrls Regt
The Malayan Emergency 1951-1960**

Members of No 1 Det, 101 Wireless Regiment and Wrls Tp Type 'F'
who served in Singapore/Malaya during the Malayan Emergency and who
qualified for the award of the British General Service Medal (GSM) 1918-1962¹

Abrahamson	BL	Adams	AJ	Allwright	R
Andrews	DM	Anstee	MG	Antcliff	RG
Auger	GA	Baker	ER	Barden	WB
Barkell	AK	Barwick	R	Basnett	JN
Bennett	AE	Bennett	GM	Bettens	J
Blacker	EC	Blanchonette	EJ	Boddy	FP
Bone	WS	Borland	BJT	Brill	JAA
Brown	JF	Buckton	T	Bull	JR
Carter	KJ	Carver	JM	Casey	WE
Cattanach	CJ	Cockburn	A	Cole	SJ
Coleman	KT	Conder	EN	Cooper	RL
Craig	AD	Darker	WH	Day	CJ
Day	JW	Dean	RM	Dixon	AH
Drochmann	G	Downing	I	Elliott	G
Eyles	WJ	Fenton	JE	Fincher	HWR
Fizzell	GE	Flynn	BM	Foote	LH
Fox	RNG	Freestone	H	Gilbert	EN
Godley	DR	Grace	ECK	Gracey	L
Hadley	BFG	Hall	L	Hampstead	BV
Harper	BV	Harris	RG	Havey	MJ
Herd	TC	Hooker	JD	Howell	RC
Howell	RJ	Hughes	WE	Hurene	H
Hutchinson	GH	Hyland	RC	Ison	RW
Ison	WF	Jacobsen	WE	Jordan	CCH
Kaarsberg	JG	Kelly	FJ	Kidson	GH
Killick	AS	Knight	ADA	Lawrence	RG
Lea	P	Lopes	CC	Machin	LA
Madden	ER	Meehan	JN	Mitchell	DG
Mitchell	WH	Mitchener	FC	Mooney	EE
Moore	DA	Morgan	JT	Muirhead	JM
McCartney	HC	McKinven	D	McLeod	TR
McLoughlin	JP	McMillan	MJ	McPherson	JG
O'Donnell	FW	Oswin	TW	Overstead	DR
Owbridge	WG	Parker	JP	Parle	RA
Parsons	EW	Patterson	MG	Peacock	RL

¹ Most of the information for this Nominal Roll came from the book: *Mostly Unsung- Australia and The Commonwealth in the Malayan Emergency 1948-60* by N.C. Smith

Pratt	RA	Quickmire	PW	Rayner	JW
Reid	J	Reid	PF	Richards	BR
Roberts	RL	Robinson	IS	Royal	E
Rush	EF	Russell	AG	Russell	GBR
Seagar	DS	Seager	JB	Senior	A
Slade	DJ	Smith	RS	Stanfield	AH
Stewart	CD	Stewart	GG	Stewart	JD
Swann	KF	Taylor	EA	Thompson	MJ
Thompson	RJ	Thorpe	EW	Thorpe	J
Turner	R	Turner	RC	Turnley	CJ
Walsh	JE	Ward	J	Wardhaugh	K
Watson	RJ	Watterson	KJ	Webb	IH
White	WJP	Wicks	RS	Wiggins	ER
Williams	RD	Williamson	JI	Willis	JG
Wiltshire	ACW	Winter	RG	Wood	R
Woods	WLG	Wright	AHJL	Yule	JT
Sear	FJ	Straughan (Dvr)	M		

Note:

It is acknowledged that the above list may not be complete.

The authors have made every effort to confirm names. However, with no official records available the task has been difficult.

Please advise the authors of any discrepancy
