

**AWM78**

**Reports of Proceedings, HMA Ships and  
Establishments**

**AWM78 Class 315 - HMAS SNIPE**

**File number:** AWM78/315/15

**Title:** AWM78 315/15 - January - June 1983



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HMAS

SNIPER

1983

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Ar 1-16-50



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

TELEPHONE: 92-0961

IN REPLY QUOTE 1/16/1E

HMAS SNIPE  
at Sea

1 February 1983

The Flag Officer Commanding  
HM AUSTRALIAN FLEET

For Information:

The Commander  
AUSTRALIAN MINE WARFARE AND PATROL BOAT FORCES

The Commanding Officer  
HMAS IBIS

The Commanding Officer  
HMAS CURLEW

HMAS SNIPE REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS  
JANUARY 1983

Sir,

1. I have the honour to report the proceedings of HMA Ship SNIPE, under my command, for the month of January 1983. Times throughout are Zone Lima (-11).

2. SNIPE was alongside HMAS WATERHEN at the beginning of the month with the majority of the ship's company enjoying Christmas leave. On Monday 17, with everyone back onboard, all ships systems were checked in preparation for the degaussing (DG) ranging the following day. In addition, emergency stations, leaving ship stations and special sea dutymen were exercised to acquaint newly joined personnel with their positions and responsibilities.

3. At 0830 Tuesday 18, the ship cast off and proceeded to No 2 buoy to embark a full outfit of Mine Disposal Weapons. These weapons were embarked to ensure the ship was as close as possible to its war state in order that the DG ranging was valid. Ammunitioning commenced at 0920 and at 1200, the ship slipped and proceeded to the degaussing range. The following two days were spent on the range during the day and berthing at WATERHEN in the evenings. The ranging was completed by 1200 Thursday 20, which was earlier than expected, as SNIPE had changed both main engines and a generator since the last calibration and it was thought that this would require major alterations to the previous settings.

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4. The de-ammunitioning that was programmed for Friday 21, was cancelled due to an industrial dispute minutes after casting off from WATERHEN to proceed to No 2 buoy. This opportunity was used to give the ship's officers practice in berthing and unberthing the ship. SNIPE secured alongside WATERHEN at 0930, where she remained for the weekend. During the week, the 40/60 Bofor was tested and accepted after the series inspection which had been carried out during the leave period. URDEFs 30/83 HF Transmitter, 27/83 60 kw generator and 29/83 Willis Sea Phone were also rectified after testing.

5. At 1000 Monday 24, SNIPE joined HMAS CANBERRA off Garden Island for a combined departure. After clearing the heads, HMAS IBIS joined the formation and OOW manoeuvres were conducted by CANBERRA. On completion, CANBERRA detached both ships and the task of working up IBIS commenced. A series of RAS approaches followed, culminating in the passing of a light jackstay. On completion of the jackstay serial, SNIPE proceeded independently to rendezvous with CANBERRA for a night steam and screenplay exercise.

6. Tuesday 25 was a day for mechanical sweeping. It commenced with exercise team sweeps without wires, to ensure the tactical and ship handling aspects were satisfactory, and then progressed to passing wires and exercising turns. All these evolutions were completed without incident. After a meal break and the re-organizing of sweepdeck hardware, Formation Double Oropesa sweeping was carried out. Once again the exercises went smoothly and SNIPE and IBIS proceeded to join CANBERRA for another night steam and screenplay exercise.

7. Officer of the Watch manoeuvres by flags got Wednesday 26 off to a sharp start. These exercises were conducted in company with IBIS as both ships proceeded into Jervis Bay for a first aid exercise. SNIPE simulated an explosion in the battery banks under the Wardroom which incapacitated all officers, caused holes in diesel tanks and shut down power to all communications. The POMTP took charge of the ship and requested assistance from IBIS by using the ship's boat. It is considered that this particular part of the work up was good value for both ships. SNIPE was hastily revived and the remainder of the day was spent conducting RAS approaches, team sweeping and individual man overboard exercises prior to a formation anchorage in Jervis Bay where both ships remained overnight.

8. On Thursday morning, a lead out serial was cancelled and SNIPE, with the spare time on hand, practised man overboard exercises and shiphandling for the junior officers. Some members of the ship's company were given the opportunity to handle the ship for man overboard recovery and they produced some surprising results. These exercises were stopped at 1015 and SNIPE joined IBIS in the northern section of Jervis Bay for towing serials. After SNIPE towed IBIS and vice versa, ships departed Jervis Bay for the open ocean to carry out a gunnery serial, night RAS approaches, and a jackstay. On completion, SNIPE proceeded independently to join HMA Ships HOBART and CANBERRA for a night steam and screenplay exercise.

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9. At 0400 Friday 28, SNIPE and IBIS were detached to proceed to Port Kembla, an official visit for the Australia Day weekend. The arrival at 1000 was well covered by the media. They had been well primed and air time on both television and radio combined with press coverage in the local newspaper ensured a fine turnout of over 1000 visitors when the ship was opened for public inspection over the weekend.

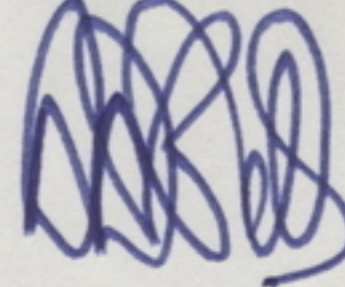
10. At 1500 Friday 28, in company with LCDR O.S. Barwood RAN, I called on the Lord Mayor of Wollongong, Alderman F.N. Arkell. A Cocktail Party, hosted by the officers of SNIPE and IBIS, was held at 1830 and the Lord Mayor was one of the distinguished guests.

11. The health, welfare and conduct of the ship's company is good. Morale is high, although there is some apprehension about the future, as the ship's company await the official decision on the paying off date of the ship.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,



(D.N.W. BELL)  
Lieutenant Commander, RAN  
Commanding Officer

- Annexes: A. Steaming Details - January 1983.  
B. Details of Exercises - January 1983.

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ANNEX A TO  
HMAS SNIPE LETTER 1/16/1E  
DATED 1 FEBRUARY 1983

STEAMING DETAILS

1.	Distance steamed during January	957 nm
2.	Hours underway during January	103
3.	Total distance steamed since first commissioning	313 574
4.	Total hours underway since first commissioning	28 815
5.	Occasions for exceeding fast routeing speed	Nil

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ANNEX B TO  
HMAS SNIPE LETTER 1/16/1E  
DATED 1 FEBRUARY 1983

DETAILS OF EXERCISES - JANUARY 1983

<u>Exercise No</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>No Conducted</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Dates</u>
<u>Seamanship and General</u>				
5	FAIDEX	1	1	26
10	OOW/ENG BREAKDOWN DRILLS	4	2	26, 27
11	OOW MAN	3	3	24, 25, 26
12	MOB DRILLS	15	2	26, 27
13	RASAPS - DAY	2	3½	24, 26
	- NIGHT	1	1	27
14	JACKSTAY - DAY	1	½	27
	- NIGHT	1	½	27
15	TOWEX - PROVIDE	1	1	27
	- RECEIVE	1	1	27
N/N	SCREEN PLAY	3	20	24, 25, 27
N/N	STREAM LARNE TARGET	1	1	27
<u>Navigation</u>				
22	FORMAGE	1	½	26
23	XO CON SHIP (BERTH/UNBERTH)	3	1	19, 21
N/N	MHCO CON SHIP (BERTH/ UNBERTH)	1	½	21
N/N	JOUT CON SHIP (BERTH/ UNBERTH)	1	½	21
<u>MCM Exercises</u>				
32	'00' SWEEP (WITH CUTTERS)	2	5	25
34	TEAM SWEEP (WITH WIRE)	2	6	25, 26
39	DANLAY	1	½	25
51	SHIP/UNSHIP ARs	2	1	20

/Communications

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ANNEX B

<u>Exercise No</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>No Conducted</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Dates</u>
<u>Communications</u>				
NCX 204(MOD)	FLAGHOIST	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	25
NCX 401(MOD)	MORSE RECEPTION	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	24
NCX 418	PORTABLES	2	$\frac{1}{2}$	11, 26
NCX 604	CRYPTO (GEN)	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	18
N/N	EMERGENCY CONTACT TEST	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	25
<u>Harbour Exercises</u>				
N/N	EXERCISE EMERGENCY PARTY	17	$8\frac{1}{2}$	1,2,3,4, 5,6,7,8, 10,11,12, 13,14,16, 17,21,23.

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A/1-16-50

(83)

ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

TELEPHONE: 92-0961

IN REPLY QUOTE 1/16/1E

HMAS SNIPE  
at Sydney

4 March 1983

The Flag Officer Commanding  
HM AUSTRALIAN FLEET

For Information:

The Commander  
AUSTRALIAN MINE WARFARE AND PATROL BOAT FORCES

The Commanding Officer  
HMAS IBIS

The Commanding Officer  
HMAS CURLEW

HMAS SNIPE REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS  
FEBRUARY 1983

Sir,

1. I have the honour to report the proceedings of HMA Ship SNIPE, under my command, for the month of February 1983. Times throughout are Zone Lima (-11).
2. At 0830 Tuesday 1, SNIPE sailed from Port Kembla in company with HMAS IBIS. This was the beginning of the second week of consort duties and evolutions were beginning to progress very smoothly. During the day, ships carried out OOW manoeuvres, RAS approaches, personnel transfers by light jackstay, and an armed team sweep, followed by a boarding exercise. A formation anchorage in Jervis Bay rounded off the day and gave the crew an opportunity to re-charge batteries for the following days mine-hunting operations.
3. During the preparations for minehunting, a tear in the soft dome diaphragm necessitated a repair task. As these repairs were going to take five hours, the ship remained at anchor and carried out operator training with the transducer lowered and operating without the soft dome. This period proved very valuable. It was the first time the new minehunting control officer and the operators had worked together. With all facets being exercised in slow time, confidence and ability in drills and procedures increased to an acceptable level during the forenoon.

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This training period also showed how necessary regular mine-hunting exercises are, as operators had become very rusty since the previous hunting task in November last year.

4. At 1230, while the ship was still at anchor, a helicopter transfer was carried out. Stores and personnel from IBIS were delivered to SNIPE and then returned by the IRIQUOIS from NAS Nowra. On completion of this transfer, SNIPE weighed and commenced minehunting operations, clearing a one mile square box in the Darling Roads anchorage. Nothing was located during this search, so once again the ship anchored and removed the soft dome and active rudders in preparation for the next serial; a night transit to Broken Bay in company with IBIS.

5. Once again in company the evolutions on Thursday 3 flowed thick and fast. A screenplay followed by OOW manoeuvres and a man overboard exercise preceded the forenoon's mechanical team sweep. As the ships were becoming more familiar with each other sweeping evolutions progressed very quickly and SNIPE was detached at 1120 to lay two short scope buoys to mark the anchorage area for later minehunting operations. During this task, IBIS laid a danline to mark the entrance channel and then ships rejoined for formation double oropesa sweeping. Prior to anchoring that night the short scope buoys were recovered as SNIPE was to proceed to Sydney early the following morning to disembark Mine Disposal Weapons.

6. At 0810 Friday 4, SNIPE secured to No 2 buoy and a crane lighter secured alongside the starboard quarter. HMAS CURLEW then secured outboard of the crane lighter and the outfit of mine disposal weapons was transferred directly from one magazine to the other. This evolution was completed by 1025 and units cast off and proceeded. SNIPE slipped at 1035 and proceeded to WATERHEN where she remained for the weekend.

7. A minor fleet unit departure involving HMA Ships IBIS, FREMANTLE, WOLLONGONG, LAUNCESTON and SNIPE took place at 1100 Monday 7. After clearing the Heads, IBIS assumed the duties of OCS for OOW manoeuvres which involved line and sub-division formations and lasted for one hour. The patrol boats were detached on completion and IBIS and SNIPE conducted RAS approaches and a personnel transfer by light jackstay prior to SNIPE being detached to carry out minehunting training in Broken Bay.

8. One exercise that had not been carried out during the work-up was night OOW manoeuvres. IBIS, SNIPE and CURLEW rendezvoused at dusk for this evolution and an exciting time was had by all! The screenplay that followed seemed rather tame, however, it gave a welcome respite and allowed preparations for the following days minehunting operations to be completed.

9. At 0800, after OOW manoeuvres, IBIS and SNIPE formed for a double oropesa sweep. As ships approached the marked channel, visibility began to reduce and continued to deteriorate until it was down to less than 500 yards. The sweeping exercise was aborted and SNIPE acted independently to recover sweeps.

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This was considered to be an ideal opportunity to test the blind pilotage team so, on completion of recovery, the ship proceeded into Broken Bay and anchored to carry out an active rudder change in preparation for minehunting operations. At 2030 minehunting was terminated and after removing the active rudder propellers, SNIPE and CURLEW rendezvoused for a night steam and screenplay exercise.

10. CURLEW detached at 0600 Wednesday 9, and SNIPE joined IBIS for OOW manoeuvres prior to the day's exercises which included towing, man overboard and breakdown drills, minehunting operations and a formation anchorage in Broken Bay which was conducted by IBIS. Ships remained at anchor overnight weighing at 0500 and proceeding to Sydney to store, fuel and rectify defects prior to sailing for the Fleet Concentration Period, the same evening.

11. Sailing at the programmed time of 1700 was delayed due to a sonar defect in the transducer (URDEF 31/83 refers). Although G.I. technical assistance was provided, ship's staff excelled in that they raised the transducer, confirmed the predicted defect was correct, made the necessary repairs, and re-sealed the dome space by 1800. This task would normally take two days. The sonar was tested as IBIS, SNIPE and CURLEW sailed from Sydney and by the time the formation reached the Heads, ship's staff were confident they had rectified the defect.

12. During the passage to Jervis Bay, ships carried out a team sweep streaming and recovery exercise. This evolution was completed at 2000 and units rejoined to continue the passage south. On arrival in Jervis Bay, IBIS conducted a formation anchorage at 0230 Friday 11, where the ships remained overnight.

13. The next two days were devoted entirely to MCM. SNIPE was tasked with minehunting the alternative anchorage MW2, leading in HMAS TOBRUK, mechanical sweeping in the main entrance channel, and laying a buoyant mine for IBIS's ORE. All these tasks were completed without a hitch and SNIPE anchored at 1230 Saturday 12.

14. At 0945 Sunday 13, divisions were formed for a formal inspection and prayers. The service was prepared by the junior officer under training, SBLT J.H. Alexander, RAN, and it was centered around the recent anniversary of the tragic loss of HMAS VOYAGER. On completion of prayers the ship's company was addressed on the dangers of drug and alcohol abuse prior to the granting of leave for sports ashore. To engender some interest onboard, a five a side touch football knockout competition had been organized with a make-and-mend offered as the prize to the winning team. Confidence in the 'Wardroom Warriors' was well placed as they took the final 8 tries to 2.

15. Serious tasking recommenced at 0445 the following morning as the Fleet departed Jervis Bay. SNIPE carried out leadouts of HMA Ships CANBERRA, YARRA, PARRAMATTA, OTWAY and OVENS in two groups and then joined IBIS and CURLEW for a formation double ropesa sweep, the first serial in the two days of exercises for IBIS's ORE. After a team sweep, IBIS proceeded to carry out influence sweeping whilst SNIPE was tasked with relocating the buoyant mine. The mine was relocated by 1930 and SNIPE proceeded to anchor for the night.

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16. Tuesday 16 was the general evolutions day of the ORE and after a blind exit from Jervis Bay, IBIS and SNIPE engaged a Larne target, being towed by CURLEW, with 40/60. On completion of the firing, personnel were transferred to and from IBIS by light jackstay and then SNIPE was detached to recover the buoyant mine and rendezvous with CURLEW at 1600 for a formation anchorage in Jervis Bay. The early end to the day's operations allowed members of the ship's company to use the gymnasium facilities at HMAS CRESWELL and this provided an entertaining hour of 'body contact basketball'.

17. SNIPE weighed anchor at 0500 Wednesday 16, and proceeded to CRESWELL to embark Commander K.C. Stephen, RAN, and LCDR M.S. Welford, RAN, for passage to Sydney, in company with IBIS. The run north was uneventful with the exception of one hour's OOW manoeuvres by flags prior to entry into Sydney. On arrival at WATERHEN, SNIPE berthed starboard side to the MCM Wharf, remaining there for the rest of the month in a Self maintenance period (SMP).

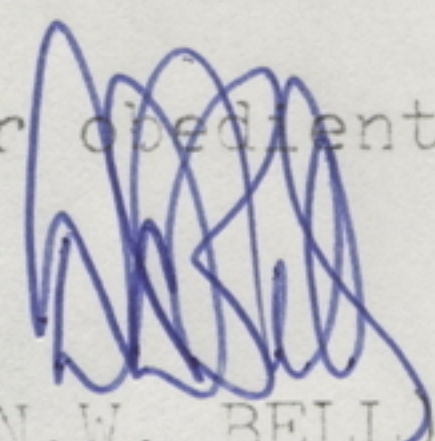
18. During the SMP the ship's hull was surveyed with a view to the future employment and paying off availability date. This survey highlighted the deterioration of the internal hull structure and resulted in the withdrawal of the ship's seaworthiness certificate. The impact of this necessary decision will not be fully felt onboard or in the remainder of the MCM Force for some time, however, the immediate effect of stunned silence throughout the ship's company was somewhat unsettling. An intensive interdepartmental sports and higher rates training programme led by the officers has been the main tool in maintaining morale. Apprehension about the future has been quelled by regular briefs.

19. The health, welfare and conduct of the ship's company has been good. Morale is satisfactory.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

  
(D.N.W. BELL)  
Lieutenant Commander, RAN  
Commanding Officer

Annexes: A. Steaming Details - February 1983.  
B. Details of Exercises - February 1983.

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ANNEX A TO  
HMAS SNIPE LETTER 1/16/1E  
DATED 4 MARCH 1983

STEAMING DETAILS - FEBRUARY 1983

1.	Distance steamed during February	1 209 nm
2.	Hours underway during February	145
3.	Total distance steamed since first commissioning	314 783 nm
4.	Total hours underway since first commissioning	28 960
5.	Occasions for exceeding fast routeing speed	Nil.

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ANNEX B TO  
HMAS SNIPE LETTER 1/16/1E  
DATED 4 MARCH 1983

DETAILS OF EXERCISES - FEBRUARY 1983

<u>Exercise No</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>No Conducted</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Dates</u>
<u>Seamanship and General</u>				
4	BOARDEX	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	1
8	Helo transfer	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	2
11	OOW manoeuvres	7	$7\frac{1}{2}$	1,3,7,8,9,16
12	Man overboard drills	2	1	3
13	RAS approaches - day	3	$1\frac{1}{2}$	1,7,15
14	Jackstay transfer	3	$1\frac{1}{2}$	1,7,15
15	TOWEX - providing	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	9
	- receiving	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	9
N/N	Boat transfer	1	$\frac{1}{2}$	16
N/N	Screenplay	3	$22\frac{1}{2}$	3,7,8,9
<u>Gunnery</u>				
18	SUTF	1	1	15
<u>Navigation</u>				
21	Blind Pilotage	8	5	1,3,9,10,11,12, 14,15
22	Formation anchorage	4	2	1,9,10,15
<u>Minesweeping Exercises</u>				
32	'00' sweep (with cutters)	4	9	3,8,14
34	Team sweep	4	8	1,10,14
41	Short scope buoy lay	6	3	2,3,8,11
42	Conning runs			
43	Lay & recover dummy mine	1	1	12,15
45	Bottom type II	7	19	2,7,11,14,15
52	Ship/unship active rodders (sea)	5	$2\frac{1}{2}$	2,7,8,9,11
53	Dome change	5	$2\frac{1}{2}$	2,7,8,9,11
N/N	MCM lead-in	1	1	13
N/N	MCM lead-out	2	2	14

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<u>Exercise No</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>No conducted</u>	<u>Hrs</u>	<u>Dates</u>
<u>Communications</u>				
NCX 204	Flaghoist	1	½	17
NCX 206	Directional flasking light	1	½	22
NCX 207	Flashing	1	½	1
NCX 418	Portables	1	½	8
<u>Harbour Exercises</u>				
N/N	Exercise emergency party	11	5½	4, 5, 6, 17, 18, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28.

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ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

TELEPHONE: 92-0961

IN REPLY QUOTE 1/16/1E

HMAS SNIPE  
at Sydney

5 April 1983

Flag Officer Commanding  
HM AUSTRALIAN FLEET

For Information:

Commander  
AUSTRALIAN MINE WARFARE AND PATROL BOAT FORCES

Commanding Officer  
HMAS IBIS

Commanding Officer  
HMAS CURLEW

HMAS SNIPE - REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

MARCH 1983

Sir,

1. I have the honour to report the proceedings of HMA Ship SNIPE, under my command, for the month of March 1983. Times throughout are Zone Kilo (-10).

2. At the beginning of the month SNIPE was alongside HMAS WATERHEN undergoing a self maintenance period. As the ship had been withdrawn from the Fleet Programme (COMAUSFLT IAD/RDH 240823Z FEB 83 refers) and was to be restricted to Sydney Harbour until decommissioning, the 40/60 mounting was removed and transferred to HMAS BOMBARD on Tuesday 1. De-ammunitioning was arranged for Thursday 3 which reduced the ship's outfit to pyrotechnics and enough small arms rounds for the Annual Range course.

3. The programme for the next few months is based entirely on the Minewarfare Pilot Survey (MWPS) of Sydney Harbour. To provide some relief, tasks for the RAN Research Laboratory (RANRL) will also be undertaken. As the details and results of these operations are highly classified they

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will be covered in a separate report on their completion.

4. SNIPE commenced the MWPS task Monday 7 and after some minor problems with ship movements, it was decided that a visit to the harbour control authorities was necessary. Discussions with the Deputy Harbour Master and his watchkeepers in the control tower about SNIPE's future underwater operations in the harbour proved very beneficial. A good liaison has built up during the month and the movements problems are no longer being experienced.

5. On Monday 14, 22 personnel attended the first day of the annual range course. Due to inclement weather the second day Wednesday 16 was cancelled. This may not have been such a bad thing, as the ship is not graced with superior marksmen and considerable practice would be required by all before crossed rifles could be awarded! The remainder of the week was spent on the harbour conducting towing trials for RANRL.

6. During the week commencing Monday 21 the MWPS task progressed very satisfactorily. By Thursday 24 the main channel between WATERHEN and Bradley's Head had been surveyed. With this achievement behind her, SNIPE sailed from WATERHEN at 0930 Friday 25 for what turned out to be a very successful Families Day with many favourable comments still filtering back to the ship.

7. On Monday 28, the ship resumed the daily routine of sailing from WATERHEN for MWPS. Once again the ship's company worked well as the task was completed by 1130 Thursday 31 and SNIPE returned alongside to allow personnel an early start to the Easter break.

8. Throughout the month, ship's equipment has operated satisfactorily with the only problem being the ever troublesome gemini/zodiac dinghy (URDEF 38/83). A replacement arrived Thursday 31 and it is hoped that this one will last for the remainder of the ship's commission.

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9. The health and conduct of the ship's company has been good. Morale is very satisfactory and improving as a sense of purpose in the ship's future tasks has become apparent to all.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,



(D.N.W. BELL)  
Lieutenant Commander RAN  
Commanding Officer

Annexes:    A.    Steaming Details - March 1983  
                  B.    Details of Exercises - March 1983

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ANNEX A TO  
HMAS SNIPE LETTER 1/16/1E  
DATED 5 APRIL 1983

STEAMING DETAILS - MARCH 1983

1.	Distance steamed during March	162 nm
2.	Hours underway during March	50
3.	Total distance steamed since first commissioning	314 945 nm
4.	Total hours underway since first commissioning	29 010
5.	Occasions for exceeding fast routeing speed	Nil.

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ANNEX B TO  
HMAS SNIPE LETTER 1/16/1E  
DATED 5 APRIL 1983

DETAILS OF EXERCISES - MARCH 1983

<u>Exercise No</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>No Conducted</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Dates</u>
<u>Seamanship and General</u>				
12	Man Overboard Drills	1	½	25
<u>Navigation</u>				
21	Blind Pilotage	1	2	7
23	XO Con ship (BERTH/ UNBERTH)	3	1½	3, 30, 31
N/N	NO Con ship (BERTH/ UNBERTH)	3	1½	15, 28, 28
N/N	MHCO Con ship (BERTH/ UNBERTH)	3	1½	17, 29, 29
<u>Minesweeping Exercises</u>				
42	Conning Runs	6	1	28, 29
43	Lay and Recover Dummy Mine	36	7	30, 31
45	Bottom Type II	4	8	8, 22, 24, 28
47	Bottom Type IV	2	4	28, 29
52	Ship/unship active rudders	1	1	4
53	Dome change	1	½	1
<u>NBCD</u>				
29	Major DCX (Pumping and Flooding)	1	2	24
N/N	Generator Failure	2	1	30, 31

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<u>Exercise No</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>No</u> <u>Conducted</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Dates</u>
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Harbour Exercises

Harbour exercises (Fire/Flood/Casualty) were conducted throughout the month.

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ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

TELEPHONE: 92-0961  
IN REPLY QUOTE 1/16/1E

HMAS SNIPE  
at Sydney

5 May 1983

Flag Officer Commanding  
HM AUSTRALIAN FLEET

For Information:

Commander  
AUSTRALIAN MINE WARFARE AND PATROL BOAT FORCES

Commanding Officer  
HMAS IBIS

Commanding Officer  
HMAS CURLEW

HMAS SNIPE - REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS  
APRIL 1983

Sir,

1. I have the honour to report the proceedings of HMA Ship SNIPE, under my command, for the month of April 1983. Times throughout are Zone Kilo (-10).

2. At the beginning of the month SNIPE was alongside HMAS WATERHEN with the majority of the ship's company on leave for the Easter weekend. On Wednesday 6 the ship recommenced the Minewarfare Pilot Survey (MWPS) task sailing daily in order to complete the main channel from Bradley's Head to the Harbour entrance.

3. A mini-ranger trial to assess the suitability of shore stations for complete harbour coverage was planned for the week following Easter. As plotting sheets for the harbour could not be provided this task was cancelled and work on the MWPS progressed. This additional week will ensure the survey of Sydney Harbour is completed prior to decommissioning.

4. On Friday 8 the Minewarfare Pilot Survey Officer laid three MK 5 ground mines from TRV TAILOR. The mines were laid in varying bottom conditions in the main channel and SNIPE was then tasked with locating and recovering them. This was a test to prove; that survey data could be used to assist minehunting operations; to ensure validity of the results of MWPS data from SNIPE; and to allow the Mine Warfare Group at the RAN Research

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2.

Laboratory (RANRL) to assess realistic search rates and clutter density comparisons. All mines were located and recovered by SNIPE within a realistic time frame and the details of the task have been passed to RANRL for analysis.

5. During minehunting operations Wednesday 20, a solid four metre high pole was discovered in the main channel in position 055 Bradley's Head 5 cables. This information was reported to the Maritime Services Board (MSB) and later a hydrographic note was forwarded. The MSB attempted to locate the pole over the weekend using side scan sonar and as they had no success, SNIPE was asked to relocate the object Tuesday 26. Within twenty minutes of arriving in the area the pole was buoyed and left in the care of an MSB launch. It is understood that removal by MSB divers took place the following day.

6. The routine of sailing from WATERHEN for MWPS continued throughout the remainder of the month. A task that remains outstanding is the relocation of a bottom object laid by HMAS KIMBLA for Sydney University (COMAUSFLT IFI/IGI 312224Z MAR 83 refers). This task has been delayed as SNIPE's recompression chamber is undergoing annual test and replacement parts will not be available until mid May.

7. On Friday 29 I attended a meeting in WATERHEN to discuss the disposal of the ship after decommissioning. A number of stores actions arose from this meeting and SNIPE is being assisted by and getting full support from Mr Kevin Hattenfels (CSS) and two junior sailors from Fleet Supply Team who have been embarked throughout the month.

8. The health and conduct of the ship's company has been good. Morale is high with the achievements of the month providing a much needed boost. The ship's company continue to express apprehension about postings and every effort is being made to establish the decommissioning programme and to formulate a posting plan.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(D.N.W. BELL)  
Lieutenant Commander RAN  
Commanding Officer

- Annexes: A. Steaming Details - April 1983  
B. Details of Exercises - April 1983

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ANNEX A TO  
HMAS SNIPE LETTER 1/16/1E  
DATED

STEAMING DETAILS - APRIL 1983

1.	Distance steamed during April	176 nm
2.	Hours underway during April	44
3.	Total distance steamed since first commissioning	315 121 nm
4.	Total hours underway since first commissioning	29 054
5.	Occasions for exceeding fast routeing speed	Nil

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ANNEX B TO  
HMAS SNIPE LETTER 1/16/1E  
DATED 5 APRIL 1983

DETAILS OF EXERCISES - APRIL 1983

<u>Exercise No</u>	<u>Title</u>	<u>No Conducted</u>	<u>Hours</u>	<u>Dates</u>
<u>Seamanship and General</u>				
12	Manoverboard Drills	1	$\frac{1}{4}$	13
<u>Navigation</u>				
N/N	Gyro Failure	2	1	15,22
23	XO Con Ship (Berth/Unberth)	4	2	6,12,18,26
N/N	NO Con Ship (Berth/Unberth)	4	2	8,13,20,27
N/N	MHCO Con Ship (Berth/Unberth)	4	2	11,15,22, 28
<u>Minehunting Exercises</u>				
42	Conning Runs	24	8	Various
43	Recover Dummy mines	4	2	12,19,20,26
45	Bottom Type 4	6	$1\frac{1}{2}$	Various
47	Bottom Type 1	8	2	Various
<u>NBCD</u>				
N/N	Generator Failure	1	$\frac{1}{4}$	11
29	Major DCX	2	1	7,14

Harbour Exercises

Harbour Exercises (Fire/Flood/Casualty) were conducted daily during the month.

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ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

TELEPHONE: 92-0961

IN REPLY QUOTE 1/16/1E

HMAS SNIPE  
at Sydney

3 June 1983

Flag Officer Commanding  
HM AUSTRALIAN FLEET

For Information:

Commander  
AUSTRALIAN MINE WARFARE AND PATROL BOAT FORCES

Commanding Officer  
HMAS IBIS

Commanding Officer  
HMAS CURLEW

HMAS SNIPE - REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS  
MAY 1983

Sir,

1. I have the honour to report the proceedings of HMA Ship SNIPE, under my command, for the month of May 1983. Times throughout are Zone Kilo (-10).

2. At the beginning of the month the ship was berthed alongside the MCM Wharf, HMAS WATERHEN. On Monday 2 the Mine Warfare Pilot Survey of Sydney was recommenced; the majority of the task had been completed and work during this month consisted mainly of minor tasks and final checks.

3. The daily routine of survey work was agreeably interrupted Tuesday 3 at 1055, when the boarding party from HMAS COOK stated their intention to board. SNIPE was anchored in Watsons Bay (268 Watsons Bay Wharf 2 cables) and flying quarantine flags in an attempt to dissuade Government officials boarding and confirming their fears, that illegal firearms were being smuggled into port. Obviously, COOK personnel had been innoculated for everything as they boarded with haste and took over the ship. The exercise was terminated at 1145, by the Fleet Gunnery Officer, and after a debrief on the sweepdeck of SNIPE, the real surveyors returned to COOK.

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2.

4. SNIPE was nominated as host ship for HMNZS TUI (LCDR D.A. Swann, RNZN) during her visit to Sydney for five days from Tuesday 3. Although social and sporting functions were organized, TUI declined as they were concentrating on preparations for their forthcoming Admiral's Inspection.

5. The final checks on three M MK5 ground mines were carried out Friday 6. These mines had been laid in key positions in the harbour to provide realistic data on mine burial. As this task was completed the mines were recovered and the ship returned to WATERHEN berthing alongside the MCM Wharf at 1140. On securing, SNIPE reverted to 24 hours notice for sea and entered a two week leave period.

6. During the leave period all non essential consumable stores were landed and preparations for the removal of ship's equipment after paying off were progressed. The ship's company returned from leave Monday 23, refreshed and ready for final tasking prior to paying off.

7. Lines were cast off at 0827 on Tuesday 24 and SNIPE proceeded to sea to attempt relocation of the oceanographic mooring laid by HMAS KIMBLA (COMAUSFLT IFI/IGI 312224Z MAR 83 refers). Although a good contact was located it could not be identified by divers due to the depth limitations imposed when there is no recompression chamber (RCC) on the diving site. SNIPE's chamber was landed for annual test March 24 and is still awaiting parts. On completion of the search, SNIPE returned to WATERHEN berthing on the MCM Wharf at 1308.

8. At 1100 Wednesday 25 I paid my last official call on you, Sir, before SNIPE pays off. After some very helpful discussions on the paying off ceremony with your staff, I then joined you for a most enjoyable lunch in HMAS PERTH.

9. At 0830 Thursday, SNIPE sailed to make a further attempt at location of the oceanographic mooring. A RCC had to be borrowed from CDT1 to allow diving operations to be carried out. Additionally, Lieutenant R.H. Crane, RAN, the CO Desig of HMAS CURLEW, was embarked for familiarization. As the sea state was in excess of the ship's current limitation, ship handling evolutions were carried out and then SNIPE returned to the MCM Wharf, WATERHEN, where LEUT Crane carried out a very seamanlike berthing.

10. The unsettled seas precluded further minehunting operations for the oceanographic mooring Friday 25 and Tuesday 31. In view of the weather conditions and information received that a trawler may have picked up or dragged the mooring, I requested termination of the task (HMAS SNIPE IAJ/IFI 300633Z MAY 83) and this was approved by COMAUSMINPAB. The time spent alongside was well used in preparation for the paying off ceremony which will be held June 3.

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3.

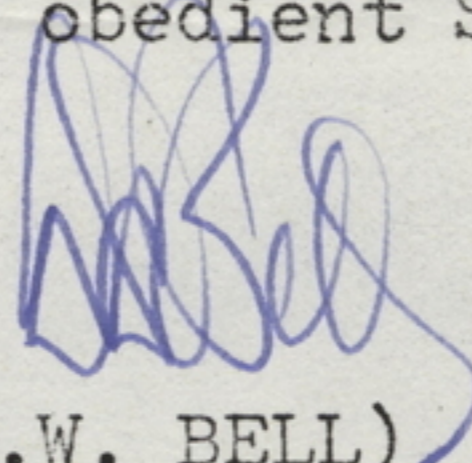
11. On Friday 25, the ship's officers hosted a Cocktail Party on the forecastle for past commanding officers of SNIPE. On completion, I hosted a Mess Dinner in the Wardroom and the evening was a tremendous success with eight of the past 12 Commanding Officers enjoying a final toast to the oldest ship in the fleet.

12. The health and conduct of the ship's company has been good; morale is satisfactory. All members of the ship's company have been advised of their postings and internal planning for equipment removal and destoring is progressing satisfactory.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant



(D.N.W. BELL)  
Lieutenant Commander, RAN  
Commanding Officer

Annexes: A. Steaming Figures.  
B. Exercises Conducted.

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ANNEX A TO  
HMAS SNIPE LETTER 1/16/1E  
DATED 3 JUNE 1983

STEAMING FIGURES

1.	Distance steamed during May	123
2.	Hours underway during May	20
3.	Total distance steamed since first commissioning	315 244
4.	Total hours underway since first commissioning	29 074
5.	Occasions for exceeding economical speed	Nil

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ANNEX B TO  
HMAS SNIPE LETTER 1/16/1E  
DATED 3 JUNE 1983

EXERCISES CONDUCTED

<u>Exercise No</u>	<u>Short Title</u>	<u>No Completed/ Duration</u>	<u>Date/Remarks</u>
<u>Seamanship and General</u>			
2	Boardex	1 x $\frac{3}{4}$	3
12	Manord	4 x $\frac{1}{4}$	26
<u>Navigation</u>			
21	Blind Pilotage	1 x $\frac{3}{4}$	24
23	XO Con Ship (Berth/Unberth)	1 x $\frac{1}{4}$	2
N/N	NO Con Ship (Berth/Unberth)	2 x $\frac{1}{4}$	3, 24
N/N	MHCO Con Ship (Berth/Unberth)	1 x $\frac{1}{4}$	4
<u>Mine Hunting Exercises</u>			
42	Conning Runs	3 x $\frac{1}{2}$	2, 27
43	Recovery Dummy Mines	3 x $\frac{1}{2}$	6
47	Bottom Type 1	4 x $\frac{1}{4}$	2, 6, 24, 27
52	Ship/Unship Active Rud ers	2 x $\frac{3}{4}$	10, 23
53	Ship/Unship Soft Dome	2 x $\frac{3}{4}$	10, 23
<u>NBCD</u>			
29	Major DCX	1 x $\frac{1}{2}$	26
<u>Daily Harbour</u>			
N/N	Emergency Party	31	1 Thru 31.

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ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

TELEPHONE: 92-0961

IN REPLY QUOTE 1/16/1E

HMAS SNIPE  
at Sydney

8 June 1983

Flag Officer Commanding  
HM AUSTRALIAN FLEET

For Information:

Commander  
AUSTRALIAN MINE WARFARE AND PATROL BOAT FORCES

Commanding Officer  
HMAS IBIS

Commanding Officer  
HMAS CURLEW

HMAS SNIPE - REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

1 JUNE 1983 - 3 JUNE 1983

Sir,

1. I have the honour to report the proceedings of HMA Ship SNIPE under my command for the period 1 June 1983 to 3 June 1983. Times throughout are Zone Kilo (-10).

2. At the beginning of the period the ship was berthed alongside the MCM Wharf HMAS WATERHEN. All preparations for the final day at sea were finalised by Thursday 2 and, at 0830 Friday 3 SNIPE sailed on her last journey as a commissioned vessel.

3. After clearing Balls Head Bay the ship proceeded to anchor in position 268 Watsons Bay Wharf 2.2 cables. The divisions that were subsequently held on the forecastle, were filmed by the Channel Seven News Team. On completion of divisions I took the opportunity of addressing the ship's company, commending them for their fine contribution to the ship's successes over the past 16 months and wishing them all good fortune in their future postings.

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2.

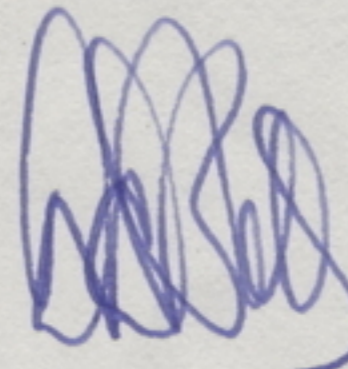
4. SNIPE weighed at 0940 and proceeded to sea to hoist the paying off pennant. On returning to harbour the diving workboats of the Minewarfare and Clearance Diving School formed astern of the ship and they acted as an escort as SNIPE entered Hunters Bay and passed HMAS PENGUIN. During the entry the ship proceeded into Garden Island and then West to pass around Cockatoo Island before berthing at WATERHEN at 1100.

5. The paying off ceremony commenced with your arrival at 1135 and after speeches on the history of SNIPE and the Future of the Navy and Minewarfare a sunset ceremony marked the end of 20 years and 9 months service. On completion of the ceremony the ship's company marched off and the sadness of this final event was softened by a toast to the ship as the paying off cake was cut.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,



(D.N.W. BELL)  
Lieutenant Commander RAN  
Commanding Officer

Annexes: A. Steaming Figures.  
B. Exercises Conducted.

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ANNEX A TO  
HMAS SNIPE LETTER 1/16/1E  
DATED 8 JUNE 1983

STEAMING FIGURES

1.	Distance steamed during June	14
2.	Hours underway during June	2
3.	Total distance steamed since first commissioning	315,258
4.	Total hours underway since first commissioning	29,076
5.	Occasions for exceeding economical speed	NIL

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ANNEX B TO  
HMAS SNIPE LETTER 1/16/1E  
DATED 8 JUNE 1983.

EXERCISES CONDUCTED

<u>Exercise No</u>	<u>Short Title</u>	<u>No Completed/ Duration</u>	<u>Date/ Remarks</u>
<u>Daily Harbour</u>			
NN	Emergency Pty	2 x $\frac{1}{4}$ hour	1, 2

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