

AWM52

Australian Military Forces, Army headquarters,
formation and unit diaries, 1939-1945

1/15/20 RECORDS

District Records Office 8
Military District (DRO 8 MD)

September - October 1941



1/15/20-001/

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required)

Unit DISTRICT RECORDS OFFICEDate and Time.—From 24th September To 31st October 1941.

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
Port Moresby	sept 1941		24.9.41. Disembarked Port Moresby ex Transport 21 and placed under quarantine restrictions in canvas camp at Murray Barracks owing to a mild outbreak of measles. After a few days, quarantine restrictions modified and it is now possible to contact H.Q. 8 M.D.	
			The only accommodation available is a portion of a wooden hut which is not quite finished, situated about 3½ miles from District Pay Office. It is to be the temporary Records office until a suitable building is erected in the vicinity of H.Q.	
			The meager supply of furnishings is augmented by benches chairs, tables, partitions and shelves roughly constructed from old packing cases.	
			A typewriter is begged from H.Q., a field telephone is installed by the Signals Service, stationery and writing equipment from the Stationery office, and the Records Office is a factum.	

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required)

Unit _____ Date and Time.—From _____ To _____

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
			Stationery stocks are scarce and various styles of forms have	
			to be stencilled and copied on a duplicator which it was poss-	
			ible to obtain through being in a state of disrepair.	
			Basic documents B105's and B199a's have yet to arrive. Just	
			a few hand books M.B. Instructions gathered in haste before	
			embarkation, and past knowledge gained, ¹⁶ the material on hand	
			for starting operations.	
			Statistical returns are an urgent necessity so it is decided	
			to Radio A.H.Q. 2nd Echelon that Records are established and	
			the date for commencement of operations is fixed as 29.9.41.	
			Through the signals Service, contact is made with the	
			forces stationed in the Rabaul area. It is necessary to have	
			consolidated strength returns from 8 M.D. A link up is made with	
			the many small units and detachments in Port Moresby	

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(Erase heading not required)

Unit _____ Date and Time.—From _____ To _____

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
			Unit Orderly Room staffs are called together for instruction	
			which is badly needed. Personal queries and troubles begin	
			to flow in for attention and possible adjustments. Urgent requests	
			have been and are being made to districts concerned for personal	
			documents; and as they arrive Part 11 Orders are published.	
			Inconvenience caused by no Records being in the District and previously	
			delay caused by the change over from Northern Command has	
			added to the difficulties.	
			Lighting is another problem which ^{WHICH} apparently cannot be	
			solved by the authorities that be. No electric light being being ^{is}	
			available, and the District Finance Officer says that he has	
			no power to purchase a suitable substitute. This further curtails	
			Records activities in so far that ^{although} the staff is making best use	
			of what daylight is available, they are barred from working at	

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(Erase heading not required)

Unit _____ Date and Time.—From _____ To _____

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
			night on matters that require urgent attention.	
			It has been necessary to return to Northern Command such	
			P.M.F. Records, that could be located here, for necessary action,	
			vide A.H.Q. Instructions. Lack of the necessary Army forms	
			and other facilities made this imperative in view of its urgency.	
			Such Records were found to have been lying dormant for some	
			months thereby causing hardships in individual cases. Temporary	
			B103's and B199a's have been recorded where possible pending	
			the receipt of certified copies of basic documents from the	
			Districts concerned.	
			Records of Native personnel attested for employment in this	
			district are at present contained by the various units and Part 11	
			orders published accordingly/ Speciman Army forms adapted for	
			such enlistments have been forwarded to A.H.Q. 2nd Echelon	

WAR DIARY or INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY

(Erase heading not required)

Unit _____ Date and Time.—From _____ To _____

Place	Date	Hour	Summary of Events and Information	Remarks and references to Appendices, Diaries, &c.
			under cover of a memo explaining the present routine and asking	
			for Army Instructions to Records in regards to what action if	
			any is necessary by this office.	
			The Records staff throughout are very willing and efficient	
			but are definitely inadequate in number to cope with local require-	
			ments in accord with Records procedure and it has been necessary	
			to request H.Q. 8 M.D. to approve and recommend a suggested	
			provisional Establishment to meet the demand. A copy of this	
			together with a copy of the explanatory covering memo is attach-	
			ed for reference. Until the minimum essential equipment and	
			personnel is made available it will be impossible to service	
			Records effectively except in regard to such matters that comm-	
			and priority by their urgency and importance. Record requirements	
			are extremely urgent for maintaining efficiency and service	

District Records Office &
27th October 1941.

Headquarters
8 M.D.

In submitting the attached suggested Establishment for 8th M.D. Records Office the following facts and anomalies have been taken into consideration based on the present personnel who have enlisted in this District together with those of other Commands now serving here. The system to be adopted for Records procedure is identical in all districts in so far as maintaining all its sections for the necessary service required of them. Such sections are inter-dependent and function according to local requirements and in all cases must be operative.

No allowance has been suggested in this Establishment for reinforcements for replacements which may be necessary from time to time.

1. The minimum personnel necessary under local conditions for a maximum efficiency.
2. The Records Office organisation provides for various sections which are in this instance modified and grouped with regard to local conditions and economy.
3. It is preferred that each section or group of sections are staffed with specialist clerks conversant with the requirements of those sections.
4. The following is a resume of activities as required by Records procedure.

1. Instruction to Unit Orderly Room Staffs in the correct rendering of casualty returns A A Forms etc. in accordance with Army Instructions.

2. REGISTRY

To receive, tabulate and file all correspondence Unit and Hospital returns and other such matter which have been duly attended to according to the need, and to register check and dispatch all out-going matter.

3. PERSONAL RECORDS.

To compile basic Personal documents of all personnel on enlistment. To enter all such movements relevant to a soldier's history on his B103 or in the case of a commissioned officer on his B199a, and cause such movements that are deemed necessary to be promulgated through Part II Orders.

4. MEDICAL SECTION

To maintain and record all particulars relevant to a soldier's Medical History; Sickness, Injuries, wounds etc., and to render to A.H.Q. various statistics on Medical and Hospital data which is required by the Government Statistician and other interested Departments.

5. STATISTICAL SECTION

To obtain from Units returns, re strength, camp locations and other particulars, check same and formulate consolidated returns to meet A.H.Q. & Command Instructions.

6. CASUALTY SECTION

To record all casualties including cases of seriously ill and Dangerously ill and notify next of kin accordingly, and to take all necessary action in respect to deaths, deceased soldier's effects, notification to Next-of-Kins of grave locations, dispatching of Royal letters of condolence and other things relevant to these matters. To have custody and disposal of Soldier's Wills and to maintain a register to that effect. To record Honours and awards and to furnish to next of kin concerned copies of notations.

7. BADGE SECTION

To receive applications, record and issue badges in accordance with Army Instructions.

8. DISCHARGE SECTION

To finalise all discharges effected in the District and to issue a certificate for same.

9. MAINTENANCE OF P.M.F. RECORDS in accordance with M.B.I. 32377 dated 19th May 1941 procedure as per Direction No 24 dated 26th June.

10. GENERAL

A.H.Q. Inter-district and other correspondence to be attended to. Nominal and lexicographical index to be adopted and maintained. Inter-district transfers to be checked and all personal and medical documents of outward transfers to be certified and dispatched to the District concerned.

To satisfy all enquiries in respect to record matters and to generally conduct itself as a Unit in matters of administration and discipline.

.....Lieut.
Officer-in-Charge
D.R.O. S. M.D.

SUGGESTED ESTABLISHMENT (PROVISIONAL)

8 M.D. RECORDS OFFICE

Designed to maintain up to 5000 records (P.M.F. Included)

HEADQUARTERS SECTION

DETAIL	OFFS	W Ofs	SGTS	Cpls	Ptes.	
Officer-in-Charge	1					1
Officer 2nd in Charge	1					1
Clerks 5666		1				1
Typists			1	2		3
Orderly					1	1
<u>REGISTRY SECTION</u>						
Clerk				1		1
<u>PERSONAL RECORDS</u>						
Clerk			1	3		4
<u>MEDICAL & CASUALTY SECTION</u>						
Clerks			1	1		2
<u>WILLS, BADGES, DISCHARGES & STATISTICAL</u>						
Clerks				1		1
	2	1	3	8	1	15