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24 AUSTRALIAN INFANTRY BATTALION (AIF)

R E P O R T

O N

O P E R A T I O N S

S O U T H B O U G A I N V I L L E

JANUARY 1945

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JULY 1945

VOLUME I

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REFERENCE MAPS

1:25000 Series

BARARA

HIRU HIRU

MONOITU

RUMIKI

MIVO RIVER

MUSARAKA

MAMAGOTA

1:63360 Series

TOROKINA

VITO

MOTUPENA - PURIATA RIVER

AITARA

NB. All references in this report are given on the
1/25000 Series with the exception of the TEISHINTAI
Operation which are given on the 1/63360 Series.

24 AUST INF BN (AIF)

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART ONE

PREPARATIONS FOR OPERATIONS

1. MOVEMENTS PRIOR TO 2 JAN 45

Following the termination of the RAMU VALLEY - MADANG Operation and the Brigade's relief the Battalion returned to the Mainland as a body where all received their accrued recreational leave and were fully rested.

On completion of leave the Battalion was taken to ~~ABERNETHY~~ TABLELANDS where it underwent re-organisation, re-equiping and re-inforcing to fit it for coming operations.

Whilst on the TABLELANDS intense and closely supervised elementary training was carried out, building up gradually to Battalion exercises, at the same time organised periods allowed for all ranks to obtain as much rest and amenities as was possible.

Throughout this re-organisation period, particularly toward the latter part of December 1944 it was evident that the discipline, morale and cheerfulness was improved and the moulding of a team was being effected.

2. ORDERS FOR EMBARKATION

At a Brigade conference conducted by Brigadier H H HAMMER, DSO and Bar, orders were received for embarkation and in turn these were promulgated to the Battalion by the commander, Lt Col A J ANDERSON.

December was a very busy month, all stores were prepared for shipment, loading tables were compiled, controlled and uncontrolled stores were requisitioned for, received from Ordnance Depots, checked and where necessary issued to personnel. This in itself was a very important part of the preparation for movement.

The Battalion embarked in two groups, the first being the advance party on 23 December 1944 and the second the main body on 29 December 1944.

By 3 January 1945 the Battalion was concentrated in an assembly area at TOROKINA, BOUGAINVILLE, NORTH SOLOMONS.

The whole move from the Mainland to TOROKINA necessitated moves by rail and sea and staging at various marshalling areas enroute. This move was controlled by 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) and functioned very smoothly.

3. SECTOR OF RESPONSIBILITY OF TOROKINA DEFENCES

At an "O" Group conference the Battalion was ordered the responsibility of left battalion sector of 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) front on SOUTH flank TOROKINA defences.

On 6 January the Battalion effected relief of elements of US AMERICAN DIVISION in the PENDLETON Road area.

As it was known that 48 hours notice of any enemy movement toward the defences would be given, the Battalion concentrated en masse. In the event of enemy movement being reported the Battalion was to adopt a role as already ordered and occupy a defensive locality.

4. PREPARATION FOR TRAINING

At the PENDLETON road camp site, which was situated adjacent to a swimming pool constructed by the AMERICAL DIVISION on the PENDLETON Creek, the Battalion constructed a model camp. Incorporated in the camp was the maximum of comfort and sporting facilities in order to provide as much relaxation as possible between training periods.

In each coy area reading rooms, volley ball courts, basket ball courts and football areas were constructed; these were very much appreciated by all ranks.

The swimming pool was improved, a high diving tower and water novelties added. The popularity of the pool spoke for itself as it was very well attended by all ranks and many visitors at all stand down periods.

5. TRAINING FOR OPERATIONS

At a Brigade conference it was made known that it was not expected that the Brigade would be required for operations before April 45. Further to this, it was made known that we would be under command 3 Aust Div (AIF) and be committed in the SOUTHERN sector of the BOUGAINVILLE operation.

In view of this the Brigade brought out a training policy and master syllabus was prepared so that the maximum training could be extracted from the time available. This policy covered a comprehensive range of subjects and was strictly adhered to.

In this period the unit carried out its first training with tanks. In conjunction with B Sqn 2/4 Aust Armd Regt the unit trained to a high standard in this tank co-operation, a definite technique being accomplished.

Emphasis was placed in the attack, defence and patrolling in jungle conditions so that all acquired junglecraft. With reference to patrolling all commanders and troops were fully practised, importance being put on methods of jungle navigation, reporting and presenting of collated information.

In addition series of cadres were conducted so that firstly, Officers, NCOs and potential NCOs would clearly understand the Brigade training policy and be fully conversant with their duties, and secondly a 100% reserve of all specialists was aimed at in order to maintain their full WE were there a wastage from operations in the future.

Early March 1945 saw the culmination of this training when the advanced stage of Battalion exercises was reached. Here was seen the high standard of training that had been attained and the spirit in which each and every man entered into this strenuous training was noteworthy.

Interspersed with this extensive training was a programme of sports. All types of sports were played, keen competition and enthusiasm was displayed. The zenith of these was on a Brigade basis when boxing, swimming, football, both Australian Rules and Rugby League, athletics and Concert Revues were staged.

At this phase of the training, helped by the previous strenuous training and the competitive sports and entertainment the moulding of a team had taken shape. Esprit de Corps was paramount, the desire now was to close with the enemy and to display all these previous lessons learnt.

The training period was partially halted on 10 March 45 by the unit being called on to an operational role. This is covered in PART TWO, "The Teishintai Operation".

On 23 March 1945 the unit commenced its move SOUTH to a concentration area in TOKO area. This was preceded by reconnaissance parties including the Command and staff. By 30 March, 1945 the whole Battalion was in a defensive role on BUIN HIGHWAY in TOKO area.

From this point the report will be in parts, each part dealing with a separate operation.

24 AUST INF BN (AIF)

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART TWO

TEISHINTAI OPERATION

10 MARCH - 24 MARCH 45

1. PROJECTED ATTEMPT INFILTRATION TOROKINA

A Prisoner of War captured by 2/8 Cav Cdo Sqn at TONDUI, SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE supplied the following information:

"PW is member 23 Inf Regt. Saw 6 Div Intrep for January 45 stating information had been gained from native ex TOROKINA and from captured pilot regarding installations within perimeter. Also location 80 aircraft. Next saw 6 Div order that parties of 12 including 1 Officer, from various units, after 30 days special training were to leave within a week of each other to blow up our HQ and damage installations. First party was to depart MAINA 1 March and they were to travel via the foothills avoiding our troops. They were to enter perimeter via PENDLETON Road and NUMA NUMA Trail".

The information was considered reliable.

2. COUNTER MEASURES

After a Brigade conference a tactical plan was evolved to thoroughly comb all approaches to perimeter in our area of responsibility. This was commenced on 10 March 45 and carried out in the following way:

(a) A Coy with under command 4 Pl HQ Coy formed a patrol base in BANEMO Sector. The following were the dispositions 4 and 9 Pls Jeephead, Coy HQ and 7 Pl midway between Jeephead and Bamboo Staging Camp and 8 Pl at Base Camp. From this base extensive patrolling in a wide radius was conducted to keep watch on all approaches.

(b) From the Battalion area mobile patrols were despatched daily along the CHOP CHOP Trail.

(c) Important features, TOROKINA Bridge, junction CHOP CHOP Trail - COASTAL road, junction AMERICAN - GIER Roads were guarded by standing patrols.

(d) Further patrols were sent from Bn HQ to the foothills of BAGANA VOLCANO and the immediate area SOUTH of TOROKINA River.

Throughout these counter measures no contact was established with the enemy. On 24 March 45 the battalion was relieved by 57/60 Aust Inf Bn (AIF) in this operational role.

3. TRAINING and ADMINISTRATION

(a) Whilst no enemy contacts were made it was considered that this operation provided valuable training and through mistakes made a smoother working administration was accomplished.

(b) The subject of Man Management was closely watched and many valuable lessons learnt. These lessons had been brought out time and time again but it was still apparent that some did not fully realise the importance of the subject.

24 AUST INF BN (AIF)

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART THREE

TOKO - MABIS OPERATION

27 MARCH - 13 APRIL 45

1. ARRIVAL TOKO

On 30 March 45 the Battalion completed its move to the TOKO area and assumed a reserve role to 7 Aust Inf Bde.

A variety of tasks was allotted in preparing installations for 3 Aust Div (AIF) for occupation and constructing roads. In addition the protection of various installations in the immediate TOKO area was ordered.

2. OPERATIONAL ROLE

Information was received that in view of enemy counter attacks at SLATERS KNOLL attempted infiltration of the TOKO defences was a possibility. In view of this danger of disrupting the L of C orders were received by the Battalion for counter measures.

3. COUNTER

(a) On 30 March A Coy occupied a defensive position at 838483 in protection ANGAU COMPOUND. The enemy nightly made minor attempts at infiltration with small parties to harass ANGAU natives but each time was forced to withdraw causing him casualties.

(b) Active patrolling in the area bounded by FURIATA RIVER - DARARA Track was carried out preventing the enemy free use of the country. Sighting of odd Japanese and footprints seen but no contact was made.

(c) 4 Pl HQ Coy occupied a defensive locality at 839449 on 5 April to oppose enemy movement via this track. From this base patrols moved out across the FURIATA River for 300 yards EAST and SOUTH to COAST but no contact was made.

(d) B and D Coys were responsible for defence of TOKO installations.

(e) On 7 April 11 Pl B Coy moved to and occupied a defensive position around "U Hy Bty" at 827443 with the role of protection. No contact with the enemy was established.

(f) On 12 April 10 Pl B Coy patrolled EAST along COAST to AITARA. Contact was established with 8 enemy at AITARA, fire was exchanged and enemy withdrew.

While very little contact was made with the enemy, this was a fitting climax to training in the way of troops receiving an inoculation to conditions akin to battle and from enemy Artillery fire. This proved valuable.

4. RELIEF

On 12 April 45 a warning order was issued for Battalion to move to and occupy defensive position at SHINAU - KERO Creeks area to relieve 25 Aust Inf Bn. No move before 13 April 45.

24 AUST INF BN (AIF)

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART FOUR

PURIATA - MIVO RIVERS OPERATION

13 April - 1 July 45

1. INTRODUCTION TO OPERATIONS

On 13 April the Battalion moved to the SHINMU River area and occupied a defensive position, thereby taking over the front from 25 Aust Inf Bn.

The position occupied covered the area astride HUI Road from forward defensive lines SHINMU River to the reserve line KERO Creek. Dispositions were as follows:

Bn HQ, HQ Coy	883469
A Coy	878474
B Coy	883472
C Coy	884467
D Coy	885468.

In the afternoon of 13 April 45 6 and 7 Tps B Sqn 2/4 Aust Armd Regt arrived in the area and came under command. They were disposed one troop to C Coy, one troop to B Coy.

Immediately on occupation protective patrolling was carried out to give security to the force. The remainder of the Battalion was occupied in development of positions, carriage of stores forward and the corduroying of the HUI Road.

On 15 April 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) Flamethrower Pl came under command and was retained at Bn HQ as reserve force.

2. THE BATTLE FOR DAWES CREEK

From 13 April to 17 April very active patrolling was carried out forward to contact the enemy, probe his flanks and to locate his defences. Also long range patrols to the rear of the enemy position were conducted to gain the enemy's intentions.

By 16 April the patrols had gained sufficient information to attack and destroy the enemy pocket confronting us and so take up the advance.

During this preparatory patrolling many enemy contacts were made, his positions pinpointed, enabling Artillery and Mortar concentrations to be planned.

On 16 April one platoon was sent forward to occupy a defensive position 300 yards WEST of ANDERSON'S JUNCTION to guard a forming up point.

On the afternoon 16 April an "O" Group conference was held where orders were issued for the attack on DAWES CREEK.

At 0830 hours on 17 April the Battalion advanced with C and D Coys forward, A Coy left flank and B Coy reserve, preceded by a creeping barrage of 700 shells, to assault the enemy positions forward and in rear of DAWES Creek. The left forward company, D Coy, reached its objective by 1400 hours without making contact. The right forward company, C Coy with 7 Tp B Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt fought a vicious action throughout, reaching their objective on the afternoon 18 April. A strongly entrenched enemy dug in on their right flank covering the road and DAWES Creek were only forced to withdraw after heavy Artillery concentrations and fierce fire fights from both tanks and infantry.

It was considered by the delaying action fought and investigation of his positions that the Battalion was opposed by 120 troops.

Casualties for the Battle of DAWES Creek were:

Enemy	37 killed	1 wounded
Own	7 killed	19 wounded

Following the defeat of the enemy at DAWES Creek on 17 April, A Coy outflanked the HATAI Track cutting it in the KIMAKU Area where they took up a defensive locality. This was to provide flank protection to the remainder of the Battalion. On 18 April 9 Tp, B Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt moved up HATAI Track from ANDERSON'S JUNCTION and came under command A Coy. From 18 April to 26 April vigorous patrolling from this base had many contacts with the enemy in this sector. It was evident toward the end that the patrol fight was won when a decrease in clashes was noticeable.

During the Battalions occupation of DAWES Creek - ANDERSON'S JUNCTION area it was subjected to severe hostile shelling from which we suffered 3 killed and 14 wounded.

3. THE ACTION AT SINDOU CREEK

With the seizing of DAWES Creek and the mopping up of the area, patrols were pushed forward to gain contact with the enemy. In addition strategical patrols to the rear in the KEKRO Creek - HONGORAI River areas were completed to gain enemy's strengths and dispositions in preparation for artillery and Air strike concentrations, also to gain his intentions.

On 20 April 45 B Coy with 7 Tp, B Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt under command advanced along the BUIN HIGHWAY and occupied a defensive position astride the SINDOU Creek at 898454. This advance was unopposed.

The occupation was strongly contested by small raiding parties of the enemy who repeatedly counter attacked and harassed the company over the period from 20 to 26 April. All these attempts were met with stubborn resistance and by full use of the fire power available forced the enemy to withdraw.

Once again the Battalion carried out extensive patrolling denying the enemy use of no mans land and gaining his intentions. Valuable pin pointing of enemy defensive positions from this patrolling resulted in being able to apply Artillery and 3 in Mortar concentrations. Investigating patrols time and again found this fire most accurate, numerous graves gave proof of its damaging effects.

Casualties for the action at SINDOU Creek and the patrol clashes were:

Enemy	13 killed	3 wounded
Own	6 killed	12 wounded.

A Coy were relieved by one company of 57/60 Aust Inf Bn (AIF) in the HATAI Track position on 20 April. On 21 April they moved to and occupied a defensive locality at 898464 still maintaining left flank protection for the advance.

4. THE SEIZING OF UMAMU CREEK

Patrols having ascertained enemy in occupation astride BUIN Road in the UMAMU Creek area a plan was formed to attack his positions and so take up the advance.

From 0730 to 0930 hours on 26 April 36 Corsairs in three strikes each of 12 planes effectively bombed and strafed the areas on either side of the BUIN Road from 300 yards EAST of SINDOU Creek to BIAGU 3 FORK Junction, dispersing the enemy, clearing the undergrowth and allowing visibility for the advancing infantry.

At 0930 hours C Coy supported by 8 Tp, B Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt advanced from SINDOU Creek under a creeping barrage of Artillery and Mortars. Only slight opposition was encountered as the weight of support which aided the swift advance completely dis-organised the enemy. By 1400 hours the force had reached 908447 which was an advance of approximately 1400 yards. Here the company took up a defensive position and consolidated. The enemy attempted to dis-organise consolidation by cutting L/T communication and establishing an ambush on the L of C. This was cleared by B Coy with an armoured patrol.

Co-ordinated with C Coy's advance A and D Coys advanced along the left flank 1000 yards NORTH of BUIN HIGHWAY. By 1130 hours D Coy was established at THOMAS CLEARING 908456 and A Coy established at 904459. During these advances no contacts were made with the enemy.

Combined with the vigorous patrolling policy a series of ambushes were set with good results. One Japanese shot from an ambush carried a document which gave us the enemy intention of his harassing tactics in the HATAI track region.

Casualties for the Battalion to 28 April 1945 were:

Enemy	65 killed	9 wounded
Own	18 killed	60 wounded.

4. THE BIAGU THREE FORK TRACK JUNCTION ADVANCE

Following the mopping up of the enemy in the UAMU Creek area and the information from the patrols the stage was set for a further advance. For the next bound the all important BIAGU THREE FORK TRACK Junction was selected as the objective.

At 1000 hours on 28 April, 11 Pl, B Coy with two tanks advanced forward from C Coy at UAMU Creek and seized the BIAGU THREE FORK TRACK Junction. In the afternoon the remainder of the company joined 11 Pl and a company defensive locality dominating the track junction was formed.

Enemy parties of small strengths used harassing tactics against the defensive locality but these were put to flight each time.

The enemy still continued his hostile shelling causing casualties to us and damage to equipment.

A re-organisation of force now was being effected in the Battalion so that the ground won could be consolidated and preparation made for the next advance.

On 29 April 45 A Coy advanced 1000 yards on the left flank and occupied a position near DICKIE'S CLEARING at 913455. This advance was not contested. Bn HQ was moved forward on the same day to 910446.

5. THE PUSH TO KIKRO CREEK

On 30 April 45 D Coy moved down from the left flank and took up the advance from B Coy reaching the ridge on the EAST bank of KIKRO CREEK at 921442. This represented an advance of 1000 yards. The advance was unopposed.

Again extensive patrolling was carried out well forward, as far as the HONGORAI River to gain targets for artillery and air strikes. These patrols had clashes which gave an indication that the enemy strengths forward of the HONGORAI were considerable with the main disposition astride the BUIN Road. It was also found that the enemy used a secret L of C which crossed the HONGORAI River at MARTINS CROSSING. The clearing of the HIAU HIAU garden area was another accomplishment from this active patrolling.

6. THE MASSACRE OF THE HONGORAI RIVER

By 1 May 45 plans were formed for the seizing of the HONGORAI Line. This plan comprised a series of phases.

First of these phases was under way on 2 May 45 when B Coy with 8 Tp, B Sqn, 2/4 Armd Regt advanced along the BUIN Road to the UNGARRA Creek at 926438 being an advance of 1000 yards. No enemy was encountered enroute. The enemy made a series of counter attacks to this move, these were all ably dealt with causing him casualties.

By this time the patrol fight was near won for due to our vigorous policy contact was established with the enemy immediately he moved from his defences. Winning this fight was a hard task.

On 4 May 45 LAWN FORCE comprising 18 Pl with two tanks and bulldozer team under command advanced along the BUIN Road forward of B Coy. At 1130 hours contact was established with an enemy position strength one company and 75mm mountain gun sited in Tka role, 300 yards forward of B Coy at 928438. Preceded by accurate mortar and artillery fire the force attacked driving the enemy from the position and causing him to abandon gear and equipment. In the attack the leading tank was engaged by the 75mm gun, the tank returned fire killing the crew by 3 in HOWITZER and BESA fire. The LAWN FORCE then returned to company HQ.

On 5 May 45 D Coy with 8 Tp, B Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt advanced along the BUIN Road and after moving 700 yards forward of B Coy to 931437 struck a strongly entrenched position occupied by 100 enemy. D Coy attacked with the tank support forcing the enemy to withdraw. In the engagement the enemy fired on the leading tank with a 75mm gun damaging the BESA gun, the enemy gun was subsequently knocked out. At a further 30 yards advance another enemy position stronger than the previous one was attacked and after severe fighting the enemy withdrew to the NE. The company fought its way forward for a further 150 yards against a strong force of determined enemy. It consolidated at 932436 and dug a solid position.

Throughout the night of 5/6 May 45 enemy hostile shells fell in the D Coy area causing casualties and damage to stores. This was a prelude to an attack.

On 6 May 45 A Coy enroute to take up the advance had just reached the rear wire of D Coy locality when the enemy launched a savage attack with a force of 100 on D Coy. He was forced to retire in his initial attempt. He then attempted an encirclement to the WEST where he contacted A Coy. A determined attack was then put in on both companies, the enemy advancing to within 5 yards of our forward defensive lines but was met by withering fire from our position. After 2 hours solid fighting he finally withdrew.

Casualties for this counter attack were:

Enemy	58 killed	1 wounded
Own	1 killed	9 wounded.

The following equipment was captured:

- 1 TAISHO LMG
- 1 KIKI LMG
- 6 LMG Magazines
- 1 Pistol
- 2 Swords
- 15 Rifles
- 4 sets of wire cutters
- 20 Bayonets
- 1000 rds 256 ammunition.

On 7 May 45 following an Artillery barrage A Coy moved through D Coy and advanced along the axis BUIN Road to the HONGORAI River at 942434. This advance was not contested, the support having caused the enemy to withdraw to the NORTH.

A complete re-organisation of force was effected to consolidate the line of the HONGORAI River. By 12 May the river was held by three companies forward, one company in reserve. Dispositions were as follows:-

Bn HQ, HQ Coy	936432
A Coy	936438
B Coy	939424
C Coy	938431
D Coy	934433.

Total casualties for the battalion for the period 13 April to 12 May 45 were:

Enemy	169 killed	13 wounded
Own	25 killed	98 wounded.

7. ATTACK ON THE HONGORAI - POROREI RIVERS DEFENCES

(a) Preparatory Patrolling.

From 7 May to 14 May 45 a very vigorous and active patrolling policy was adhered to to gain the relevant information to assist the Brigade Commander to formulate his plan of assault on the HONGORAI - POROREI Rivers line. These patrols not only were concerned with the immediate front but they probed well into the rear of the enemy's flanks and L of C.

From the information gained it was learned that the enemy was concentrating a considerable force on our Northern flank WEST of the HONGORAI River. As this was an immediate threat to our positions and L of C we strongly contested it with numerous fighting patrols. These patrols accurately map spotted positions enabling Artillery, Mortar and Air Support to be used to the maximum with effect.

Patrols revealed that all the enemy's attention was to the Northern flank where numerous clashes both EAST and WEST of HONGORAI River took place. It appeared that the TIGER Track was his primary L of C and the larger portion of his force concentrated on it. Further extensive enemy positions were found occupied on EGAN'S RIDGE. Also they revealed that the Southern flank from the BUIN Road to as far as the POROREI River was not occupied nor patrolled by the enemy, here we had freedom of movement.

(b) Gaining Frontal Contact.

On 13 May 45 16 Pl, D Coy advanced across the HONGORAI ford under covering fire from C Coy and Artillery support. The platoon reached 200 yards EAST of HONGORAI River to 940430 and adopted a defensive locality.

On 14 May 45 remainder of D Coy joined 16 Pl and established a company position.

Immediately patrols were despatched forward to gain contact with the enemy. Contact was established, ascertaining the enemy in occupation of EGAN'S RIDGE on the escarpment EAST of ROBERTSON'S CREEK. This position dominated the BUIN Road in the WESTERN approaches and also covered a series of tank traps which had been constructed.

On 15 May 45 EGAN FORCE, comprising 18 Pl with two tanks from 6 Tp, B Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt, advanced along the axis of the BUIN Road from D Coy. The force reached a point 400 yards from EGAN'S RIDGE where the tanks became bogged, it was decided that the surface of the terrain would not permit a further advance without considerable engineer assistance. Patrols moved forward establishing contact with the enemy on EGAN'S RIDGE. EGAN FORCE returned to the company locality.

(c) Preparations for encirclement.

An outlined plan was made for 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) to encircle the enemy from the Southern flank. 24 Aust Inf Bn (AIF) were to assemble in the area junction HONGORAI - POROREI Rivers and attack the BUIN Road from HONGORAI River to including POROREI River. Also we were to demonstrate with force along the TIGER Track as a diversion.

Strong fighting patrols operated in the TIGER Track - MARTINS Crossing area and on the NORTH flank of EGAN'S RIDGE hitting the enemy whenever possible to divert his attention to this flank. These forces, as it was later learned, did achieve their object. As a further measure air strikes were directed at MARTINS Crossing and along the axis of TIGER Track.

Synchronised with these diversionary tactics HAESLERS Track was constructed to cross HONGORAI River at MACKLIN'S FORD.

On 19 May 45 the battalion less C Coy moved to the assembly area in preparation for the assault on 20 May 45. C Coy with 6 Tp, B Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt under command relieved D Coy forward of HONGORAI Ford.

Dispositions of the Battalion in the assembly area were:

Adv Bn HQ	943416
A Coy	944415
B Coy plus F HQ Tp, B Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt	945418
D Coy plus 9 Tp, B Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt	944417.

For the past 7 days continual air strikes, artillery barrages and mortar concentrations were placed on the known enemy positions extending from EGAN'S RIDGE along the axis BUIN Road to including POROREI Ford.

(d) The Assault

D Day, Sunday 20 May 45, saw A, B and D Coys move to their respective forming up points at a distance 600 yards from their final objectives. Following the advance of B and D Coy was a bulldozer team and their two troops of tanks, this movement was in rear of the advanced elements, protected by a small force.

From 0800 to 0820 hours 80 Aircraft bombed and strafed the proposed company objectives. At 0830 hours the companies advanced under a creeping barrage of Artillery and Mortars and enfilade fire from MMG Pl. This support totalled:

80 sorties of aircraft
1528 rounds of Artillery fire
700 rounds of Mortar
26000 rounds of SAA from MMG Pl.

Due to this unexpected Southern encirclement and the huge weight of support the enemy were completely surprised and overwhelmed.

By 0955 hours B Coy had gained their objective against slight opposition. They hastily took up a defensive position on a ridge dominating the BUIN Road at 949424. At 1145 hours the enemy launched a counter attack from the NORTH but were not with intense fire from infantry and tank weapons forcing them to retire, leaving their dead.

D Coy attained their objective 953421 by 1115 hours against no opposition, the weight of support having forced the enemy to evacuate the area. This position was on a high escarpment on the WEST Bank of the POROREI River dominating the ford area. Shortly after occupation the company was subjected to fire from a strongly entrenched enemy position on the high ground on the EAST Bank of the river. The enemy using JUKI, LMG, rifles, a 75mm and 47mm gun firing over open sights. We returned the fire with infantry and tank weapons. The company was further subjected to hostile artillery concentration which caused no casualties but damaged a tank.

A Coy advance reached a point 200 yards from their objective when they encountered a strongly defended locality using HMG, LMG, rifles and 75mm gun firing at point blank range. They were further subjected to intense shelling from 150mm gun. After a series of attacks supported by Artillery the company finally gained their objective at 1720 hours on 21 May 45. They dug in astride the BUIN Road on the high escarpment dominating the POROREI Ford at 956419. During occupation the enemy engaged our forces from a dug in position 300 yards to the EAST on the SOUTH side of the BUIN Road, from this position he fired on the company with a 75mm gun over open sights.

(e) Mopping Up

The Battalion having attained its objectives proceeded to mop up the encircled enemy and thoroughly search all vacated positions for documents and equipment.

One platoon of B Coy with two tanks and bulldozer team, known as EGAN FORCE, on 21 May 45 advanced WEST along the BUIN Road from B Coy. This force cleared the road and adjacent terrain of enemy, filling in all tank ditches and de-lousing all mines enroute, ensuring the road was jeepable.

On 22 May C Coy advanced forward and occupied vacated positions on EGAN'S RIDGE.

Bn HQ moved to a defensive locality in rear of B Coy's position.

With the Battalion re-organised vigorous patrolling was maintained in all areas WEST of POROREI River completely clearing it of enemy.

Dispositions of the Battalion as at 24 May 45	
were:	
Bn HQ, HQ Coy	948425
A Coy plus 7 Tp, B Sqn, 2/4 Aust	
Armd Regt	957418
B Coy	952429
C Coy plus 6 Tp, B Sqn, 2/4 Aust	
Armd Regt	945429
D Coy	956424.

(f) Conclusion

The seizing and clearing of the HONGORAI - POROREI Rivers area lasted over the period 13 May to 24 May 45 and was the major operation of this units experience.

The weight of support during the attack was immense
it being:

223	sorties aircraft
7822	Artillery shells
5679	Mortar bombs
26000	rounds SAA MMG Pl
88 HE 17 AP	rounds TKA Pl

and in addition many rounds of BESA, 3in Howitzer and 2 Pdr fire from tank support.

Casualties inflicted and sustained during the period were:

Enemy	54 killed	32 wounded
Own	7 killed	26 wounded.

Large quantities of documents equipment and weapons were captured.

8. RESERVE ROLE

With the seizing of the POROREI River line 58/59 Aust Inf Bn took up the advance and the Battalion was allotted the reserve Battalion role. This entailed maintaining rear and flank protection to the advancing elements.

B, C and D Coys were moved to along the HAMMER Road as left flank protection. Their dispositions were as follows on 2 June 45:

B Coy	973429
C Coy	979418
D Coy	967427.

As the advance was made along the BUIN Road companies were required to relieve the forward Battalion's companies so that the advance could be maintained.

Active patrolling on both flanks of 58/59 Aust Inf Bn was carried out to give security to the force. Minor clashes with enemy harassing parties were made.

On 4 June 45 C Coy advanced down the centre of the two forward Battalions with the intention to cut the MAMAGOTA - TAI TAI Road and so disrupt the enemy's L of C. This necessitated a hazardous move across difficult terrain of rain forest with heavy undergrowth and secondary growth. The company was established on the objective at 003403 by 7 June 45. They then patrolled NORTH and SOUTH along the road clearing it to both 57/60 Aust Inf Bn(AIF) and 58/59 Aust Inf Bn.

The Battalion by 7 June 45 had completely re-organised in preparation for the next phase of the operation, dispositions were as follows:

Bn HQ, HQ Coy	981387
A Coy	989380
B Coy	983386
C Coy	003403
D Coy less 17 Pl	969399
17 Pl	001381.

9. THE CLEARING OF MAMAGOTA

An armoured force consisting of 8 Pl A Coy with 2 tanks and bulldozer team moved from company HQ on 8 June 45 with the object of clearing MAMAGOTA.

This force advanced along the MAMAGOTA Road clearing it of obstacles as it went. Enroute numerous vacated enemy positions were searched securing valuable documents and capturing equipment including one prime mover and two 3 ton vehicles. Investigations revealed that the enemy had occupied the area from MAMAGOTA Junction to 2000 yards SOUTH with a force of at least 500, having vacated it within a week prior to our move.

The force finally attained its objective at 1400 hours. After a thorough search of the MAMAGOTA Area the force moved to a point 800 yards NORTH of the beach and took up a defensive locality.

From this base on 9 June 45 extensive reconnaissance patrols were despatched bringing back topographical information. From compilation of the information gained a complete report of the MAMAGOTA Beach, hinterland and approaches was presented. This gave its possibilities as a barge landing base.

On the afternoon of 9 June a mobile patrol of two jeeps was sent from MAMAGOTA Junction to contact 8 Pl, thence proceed to the beach. They carried out ~~their task~~ without contacting any enemy. The patrol also searched enemy positions, capturing equipment, and then returned to Battalion HQ.

8 Pl Armoured Force returned to Company HQ on 10 June 45, its task having been completed. Although no contact was made with the enemy this force completed an important phase of the operation.

10. THE HARI RIVER LINE

After the preparatory patrolling, the gaining of the important information and the consolidation of the ground won orders were given by Brigadier H H HAMMER DSO and bar for the attack on the HARI - OGORATA Rivers line. The task allotted the Battalion was to be Brigade reserve, responsible for flank and rear protection and to stage diversionary attacks on the SOUTH flank to support the main attack.

This flank and rear protection called for patrolling a wide area. This area extended from the COAST north to TAI TAI on the North of BUIN Road WEST to POROREI River and South of BUIN Road to as far EAST as MOBIAI River.

Diversionary attacks with armoured forces, strength one platoon, 2 tanks and bulldozer team were staged in the area 1000 yards SOUTH of the BUIN Road on the EAST Bank of the HARI River, on the 11, 12, and 13 June 45. A further force of two platoons with one troop of tanks, bulldozer team staged mock attacks in the same area on 14/15 June 45 as support to the main Brigade thrust on the NORTH flank. Throughout these diversion attacks no contact with the enemy was made.

As a further diversion and harassing role patrol bases were established on the OGORATA River 1500 yards SOUTH of BUIN Road and astride a NORTH-SOUTH track at 010350. In addition to mock battles patrols from these bases carried out exercises with live enemy, inflicting heavy casualties. An ambush established on the main evacuation route for the HARI Forces SOUTH of BUIN Road made contact with 100 Japanese killing 12 and wounding 3.

The protective patrols to the SOUTH made contacts in the MAMAGOTA Road area with enemy ambushes and harassing parties. These had moved into the area since it was cleared on 8/10 June 45. Casualties were inflicted on them forcing them to retire and by 15 June the area was considered cleared again. To the NORTH C Coy had patrolled to the EAST to across the HARI River and all areas WEST of HARI River to the TAI TAI Road without making contacts. Patrols in the garden area MONOITU found valuable technical equipment and documents from various vacated HQ positions.

The Mortar platoon was organised into two batteries and sited in A Coy defensive locality in the MAMAGOTA Junction area. From this position they placed concentrations on known enemy positions both EAST and WEST of the HARI River in the period 9 to 15 June in support of the Brigade operation. The enemy used counter battery fire to silence the mortars with 75mm and 150mm guns, neither damage nor casualties were sustained. He further opposed this support by a gun raiding party who attacked and threw grenades into their position during firing, once again neither damage nor casualties were inflicted, his force being driven off. After the attack investigations of these enemy positions revealed the accuracy of this support.

At 1030 hours on 9 June three prisoners of war, two sergoant majors and one corporal, surrendered to our C Coy, appearing on the TAI TAI Road near their forward defensive lines waving surrender leaflets. A further prisoner of war, a sergeant, surrendered to 17 Pl at 001381. From these prisoners of war valuable information was obtained to assist the operation, pin pointing of enemy positions, allowing artillery and mortar concentrations and air strikes to be directed on them, giving strengths and order of battle. These were the first prisoners of war the battalion had taken since the commencement of the campaign.

During this operation the Battalion was subjected to severe hostile shelling causing only slight damage and casualties.

Casualties for the Battalion for this action, to 15 June 45 were:

Enemy	17 killed	5 wounded	4 PW
Own	1 killed	2 wounded.	

B Coy moved to the KINGORI Area on 16/17 June, C Coy joining them on 19 June, this phase of the operation will be covered in paragraph 13.

11. THE DRIVE TO THE MOBIAI RIVER

The successful encirclement of the HARI line saw the enemy completely outmanoeuvred and so forced to withdraw EAST. The weight of support had been accurately employed as patrols later discovered. By a further swift deep encirclement by the Brigade of his OGORATA River line he was forced to continue his withdrawal to the MOBIAI River line.

The Battalion in its reserve role followed in the rear during the OGORATA River phases assisting the 58/59 Aust Inf Bn in the consolidation of the ground won.

The dispositions after this re-organisation was effected were:

Bn HQ, HQ Coy	998386
A Coy	011374
B Coy	998396
C Coy	003403
D Coy	001379.

Patrols to search the enemy positions on the HARI River line salvaged large quantities of enemy equipment and many documents. From Prisoner of War information two 70mm guns and one 81mm mortar were unearthed.

To assist the 57/60 Aust Inf Bn (AIF) drive on the MOBIAI River a patrol base was established on the OGORATA River at 045342 and operated in the area SOUTH of BUIN Road bounded by OGORATA - MOBIAI Rivers. This base was maintained until 20 June 45. From this base we successfully harassed the enemy inflicting casualties on him.

12. THE MIVO RIVER ATTACK

On 19 June 45 D Coy moved to and occupied a defensive locality astride BARRET'S Road at 047374. 18 Pl advanced from company HQ on 20 June and established a base at 070383. From this base patrols covered the area NORTH of BUIN Road bounded by MOBIAI - MIVO Rivers to give complete topographical report as to the terrain for tankability, construction of road and possible company objectives on the BUIN Road. These were carried out in preparation for the coming attack. Further patrols operating NORTH and SOUTH of base WEST of MOBIAI River had contacts with enemy patrols, attacking and causing him casualties.

On 22 June 45 Bn HQ moved to MUSAKAKA Area to 045375 so as to be at a focal point to control the forces under command.

Further patrols from A Coy, D Coy and Bn HQ operated in the MOBIAI - MIVO Rivers sector selecting Battalion assembly areas, concentration areas, stores areas possible objectives and L of C to objectives.

Meanwhile a bulldozer team had cut LAWNS Track to as far as 18 Pl base. This was only intended as a tankable road, all stores to be carried by boy lines.

On 23 June 45 D Coy plus 18 Pl moved to the proposed concentration area at 083365 and took up a defensive locality. On the same day A Coy moved to and occupied base vacated by 18 Pl at 070383. 11 Pl B Coy came under direct command Bn HQ and moved to position vacated by D Coy.

On 25 June 45 A Coy joined D Coy in the concentration area 083365, 11 Pl moved forward and occupied the vacated A Coy position. 4 Tp and F HQ Tp A Sqn 2/4 Aust Armd Regt moved to the concentration area preceded by the bulldozer team who constructed a road, they bivouaced in A Coy locality.

During this period of movement to the concentration areas vigorous patrolling was accomplished to protect the moves, deny the enemy reconnaissance of our intentions and to familiarise as many as possible with the country to be traversed during the Brigade attack.

A forward B Echelon base was established in the concentration area and as much stores and equipment as was possible was brought forward to this base. This was done to accelerate the movement during the final phases.

On 27 June 45 the Battalion, to be committed in the Brigade assault on the MOBIAI - MIVO Line consisting of A and D Coys, elements HQ Coy, 11 Pl B Coy, as reserve, and tactical Bn HQ advanced to the selected assembly area. D Coy preceded the advance to seize the ground and protect the main body's occupation. The company reached the previously selected area, the forward elements saw an occupied enemy position so they engaged them killing 9 and wounding 3 then moved back 200 yards and occupied a defensive locality. The battalion assembled in this area. The tanks followed the advance of the Battalion and by 1600 hours the unit was established in a solid defensive locality as follows:

Tactical Bn HQ, Elements HQ Coy, 11 Pl	092361
A Coy plus 4 Tp, A Sqn, 2/4 Aust	
Armd Regt	093358
D Coy plus F HQ Tp, A Sqn, 2/4 Aust	
Armd Regt	092359.

On the afternoon of 27 June 45 Artillery concentrations were placed on known enemy position forward of D Coy. Investigating patrols on morning 28 June 45 found this position vacated, the artillery fire having been very accurate.

On 28 June 45 reconnaissance patrols from both A and D Coys moved to their objectives for 29 June 45 to reconnoitre enemy dispositions, strengths, proposed company localities and suitable route for construction tankable tracks to objectives. These patrols accomplished their tasks, gaining all the necessary information.

At 1500 hours on 28 June 45 16 Pl moved forward to 091346 and occupied a defensive position, this was the selected FUP for D Coy for the attack.

At 0700 hours on 29 June 45 A Coy with 4 Tp, A Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt and bulldozer team and D Coy with F HQ Tp, A Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt and bulldozer team advanced along their axis to their company forming up points. They then formed up in preparation for the attack. Due to the heavy rains on the night 28/29 June 45 the ground had become boggy and made movement of the bulldozer and tanks much more hazardous than expected. In view of this the time factor had to be re-considered. It was learnt that F HQ Tp, A Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt could not negotiate the route as taken by D Coy so they were returned to Bn HQ. 4 Tp, A Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt with A Coy were experiencing difficulty and movement was greatly slowed up. In view of this the Commander ordered that the companies advance without tank support, the tanks were to reach them later in the consolidation stages.

After a terrific air bombardment, 44 Corsairs bombing and strafing the objectives, A and D Coys advanced preceded by an artillery and mortar creeping barrage. Due to the restricted movement of the ground troops by the heavy undergrowth and rugged terrain the support barrage had to be held in some stages of the advance. By 1500 hours both companies were consolidated on their respective objectives astride the BUIN Road, A Coy on the IVANA River at 099337, D Coy on the KOOPANI River at 089351. The heavy weight of the support and the swift advance of our forces had completely driven the enemy from his defences, disorganising him. The only one enemy who was seen was wounded by A Coy during their advance. On attaining their objectives clearing patrols were despatched to B Coy 58/59 Aust Inf Bn on the WEST and D Coy 57/60 Aust Inf Bn (AIF) on the EAST.

The clearing patrol from D Coy contacted an enemy party 400 yards WEST of the company locality and after an exchange of fire returned to company position. This sector was cleared of enemy on the morning of 30 June 45 when an armoured patrol from the MOBIAI Ford area moved EAST to D Coy. Small enemy harassing parties still continued to ambush on this sector causing it to be vigorously patrolled.

The sector between A and D Coys from IVANA River to across the KOOPANI River saw a series of actions in the clearing stages. On afternoon of 29 June 45 a patrol from D Coy moving along the NORTH side of the BUIN Road to A Coy exploded a mine when 800 yards EAST of the company locality making the commander a casualty, the patrol returned.

The total support used by the Brigade for the attack on the MOBIAI - MIVO Rivers was:

88	Aircraft sorties
4500	Artillery shells
3885	Mortar bombs.

On 30 June 45 both A and D Coys concentrated on ascertaining and maintaining that the area from A Coy 58/59 Aust Inf Bn to D Coy 57/60 Aust Inf Bn (AIF) was clear of enemy, in conjunction with both flanking battalions. At 1200 hours the sector was declared clear of enemy on both sides of the road.

At 1300 hours on 30 June 45 a bulldozer team with escort moved from A Coy WEST along the BUIN Road. In the KOOPANI River the dozer was bogged for two hours and extricated at 1700 hours, the party then advanced to make D Coy area their bivouac area for night 30 June/ 1 July 45. The party had only advanced 200 yards WEST when a 150mm gun, on the SOUTH side of the road, engaged the bulldozer scoring three direct hits, killing 4 and wounding 4 of the protection engineer party. The bulldozer was rendered unserviceable and the patrol broke contact and returned to A Coy. Shrapnel from the shelling fell in the D Coy locality, which was approximately 300 yards NW of the action, causing neither damage nor casualties.

D and A Coys patrolled the area SOUTH of the BUIN Road but only minor clashes were made. Signs of large scale enemy movement were seen, moving both EAST and WEST, along numerous footpaths.

On the morning of 30 June 45 the Padre and escort party were ambushed on LAWN'S TRACK, vicinity of MOBIAI River crossing. The party was returning from a burial. Nil casualties were inflicted by the Japanese. 11 Platoon left Bn HQ in the afternoon and attacked this ambush position killing 4 and wounding 2 enemy. The L of C from MUSAKAKA to Bn HQ was then declared clear of enemy.

On the night 30 June/1 July 45 the enemy made a series of harassing raids on D Coy locality but was met by withering fire from infantry weapons.

Harassing fire was directed on the enemy gun position forward of D Coy locality by Artillery through the night of 30 June/1 July 45.

At 1000 hours on 1 July 45 following an artillery concentration of 200 rounds, 16 and 18 Fls with flamethrower support, from the 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) Flamethrower Platoon, attacked and captured the enemy 150 mm gun and position at 090300. The position was a masterpiece of camouflage which accounts for the clearing patrols having not observed it although, as they now know, they had passed within feet of it. The gun was completely camouflaged with a cunning wire stringed arrangement in the bushes, which opened to make a fire lane on being pulled and closed on being released, thereby completely concealing the gun's presence. From this action no casualties were suffered by either force.

A further bulldozer enroute from A Coy was blown up by a mine, which had been placed in a mud puddle, 600 yards WEST of the company locality. The dozer was badly damaged and the driver rendered a casualty.

By 1430 hours on 1 July 45 the Battalion had been relieved by 42 Aust Inf Bn, and moved back to the MUSAKAKA area to a concentration area for re-organisation and rest and become part of a reserve force. B and C Coys were still actively operating in the KINGORI - KATSUWA Area (ref paragraph 13). Dispositions of the Battalion at 2 July were:

Bn HQ, HQ Coy	045373
A Coy	048367
B Coy	054427
C Coy	087407
D Coy	047374.

13. KATSUWA - KINGORI - COMMANDO ROAD ACTIONS

In the Brigade encirclement of the enemy defences on the OGORATA River line, 57/60 Aust Inf Bn (AIF) moved from the NORTH flank. Our Battalion was then given the responsibility of this flank protection.

On 16 June 45 11 Pl moved to KINGORI Area via BARNET'S Road and took up a defensive locality at 052429. On 17 June 45 the remainder of B Coy with 4 Tp, A Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt joined 11 Pl at KINGORI. During the move of both forces no contact was made with the enemy, also local security patrols around the new company locality reported no movement seen.

A patrol from 11 Pl, on 17 June 45, established contact with an enemy force at 068421, estimated strength 20, patrol engaged them then broke contact.

On 19 June 45 C Coy less 15 Pl who were at a patrol base on the OGORATA River, advanced via TAI TAI - COMMANDO Road - KINGORI where they staged the night with B Coy at 052430. No enemy were contacted enroute.

At 0800 hours on 20 June 45 12 Pl moved out to clear COMMANDO Road to KATSUWA to allow freedom of movement of C Coy. At 0830 hours C Coy advanced from KINGORI Area enroute KATSUWA, moving in rear of 12 Pl. At 1030 hours 12 Pl established contact with strongly dug in position estimated strength of 60. The enemy used light machine guns, rifles and knee mortars. 12 Pl engaged then broke contact. C Coy moved forward and combined force with 12 Pl. Artillery concentration was then accurately put on the position. 12 Pl returned to their Coy locality.

C Coy outflanked the enemy defences and reached KORORO River area at 074405 where it bivouaced for night 20/21 June 45. On 21 June 45 the company continued the advance reaching TOHODO River 600 yards SOUTH of COMMANDO Road at 087407 where it took up a defensive position.

15 Pl moved from MUSAKAKA Area on 20 June and staged night 20/21 June 45 in B Coy locality. On 21 June 45 they continued their advance along COMMANDO Road to rejoin C Coy. Orders were issued to attack the known enemy position at IERI plantation at 068421 enroute. Contact was made with the position at 1115 hours. An attack was launched but due to the enemy's superiority in numbers and fire power the platoon broke contact. 15 Pl Commander then directed an intense accurate artillery concentration on the position. They put in a further attack and found the enemy still in occupation. The platoon broke contact and outflanked the position to rejoin the Company. 15 Pl reached, and bivouaced night 21/22 June at, the area used by C Coy the previous night. On the morning of 22 June the platoon heard firing in the direction of C Coy locality so the commander left the main body of his platoon at the bivouac area whilst he took a small party forward to investigate.

At 1000 hours on 22 June 45 a strong force of 100 Japanese with HMG, LMG, knee mortars and rifles made a fanatical attack on C Coy locality at 087407. He was met by fierce fire from our MMG and platoon weapons which forced him to withdraw. The only men manning the locality at the time was a small force including Coy HQ personnel, the remainder being out on patrols. The enemy re-organised and put in a series of attacks lasting for two hours. Each time he was met by fire from our determined troops forcing him to retire. At one time his assault reached our forward pits. In these attacks we killed 18 and wounded many and captured quantities of equipment. Unknown to the Japanese our supplies of ammunition were near exhausted in the last of their attacks, but a DOUGLAS Kai bomber saved the day when it answered a call for supplies and dropped to our troops.

At 1700 hours on 22 June an 11 Pl patrol with 15 Pl Commander and small party reached C Coy, after skirting an observed ambush position 300 yards WEST of the company locality. Both departed at 1710 hours, 15 Pl Commander to rejoin 15 Pl and bring them back to rejoin the company and 11 Pl patrol to return to B Coy.

15 Pl departed bivouac area on 23 June and enroute to company attacked the known enemy ambush 300 yards WEST of company. The ambush had a strength of 30 with 2 LMGs and rifles. Due to the enemy's superior strength the patrol broke contact and returned to the Company locality.

Both B and C Coys prepared dropping grounds and all their supplies were dropped by planes. Nearly 100% recovery was made each drop and the companies built up the essential reserve of rations and ammunition.

The signal line laid from B to C Coy was mutilated each time it was repaired so due to the large numbers of enemy in the area it was decided not to continue with this communication. An alternate line was laid from MUSAKAKA area along the line of TOHODO River but this too was mutilated in the same manner. The only communication left was W/T so this was used extensively.

On 25 June 45 a further patrol from B Coy moved out and ensuring the enemy were still in occupation of IERI Plantation harassed it with an Artillery concentration.

Completing one of its tasks C Coy contacted ATKINSON FORCE of 57/60 Aust Inf Bn (AIF), relieving it of the patrolling. ATKINSON FORCE moved back on 25 June 45, rejoining its unit. C Coy took over command 13 Pl D Coy PIB from ATKINSON FORCE.

From C Coy vigorous patrolling was carried out in all directions bringing in information that the enemy had defensive positions along the COMMANDO Road from IERI plantation to KATSUWA Plantation and he actively patrolled this area. Further, the EAST side ASTILS Crossing was occupied in force with outpost positions on WEST side. He also had positions in the area on the EAST side of the TOHODO River 2000 yards SOUTH of COMMANDO Road. Our patrol policy was ordered so as to actively operate in these areas to pinpoint his positions and bring Artillery concentrations down, also to harass him at every opportunity.

To assist the attack on the MOBEAI - MIVO Rivers 13 Pl C Coy with one section PIB operated as a fighting force in the area on the WEST Bank of the MIVO River 4000 yards NORTH of BUIN Road. Contacts were made with the enemy harassing him.

On 29 June 45 enemy parties were seen forming up forward of B Coy locality at KINGORI for what was deduced, an attack but artillery defensive fire was called for dispersing him, forcing him to withdraw. Enemy parties also cut the signal line between B Coy and Bn HQ, but continual contact patrolling prevented any serious disruptions to communications.

A patrol from C Coy on 30 June 45 observed a party of Japanese on the COMMANDO Road in vicinity of KATSUWA Plantation, estimated strength 70/100. The commander thought they were moving to the EAST, this was proven correct at a later date. The patrol engaged them then broke contact.

Further patrols over the period 1 to 7 July have ascertained that the enemy are in occupation in strength on the EAST bank of the MIVO River in the ASTILS Crossing area. Positions were pinpointed, registered then Artillery Concentrations directed on them. Investigating patrols always reported the fire most accurate. On 6 July 45 patrols reported the area WEST of KATSUWA to NORTH of COMMANDO Road area clear of enemy, extensive positions along the COMMANDO Road reveal a considerable force vacated the area on approximately 3 July 45, moving to the EAST.

As this report is completed the action in the COMMANDO Road - ASTILS CROSSING area is still in progress.

Total casualties for the combined force B and C Coys for this phase of the operation from 16 June to 7 July are:

Enemy	56 killed	5 wounded
Own	NIL killed	4 wounded

and the following equipment was captured:

4	Rifles
2	Bren Magazines
1	Compass.

14. GENERAL POINTS OF THE CAMPAIGN

(a) Patrolling

From 13 April 45 to 7 July 45 the Battalion carried out 412 specially ordered patrols, this excludes normal contact and security patrols. Adhering strictly to the 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) policy, vigorous patrolling was at all times kept up, denying the enemy use of the ground, gaining the necessary information to plan the operation, finding the enemy's intention and defeating him in detail in the patrol fight.

This policy called for a major physical effort, patrols often being of three or four days duration and covering long distances. On many occasions up to 70 per cent of rifle companies were employed on patrols in one day.

(b) Artillery

Whenever targets presented themselves full use was made of artillery support, investigating patrols were always despatched and invariably reported the fire most accurate.

Forward observation Officers accompanied patrols enabling enemy positions to be accurately registered so as further concentrations could be directed on them. This practice produced good results. Intercommunication problems were solved by taking two W/T sets with each patrol or, where possible, laying signal cable.

2 Aust Fd Regt always had a Liaison Officer on Battalion HQ and full co-operation was always had, facilitating use of this valuable support.

(c) Tank Support

Both A and B Sqn, 2/4 Aust Armd Regt were attached to the unit throughout the campaign. Due to the training with this arm preceding the operations and the initial phases of it a technique of battle co-operation was effected allowing the maximum use of the combined force in the destruction of the enemy.

(d) Engineers

15 Aust Fd Coy (AIF) assisted the Battalion's operation by rendering engineer assistance whenever required. Close liaison between forces greatly facilitated this accomplishment. Engineer bulldozer teams were employed in all advances, preceding the tanks so as to clear obstacles and construct creek and river crossings. Mine delousing parties from this company were always made available, minimising the casualty rate and speeding the clearing of the area.

(e) Air Support

Large concentrations of enemy in dug positions on being pinpointed and registered with artillery or mortars were always given attention by aircraft.

The pinpointing of the target area by smoke cannisters from either artillery or mortars was valuable in ensuring the air strike was directed at the place intended. Air strikes were known to be most accurate.

(f) Air Reconnaissance

Both Tactical Reconnaissance and Artillery Reconnaissance were made good use of, they being on call whenever required. Particularly good work was done by this arm in their immediate appearance upon request during hostile shelling periods, more than once they were able to pinpoint hostile guns and so assist in their destruction.

(g) MMGs

2 Pl was used as a platoon to support the POROREI - HONGORAI Rivers attack, they having provided on-filade fire on the objective during the advance. In this support they engaged a 7000 yards target expending 26000 rounds. The enemy replied to this fire by countering with 150mm gun concentration, this did not deter our fire.

A sub section of one gun was allotted each forward company, in this role it was found invaluable in defence. In many cases playing an important part in repelling counter attacks.

(h) Mortars

The mortar platoon during the campaign fired 18008 HE bombs and 534 smoke bombs. This gives an indication of the immense support supplied by this platoon. New methods of registration of targets by Air Reconnaissance were used with good results. Also new organisations of firing teams were tried out, these are reported on fully in part IX. The effort of this platoon is considered an all time record.

(j) Tk A Platoon

This platoon maintained at least one gun as protection of Bn HQ, one gun in support of forward right company and the remainder of the personnel were employed at B Echelon in escort duties.

For the HONGORAI River crossing two guns were brought forward, supplying covering fire for the advance. In another instance they were employed to engage a suspected tree Observation Post at a long range. Their fire was extremely accurate.

(k) Pioneers

5 Pl were maintained as a part of the protective force for Bn HQ. They were also employed to assist the movement of tanks in the advance acting as an engineer team. This platoon was also called on to supervise and construct corduroy on the roads.

(m) Rest Camp

Full advantage was taken of the quotas allotted the Battalion for 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) Rest Camp at TOKO. In the course of the operation each man in the Battalion spent at least one period of three days at this Rest Camp.

This was of immense value to the Battalion and it is felt that the adoption of the rest camp, its excellent surroundings, the facilities placed at the disposal of the men, by 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) HQ, with the efficient manner in which it has been conducted, has helped greatly to assist skin complaints, morale and general happiness of the men.

15. SUMMARY

The role of the Battalion for the period of operations was a heavy one, but the conditions were such that at the termination of the period under review the Battalion as a whole was fit and not unduly operationally tired. This is proof of the organisation, supervision and fighting of the force under the 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) policy. Throughout the operation a percentage was at all times being rested at a special rest camp in a rear area, this disallowed operational tiredness to eventuate.

All objectives allotted the Battalion were gained and all tasks carried out. The excellent manner in which the task was completed being proof of the hard strenuous and extensive training prior to the operation, also to the planning and thorough preparation, the administration and the quality of the troops under command.

Full co-operation given by the supporting arms and services attached to or supplying the unit and the close support given by the Air Force, helped greatly the attainment of the object.

In the period of operations the total casualties inflicted and sustained were:

Enemy	317 killed	66 wounded	6 F W
Own	32 killed	6 died of wounds	142 wounded
Attached	13 killed	15 wounded	

and in addition a large quantity of equipment was captured.

The Battalion is now a well trained fighting force wise from the valuable lessons which have been learnt from the operation and with a high morale. It is now resting, re-organising and further training so as to be completely fitted for the task ahead.

24 AUST INF BN (AIF)

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART FIVE

O REPORT

This report is divided into two sections:

Section I Operations

Section II Intelligence

SECTION I - OPERATIONS

1. PREPARATORY TRAINING

During training on the Mainland and at TOROKINA the issue of verbal and written orders was widely practised. All sub unit commanders were required to prepare exercises and to practise the issue of orders to their own particular sub unit. This training was extended down to Section Leaders with the object of teaching the commanders of various grades to organise their thinking and to plan in sequence. When the unit commenced operations the value of this form of training was amply demonstrated. Because of this system, which has now become a drill, not one instance occurred, during the whole of the period under review, when any doubt existed in the minds of the subordinate commanders of their tasks, objectives and roles. Organised planning did much to ensure the success which the unit achieved in every operation in which it was engaged and enabled the system of supply and replenishment to function so smoothly that never at any time were troops deprived of a hot meal, barbed wire or ammunition on their objectives.

2. ADMINISTRATION IN OPERATIONS

It was found that the administration functioned efficiently under all conditions when the HQ was established as one body. When a Forward or Battle HQ was established it was found more practicable to move forward only that part of the HQ concerned with operations. One clerk moved forward with the Adjutant and acted as a valuable link in obtaining details of casualties strengths and movements of companies which were collated and then telephoned to Rear HQ. Thus, although the Administrative Section was practically divorced from the fighting in these instances, accurate compilation of the necessary returns was always possible.

Company administration, generally, was good because the efficiency of the Transport Platoon was such that records were invariably available shortly after consolidation on an objective thus making possible a quick and accurate rendition of necessary returns. In some cases, however, difficulty was experienced through a Company moving to a distant location with a depleted boy line, which necessitated leaving some portion of the records behind. In instances such as these, however, the Coy Clerk was able to carry sufficient in his pack to meet immediate requirements.

3. ISSUE OF ORDERS

When operations commenced all verbal orders issued at 'O' Group conferences were confirmed in the form of the standard Operation Order. This necessitated the office staff working long hours with a poor light in a blacked out tent and it was felt that the time spent and the delay occasioned in issuing this type of order was not warranted.

Most orders other than for Battalion attacks, were issued at night and generally took the form of a telephoned order to the Company Commander concerned. As security in these telephone conversations was most necessary it was considered desirable to always confirm the orders in writing so that locations, map references and times given in code could be checked. It was found that the speediest method was to issue the order in signal form employing the codes in use and to send the signal only to those persons required to take immediate action. By this method it was possible to issue full orders the same night. Simultaneously with the preparation of the signal a roneoed form of order, in clear, was prepared which was delivered by runner at first light the following morning. This system worked admirably as it allowed the sub unit commanders time to make preparations during the night and to have the complete order in clear in time to work to it during the actual operation the next day. When a Battalion operation took place a complete Operation Order was delivered to all sub units at least 24 hours before H Hour. Although last minute alterations had to be made occasionally, this disadvantage was offset by the fact that sufficient time was always available to discuss the operations with all ranks so that they had no doubt as to their tasks.

4. STRENGTHS

On completion of leave in October 1944 the unit concentrated on the Atherton Tablelands with approximately 600 all ranks in the unit. Reinforcement drafts during November built up the strength to over 700 and intensive open warfare training was carried out. Medical reclassifications, discharges and transfers reduced this figure somewhat, but further reinforcements kept the strength fairly constant with the result that on arrival at TOROKINA the unit was 28 officers and 672 other ranks strong. Whilst training at TOROKINA a further culling out of older men took place, mainly on a reciprocal transfer basis with 2/1 Aust Guard Regt, and fresh reinforcements also arrived.

When the unit moved to the TOKO area, at the end of March, the strength was 28 officers and approximately 700 other ranks, of whom some 30 remained as "left out of battle" personnel. On 13 April, the day the unit moved into operations at SHINKU River its strength was 31 Officers 670 other ranks plus 1 officer 29 other ranks at "left out of battle".

During the twelve weeks of action which followed many casualties were suffered by the Battalion and during the month of May the total available in the forward area averaged only 30 officers and 630 Other ranks. Limited reinforcements, however, plus the return of earlier battle casualties built the fighting strength up again and strict man management to counteract the skin complaints arising from continuous patrolling enabled the unit to complete the MOBIAI - MIVO Rivers operation with 27 Officers and 569 other ranks in the forward area and 1 officer and 63 other ranks at "left out of battle" and rest camps, making the total unit strength at that date 28 officers and 632 Other ranks.

Thus, the Unit, after three months of training and three months in action was only 40 less in number than on the day of disembarkation at TOROKINA.

5. CASUALTIES

Detailed history of casualties suffered is contained in the Medical Report. An analysis of the casualties suffered during the campaign show that, based on an average unit strength of 30 officers and 650 other ranks, 40% of officers (or 2 in every 5) and 26.3% of other ranks (or approximately 1 in every 4) became battle casualties. Evacuations through illness remained remarkably low during the whole period on the Island and no appreciable difference was noted whilst the unit was in operations. This standard of good health was a direct result of strict man management, efficient medical treatment, and a very high standard of catering.

6. REINFORCEMENTS

Unit strength was maintained by drafts mainly from Training Battalions, who had completed a course of training at the CANUNGRA Jungle Warfare School. With a few exceptions the men, whose average age was about 20 years, soon adapted themselves to unit training and proved quite efficient in action. The surprisingly low standard of education, however, proves a bar to advancement of many of these soldiers and has made difficult the creation of a 200% reserve of specialist personnel. Before leaving the mainland it was possible to send a few illiterates to an AAES Course and the improvement shown was most gratifying. The men's leaders have commented that, whilst the reinforcements are well trained in weapons, are hardy and well disciplined, they appear to possess only a very rudimentary knowledge of such vital subjects as navigation in the jungle, map reading, use of the compass and protractor. As patrols are briefed very closely and as accurate compass and map work is an absolute necessity in jungle these men have been placed at a decided disadvantage.

Reinforcements marched in on a reciprocal arrangement with 2/1 Aust Guard Regt, whereby personnel under 30 years of age were exchanged for unit personnel over that age, proved most satisfactory.

Reinforcement officers proved capable and efficient and in every instance performed their duties most satisfactorily. The unit was fortunate in that it was able to promote and take on strength as reinforcement officers 6 senior NCOs who had all rendered valuable service in operations in New Guinea. These jungle experienced and battle tried young officers were a decided acquisition to the unit and by their keenness and skill played a big part in the success of the operations.

STATISTICS

STRENGTHS

Concentrated at Mapee following leave	22	Offrs	587	Other ranks
Strength on arrival at TOROKINA 2 Jan 45	28	"	672	" "
Strength on arrival at TOKO 23 Mar 45	28	"	691	" "
Strength at commencement of operations:				
With unit	31	Offrs	670	other ranks
At L O B	1	"	29	" "
Strength on completion of MIVO River operation 2 Jul 45:				
With unit	27	offrs	569	other ranks
Rest Camp and LOB	1	"	63	" "
	28	"	632	" "

CASUALTIES

	Numbers		Percentage	
	Offrs	ORs	Offrs	ORs
Killed in Action	2	30	6.6	4.61
Died of Wounds	-	6		.92
	2	36	6.6	5.53
Wounded in Action	10	135	33.3	20.76
Total Battle Casualties	12	171	40	26.3

Total Casualties All ranks 183 or 26.9% of unit average strength.

5 Officers and 80 other ranks wounded in action have since rejoined the unit.

REINFORCEMENTS RECEIVED

11 Officers 81 Other Ranks

PATROLS

Number of Patrols completed	412
Average distance each patrol	5730 yards
Aggregate distance patrolled during operations	1370 miles

SECTION II - INTELLIGENCE

During the training periods at TOROKINA and MAFEE a series of intelligence cadres were conducted with the object of standardising work within the section and to train 100% reserve personnel from the companies. This object was achieved. This reserve was fully appreciated when personnel were called upon to reinforce the section due to depletion from attendance at HQ Schools and discharges.

Prior to commencing the FURIATA - MIVO Rivers campaign due to lessons learnt in training, it was seen that the section War Establishment as laid down was insufficient to carry out the tasks required to perform. Further it is essential to have at least one trained reserve Intelligence Officer to be able to take over in the event of the present one becoming a casualty. In view of this the section was enlarged to the following:

I O
II O (Learner)
1 Sgt
2 Cpls
8 Ptes

a further one Cpl and one Pte were away attending schools.

The distribution of the section was as follows:

Bn HQ

Group 1
I O
Sgt
Cpl
Recorder
Draughtsman
1 Pte

Group 2
I O (Learner)
1 Cpl
3 Ptes

Coys

Each rifle company was allotted one private.

With the allotment as such it was possible to effect relief of company personnel by interchanging with the office personnel. Further, advantage could be taken of the rest camp quota and so the section, each man in turn, received a rest.

Group 1 was responsible for the running of the intelligence office, whilst Group 2 handled the outdoor traverses, patrol reports, war diary and the keeping of post records. This system was found to work smoothly.

Due to the L of C having been the BUIN Road throughout our advance it was possible to carry more office gear than in previous operations, this allowed for a more elaborate set up. The intelligence office consisted of, office box (this was built prior to the unit commencing operations and was a complete office with 2 map boards for situations at a pinch, this was all that was necessary to operate as an office) one GS table, one FS table and form, one improvised table and a sheet of 3 ply 4 feet by 2 feet 6 inches for a situation map. The office used an Australian Pattern Tent. Group 2 used a tent fly having one GS table, one FS table and form and three mortar boxes of stores.

Each company man was supplied with a portable outfit comprising board, talc, paper, pencils, ruler, protractor and message pad enclosed in a waterproof cover.

During the campaign all stores requisitioned for were supplied with the exception of china-graph pencils of which there was a distinct shortage. Full use was made of dye line work in the duplication of maps or sketches.

All special patrols ordered were briefed by the Intelligence Officer with, where possible, the use of air photographs. On their return they reported to Bn HQ where they were interrogated both by the Commanding Officer and the Intelligence Officer so that the detailed information could be extracted. In the case of less important patrols the company intelligence private under the direction of the company commander briefed and interrogated the patrols.

Daily summaries were issued of the current operation so that the troops could be fully kept in the picture. In addition company intelligence personnel kept situation maps and promulgated the situation to the troops by visiting platoon by platoon at least once per day. Regular visits were made to the companies by the Intelligence Officer who gave the latest information on all fronts, the enemy position and the commander's intention. By troops being kept fully in the picture it contributed to the morale and stamped out rumours.

On all important patrols intelligence section personnel were attached to do the traverse and collect the information. This brings out the point of the necessity for additional trained reserve.

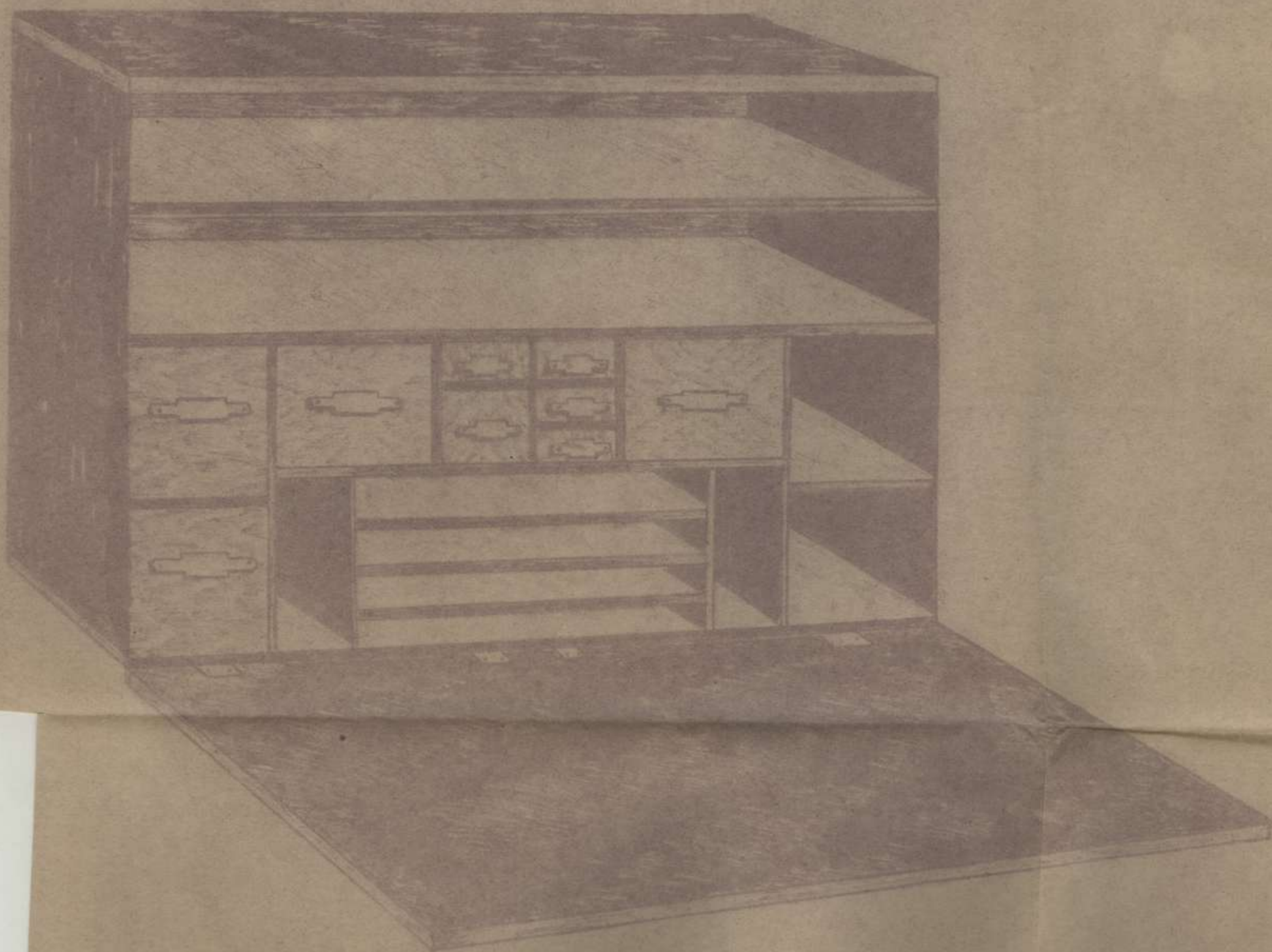
Sitreps were submitted periodically three times daily and in addition all important information was sent as a SITREP immediately following the happening. Included in these reports all the essential topographical detail was included.

All tracks in areas when occupied were accurately traversed and all topographical information collected to bring existing maps up to date.

In the advance the company intelligence man was responsible to accurately traverse route so as to pinpoint the spot whenever it was asked for.

NB. Attached as appendix 'A' to this report is diagram of Intelligence Office Box as used during operations.

OFFICE SECRETAIRE F1.



24 AUSTRALIAN INF BN (AIF)

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART SIX

Q REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION

The problems of supply during the campaign were many and varied. The campaign being conducted along the axis of BUIN Road provided a good L of C. The operation does not in any way resemble previous ones which this unit participated in, having such an L of C it bordered on mobile warfare. Below is given an outline of supply in phases of the operation.

2. PREPARATION FOR OPERATIONS

In the areas of TOROKINA and TOKO the final preparation was completed in readiness for the operation. This entailed the drawing of all stores, including War Establishment of Ammunition, rations, wire, controlled and uncontrolled stores.

Rations consisted of 5 days reserve SWFA, 2 days FOR and one emergency ration per man. The 5 days SWFA was reduced to 3 days when the battalion became brigade reserve after the HONGORAI - POROREI Rivers operation.

All rations and stores were organised into echelons, staff tables prepared and the final reductions made to make the unit as mobile as was possible. During the stages of the campaign, due to this complete preparation, only few changes were necessary and these constituted minor changes in B Echelon stores and equipment.

3. PHASE ONE

(a) This phase covers the period of operations from SAIRU River to the HONGORAI River line.

(b) During this phase B Echelon changed its location four times. These moves were made to abide by the Battalion policy of keeping B Echelon as close as possible to Bn HQ. The siting was always in a central position so as to be as near DID as Bn HQ. This was effected with one exception when the fourth move was made, this made B Echelon 1800 yards from DID, this caused delay because rations could not be broken up for distribution to sub units before 1400 hours.

(c) For the first two moves a dropping zone was constructed by unit personnel and ANGAU natives attached. The unit was required to operate supplies from the dropping zone for a few days when the Supply Platoon took over and established a DID.

(d) During this phase it was possible to supply companies by jeep and trailer with few exceptions. On these excepted occasions companies were established in positions off the BUIN Road and necessitated use of boy lines and tractor train.

4. PHASE TWO

The HONGORAI - POROREI Rivers attack which was effected by a southern outflanking move presented new problems to the supply line.

(a) In preparation for the assault an advanced stores base was established at forward Bn HQ at MAGELINS FORD Area. Initially stores were transported to this base by jeep but due to rains the road became non-jeepable and tractor trains had to be used.

(b) When the companies launched the attack a tractor train followed the tanks along HAESLERS Road with B and D Coys. Tanks were tactically loaded which greatly assisted in the stores reaching the objective in the consolidating stages. To A Coy native carrier lines had to be used.

(c) When the companies reached the objectives before the BUIN Road was cleared B C and D Coys were supplied by jeeps and tractor trains and A Coy by native carriers. On the clearance of BUIN Road all supplies were transported primarily by tractor train and thence by jeeps and trailers via the BUIN Road.

(d) This operation was greatly assisted by the work of B Echelon and its staff who worked hard having all stores in the company areas when required.

5. PHASE THREE

This phase deals with the re-organisation of force, following the advance being taken over by 58/59 Aust Inf Bn (AIF) and the Battalion becoming Brigade reserve. As part of this re-organisation B Echelon was moved to a position on the junction of BUIN - HAMMER Roads.

(a) Following strictly supervised kit inspections, check on controlled and uncontrolled stores the necessary issues were made ensuring that the War Establishment was maintained.

(b) Inquiries into loss of all stores was made from which steps were taken to prevent further losses.

(c) During this period the SWPA Reserve Ration scale was reduced from 5 days to 3 days.

(d) All companies having suitable Ls of C it was possible to supply by jeep and trailers during this phase.

6. PHASE FOUR

The advance to the MAMACOTA Road Junction and the seizing of the HARI line comprises phase four of the operation.

(a) C Coy carried out the role of cutting the TAI TAI road between the forward battalions, this necessitated a cross country move of 4000 yards. During this task the company was supplied by native carrier line.

(b) The remainder of the Battalion being on the HAMMER and BUIN Roads were supplied by jeeps and trailers.

7. PHASE FIVE

This period covers the re-organisation of the force after the attack on the HARI River line.

(a) The battalion being dispersed along the axis of BUIN - TAI TAI - HAMMER Roads, supplies were kept up by jeeps and trailers.

(b) Re-issues of stores where necessary were made.

8. PHASE SIX

The concentration of the battalion in the MUSAKAKA Area, the attack on the MOBIAI - MIVO Rivers line, the relief and return to the MUSAKAKA Area is dealt with in this phase.

(a) For this phase B Echelon was moved and established 200 yards from DID near the OGORATA River.

(b) For the assault on the MOBIAI - MIVO Rivers line it was necessary to establish forward supply bases to keep pace with the advance. The first base was made at MUSAKAKA, thence in co-ordination with the advance further bases at LAWNIS BASE - BASE ONE in the concentration area EAST of the MOBIAI River and at the Battle Bn HQ site. Movement forward to these bases were to MUSAKAKA by jeep and tractor trains, for the remainder by native carriers and tactically loading tanks.

(c) In the assault on the BUIN Road the forward elements were followed by native carrier lines which had the necessary stores on the position for consolidation.

(d) These carriers worked throughout for two days getting all the accumulated stores to a base on the BUIN Road on the WEST of the MOBIAI River where they were moved back to rear HQ at MUSAKAKA.

(e) In this operation 150 native carriers were maintained at the forward supply bases. In respective company areas and in the bases 6 days SWFA, 2 days FOR, one emergency ration per man, plus all essential cooking gear was accumulated.

(f) A and D Coys were relieved by 42 Aust Inf Bn on 1 July 1945. Ammunition, wire and cooking gear were handed over to the relieving force. The remainder of the stores were moved back by tractor train, the road being impassable to jeeps.

(g) Bn HQ moved out with their stores along an alternate route to WEST bank of the MOBIAI River, Buin Road area thence to the MUSAKAKA Area.

(h) The captured prime mover "The HAMMER" proved invaluable in the transportation of the stores during the latter phase of this operation.

9. PHASE SEVEN

The operations of B and C Coys in the KINGORI - KATSUWA - COMMANDO Road area are covered in this phase.

(a) The move of B Coy from the HARI Area to KINGORI was made via BARRETT'S ROAD. This permitted the use of jeeps and trailers, tanks and tractor trains for the movement of stores.

(b) C Coy moved via COMMANDO Road staging at KINGORI for one night thence to TOHODO River - COMMANDO Road area to 087407. For this move native carriers were employed.

(c) Due to the cut up condition of BARRETT'S Road it became non jeepable and the lack of available tractor trains the only alternative supply method from B Echelon was by native carriers. To ease this situation both B and C Coys constructed dropping zones within their defensive localities. From then on all stores were dropped by air, the parachutes being returned via carrier lines. A good recovery percentage has been obtained throughout.

10. PHASE EIGHT

This deals with the period of rest and re-organisation that is at present taking place. A, D, HQ Coys and Bn HQ who are in the MUSAKAKA Area are mostly effected by this phase.

(a) A complete kit inspection of personal items has been held and all shortages that can be have been issued.

(b) Check on all controlled and uncontrolled stores.

(c) Weapons have been inspected by the armourer to ensure they are up to standard.

- (d) All axes are being repaired and sharpened.
- (e) Inquiries into all losses of stores are being conducted to ensure that the necessary precautions against loss are taken in the future and that all are fully aware of their responsibility in caring for issues.
- (f) Reserve rations were checked and balanced, then consumed.
- (g) The Battalion reverted to normal ration supply, carrying one days SWPA, 2 days FOR and one day emergency per man as reserve.

11. GENERAL

In the assault it was the policy to have the stores all prepared so that immediately the word was received that the objective was cleared the stores were taken to the companies. This called for preparation which had to be thorough as in the case of boy lines all loads were made awaiting the signal.

It was also found necessary to have duplicate sets of stores ready in the event of tanks or tractor train not being able to get through to the companies.

GENERAL POINTS AND LESSONS LEARNED

1. RATIONS

The Battalion was maintained throughout the operations on the SWPA Ration scale, both fresh and dry.

(a) Rations were drawn daily from DID, delay in drawing rations was sometimes caused through air maintenance plane being delayed by weather conditions, or condition of BUIN Road delayed arrival of supplies from TOKO. This delay was eliminated to a great extent, by a stroke of good fortune and intelligent appreciation of the position by the WO Caterer; during the first series of air drops to the Battalion, excess dry rations were obtained, sufficient to make up one days maintenance ration for the Battalion, this reserve was held in the ration store. It allowed dry rations to be broken up into company lots early in the morning or, if necessary, the night before. On the arrival of fresh rations only 45 minutes was required to complete the ration break up. The days issue of dry rations then became the reserve and could be drawn from DID when transport became available through the day.

(b) The SWPA Ration is excellent as long as it can be cooked. Together with the almost daily issue of fresh rations including fresh meat, potatoes and onions, with bread issued daily, the Battalion lived on a balanced ration, the best in any operations during the war.

(c) FOR were issued to patrols of longer duration than one day, or on a cross country move when ordered by the Battalion. It is suggested that the unexpended portion of the days ration, ie, SWPA, be left in the cookhouse and all patrols live off FOR. The SWPA Ration is most unpalatable when uncooked, also men have to carry different portions of the ration, eg, sugar, salt, tea, etc, then if separated they are without a complete ration. The ration is also issued in company lots and for patrols a further break up has to be made in company areas, in some cases this causes an unequal distribution as all essential items are difficult to break up evenly. If SWPA ration is to be carried by one day patrols, the most satisfactory for many reasons is for each man to carry bully beef and biscuits,

(d) Reserve Ration turn over.

The following method was adopted to turn reserve ration over every three or four weeks:-

Procedure in the companies:

- i Each company carried 5 days reserve SWFA. On a certain fixed date they commenced consuming the ration.
- ii Day 1, one days ration is consumed, plus fresh ration delivered daily.
- iii The same procedure is adopted on Days 2, 3, 4 and 5.
- iv Day 5, the new reserve ration is delivered to the company. If the tactical position warrants it the delivery can be made on Day 4.

Procedure at B Echelon:

- i Days 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 fresh rations broken up and delivered to companies.
- ii Day 3, new reserve drawn from DID and broken up into company lots, boy loaded, and suitably marked with paint. An adequate supply of sand bags and corn sacks must be held in the ration store. The reserve was never boy loaded for Bn HQ or B Echelon, except Advance Bn HQ for cross country moves.
- iii Day 4 or 5, reserve delivered to companies.

(e) Bags and Bread Containers

It is necessary to commence operations with no less than 1500 sandbags. Corn sacks were obtained from DID on every available opportunity, the ration store can never carry too many. Bread containers must be returned for the purpose of boy loads.

(f) Fuel

- i Range fuel was air dropped in 4 gallon containers for the first month and then drawn from DID in 44 gallon drums.
- ii A close check was kept on companies to return all empty 4 gallon containers and sufficient were obtained to last the Battalion for all phases of the operations except the last two weeks when an additional 30 had to be obtained from DID to supply the Battalion for the outflanking move across the MOBIAI River. A count of empty drums at B Echelon on 3 July revealed 30 in good condition but without bungs thus being unserviceable.
- iii Companies had a tendency to use drums for latrine seats and for boiling clothes etc. This practice was soon stopped as sufficient flour and wheatmeal drums were available for that purpose. In spite of all instructions to return all empty fuel drums the return was not over 70%. All drivers had orders to collect empty drums from companies but unless they had close co-operation with COMS or unloading personnel in companies their task was made exceedingly difficult.

2. EQUIPMENT

The position regarding equipment was generally good, supplies being readily obtained from BOWO, and adequate stocks held in Q store.

- (a) The usage rate of equipment web, especially packs was greater than anticipated, because on becoming wet no facilities existed for drying them out, the webbing commenced to rot and the stitches tear out.

(b) Canvas stretcher tops for evacuation of wounded placed a heavy demand on available stocks whilst the Battalion was forward. During the last month replacements were obtained from 15 Aust Fd Amb.

(c) Tents half shelter were always in short supply. The Battalion commenced operations with one per man but hostile shelling took a heavy toll, at least 30% were part used when issued and they soon commenced to deteriorate and become unserviceable. Replacements were part used having been withdrawn from 7 Aust Inf Bde. Ground sheets and capes anti gas were issued in lieu. On 1 July 100 combination tents shelter half and ground sheets, called IONCHIOS, were received, still leaving about 100 required to bring Battalion up to full strength.

3. CONTROLLED STORES

Weapons destroyed by enemy action and lost in action were considerable when the battalion was forward, due to hostile shelling and great patrol activity. Replacements were in company areas within 24 hours of being reported.

4. CLOTHING

The maintenance of clothing supplies were excellent, the only shortage was in size 11 trousers for the first six months.

5. TOOLS

(a) Loss of axes was considerable due to neglect, shelling and corduroying. After tightening up the control of tools, down to sections, the position improved, assisted by further issues from 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) and some found in old enemy positions.

(b) Although no definite proof exists natives were suspected of keeping axes issued for corduroying. Close co-operation with ANGAU representative is essential to check all tools in before natives return to the compound.

6. WIRE

Air droppings of wire were unsatisfactory, recovery averaging from 30% to 40%. A company required 30 coils for each new position occupied, stocks were held at B Echelon or in the Battalion dump in a forward company area.

7. COOK HOUSES

(a) Each company had at least two hydra burners in working order. The LAD Representative moved around at every opportunity repairing and replacing burners. It was found that a high standard of maintenance was essential to keep burners working satisfactorily.

(b) One table FS was used in each cook house, except when company was being maintained by boy line.

(c) Field ovens designed by the WO Caterer, made out of two 44 gallon drums, were found to be extremely satisfactory and took the place of Fowler stoves. They only weighed 80 pounds and were easier to handle.

(d) Water containers used were 44 gallon drums. At times a jeep and trailer was required all day to maintain supplies of water to two or three companies. The drums must be kept well clear of the road but still accessible to the water trailer.

- (e) When companies were accessible by jeep two half 44 gallon drums cut length ways were supplied for the washing of dixies.
- (f) The standard of cooking was high throughout the Battalion and no small credit is due to the cooks for the meals provided.

8. CANTEEN

The supply of canteen goods was regular and satisfactory. Orders were placed by companies on Friday and delivered on Wednesday or Thursday. Bulk canteen supplies were obtained each Tuesday.

- (a) Goods were issued on the credit system, with a card for each man, no goods were supplied unless a man had a credit balance on his card.
- (b) Whilst away from TOROKINA two bottles of beer per man per week have been purchased and held at "left out of battle".
- (c) To start off the canteen each man paid in at least £2, subsequent sums were transferred direct from members' pay books to his canteen credit card.

9. POSTAL

The mail delivery had its ups and downs due to the shortage of planes. The longest period without mail was 4 days. On parcels being delivered at B Echelon they were forwarded to companies at first available opportunity.

10. PAY

The pay Sergeant made regular visits to companies, it was intended that he should make weekly visits but this did not work out and there were complaints, which were eventually overcome, mainly from personnel who were out on patrol when pay representative was in the company area.

A close check was essential at all times by either Quartermaster or Transport Officer to see that canteen goods and mail were despatched as soon as possible and that pay representative made his visits.

11. ARMOURER

The armourers made inspections of weapons in company areas at irregular intervals. As the LAD always had a jeep more frequent visits could have been made. They did an excellent job in serving hydra burners.

12. DROPPING ZONES

- (a) The dropping ground requires to be cleared 150 yards by 50 yards with a jeepable circuit round it. The B Echelon or DID needs to be on a flank to avoid damage by over or under drops.
- (b) The T panel and DZ code letter must be left on the Dropping Zone at all times, otherwise planes will not drop.
- (c) Air droppings to isolated companies was excellent, the only losses sustained were on free drops due to the container or drum breaking.

13. MOVEMENT and LAYING OUT OF B ECHELON

- (a) It has been found that to move B Echelon forward during a lull in operations when transport requirements are not heavy, even then the loan of at least 4 ASC jeeps plus unit transport was necessary to complete move in one day. Where the road will stand it movement by night using 3 ton trucks was satisfactory.

(b) On an average there were 60 jeep trailer loads to be moved, this included delivery of daily maintenance rations to companies.

(c) It is most important that the area be paced out, irrespective of undergrowth in order to avoid congestion. Similarly the sighting of the track circuit requires careful planning. Allowance must be made for area to accommodate staging personnel.

(d) Area must be well prepared and laid out, signs posted, holes dug with overhead cover, fields of fire cleared and wire erected at least one day prior to move.

(e) Erect as many tents as possible before movement of stores, due to shortage of personnel all are required for loading, unloading and escorting jeeps on day of move.

(f) The use of natives to clear area and cut timber for overhead cover would be of great assistance as it has been found that the men concentrate on digging holes and preparing overhead cover with the result that movement and stacking of stores is delayed. This applied in particular to transport drivers who are unable to prepare holes and overhead cover whilst ferrying stores.

(g) The sighting of B Echelon depends on the tactical situation, but consideration should be given to the fact that the closer it is situated to DID the quicker the rations and ammunition can be supplied to companies.

14. PREPARATION OF STORES FOR BOYLINE

(a) All containers, boxes etc must be clearly marked with company sign. Where two Battalions are using same L of C (eg outflanking move over the MOBIAT River) they must have a distinguishing Battalion mark. White paint was used for marking.

(b) To avoid delay in movement of boyline

- i stack boy loads in line along track
- ii where ammunition is carried, generally more than one boy load, carrying stick should be firmly attached to container with twine or wire.
- iii have sandbags for wrapping around coils of wire
- iv have escort in position for quick move.

(c) All that is then required is for boys to take up load and move off, time about 5 minutes. If no preparation is made delays of up to 30 minutes or more can be expected.

15. CONDUCT OF BOYLINES

(a) The strict supervision of native carrier lines cannot be overdone. It is essential that sufficient escort accompanies them not only as protection but to maintain strong control in the event of an enemy contact.

(b) Care must be exercised to ensure that the native lines do not enter the company area until the objective is taken and cleared of enemy. Laxity in this has caused serious confusion and loss of stores.

16. GARDENS

Foraging of gardens has resulted in KAU KAU and pumpkin supplementing rations on a few occasions, this depending on number of personnel available to collect same.

TRANSPORT REPORT

1. MOTOR TRANSPORT

(a) A particularly heavy task has fallen on transport section during these operations, vehicles rarely being idle and long hours have been worked by both drivers and vehicles.

(b) War Establishment

Unit transport as per War Establishment is NOT sufficient, it being frequently found necessary to use ASC vehicles for the purpose of supplementing unit resources.

One vehicle each day is grounded for maintenance purposes thus ensuring complete check, cleaning and maintenance routine is carried out each eight days.

One vehicle is constantly employed carting water.

This leaves a total of 6 vehicles available for drawing rations, ammunition, petrol oil lubricants, wire, ordnance or other engineer stores from DID or Brigade, as the case may be.

In addition 14 trailer loads of company stores are required to be lifted as each company moves (with an average turnaround time of $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours - not usually due to distance to be traversed, but owing to condition of tracks, coupled with congestion of road with other vehicles). 3" Mortars are usually in support, therefore, an additional 4 trailer loads must be catered for in most cases.

Thus it can be seen that if more than one company has to be moved on any one day and if expenditure of ammunition (particularly 3" Mortar) has been heavy, difficulty will be experienced in either.

- i shifting the company or companies
- ii replacing expenditure of ammunition, wire, petrol oil lubricants etc, or
- iii distributing rations to companies (daily maintenance).

Frequently other demands are made, ie urgent documents to Brigade, FLELO set-up to be moved, personnel transported to rest camp, signals despatch service, canteen supplies to be drawn from anything up to 20 miles to the rear.

Therefore, on occasions, particularly when Bn HQ (average 40 trailer loads) or B Echelon (60-80 trailer loads) is in transit, as many as 6 ASC vehicles have been employed.

Use can also be made of these vehicles to transport barbed wire from engineer dump to B Echelon as they report for duty. This wire has been found to be far more satisfactory than that air-dropped to DID.

It is considered that War Establishment should be amended to include a minimum of 12 trucks $\frac{1}{4}$ ton 4 x 4, with trailers.

(c) Method of employment

Below is set out a typical day's work:

- 0600 hours - maintenance carried out
- 0630 hours - 3 jeeps report to a company to move stores 3000 yards. (Trailers have been loaded with wire previous night to be dumped at old company site (if on main L of C) thus ensuring that trip from B Echelon to company is not wasted and saving movement of wire by special trip later. Drivers breakfast whilst stores are loaded at company.
- 0700 hours - 1 jeep outward mail and despatches to Brigade, water trailer is left with party to be filled at nearest creek en route. Remains on water duties for remainder of day, in course of which it performs signals despatch service duties and transports hot lunch to work parties etc.

- 0715 hours - 1 jeep required for use by Bn HQ. Staging personnel, ordnance stores etc are taken from B Echelon to Bn HQ or companies en route. Used by Commanding Officer and other duties. If possible it is returned to B Echelon in the afternoon for maintenance rations.
- 0730 hours - 2 jeeps commence ferrying 3" Mortar bombs from DID to forward battery position. 1 returns at 1300 hours for ration duties.
- 0745 hours - 1 jeep commences weekly maintenance and is grounded for day. May be worked until this time if necessary.
- 0830 hours - 1 of 3 jeeps shifting companies returns to B Echelon for drawing rations from DID and is thus employed until 1300 hours.
- 1300 hours - 5 jeeps are loaded with daily maintenance rations, range fuel, pioneer stores, ordnance stores etc, 1 trailer load to each company. Vehicles are now all employed until 1500 - 1600 hours, dependant on distance and condition of track to companies.
- 1500 hours - First jeep to return picks up postal sergeant, collects inward mail and trailer load of clothing from BOWO. Employed till 1630 hours.
- 1530 hours - two more ration jeeps return, back loaded with empty drums, hydra burners for repair, etc. 1 moves tank attack gun 3000 yards forward, the other goes to DID for two 44 gallon drums of petrol.
- 1545 hours - Fourth ration jeep returns - had been bogged several times on side track to flank company - takes out load of ARC mesh for use on same track.
- 1630 hours - Remaining ration jeep returns, had been intercepted by telephone and given the task of evacuating two wounded men from forward company to Medical Staging Post.
- 1830 hours - All vehicles in lines, daily maintenance is carried out on return.

Thus, the main principles to be observed are:

- i Never send an empty trailer when stores can be loaded to be transported even part of the way to their destination. Unless urgently required, jeeps can be held up to 15 minutes while load is arranged, thus saving a possible special 2 hour trip later.
- ii back loading should always be arranged until COMS's are "educated", when procedure will become automatic.
- iii The Transport Officer should be advised, where possible previous night, of requirements in order that programme can be drawn up thus obviating unnecessary running.
- iv Supervision is necessary to see that vehicles are NOT held up waiting for officers, documents being typed, etc, when other vehicles will be returning past that position later.

(d) Tow Ropes

Tow ropes should be included as items on vehicle outfit lists.

(e) Exhaust Pipes

These should be brought out over front bumper. Seven out of eight have been scraped off from normal position underneath chassis.

(f) Winch

A small hand winch attached to chassis could be employed with advantage on each jeep.

(g) Maintenance

90% of running is done over corduroyed tracks or axle deep in mud. In addition to normal maintenance a careful check must be made of the following:-

Tightness of all nuts and bolts
Leaks in radiator and petrol tank
Brake linings and mechanism. Oil seals.
Weakened or broken springs
Play in steering linkage
Weld lifting in pintle hooks
Efficiency of shock absorbers
Looseness developing in castellated nuts securing trailer draw bar.
Tyre pressures and condition.

(h) Points to Note

i Circuits

Where operations permit occupants of each locality should prepare, as early as possible, a jeepable track off the main L of C with turning circuit and bay for unloading. This greatly facilitated quick turnabout of vehicles.

ii Consolidation stores for an advance

Trailers to be loaded as advance commences in priorities as laid down by the Commanding Officer. Where possible load should include cooked hot meal. Pioneers should be available in the advance or on success to repair damage done to tracks by bombs, tanks etc and search track thoroughly for mines.

With this system it has normally been possible to have company in position at night complete with wire, reserve ammunition, supporting weapons, FELO outfit, 7 days reserve rations, packs and blankets.

Care should be taken that trailers used have pintle hook on rear (4 of this type in unit) in case track cannot be rendered jeepable, and in which case a tractor, bulldozer or if neither of these is available a tank can be used to get stores forward. (NB a 4 foot length of steel cable ($\frac{1}{2}$ ") with 'D' connection should be carried for attaching trailers to last named).

iii Bulldozer

Bulldozers should when possible be employed to cut tracks to companies off the main L of C, obviating use of natives. Track should be separate to that used by the tanks in the original advance.

iv Mines and Booby Traps

Types found during these operations have been mostly type 93, which, if detonated by a vehicle, has not caused more than minor damage (wheel, tyre and tube destroyed on three occasions). Mines may be sometimes located by yellow stain on ground caused by effect of rain on picric charge usually attached underneath.

v Overloading

A strong attitude must be taken by drivers to prevent personnel loading vehicles in excess of 8 cwt, and also if trailers are loaded to full capacity, to permit no passengers to ride on them.

vi Escorts

A minimum of one escort should travel with each vehicle at all times. (In this unit, provided from band). Some measure of protection is thus afforded to, and greatly lessens fatigue on, the driver, besides lowering time wasted in loading.

2. TRAILER TRAINS

(a) Method of employment

- i Trailer trains have been employed on many occasions, drawn behind tractors on loan from Artillery, bulldozers or tanks, and with marked success. Large quantities of stores have been moved quickly over long distances in this manner and wherever possible should be used in preference to the more limited native boy line. In the later stages of the campaign captured Japanese prime movers have also been employed with satisfactory results.
- ii Trains should only be used on rough and boggy tracks, difficult or impossible to traverse with jeeps. If only centre or last part of track from B Echelon to a company is bad stores should be loaded into pintel hook trailers and towed by jeep to rendezvous at commencement of bad patch, where train can be made up.
Where jeeps can get stores through but only with difficulty the train is a much quicker method.
- iii Escort-cum-loading party, trained in this work, can be of great assistance in cutting down turn-about time.
- iv On downhill grade trained escort will apply brakes on rear trailers which, experience has shown, will otherwise overrun train and probably overturn the lot.
- v If all companies are on one road it should be ensured that trailers are loaded one company to each trailer (preferably with code name marked on both trailer (chalk) and stores (paint)), and the stores of the first or closest company in the last trailer etc. so that each company's trailer can be dropped off, en route, from the rear of the train. Thus trailers can be unloaded and turned around by personnel of that company ready to be picked up on the return journey. This saves much otherwise wasted time and allows company time to collect and load empty drums, killed in action personnel's kit, etc, for back loading to B Echelon.

3. NATIVE BOY LINES

(a) Loads

- i Natives in this theatre are unwilling to carry heavier loads than 35 pounds and are reluctant and slow if heavier loading is insisted upon.

- ii Loads should always be made up prior to arrival of boy line - stock of sandbags to be on hand at all times for this purpose.
- iii Two boy loads (ammunition, hydra burners) should be prepared securely tied to a strong pole.
- iv Fresh rations (bread etc) should be packed in light boxes to avoid damage. This can be done at B Echelon before maintenance rations are delivered to company providing sufficient notice is given.
- v All reserve rations carried by companies should be made up into boyloads before delivery by B Echelon and carried at all times in that state.
- vi Ammunition should not be broken down but left in original waterproof boxes.

(b) Escort

Escort should not be formed out of "odds and sods". It should, at all times, be under command of an NCO who should receive certain definite instructions. An infantry section has normally been found sufficient to protect 30 natives. If the party comes under enemy fire the attitude of the escort will largely determine whether natives "go bush" or not. Escort should be quick to reassure natives if fire is not in immediate vicinity, or if it is not considered to be of enemy origin.

(c) Employment

Natives will carry more, and in a shorter time, if given a definite task (number of trips required etc), before commencement of the day's work.

In current operations enemy invariably shelled forward localities in afternoon and where possible, rations should be delivered to jeep head as early as can be arranged so that natives have finished or at least delivered their loads before the shelling occurs.

If natives are held in the Battalion area for stretcher bearing do not use them for general carrying duties. These natives are especially trained and can be called upon at any hour for stretcher bearing duties as opposed to natives from ANGAU compound who have set times of work and laid down rest days.

AMMUNITION REPORT

1. EXPENDITURE

During the campaign just completed the Battalion handled a considerable amount of ammunition of all types, not only for its own use but also for the tank squadron which operated with the unit. This necessitated a considerable amount of care both in handling and storage and only by this was the maximum effectiveness obtained.

The following is a summary of the ammunition expended by this unit, excluding tank ammunition.

.303 Bandolier	42275	
.303 Carton	27872	
.303 Belt	35550	
9 mm	55308	
PITA	16	
.380 Revolver	122	
2" Mortar HE	242	
2" Mortar Smoke	18	
3" Mortar HE	18008	(includes expenditure
3" Mortar Smoke	534	whilst attached to
		53/59 Aust Inf Bn (AIF)

Grenades Hand	2516
Grenades Rifle	320
WP 77	94
1" Illuminating	47
1" Sig Red	93
1" Sig Green	56
2 Pdr HE	90
2 Pdr AP	13.

2. STANDARD OF AMMUNITION

The general standard of the ammunition now being supplied is very good, this is mainly brought about by greater use of tropic proofing and possibly by a quicker turnover.

3. PACKING

The various packings of ammunition are generally most unsatisfactory as far as handling in jungle warfare is concerned and should be reviewed in the light of future operations, especially in the packing of 9mm and tank attack ammunition, these are too heavy for two boy loads.

4. STORAGE

The storage of ammunition has been generally satisfactory, frequent inspections of Battalion and company holdings have been made by Ammunition Examiners and not one adverse report has been submitted, this is very creditable as companies have had open cases which are very susceptible to tropical conditions and great care is needed in storage. It was found necessary, at times, when hostile artillery was very accurate to dig in the Battalion reserve, it was further found that with good drainage and ventilation the ammunition was not effected.

5. MAINTENANCE

The individual maintenance at first was very poor and **soldiers** did not seem to realise that it was due to their careless handling that failures occurred, these failures in some cases resulted in casualties. Greater attention is now being paid to this and very few failures occur, sub unit commanders must make it their business to see that the ammunition is efficiently maintained if their sub unit is to be fully effective.

6. SUPPLY

The supply has been very satisfactory as DID has been well forward and there has been a minimum of delay in getting ammunition, urgently required, forward, even when items were unobtainable at the Advance Ammunition Point they were expeditiously brought forward by air dropping and all requirements were fulfilled.

7. GENERAL

It has been found that in some instances the War Establishment is insufficient for this type of operation. This was most apparent with 3" Mortar Bombs as this close support weapon was used extensively and in one instance nearly 3000 rounds were fired in one day. MMG entitlements are also inadequate to withstand a series of strong attacks of long duration as are frequently staged by the enemy, a larger reserve is, therefore, needed.

24 AUST INF BN (AIF)

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART SEVEN

REPORT ON COMMUNICATIONS

1. Training at MAPEE

During the period at MAPEE the Battalion settled down to a period of re-organisation, re-equipping, re-inforcing and intensive training.

In accordance with the Commander's policy the Signal Platoon was to be brought up to strength and a 100% reserve of Signallers were to be trained to replace battle casualties.

This was effected by:-

- (a) 60% of the Platoon attending either First Aust Army or II Div Signal Schools.
- (b) Two unit cadres each of a fortnight's duration being conducted to train the reserve of Signallers
- (c) Use of Signallers as much as possible in Battalion Exercises and Signal Office procedure.

The signal equipment over this period was in bad condition and all efforts to obtain replacements met with little success. Cable was in short supply, telephones unreliable and wireless sets unprocurable.

When the Battalion embarked for an operational zone on 29 December 44, the standard of the Platoon was much higher than it had previously been, but the equipment was definitely very poor.

2. TOROKINA DEFENCE ROLE and FURTHER TRAINING

On taking over from the Americans in the PENDLETON Road area the Battalion was placed on 48 hours notice to take up a defensive locality in the event of any reported Japanese movement towards TOROKINA. For this purpose a communications network was prepared, which included L/T and W/T links from companies to Battalion and also an alternate V/T link from Companies to Brigade.

In the meantime the Battalion concentrated in the vicinity of PENDLETON Road and embarked on a further period of intensive training.

The communication set up within the Battalion was excellent as conditions were ideal for the establishing of a suitable Signal Office and the poling of all lines in the area.

With regard to training the same difficulties were encountered with bad equipment and lack of cable. The latter was partly overcome in Battalion Exercises by using signal lines laid by the Americans to the Battalion training area. The Americans co-operated fully in this regard.

Wireless sets were still unprocurable with the result that from October 44 until March 45 very little training with W/T was carried out within the Unit.

Also while in this area a further signal Cadre of a fortnight's duration was held to train the reserve of signallers and an operating school of a fortnight's duration was held by 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) Sig Sec.

The result of this period of training was invaluable as the greater part of it had been field work which enabled signallers to put in practice the theory taught at schools whilst at MAPEE.

3. OPERATIONAL ROLE TO 30 MAY

The period in the TOKO area was a period of further training for signallers. Although most patrols relied on runners for communications, a few L/T and W/T patrols were carried out, which gave signallers additional training under operational conditions.

At this stage equipment was improved a great deal.

In the period of heavy fighting which followed and continued until the end of May when the Battalion adopted a reserve role, the Signal Pl was called on to keep up a communications system which taxed the platoon to the utmost. The speed of the advance necessitated detailed and careful planning, organisation of stores, the laying of miles of cable and a great deal of strenuous work.

Casualties were suffered and the platoon was reinforced from the reserve pool of signallers which had been trained in the preparation period.

Lessons learnt from this operation were many and are enumerated as follows:-

- i The necessity for alternate communications was emphasised owing to the number of times our lines were cut by the enemy and blown up by Artillery and Mortar fire.
- ii The use of L/T on long range patrols into enemy territory is considered unreliable and in some cases unwise as it was often cut by the Japanese and also gave them a means of locating our positions.
- iii The type of earth in Southern Bougainville provides excellent earth return circuits especially if the earths are carefully made. A suitable earth used was an unvarnished condensed milk tin filled with wet salt and buried 18 inches to 2 feet in the ground.
- iv Lateral and alternate lines must be laid through the jungle well off all tracks.
- v W/T communications are not suitable on short patrols owing to the difficulty of erecting aerials in thick jungle and in close proximity to the enemy.
- vi The best method when using W/T is to locate the enemy then move to a flank where a patrol base can be established and time spent in erecting an aerial, Artillery concentrations can then be brought down where required.
- vii The UC 10 Line switchboard proved more reliable than the 10 Line Magneto switchboard. It was more effective and less liable to break down.

4. RESERVE ROLE, 1 JUNE to 7 JULY 45

In this role when the Battalion was responsible for the flank protection of the Brigade and Companies were much more scattered, the communications within the Battalion became more difficult to maintain owing to the lengths of cable which had to be laid. W/T was used more extensively than previously as alternate communications to companies. When C Coy moved to the KATSUWA Area communications were maintained for 15 days entirely by W/T.

In the outflanking move to the MIVO River the Battalion had to rely on native boy lines for supplies and so signal equipment had to be cut down to a minimum. This called for careful organisation and planning as regards supplies of cable and other stores.

Many long range patrols were operating over this period using W/T communications, which proved reliable when bases were set up from which the patrol operated.

Pigeons were also used on a few of these patrols and when required, were a satisfactory means of relaying information.

In addition to lessons already learnt in the earlier phases of the operation, points of value were gleaned from this later phase.

- i Once again the importance of alternate communications.
- ii The need for Signal personnel to be attached to engineer bulldozer teams, to ensure that signal cables are not damaged.
- iii In good conditions wireless sets 208 mk II can be used at night. In one instance a link was kept open from KATSUWA to MUSAKAKA for 18 hours a day.
- iv Fullerphone links to companies speed up the supply of information both to and from companies and facilitate the passing of messages over long distances when telephone communications are difficult.
- v Essential signal equipment can be cut down much more than is originally planned at the beginning of an operation.
- vi The signal reserve of personnel must be maintained at all costs, which is verified by the fact that ten rifle company men who are now members of the Signal platoon, were brought into the platoon within six weeks of the commencement of operations.
- vii The R/T code No 2, at present in use, is out of date and needs revising in keeping with jungle warfare.
- viii The importance of constant maintenance in the field of all signal equipment, especially wireless sets, which can easily become unserviceable under damp conditions. All ranks have learnt the lesson that signal equipment will NOT function efficiently unless this constant maintenance is kept up.

5. EQUIPMENT

(a) Telephones

- i "L" Phones gave excellent performances under all conditions.
- ii "DV" Telephones were unreliable owing to the fact that they had been in constant use for over two years, and their condition at the present time is exceptionally poor.
- iii American Type Phones were very reliable and gave good service.

It is considered that the War Establishment for Telephones for an Infantry Battalion, which is 12 L type phones is totally inadequate to meet operational requirements.

The supply of an adequate number of reliable phones will ensure that the Battalion's organisation will function more smoothly and will be more efficient as a fighting force.

(b) Fullerphones

Fullerphones gave satisfactory service except for minor defects which were easily rectified.

(c) Switchboards

- i UC 10 Line proved the more reliable type, especially owing to the shortage of generator telephones.
- ii Magneto 10 Line is quite a good switchboard but the units are more effected by electrical disturbances than the UC units and are, therefore, more liable to breakdown.
- iii Accessories - Cords and plugs were in short supply and required constant maintenance.

(d) Cable

- i B III Single - A total of 120 miles was laid by the Signal Platoon and the cable was of good quality.
- ii Assault Cable - This was used mainly by the Mortar Platoon and was found quite effective for short periods, but it quickly deteriorated when used for too long.

(e) Wireless Sets

- i No 11 Set - A set of this type was at all times attached to Bn HQ and provided a reliable alternate means of communication to Brigade.
- ii Wireless Set 203 Mk II - These sets performed excellently under trying conditions and appear to be the best set yet produced for infantry work. The main fault was the dampness, which effected the interior of the sets. This was rectified by drying the sets out in the sun or in an oven whenever possible.

Considering equipment as a whole, the performances were quite up to expectations and most equipment has improved considerably since the Battalion left the Mainland.

6. SUPPLY

There was a heavy demand on expendable stores, but the supply of these stores from B Echelon and 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) Sig Sec was always kept up to the Battalion.

The supply of cable was excellent. It was for the most part new cable but even when reclaimed cable had to be used it was found to be satisfactory. Cable requests were always fulfilled by 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) without delay.

7. TRAFFIC

The average number of groups passed daily was between 7000 and 8000, 5000 of which were passed between Battalion and Brigade and the remainder within the Battalion.

The following methods were employed for the passing of traffic:-

- (a) Telephone - All NON SECRET traffic forward to companies was passed by this means when L/T communications were available.
- (b) Fullerphone - All traffic to Brigade was passed by fullerphone. Lengthy messages to companies and messages classified CONFIDENTIAL or higher were passed to companies by this means.
- (c) W/T - Traffic of any classification was only passed by wireless when L/T communications were out and then ALL messages were passed in R/T or Tren code.

(d) **Runner** - Messages sent by runner were normal administration messages and confirmation of messages already passed by some other means. Runners were also used for URGENT despatches when communications were cut.

8. SIGNAL OFFICE WORKING

(a) Exterior

The number of lines accommodated was approximately 20, connected to one UC 10 Line switchboard and one magneto 10 line switchboard.

A line Corporal was always on duty to carry out repairs on lines outside the Signal Office.

Early in the operation boxes terminal were used but these were found unwieldy and unnecessary. The system instituted in place of this was a framework on to which all lines were connected from thence direct to the Frames D and P. The earths were run out with the metallic to a cross arm approximately 15 yards from the Signals Office where they were dispersed to reduce induction to a minimum. All lines were labelled on the framework which was also the test point. (see Appendix 'A')

(b) Interior

It was found that a staff of four, including the Signals Superintendent, was sufficient to maintain the Signals Office at most times.

An NCO was on duty as Signals Superintendent for 24 hours a day. This is considered most essential to maintain maximum efficiency and supervision.

All the necessary Signal Records were kept up to date and the Signal Superintendent for the day was responsible for checking the records and filing them for the requisite 72 hours.

9. SIGNAL SECURITY

The importance of Signal Security at all times was impressed upon the Signal Platoon and was carried out to the full.

R/T and map reference codes were always employed where necessary and at NO time were messages passed in clear over line or wireless without the approval of the Signals Superintendent or Signal Officer.

The value of Signal Security was brought out on one occasion when the Japanese jammed a wireless link working between C Coy and Dn HQ which proved that the enemy do employ wireless listening posts to catch the unsecurity minded.

Wireless code names, code words and frequencies were changed daily at 0200L. This was religiously adhered to.

On the whole the Signal Platoon was very security minded and this was kept so by the strict supervision of the Signal Officer and NCOs.

10. CO-OPERATION

(a) Within the Brigade

The liaison between Brigade and Battalion Signal Officers was most gratifying throughout. This close co-operation resulted in the conservation of cable, equipment and valuable time of signallers and was instrumental in speeding up and maintaining communications.

(b) Between all Arms

Co-operation between infantry, artillery, armoured and engineer units was also pleasing.

In operations the communications of all arms were dovetailed to supply maximum service to everyone. On occasions artillery personnel were forced to rely on infantry signals for communications and vice versa and often both infantry and artillery were dependant on the tanks No 19 Set for a channel of communications.

It is vital also that engineer detachments co-operate with signallers. Heavy engineer equipment can cause untold damage to signal lines, but the engineers co-operated fully in this respect, although at times the damaging of cable by bull dozer was unavoidable.

11. PERSONNEL

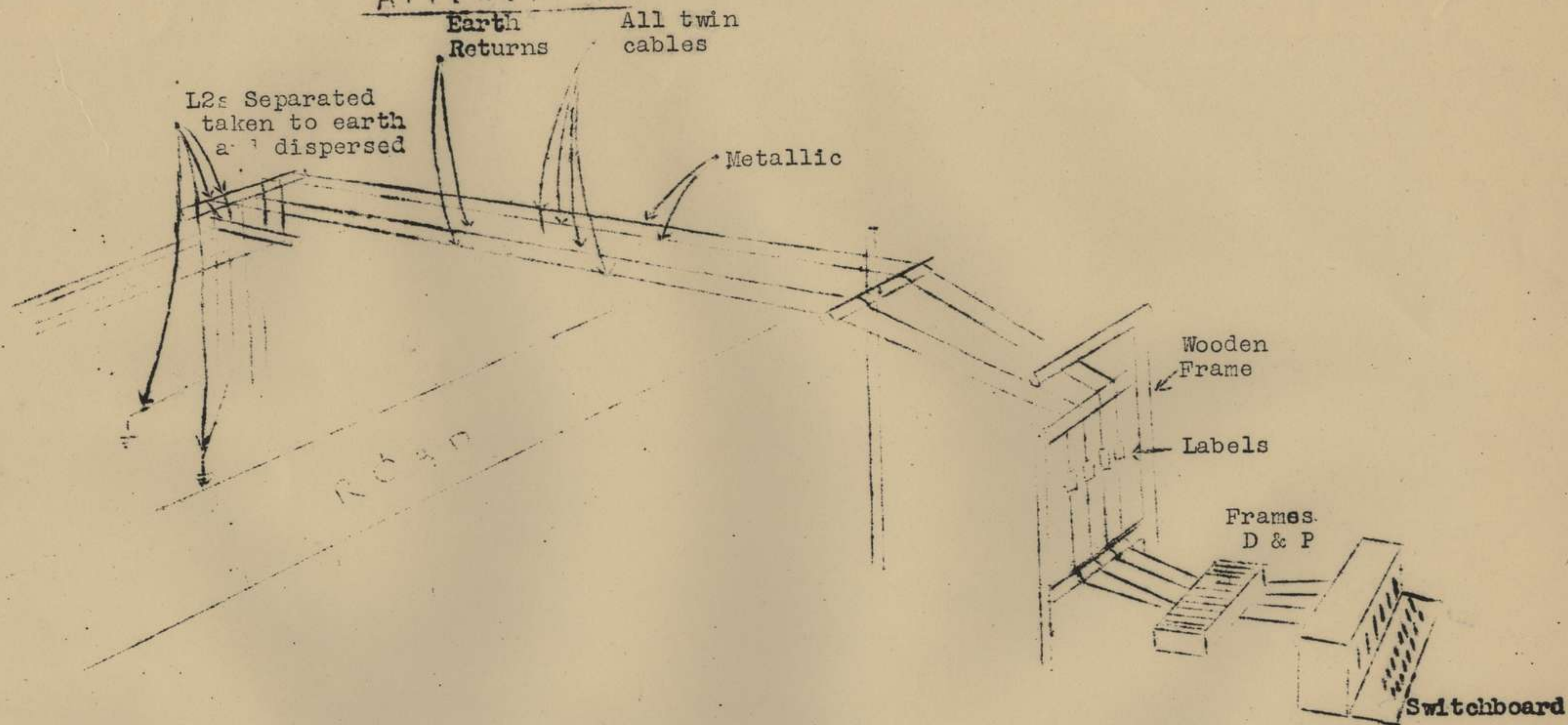
(a) The strain placed on signal personnel in this operation was particularly severe not so much from a physical viewpoint as from a mental viewpoint. The responsibility of maintaining communications under trying and difficult conditions is a heavy one, but the platoon responded creditably and worked as a team throughout.

(b) In several instances signal personnel attached to companies and patrols displayed loyal devotion to duty in maintaining communications under fire and were worthy of special mention.

(c) Owing to the Battle Casualties sustained a number of reinforcements were brought into the platoon and although not experienced signallers carried out any duty allotted them to the best of their ability.

(d) Many mistakes were made, many lessons learnt and much valuable experience gained by all signallers. The platoon has carried out its duties to the utmost and are ready to apply the lessons learnt in any operation which may eventuate in the near future.

APPENDIX 'A'



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24 AUST INF BN (AIF)

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART THREE

REPORT ON MEDICAL SERVICES

1. BATTLE CASUALTIES

Battle casualties for the period were:

<u>24 Aust Inf Bn (AIF)</u>		<u>Attached Troops</u>	
Killed in Action	32	Killed in Action	13
Med of Wounds	6	Wounded in Action	16
Wounded	142		
Totals	180		29

Head wounds comprised 8% of the total wounded.

2. USE OF HUMAN PLASMA INFUSIONS

There was limited scope only for the use of plasma, it was used on two occasions only. Both were cases of severe shock.

In other cases of shock it was found that rest and hot drinks, etc, was all that was required to resuscitate the patient.

The mistake was made early of not holding patients long enough in the RAP. This was rectified later, when the wounded were able to withstand better the usually rough trip to hospital. (This, of course, does not apply to head and abdominal cases.)

3. LINE OF EVACUATION

The ADS was usually at least 5000 yards behind the RAP, sometimes much more. It is considered that the ADS was too far behind as the tracks were particularly rough, and badly wounded cases suffered greatly by the long journey,

4. USE OF AMBULANCE JEEPS

Although very handy ambulance jeeps have a very limited role.

They should be used only for "walking wounded" and minor leg wounds, in other words for relatively minor casualties. All seriously wounded travelled better by native carriers. This was because the jeep tracks were either corduroyed or very muddy, in either case the patient having a very rough ride no matter how careful the driver was.

Notwithstanding this the ambulance jeeps did a marvellous job and are due for a lot of praise. The drivers did everything that was asked of them.

5. NATIVE STRETCHER BEARERS

Native bearers were invaluable. They carried under all conditions, day or night. They are faster than jeeps on corduroy and give a smoother ride.

Where moderately heavy casualties were expected at least 32 bearers plus 1 boss boy were attached. At the beginning of the campaign these natives were held at ANCAU, arriving at the Battalion each morning. This was impractical as casualties often occurred late in the afternoon and reached the RAP at night. The natives were then permanently attached and held at Bn HQ.

Where possible, some natives were attached to the second forward company, in order to save time in reaching casualties.

6. STRETCHERS

The canvas tops of cots folding, with long poles along the sides, made excellent stretchers for native bearers. The poles should be at least three feet longer than the canvas. The Field Ambulance usually has to be prompted to return these canvas tops.

7. MEDICAL STORES AND COMFORTS

These were more than adequate throughout the operation and the Field Ambulances are to be commended for their promptness in sending supplies forward.

The bondwood boxes originally used for carrying mixtures deteriorated rapidly and had to be discarded. An excellent substitute was found to be steel 25 pdr shell boxes. They are relatively light, waterproof, and can carry as much as the bondwood. In addition they are more easily carried by native boyline, being a comfortable one boy load.

Previously shell dressings had been carried in sugar drums, which, though waterproof, are not as good as the shell boxes.

U S .5 calibre machine gun bullet boxes were also used to advantage. A stretcher bearer kit can be packed into them nicely and they are completely waterproof, having a rubber seal under the lid.

8. THE LARGE GROUND SHEET

For the battle RAP the 12 ft by 12 ft rubber ground sheet was excellent for overhead cover. It was used in the form of a tightly laced lean-to, the lower border being about 6 ft from the ground and the higher border about 7 ft.

It is much lighter than a fly or tent and during moves can be used to keep blankets dry.

9. PRESSURE LAMPS

These were never used, though available, as a tent cannot be blacked out sufficiently when they are used.

10. SICKNESS EVACUATIONS

P U O	45
U R T I	9
Diarrhoea or Dysentery	10
Skin Diseases	30
Accidents	11
Others	40
Battle Casualties ("remaining on duty" wounds becoming infected)	4
	<hr/> 149 <hr/>

11. PREVENTABLE DISEASES

(a) Malaria

For the period, there were 17 cases of malaria;

B T	4
M T	13
Total	<hr/> 17 <hr/>

Two of the BTs occurred in men who had had more than four attacks previously.

The large proportion of MI shows clearly that some men were not taking their atabrin regularly. As Atabrin roll books were fully marked up this means that the personnel concerned in some cases deliberately refrained from swallowing the tablets.

Most of these cases occurred at one period soon after completion of the attack on the HONGORAI - POROREI Rivers.

(b) Diarrhoea and Dysentery

Ten isolated cases of dysentery over a period of 14 weeks shows the excellent state of the unit hygiene and education.

(c) Dengue

No cases of dengue occurred.

(d) Scrub Typhus

No case of scrub typhus occurred.

(e) Skin Diseases

Evacuations 30

Throughout the period about 20% of the Battalion suffered from some sort of skin disease. This proportion was fairly constant and serious cases were usually kept under control within the unit.

Feet were the main disability. When troops were compelled to wear the same wet boots and socks for days on end they were very prone to skin maceration between the toes and on the top of the feet. *Tinea circinata* and an eczematous condition were fairly common on the dorsum of the foot.

Rigid inspections and control of treatment by platoon commanders and stretcher bearers was the only solution to the effective checking of skin diseases.

12. MAN MANAGEMENT

In all these preventable diseases man management is the greatest single factor in keeping them down to a minimum. By experience it was found that the men did not always studiously perform even the simplest acts to safeguard their health.

13. PHYSICAL FITNESS

Throughout the Battalion fought under very hard conditions. Although at times individual platoons and companies were almost exhausted, a few days' rest was all that was needed to bring them up again to fighting fitness. The men stood up to the hardships extremely well, though a few showed signs of mental weariness towards the end of the period.

24 AUST INF BN (AIF)

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART NINE

LESSONS FROM OPERATIONS

1. INTRODUCTION

Included in this report are the main lessons which were learnt in the embarkation from the Mainland and in the preparatory training stages for these are considered an integral part of the campaign.

The lessons learnt in the actual operation are, in many cases, a repetition of the ones learnt in training, but now it is more solidly impressed and full benefit is being derived from them. These lessons are numerous so only the salient ones will be tabulated below.

The SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE campaign was conducted along the axis of the BUIN Road which follows reasonably flat country broken by a series of waterways. In the role of NORTH flank protection in the COMMANDO Road sector the terrain is much more rugged. In view of the major portion having been conducted along the former the lessons will be considered for that type of terrain.

2. SAWMILL

Prior to embarkation the unit from funds acquired a small saw bench operated by an old car engine. This was found a definite asset especially in the making of crates both for embarkation and in the later stages movement by road, and to aid in the construction of camp sites so as the maximum comforts could be made available.

As this is not on the War Establishment of Infantry Battalions this unit considers one should be included.

3. GRATING and LOADING STORES

This is an all important subject which has been given considerable thought, the following are the main points noted:

- (a) All stores, each in their class, to be solidly crated so as to prevent breakages in transit.
- (b) Segregation of stores into priorities and echelons so as the essential stores are made readily available as required.
- (c) The marking of crates with serial numbers and preparation of loading tables with complete inventory of stores so as checking is facilitated and if need be lost stores traced.
- (d) Standard sizes for crates to make loading easy.
- (e) Carefully selected responsible personnel for liaison duties with movement control personnel so as to ensure the maximum co-operation of the loading and despatch of stores, the safe transit and loading in categories.

4. CAMP SITES

The necessity for prior planning, siting and preparation for occupying the proposed camp site in training, in rest periods and during operations was well brought out. The major lessons were:

(a) Organisation of the work so it can be done speedily and so valuable time is not wasted, thus allowing training to be commenced almost immediately.

(b) The laying out of a model camp with the maximum amount of comfort, sporting facilities and amenities so as to provide the necessary relaxation between work periods.

(c) Strict supervision of the hygiene to protect the health of all.

5. PREPARATIONS FOR OPERATIONS

For operations the battalion's stores were organised into three echelons, namely:

(a) F1 Echelon - what can be carried on the man and with a limited amount of native carriers.

(b) F2 Echelon - what can be carried with aid of transport.

(c) B Echelon - secondary stores which are not an immediate necessity.

Staff tables were prepared accordingly, so as to be prepared for any situation in any move which had to be made.

This prior preparation proved valuable in the later operations when moves could be made more speedily.

6. PATROLLING

In keeping with the 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) policy vigorous patrolling was a feature of the campaign. A protective screen was at all times kept around the defensive locality in addition to specially ordered patrols.

In the period 13 April to 7 July 412 specially ordered patrols were done, this number excludes normal contact and security patrols.

These patrols operated far into the enemy rear and L of C so that deductions could be made as to his intentions and the necessary vital information gained for future operations.

Prior to an attack a series of patrols thoroughly combed the area hitting the enemy and ascertaining his strengths and dispositions.

Many patrols were accompanied by an Artillery Forward **Observation** Officer who accurately registered targets so that air **strikes** and heavier concentrations of artillery and mortars could be directed at them.

The patrolling in the latter stages was of a much higher standard, proving that valuable lessons had been learnt and appreciated. These lessons are many so only the most important will be dealt with in this report.

(a) Briefing and Interrogation

The importance of the complete briefing of the patrol commander and his patrol cannot be over emphasised. His tasks must be absolutely clear in his mind and to ensure his confidence all the relevant information known about the enemy must be given to him.

Where possible the Commanding Officer with the assistance of the Intelligence Officer should brief all patrols. Further it is desired that the person who briefs the patrol also interrogates the commander so as to ensure that all the full detail is extracted and the questions required to be answered are answered fully.

It was also found that best results were obtained by the patrol commander holding a conference with members of the patrol prior to interrogation so as to ensure that none of the vital information or detail was missed.

Where possible the briefing pro forma as laid down by 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) was used.

As existing maps were found most inaccurate air photos were of good assistance and allowed a much clearer brief to be given.

(b) Navigation

Each patrol detailed a party who were responsible for navigation. One man did the compass work while two others paced.

All personnel were previously checked over different types of ground to ensure that all were familiar with their estimated yardage.

The course was followed on the sketch given and at all times the commander should have known where he was.

The importance of navigation being thoroughly practised prior to, and during rest periods of, an operation cannot be stressed too much.

(c) Reports

All the detail seen no matter how trivial must be carefully logged in relation to bearings and paces so that it can be pinpointed on the map.

The following procedure was adopted on the patrols return. The commander held a conference with all members of the patrol, ascertaining that no detail was omitted. Then he reported for interrogation. All the detail including the important topographical information as a SITREP. The following day a complete report as per 15 Aust Inf Bde (AIF) Pro forma with annotated sketch was submitted to HQ.

(d) Malaria Precautions

On the patrols return they were always interrogated as to the malaria precautions taken. It is essential that a check is always made to see that all precautions are carried out and leave no loophole as to a casualty being caused through sickness.

In the patrol report a paragraph to state these precautions had been taken or not been taken with an explanation why, was always included.

(e) Duration

All patrols went out prepared to stay one day longer than the duration as laid down. eg In the case of 3 days, they were prepared for 4 days.

This enabled patrols to complete their task if the allotted time was insufficient.

(f) Communication

Where possible with long range patrols either W/T or L/T communication was provided.

With an Artillery Forward Observation Officer attached to the patrol he carried W/T and the patrol also took W/T. This gave an alternate link ensuring communication.

With L/T the line was invariably cut and is only considered of good value in short distance patrols.

(g) Scouting

The forward scout was abolished and with it the complex. In place the patrol moved on a broad front in groups. In this formation the patrol could engage or could outflank the enemy more quickly and easily.

(h) Distinct Orders

The premeditated plan and issuing of clear orders to the patrol is of utmost importance and will save lives, prevent panic and disorganisation. Each member of the patrol must be certain of the plan on making contact and of the withdrawal.

(j) Safeguarding of Equipment

All ranks must know that at all times the responsibility is theirs to safeguard equipment and stores on issue to them.

In the event of a surprise attack by a force of superior numbers and a withdrawal made necessary he must ensure that he gets his weapons and equipment out with him. In the event of not being able to retrieve the equipment it should be damaged and rendered unserviceable.

(k) Strengths

With reconnaissance patrols it was found that small strengths achieved the best results.

It is desirable if the best is to be obtained that a complete sub unit be employed on the patrol, under its normal commander. Each commander knows the men he commands and their capabilities.

(m) Extricating Wounded

Men must not dash madly in to drag out their wounded comrades. Their extrication must be made tactically by using covering fire to support their actions. Unless this is observed needless casualties will result.

(n) Time Factor

Ensure that sufficient time is allotted to do the task in hand, then the patrol commander must make certain that his time is used properly.

It has been found that in the past patrols move slowly and tactically on their way out and on their route in they move quickly with less precaution, inviting casualties. It is a good lesson that the patrol moves just as carefully on the route in and on the route out, remembering that they are still in the enemy's territory.

(o) Contact Patrols

Continual contact patrols were maintained inter unit, this proved its value in clearing the Ls of C. These commenced at first light and were kept up throughout the day, preceding all movement of transport and carrier lines so as ambushing of unsuspecting personnel was avoided.

(p) Security Patrols

A screen of security patrols were at all times kept forward of the locality to give warning and protection to the force. As they are called the eyes and ears of the commander, so it was proven,

(g) Armoured Patrols

Armoured patrols consisting of:

One Platoon of Infantry

2 Tanks

1 Bulldozer

Engineer Section

Bomb Disposal Section

were used to good effect throughout the campaign.

The tasks on which they were employed were as follows.

- i To regain contact with the enemy once an objective was gained.
- ii To clear the L of C after the enemy was encircled.
- iii To stage diversionary attacks on the enemy's flanks to camouflage our real intentions.

With the specialist personnel attached it was possible to de-louse booby traps and mines, also to clear the route of obstacles.

7. THE ADVANCE

As advances were frequent in the operation many valuable lessons were learnt and all benefitted from them. The advances made can be classed into two categories:-

- (a) the unopposed advance
- (b) the opposed advance.

The type of advance that was to be made was determined by ~~const-~~ and preliminary patrolling which reconnoitres for enemy positions, if any, his strengths etc. Then the advance suitable to the situation was planned.

(a) The unopposed advance

With the unopposed advance the best method adopted was for portion of the force (eg. in the case of a company, one platoon) to advance, lightly clad with armoured support and Artillery Forward Observation Officer and seize the objective. Immediately on capture to despatch a protective screen of patrols to give security to the occupation by the main body. Next the main body with all their effects followed by their transport advanced and under protection of the seizing elements occupied and developed the objective.

(b) The opposed advance

It having been ascertained by patrolling that the entrenched enemy occupied the objective or was in the line of advance, the whole force simultaneously, in battle order, and if warranted under air and artillery support, advanced clearing the enemy en route and occupied the objective.

Further lessons common to both categories are:

- (a) The advance carried out on a broad front, as in the case of a battalion a two company front, was found best. This enabled any enemy opposition to be quickly encircled also scouted a wide area ensuring the terrain cleared.
- (b) The inclusion of bomb disposal personnel with the forward elements so that the road can be cleared of any existing mines and booby traps.
- (c) The full use of all available support so that the advance is assisted to the maximum.
- (d) Taking full advantage of the close support and as it were "leaning" on the creeping barrage.

8. THE ATTACK

The need for extensive reconnaissance patrols to gain all the relevant information of the enemy dispositions, strengths etc, and topographical data so as the commander can make his appreciation and plan.

In the forming of a plan direct liaison between commander and representatives of supporting arms, so that the time and space factor is fully appreciated, is all important.

The issue of comprehensive orders to all concerned so that it is absolutely certain that all are clear of their tasks. These orders should be issued so that sufficient time is allowed for re-issue to subordinates and the very important point of allowing subordinates to lecture their men and so place EVERY man in the "picture".

9. THE DEFENCE

Many mistakes were made in this subject in the earlier stages but these brought out important lessons which paid dividends towards the end.

Dispersion of the force is just as necessary in jungle warfare as in the open, as artillery fire will penetrate the overhead foliage and cause casualties if forces are congested.

To allow this dispersion of force it is necessary that the jungle is thinned of the undergrowth in the position itself while the area forward of the forward defensive lines is cleared as far as 40 yards forward of the wire. This allows vision and with it permits the covering of a much larger area. "Cover the ground by fire not by men" explains it.

The unit of defence is the Company. The platoons within the company having a complete all round defensive locality with the normal reserve. These platoon localities in turn being mutually supporting and so the company defence is solid.

The use of protective wiring has been fully appreciated by all, it holds the enemy charges in the killing ground allowing his destruction. As time and wire permits always improve the entanglements attaching a series of tins and rattles to give warning during hours of darkness.

The correct employment of infantry support weapons. The siting of MMG to enfilade the forward defensive lines affording the maximum killing effect. Tasks detailed for the 3" Mortar, 2" mortar and EY rifle. In addition by liaison with attached Artillery Forward Observation Officer an artillery defensive fire programme can be registered.

The full use of mortar and artillery support to prevent the enemy withdrawing, after being repulsed in the attack, from the killing ground, so that he can be annihilated.

Kunda vine rails within the position as a means of intercommunication and to assist movement by night were used to good effect. Phosphorescent branches set up as arrows indicating directions to facilitate change of sentries and reliefs.

Listening posts were established 25 yards forward of the cleared area to give warning of the approach of the enemy.

Clearing patrols despatched first light with the task of patrolling the area forward of the protective wire to ascertain whether it is clear of enemy parties who are waiting an opportunity target. These were used extensively.

Wells dug within the locality to provide the water supply or as an alternative source.

The holding of fire with automatic weapons until their maximum effect can be obtained during the enemy attack was well brought out. This conceals the presence of the weapon and does not allow the enemy to reconsider his plan of attack.

On repulsing the attack a counter attack force to follow up the advantage by pressing his disorganised forces and so further the killing.

Hygiene in the locality must be only of the highest standard. Laxity of this subject is the chief cause of sickness, which means wastage of fighting power.

Man management must be fully exercised ensuring the good health of all and the best comforts available. If this is not practised it is detrimental to the morale.

Attached troops must be fully acquainted with the procedure inside a defensive locality, such as challenging, giving of passwords, NOT moving unnecessarily inside the locality between "stand to" and stand down".

Casualties have been caused by men running for shelters when a hostile shell is heard whistling overhead. The troops must realise that large trees, slight depressions in the ground and even flat ground are safer than running. The time to make for shelters is after the shrapnel has stopped flying and before the next shell lands.

10. THE CONSOLIDATION

The necessity for quick re-organisation then the organisation of works, so that the defensive locality can be speedily developed, cannot be over emphasised.

A series of security patrols must be immediately despatched to gain the topography and enemy information. From this information it may be considered that ambushes on well used tracks or likely positions in the area should be established. Also to ascertain the enemy has not an Artillery Observation Post in the area.

It is vital for each and every man to know his task and immediately attend to it.

11. TANK CO-OPERATION

Very effective use was made of tanks in the campaign, this arising out of good co-operation. Some of the major points brought out were:

- (a) A bulldozer team, engineer section and Bomb Disposal personnel should move as a component part of the armoured force. The dozer is required to assist the tanks forward by clearing obstacles and bridging streams. In the case of a movement through jungle it is required to precede the advance forming a track as it goes. Specially trained Bomb Disposal personnel are necessary in the movement along a road to clear and de-louse mines or booby traps encountered.
- (b) It is necessary to carry out tests in different types of jungle over a measured distance of say 100 yards, 200 yards, 300 yards, with tanks and Infantry so that when an advance is planned the Commander has a good knowledge of just how long it takes his troops to advance 100 yards thereby planning his fire support programme so that the maximum benefit is derived from it.
- (c) Do not allow troops to become tank minded.

- (d) Close liaison and a complete understanding between tank and infantry officer is necessary.
- (e) Use tanks wireless as an alternative means of communication as it allows quick decisions to be made in an emergency.
- (f) Use the fire power of the tank to full effect but do not waste it.
- (g) A thorough study of the tanks, their capabilities and limitations should be made by all ranks.
- (h) The tank in defence is a very powerful weapon but must be closely protected from enemy infiltrating parties.
- (j) Tanks in defence should always be camouflaged completely, otherwise enemy Observation Posts have a fine ranging point and target with sometimes devastating results.
- (k) If in the advance to an objective a tank or tanks become bogged down do not let them hold up the advance, throw a protective screen of two sections from the reserve platoon around tank and continue with the advance. Tanks can always move faster than infantry and so catch up with the advancing troops once they are extricated.

12. MORTARS

(a) Organisation in the Advance

In the initial stages one mortar detachment was under command each rifle company and one battery (4 detachments) were maintained at Bn HQ on call for support to companies as required. In this organisation the detachments with companies advanced as portion of Coy HQ whilst the mortar and limited quantity of ammunition was carried on the reserve tank. It was found that due to the close distance on contact with the enemy that the detachment under command could not support and in all cases support from the reserve battery was called for.

In view of the above restrictions the platoon was re-organised as follows. In the advance the company was accompanied by Mortar Forward Observation Officer who laid his own L/T cable from the mortar command post. At least one section (2 detachments) of mortars, and in most cases one battery were maintained in a reserve area on call as required. At Battalion HQ a command post consisting of the platoon commander, platoon sergeant, recorder and orderly was established to co-ordinate and control the fire. This central link relieved the Forward Observation Officer of the computations of corrections and fire orders as they were done by the platoon commander, this was found an asset as due to the conditions on contact it was extremely difficult for the Forward Observation Officer to record ranges and apply the necessary corrections to give a fire order. The Forward Observation Officer was only required to give yardage corrections plus a minus left or right then the corrections were converted to fire orders at the command post. This procedure proved most satisfactory, allowing fire support to be brought down in the minimum time and so expedited the advance, also co-ordination of all detachments was possible to be employed so as the maximum support could be given.

On capture of objective one section of mortars was sent forward under command of the company.

(b) Mutual Support

While the detachments under command of companies could not support themselves it was possible by co-ordination through command post to mutually support one another.

(c) Defensive Fire Tasks

Wherever possible defensive fire tasks were registered on all companies. A minimum of 30 bombs was prepared for each mortar and when called for fire was brought down not later than one minute and has been in 30 seconds.

(d) Recording of Targets

A complete register of all targets and defensive fire tasks under code names was maintained in command post. This facilitated quick support also rapid engagement of targets in vicinity of registered points.

(e) Registration by Auster Aircraft

Registration of targets and engagement of known enemy positions by mortar fire in conjunction with observations by Auster Aircraft was carried out with good results.

A distinct advantage of this method is that numerous targets over a wide area can be registered in a minimum of time. As against this this has to be done by ground observation necessitating a series of patrols using L/T and W/T. The former calling for miles of cable to be used.

Method of ranging used was by pilot making observations and yardage corrections. He then passed these per W/T, ground station using No 11 set, direct to command post where necessary computations and conversion were effected.

(f) Indication of Targets for Aircraft

Previously registered targets were indicated by mortar smoke for air strikes. This obtained complete accuracy of strike.

Close co-ordination of time and the necessary preparation is absolutely essential. The best results, according to pilots, were obtained by smoking targets immediately Aircraft appeared thus allowing them to run straight onto the target without circling. The other method was not to smoke the target until called for per W/T by the Aircraft Commander, this necessitated the Aircraft circling the target awaiting indication thus giving prior warning of the strike to the enemy.

In all cases the smoke was reported by the Aircraft to be most accurate, a better smoke due to pillar than Artillery and of good assistance to bombing.

(g) Ammunition

3" Mortar High Explosives has proved on all occasions to be extremely accurate and in some cases Forward Observation Officers have laid down concentrations a distance of only 40 yards forward of their Observation Post.

Smoke bombs at first were found to be very inaccurate and erratic, this was found to be due to the unreliability of NCY charges. As a result all NCY charges were replaced by 88 grain cordite augmenting charges after which good accuracy was obtained.

(h) Intelligence Personnel

It is considered that to function best the platoon should include one man thoroughly trained in intelligence duties in addition to normal mortar work.

He should be on platoon HQ and due to his advanced knowledge of map reading and general intelligence duties perform the following:

- i Maintain situation map
- ii Assist logging of targets registered
- iii By photo interpretation pinpoint targets and find opening bearings and ranges.
- iv Assist in the manning of the command post.

Also two men with additional training in general signal duties and R/T procedure. It has been learned in this operation that firstly the trained R/T operator is required so as co-operation is best between the platoon and Aircraft in registration shoots and in indication of targets for air strikes. Also maintenance of signal equipment, which is a necessary part of the platoon, is considerable and the lack of specialist personnel for the task is felt.

(j) Signal Equipment.

Resulting from the campaign it is suggested that the platoon War Establishment of head and breast set sound powered phones be replaced by standard DV type. Reasons are:

- i The former have no calling device which required that one person man the phone at all times on each end, this overtaxes the platoon. A strict listen out must be kept in order that requests for defensive fire etc are fulfilled.
- ii Over a distance of greater than 1000 yards reception is very poor.

13. MMG

(a) Allotment of Guns.

The policy was adopted of having one sub section MMG with each foremost company and one sub section in reserve at Battalion HQ. In addition where a company on a flank protection role did not have tank support one section of guns were allotted.

Due to the small amount of automatic weapons on Bn HQ the sub section in reserve played a primary role. It was found that one section of guns was necessary at Bn HQ to give greater protection.

(b) Employment

i Advance

In the advance, with a forward company, a sub section's tactical value is restricted due to the lack of mobility.

It is considered that a lesson well learnt is that the gun section moves with company HQ so if the occasion rises the gun can hastily be deployed.

ii Attack

An example of use is supporting the attack, the accuracy of the weapon and the fire power of the platoon was well demonstrated at HONGORAI - POROREI Rivers attack.

The platoon engaged 3 known enemy positions along the axis of BUIN Road with indirect fire. These targets were pinpointed by map and air photographs in conjunction with mortar and artillery registrations. Two enemy positions were covered as target of area approximately 200 yards square each. The third position as target of depth 800 yards by 200 yards. In all 26000 rounds were expended on these tasks.

Investigation of these areas proved the accuracy and its powers of penetration through the jungle to cover the target area very satisfactory.

By the above it is proven that the value of MG in support of the attack in the past has not been used sufficiently and, therefore, valuable supporting fire power has been wasted.

iii Defence

In defence the gun has not been given a definite task but is given an arc not greater than 160° and its role is to thicken the fire and engage suitable targets as they appear.

Good surprise has been had in the counter attack by this weapon holding its fire until the last possible moment, it then having its maximum killing effect.

(c) Trained Reserve

The essential point of having a trained reserve in rifle companies who can be called upon to reinforce the platoon has been well brought out. The platoon was weakened from time to time by battle casualties and sickness so this reserve was a necessity.

(d) Equipment

- i The weight of the tripod could be reduced without depleting its efficiency. This is a suggestion.
- ii The issue of brace attachments as opposed to pouches basic for Numbers 1 and 2 of the gun who are armed with pistols. The basic pouches hinder the handling of the gun.

14. MAN MANAGEMENT

The main lesson derived as a result of man management having been carried out was the little wastage of personnel as a result of sickness.

In cases where an increase in skin infections occurred a strict policing of this subject saw a remarkable decrease in numbers infected.

The main points which were strictly watched were:

- (a) Daily inspections of feet and body by sub unit officers no matter what the situation was.
- (b) Weekly inspections by the RMO.
- (c) Checking to ensure that all requiring medical aid report for treatment as ordered.
- (d) Antiseptic bathing of feet daily or immediately on return from a patrol.
- (e) Daily bathing of bodies by all ranks, whenever possible in hot water, this supervised by an officer.
- (f) Regular washing of clothes and if situation permitted the boiling so as to destroy germs.
- (g) Checking to see that a high standard in Hygiene is maintained at all times.
- (h) All ranks to erect beds and sleep off the ground.
- (j) Two pairs of boots to be carried so that a dry pair is available to change.
- (k) An inspection of sleeping tents so that during the day the tents are put in order and maintained as if in a standing camp.
- (m) The absolute necessity for each man to remove his boots at night when resting.
- (n) Don't let the operation in hand induce you to forget the elementary principles of man management.

15. MALARIA PRECAUTIONS

By a strict supervision of malaria precautions being made the cases in the Battalion were negligible. It is considered that with the taking of the precautions as laid down the possibility of contracting malaria is very slight, only cases occurring were when the troops were subject to a severe nervous strain.

The constant checking of atebrin and lotion roll books, using of mosquito nets, rolling down of sleeves from sundown till sunrise and the wearing of gaiters was enforced.

It is necessary to regularly hold an inspection of companies and platoons, junior officers and NCOs are inclined as time goes by to relax into a self satisfied way of interpreting Standing Orders.

16. ARMY EDUCATION SERVICE

A series of lectures were given by the unit education service representative, also the Divisional education sergeant, on current affairs and special subjects. These were well received.

In addition a Battalion library service was instituted allowing troops reading material during relaxation periods.

During operations correspondence courses being done by personnel were forced to be discontinued until the rest period.

17. LECTURES

A series of lectures to all companies in turn were conducted by the Intelligence Officer on the local operations and enemy situation. These were appreciated and lengthy sensible questioning was a sequel to them. These question periods often lasting one hour. If the troops are kept fully in the picture it adds to their morale, confidence and also stamps out malicious rumours.

18. CAPTURED EQUIPMENT

Regular lectures on the vital importance of handing in captured documents and equipments should be given if the best results are to be obtained.

It must be fully impressed on all that documents, no matter how small or unimportant in appearance, must be handed in to Intelligence. Further they must in no way be mutilated, torn or stamps removed as this may remove vital information.

Troops benefitted from these lectures as in the latter stages of the campaign, the amount of documents handled bore proof of thorough searching of positions.

19. AIR PHOTOGRAPHS

The air photographs available on demand were 5" by 5" and the enlarged version 9" by 9". While these were of assistance it is considered more use should be obtained from the K18 9" by 18" air photographs.

The feature overlap as opposed to line overlap was found best.

Photographs flown at medium heights (up to 10000 feet) are found better for interpretation purposes.

When photographs are issued from the Formation an asset would be a trace showing the coverage, this would save a lot of time.

A wider distribution to allow issue down to companies would permit use in conjunction with existing maps.

24 AUST INF BN (AIF)

REPORT ON OPERATIONS

PART TEN

JAPANESE TACTICS AND RUSES

1. CAMOUFLAGE

The enemy has developed camouflage to a high degree and has used it to good effect throughout.

Personal camouflage of branches and bushes draped about the person was used extensively by him.

In concealment of positions he went to great pains. All timber needed for huts and building pillboxes was cut away from the position and carried in. All pits were heavily draped with ferns and bushes, these being changed frequently to keep their freshness. His positions were sited to gain the maximum concealment also he only cleared the small fern growth on his forward defensive lines to allow more vision but maintain the camouflage.

In his movement through bush in the L of C area he avoided tracks and always broke bush. To conceal his footprints he carried bundles of small ferns which he sprinkled over his tracks. He avoided using the same track twice and always travelled on a different route out from the route in.

Clever camouflage has been applied to gun positions. In one case on the BUIN Road, forward of the MOBIAI River ford a 150mm gun sited for tank attack role was emplaced in a strongly constructed pillbox well camouflaged. In front of the gun was a curtain arrangement operated by wires, when the wires were pulled the curtain of bushes parted giving vision and a fire lane for the gun to engage tank targets on the road. On release of the wire the bushes fell back providing perfect concealment for the gun.

2. TANK ATTACK GUNS

Field pieces were employed in a tank attack role being sited up to a distance of 80 yards off the road in most cases covering a natural or man made obstacle.

Initially 75mm mountain type guns were used but these made no impression on our MATILDA tanks, their armour being adequate protection.

Realising the futility of this calibre gun he next resorted to using 150 mm guns with better results. Good fire discipline was evident in these gun crews, they held their fire to gain the maximum surprise and await a suitable target to appear.

For protection of these gun positions a defensive locality was maintained around the gun. These positions varied in strengths.

The use of these larger calibre guns in a tank attack role demonstrated his determined efforts to counter our tank support and that he was willing to pay one gun for one tank. For immediately he fired his position was betrayed and accurate from the tanks knocked the gun out. The enemy greatly overestimated the ability of his guns for although direct hits were scored on tanks it did not always do much damage.

3. ENEMY POSITIONS

He must be given credit for a sound appreciation of ground in defence. Full advantage is taken of natural features for fire lanes.

At a distance of upwards to 200 yards from the main position a series of listening outposts are maintained on approaches to give warning. These consist of approximately 5 weapon pits and sometimes a vine and rattle system of communication is made with the main position.

In two instances defensive positions were partially wired in.

Kunda vine rail systems were used extensively throughout the positions to facilitate movement by night.

4. MINES

Type 93 land mines and improvised types were used to combat our tanks and dozer teams, also to damage transport on the L of C.

In the improvised types various methods were used. Three 75mm shells tied together with an instantaneous plunger type fuse in one, the remaining two depending on sympathetic detonation, placed in a puddle hole covered by small board which in turn was hidden by the water, was one of the types encountered. Larger types were found which had blocks of picric acid acting as boosters.

The enemy also used mines with pull wires controlled from a pit in the rear. The controller awaited the arrival of a target then exploded the mine by pulling the wire.

In an endeavour to harass the L of C mines were laid to counter our use of jeeps. Being freshly laid these were easily detected, or if not were usually the type 93 and caused little damage.

5. BOOBY TRAPS

These mainly consisted of 81mm calibre mortar bombs or 75 mm shells. These were fitted with instantaneous fuses.

Fields of these were laid with a series of vines as trip wires.

In some cases a wire pulled by a controller in the rear exploding the trap in a similar way to the mine was found.

When these fields were laid across a used track leaves or branches were placed either side to warn their own troops of their presence.

6. PATROLS

On a number of occasions the enemy patrols moved on a broad front in groups of three covering an area of 50 to 60 yards. This enabled him to scour a wide area also to quickly outflank an opposing patrol.

Immediately contact is established the enemy invariably attempts to outflank with small parties on either or both flanks. These parties of three or four move noisily with object of making our troops feel insecure and have been supported by knee mortars placed in the rear of our patrol to restrict movement in that direction.

Single enemy have been used as decoys to lure our patrols into prepared ambush positions. On one occasion an unarmed Japanese appeared on the side of a track and noisily broke bush as our patrol approached. When the patrol followed they ran into a well prepared ambush position 100 yards off the track and there for no other apparent reason.

Enemy using green berets and Australian clothes have been identified on patrols.

During daylight hours all patrols do not follow tracks but break bush. By night full use is made of tracks.

7. ATTACKS

Enemy counter attacks were done in a fanatical manner led by officers carrying swords and gloves screaming orders at the top pitch of their voices.

When the leaders were killed the party broke and became disorganised.

8. TANK OBSTACLES

In the EGANS RIDGE area a series of man made tank obstacles were encountered. They consisted of a ditch 5 foot face, 9 foot sloping run and dug either between two bomb craters or where a detour was difficult.

Full use was made of natural obstacles like river or creek barriers. In most cases covered by tank attack artillery so that the vehicle could be engaged whilst it was in difficulties.

9. DUM DUM AMMUNITION

In many cases bullets reversed in the cartridge case were found. These were tested and good accuracy obtained up to 50 yards.

10. ARTILLERY

The enemy used artillery extensively and it was found to be most accurate.

It is considered that after shelling patrols were despatched to investigate results and make the necessary corrections to engage the target.

Survey pegs were found on the road which gives proof of his having prepared for artillery concentrations to oppose our advance.

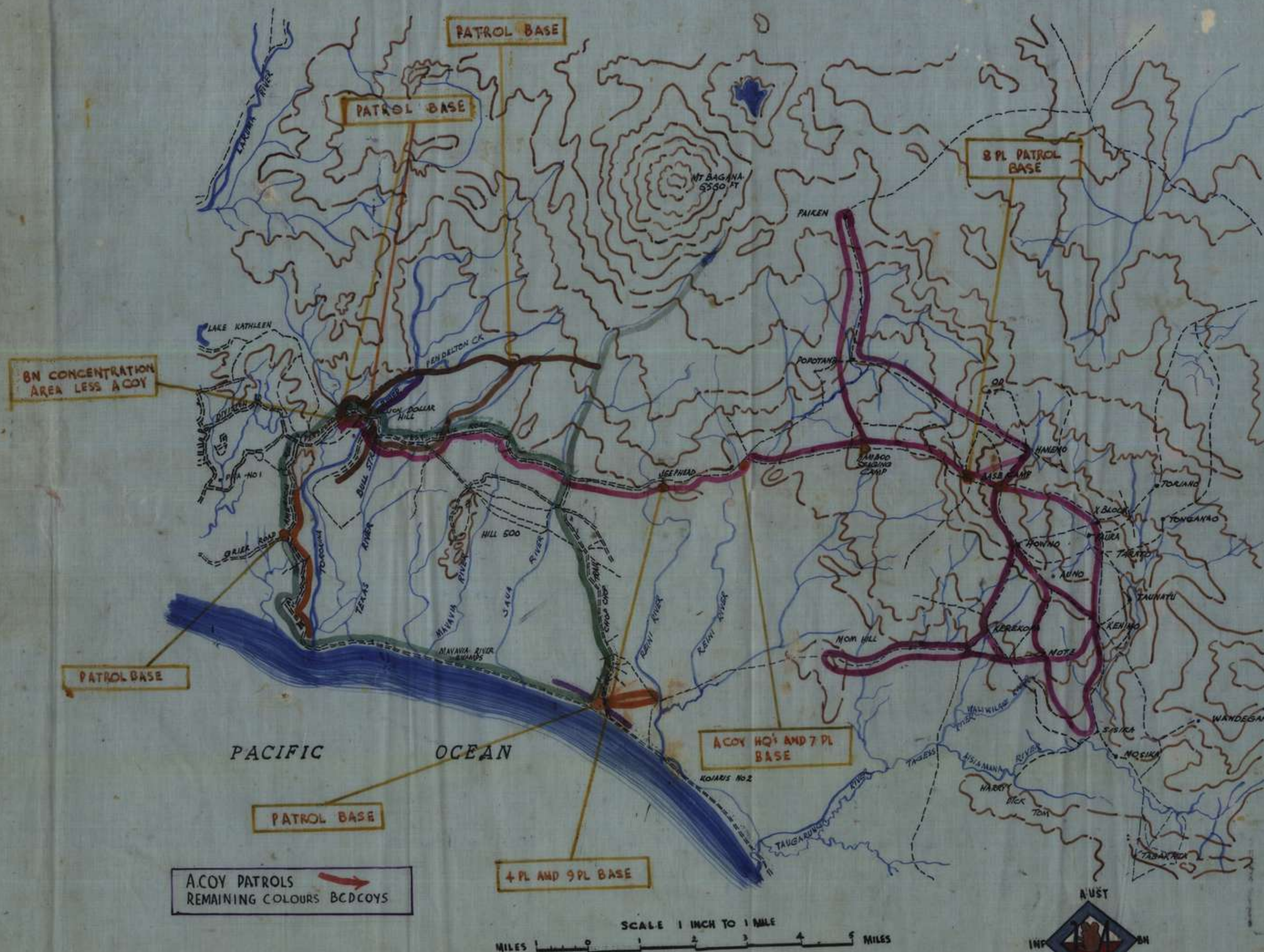
On occasions forward observation parties with signal communications were discovered conducting the shoot.

"A" X99A

R.F 1:63360

24 AUST INF BN (A.I.F.) TEISHINTAI OPERATION

TOROKINA - HANEMO AREA - MARCH 1945

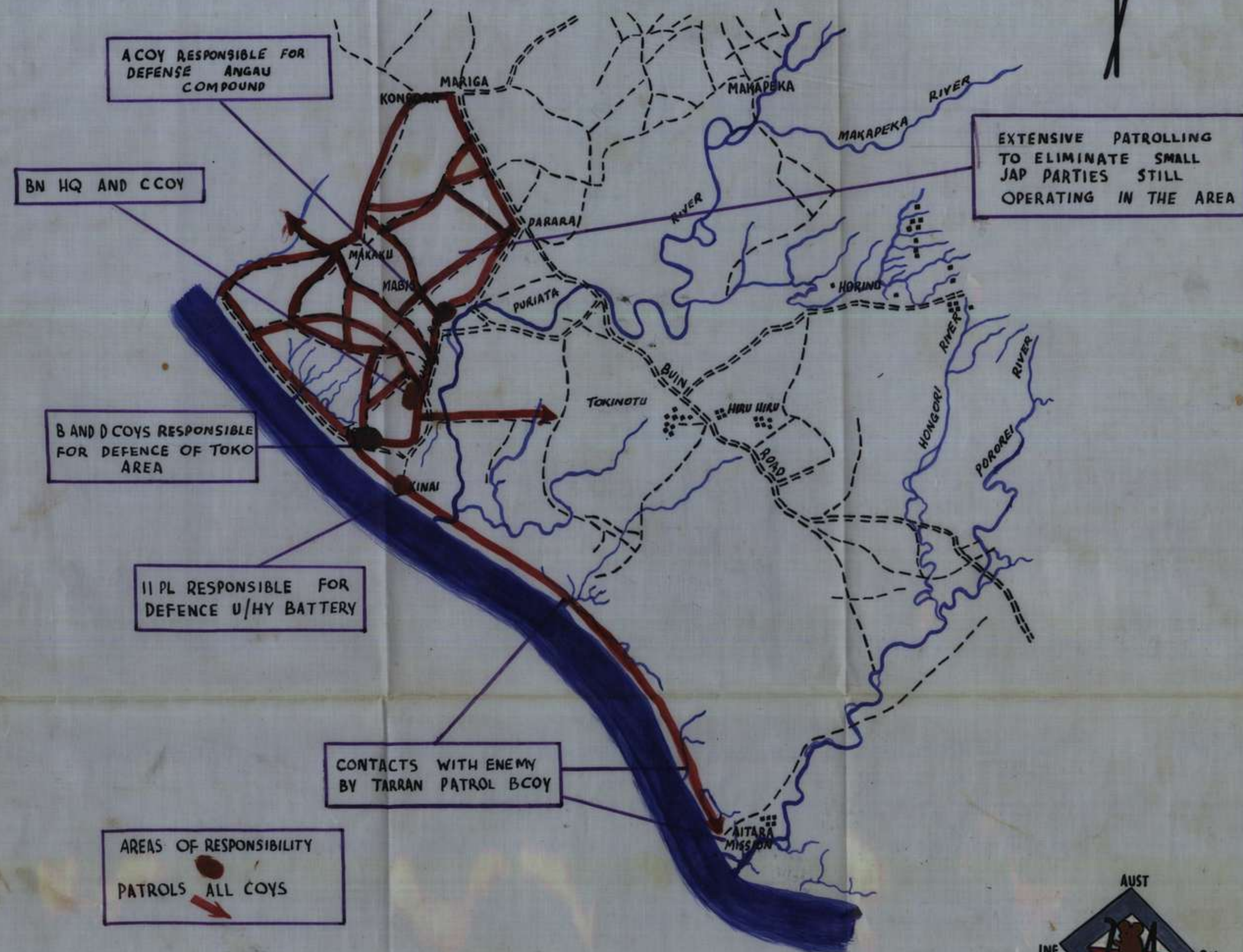


"B" X99A

24 AUST INF BN (A.I.F)
SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE OPS
TOKO - MABIS OPERATIONS

R.F. 1:63360

29 MARCH - 12 APRIL 1945



SCALE 1 INCH TO 1 MILE
MILES 1 2 3 4 5 MILES

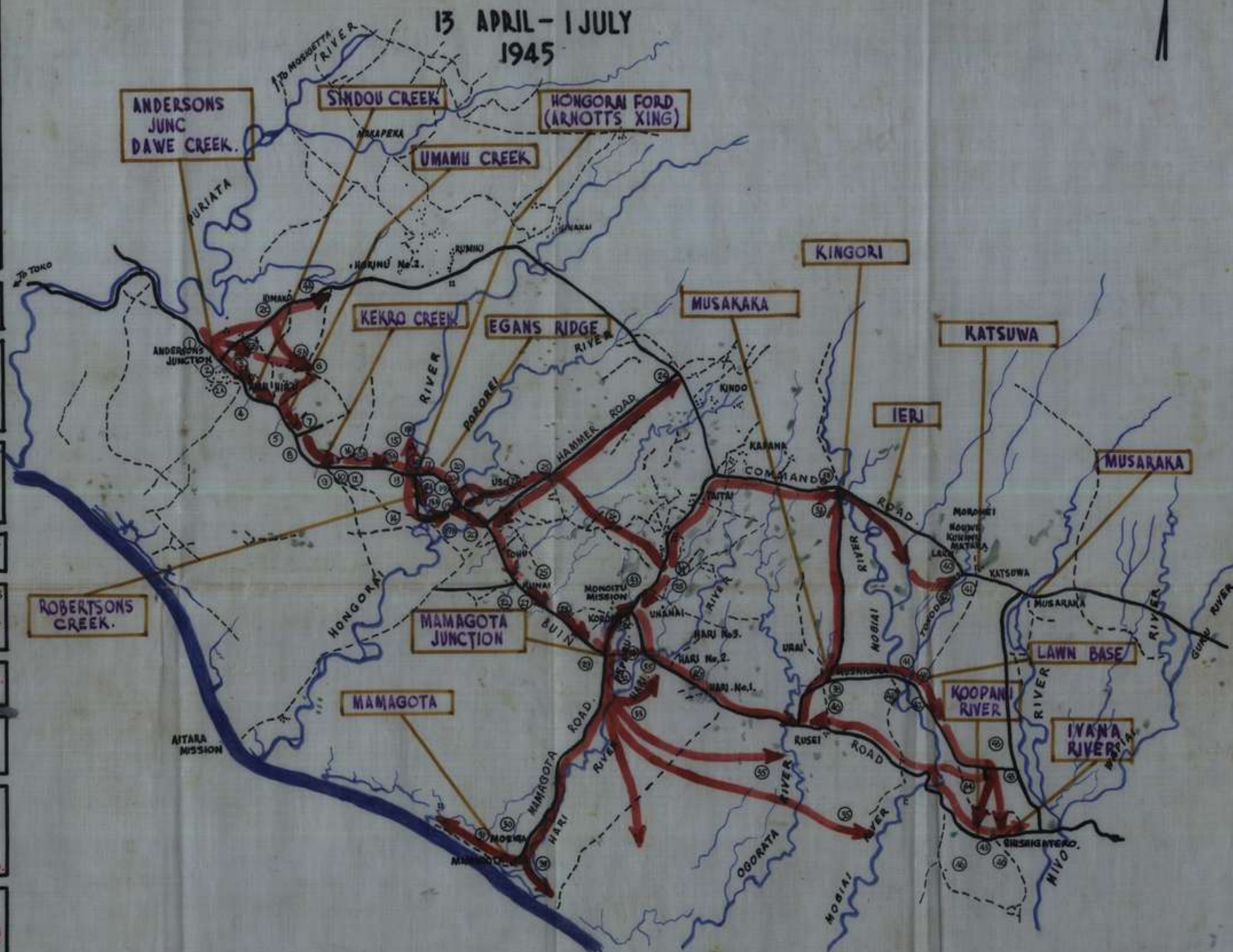


SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE OPERATIONS. 24 AUST INF BN (AIF) OPERATIONS

PURIATA RIVER TO MIVO RIVER

13 APRIL - 1 JULY
1945

- 1 **13 APRIL**
24 BN RELIEVES 25 BN AND TAKES UP NEW POSNS FWD OF SLATER'S KNOLL.
- 2 **17 APRIL**
THE BATTLE FOR HONGORAI COMMENCES - 0830 HRS BN ADVANCES WITH TK AND ARTY SUPPORT AND SECURES ALL OBJECTIVES CAS OWN 2K 10W ENEMY W K.
1030 HRS C COY REACHES DAVE CREEK AND TAKES OBJECTIVE AGAINST STIFF OPPOSITION.
D COY OCCUPIES GARDEN AREA WITHOUT OPPOSITION AND ANDERSON'S JUNG IS SECURED.
A COY OUTFLANKS TO THE NORTH AND CUTS THE HATAI TRACK.
- 3 **18 APRIL**
C COY CROSSES DAVE CREEK AGAINST STIFF OPPOSITION.
- 4 **20 APRIL**
B COY ADVANCES AND CAPTURES SINDOU CREEK. THREE JAP COUNTERATTACKS ALL REPULSED.
A COY ARMED PATROL ALONG HATAI TRACK.
- 5 **26 APRIL**
C COY CROSSES UMAMU CK AGAINST HEAVY OPPOSITION.
D COY ADVANCES 2000 YDS ON LEFT FLANK.
- 6 **29 APRIL**
A COY ADVANCES ALONG LEFT FLANK VICINITY D COY.
- 7 **25 APRIL**
B COY ARMED PATROL ADVANCES TO BIAGU THREE FORK AND IS LATER JOINED BY REMAINDER OF COMPANY.
- 8 **30 APRIL**
D COY ADVANCES ONTO BUIN RD. AND THROUGH B COMPANY.
- 9 **2 MAY**
B COY MOVES THROUGH D COY AND REACHES A POSN 1500 YDS WEST OF HONGORAI RIVER.
- 10 **4 MAY**
D COY ARMED PATROL MOVES THROUGH B COY AND CONTACTS AN ENEMY POSN STR ONE COY TK ENGAGED BY 75MM GUN CREW KILLED AND GUN CAPTURED.
- 11 **5 MAY**
D COY CONTINUES ADV WITH TK SP - ENEMY ENCOUNTERED 650 YDS FWD B COY. 75MM GUN SITED FOR TK A SCORED DIRECT HIT ON TK - GUN DESTROYED - ADV CONTINUED AGAINST HEAVY OPPOSITION - COY DUG IN 800 YDS WEST OF HONGORAI RIVER.
- 12 **6 MAY**
D COY RECOMMENCING ADV MET FIERCE ENEMY BANZAI COUNTERATTACKS.
A COY MOVING TO OCCUPY VACATED D COY POSN ARE ATTACKED FROM NORTH - A COY JOINED D COY AND IN ENSUING BATTLE 58 ENEMY KILLED OWN 1K 5W ATTACK LASTED 2½ HRS ENEMY STR. ESTIMATED LEAST 100.
- 13 **7 MAY**
A COY ADVANCES AND CONSOLIDATES ON HONGORAI FORD.
- 14 **9 MAY**
B COY OCCUPY A LOCALITY ALONG THE WEST BANK OF HONGORAI R. 500 YDS SOUTH OF BUIN ROAD.



- 31 **8 JUNE**
A COY ARMED PATROL REACHES MAMAGOTA AND PATROLS EAST AND WEST. B COY PATROLS FOLLOW THEN ALL RETURN - MUCH EQPT CAPTURED. C COY EST. ON TAI TAI.
- 32 **11-12 JUNE**
B COY ARMED FORCE STAGES DIVERSIONARY ATTACK ON SOUTH FLANK HARI R. FOR 58/59 BN.
- 33 **13-14 JUNE**
B COY DIVERSIONARY CONTINUED TO C COY TO 58/59 CLEAR.
- 34 **10 JUNE**
17 PL OCCUPIES POSN BETWEEN HARI AND PEPERU RIVERS.
- 35 **15 JUNE**
B COY OCCUPIES POSN SE OF C COY ON TAI TAI ROAD.
- 36 **16 JUNE**
PL A COY OPERATES OGORATA R. AREA SOUTH OF BUIN RD. D COY COMPLETELY OCCUPIES POSN EAST BANK HARI AT FORD.
- 37 **17 JUNE**
B COY MOVES TO KINGORI.
- 38 **19 JUNE**
C COY MOVED VIA COMMAND ROAD TO B COY. D COY REACHES VIC MUSAKAKA.
- 39 **20 JUNE**
C COY MOVES TO JOIN A COY - KATSWA-OPPEN MET.
- 40 **21-22 JUNE**
C COY REACHES TOHODO RIVER. 100 NIPS MAKE PANATICAL ATTACK.
- 41 **23 JUNE**
LAWN BASE FIRMLY EST. A COY MOVE TO LAWN BASE. ATKINSON FORCE JOIN C COY - D COY JOINS A COY.
- 42 **25 JUNE**
BN LESS B AND C COY CONTINUES TO MOVE TO CONC AREA EAST OF MOBIAI R. ATKINSON FORCE LEAVE C COY.
- 43 **27 JUNE**
BN CONC IN ASSEMBLY AREA READY TO ATTACK. D COY ATTACKED ENEMY PARTY KILLING 9 WOUNDING 3.
- 44 **28 JUNE**
FINAL RECCES MADE.
- 45 **29 JUNE**
A AND D COYS ADVANCE & SEIZE OBJECTIVES ON BUIN RD - NO OPPOSITION.
- 46 **30 JUNE - 1 JULY**
BUIN ROAD CLEARED BETWEEN A AND D COYS AND A COY 58/59 BN AND D COY 57/60 BN. PL D COY TO CAPTURE ENEMY FOUND POSN VACATED AND GUN BLOWN - 42 BN RELIEVED A AND D COYS 1 JULY AND COYS WITH BATTLE HQ RETURNED TO MUSAKAKA AREA - B COY REMAINS KINGORI AREA AND C COY REMAINS KATSWA AREA.

RED ARROWS REPRESENT AXIS OF ADVANCE
FOR 24 AUST. INF. BN (AIF)
EXCLUDING FLANKING PATROLLING.

SCALE 1 INCH TO 1 MILE
MILES 1 2 3 4



10 AUGUST '45
R. Brown
DTE

- 15 **12 MAY**
A COY MOVES 1000 YDS NORTH ALONG HONGORAI FROM FORD. C COY OCCUPIES A COY VACATED POSN AT HONGORAI FORD.
- 16 **13 MAY**
PL D COY WITH SUPPORTING FIRE FROM C COY CROSSES HONGORAI RIVER AT THE FORD AND CONSOLIDATES.
- 17 **14 MAY**
D COY ADV. THROUGH C COY TO JOIN PL ACROSS HONGORAI R. NUMEROUS ENEMY COUNTERATTACKS REPULSED WITH CAS TO ENEMY.
- 18 **19 MAY**
DIVERSIONARY ATTACK BY PL A COY ON MARTINS CROSSING. THE BN MOVES TO ASSEMBLY AREA PREPARATORY TO SEIZING BUIN RD BETWEEN HONGORAI AND POROREI RIVERS. C COY REMAIN HOLDING HONGORAI FORD.
- 19 **20 MAY**
B COY CONSOLIDATES ON BUIN RD SMALL ENEMY ATTACKS REPULSED. D COY CONSOLIDATES 400 YDS EAST OF B COY AND OVERLOOKING POROREI FORD.
A COY MET FIERCE OPPOSN ON APPROACHING POROREI FORD ALONG EAST BANK RIVER AND UNABLE TO REACH OBJECTIVE THAT NIGHT.
- 20 **21 MAY**
AFTER ARTY CONC A COY OCCUPIES POSN ON BUIN RD FWD OF FORD AGAINST HEAVY OPPOSITION. B COY ARMED PATROL MOVE NW TO C COY AGAINST STIFF OPPOSN FROM ENEMY ON NORTH SIDE RD VIC EGANS RIDGE MANY LAND MINES ENCOUNTERED.
- 21 **22 MAY**
PRECEDED BY AIR AND ARTY CONC. ON EGANS RIDGE C COY ADV. ALONG BUIN RD AND OCCUPIED POSN ON ROBERTSON'S CK. 12 PL MOVES FWD TO PATROL THE FLANKS.
- 22 **23 MAY**
58/59 BN NOW FWD BN.
- 23 **29 MAY**
D COY OCCUPIES POSN ON HAMMER ROAD.
- 24 **30 MAY**
PL D COY ESCORT TKs TO 57/60.
- 25 **31 MAY**
B COY MOVES TO POSN ON HAMMER RD VACATED BY A COY 58/59 BN.
- 26 **2 JUNE**
A COY OCCUPIES 58/59 POSN ON BUIN RD 2000 YDS SE OF POROREI FORD. C COY MOVES TO POSN CENTRALLY SITUATED BETWEEN BUIN RD & COMMANDO ROADS. TO PATROL TO TAITAI MAMAGOTA ROAD.
- 27 **3 JUNE**
D COY RELIEVED COY 58/59 3000 YDS FROM MAMAGOTA JUNCTION.
- 28 **5 JUNE**
B COY MOVED TO BOROKA CREEK. C COY ON FLANK MOVED TO WITH IN 500 YDS TAITAI ROAD.
- 29 **6 JUNE**
A COY MOVES TO MAMAGOTA JUNG.
- 30 **7 JUNE**
A COY ARMED PATROL TO MAMAGOTA.

0 X99A

SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE OPS. 24 AUST INF BN (AIF) OPERATIONS ANDERSONS JUNC - DAWE CK - SINDOU - UMAMU CKS.

R.F. 1:25000

PL BCOY IN
OCCUPATION
16 APR

17 APR BN ADV
TO SECURE
ANDERSONS JUNC
AND DAWE CK

20 APR BCOY
SEIZE SINDOU
CK AND ARE
REPEATEDLY
COUNTERATTACKED

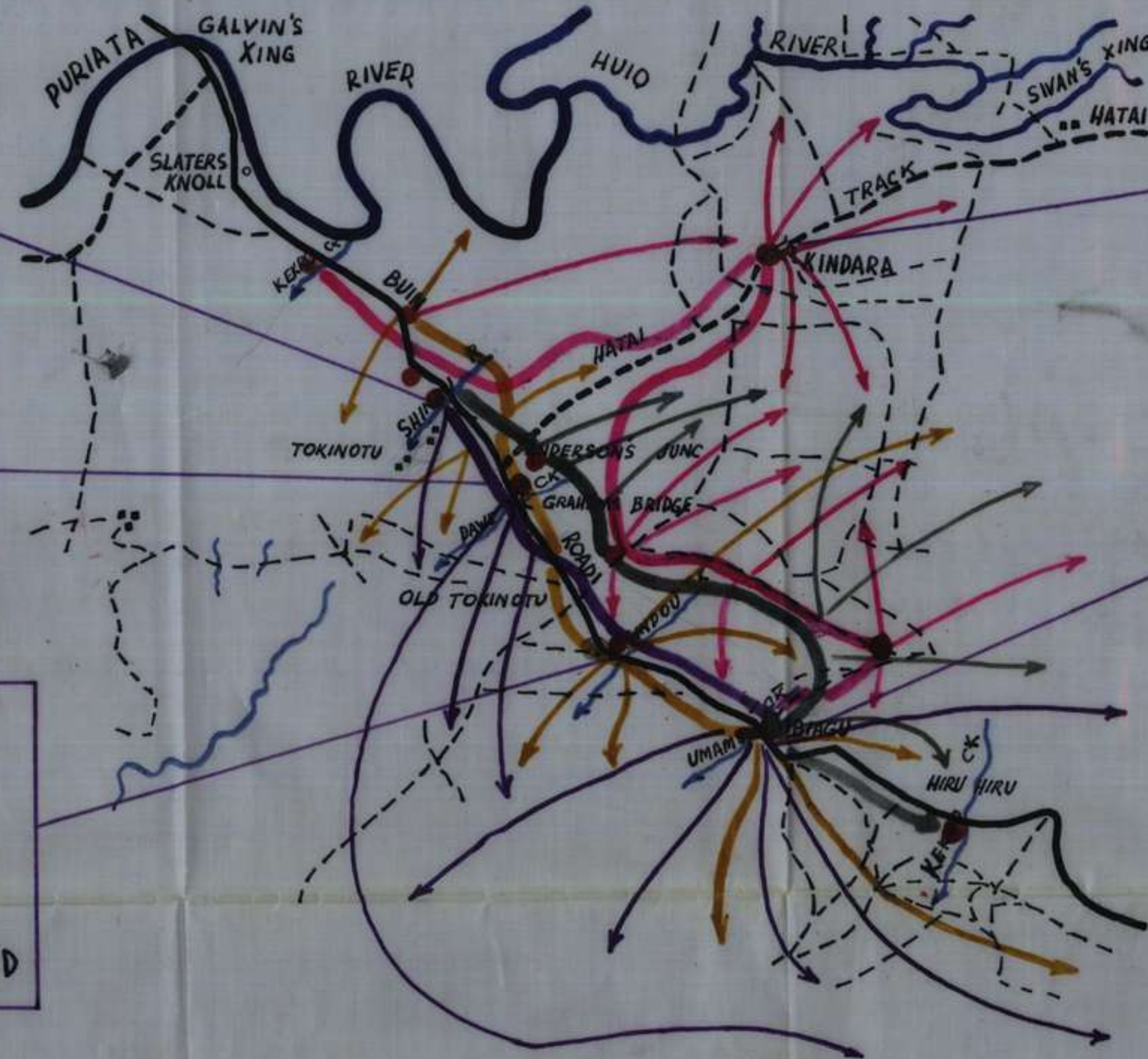
ACOVY OUTFLANK
TO KIMAKU AND
KINDARA AREA
CUTTING THE
HATAI TRACK.

26 APR. CCOV
WITH AIR ARTY
AND TANK SUPPORT
ADV AND CROSS
UMAMU CREEK

THROUGHOUT THIS
PERIOD EXTENSIVE
PATROLLING AS
FAR EAST AS THE
HONGORAI RIVER
IS CARRIED OUT.

ACOVY	ADV	PATROLS
BCOVY	ADV	PATROLS
CCOVY	ADV	PATROLS
DCOVY	ADV	PATROLS

SCALE 1:25000
YARDS 1000 0 1000 2000 3000 YARDS



SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE OPS

24 AUST INF BN (A.I.F.) OPERATIONS.

HONGORAI-POROREI RIVERS AREAS

19 MAY BN MOVES
TO CONC AREA
PREPARATORY TO
CROSSING HONGORAI

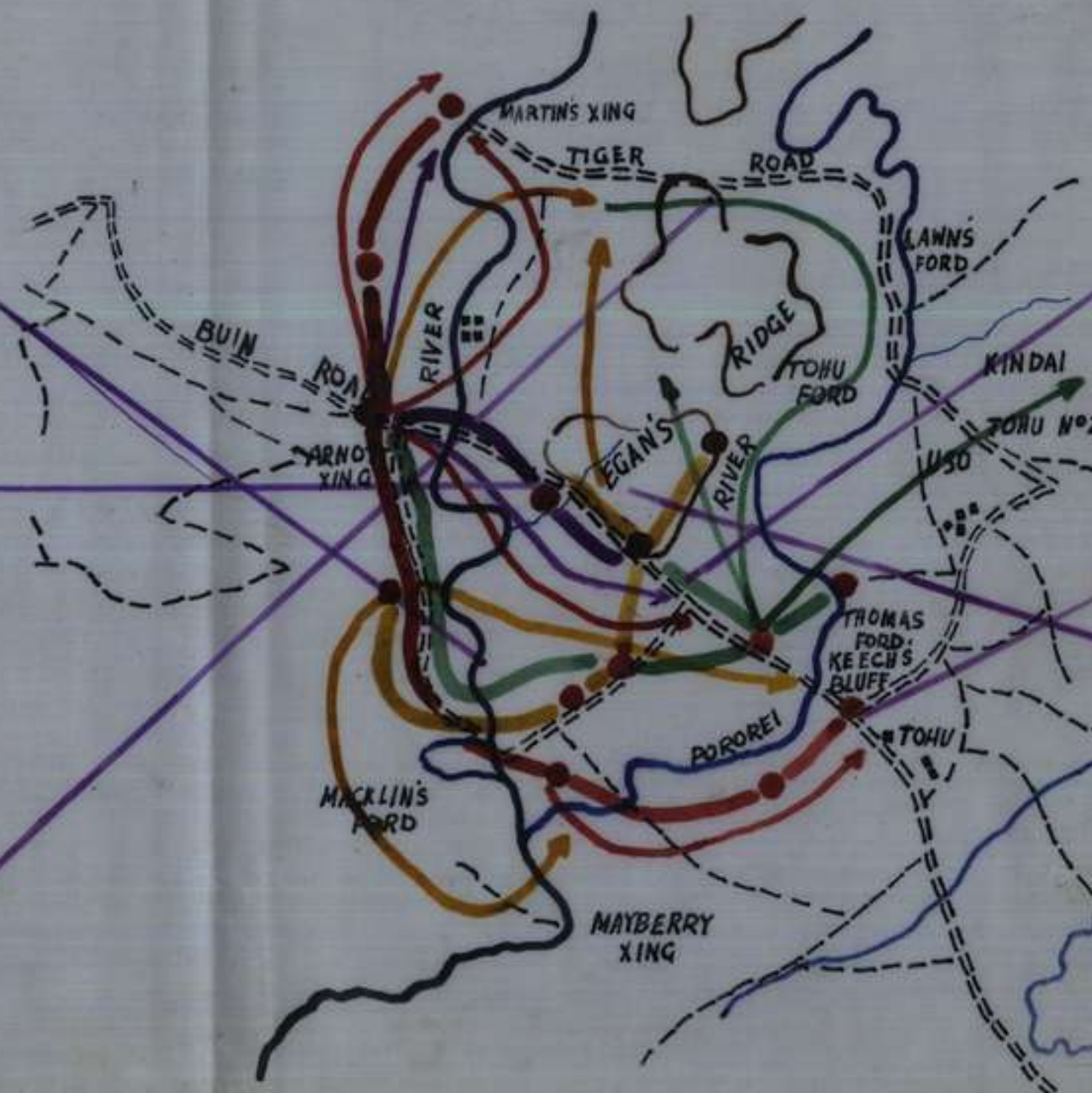
22 MAY C COY CLEAR
ROAD VIC EGAN'S RIDGE
12 PL PATROL TO FLANKS

EXTENSIVE PATROLLING
TO TIGER ROAD IS
CARRIED OUT TO CLEAR
REMAINING ENEMY POCKETS.
58/59 BN CONTINUE THE
ADV DOWN THE BUIN ROAD

20 MAY B AND D
COYS CUT THE BUIN
ROAD

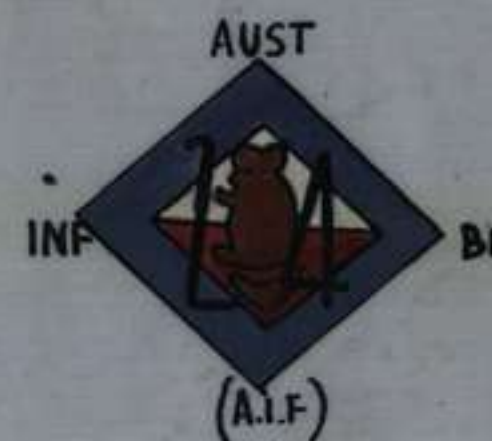
21 MAY A COY REACHES
OBJECTIVE AGAINST
STIFF OPPOSITION

21 MAY B COY ARMD
PATROL NW ALONG
BUIN ROAD TO EGAN'S
RIDGE AGAINST FIERCE
OPPOSITION.



A COY	ADV	PATROLS
B COY	ADV	PATROLS
C COY	ADV	PATROLS
D COY	ADV	PATROLS

SCALE 1:25000
YARDS 1000 2000 3000



24 AUG '45
PTE

7 X 11A

SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE OPS 24 AUST INF BN (A.I.F) OPERATIONS KEKRO CK - HONGORAI RIVER AREA

R. F. 1:25000

5 MAY DCOY CONTINUES
ADVANCE FURTHER 75 MM
GUN ENCOUNTERED DIRECT
HIT ON TK BUT GUN THEN
DESTROYED BY TK FIRE

6 MAY FIERCE COUNTER-
ATTACKS REPULSED WITH
58 NIPS KILLED BY A AND
DCOYS

ACoy IN POSN ON
HONGORAI

13 MAY DCOY COMMENCES
TO CROSS HONGORAI R.
19 MAY A COY DIVERSIONARY
ATTACK

D COY ARMD PATROL
CONTACTED ENEMY
STR ONE COY WITH
75 MM SITED FOR
TK. A GUN FIRED AT
TANK BUT WAS
CAPTURED 4 MAY

7 MAY A COY
CONSOLIDATES AT
HONGORAI FORD

9 MAY B COY IN
POSN ON HONGORAI

12 MAY C COY IN
POSN AT FORD



A COY	ADV	PATROLS
B COY	ADV	PATROLS
C COY	ADV	PATROLS
D COY	ADV	PATROLS

SCALE 1:25000
YARDS 1000 0 1000 2000 3000 YARDS



SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE OPS, 24 AUST INF BN (AIF) OPERATIONS. POROREI - HARI RIVERS AREAS.

R.F. 1:25000

DURING THIS PHASE
THE BN HAD A
RESERVE ROLE BUT
PATROLLED VIGOR-
OUSLY TO THE
FLANKS IN SUPPORT
OF THE FWD BN.
AS 58/59 BN ADV 24BN
OCCUPIED THE VACATED
POSNS.
LONG RANGE PATROLS
OPERATED TO THE
MOBIAI & OGORATA
RIVERS

CCOY MOVED MIDWAY
BETWEEN 57/60BN AND
BUIN RD TO CUT THE
TAI-TAI-MAMAGOTA
ROAD DOING SO ON 5
JUNE AND CLEARING RD
ON 14 JUNE

11 JUNE-14 JUNE BCOY
ARMED FORCE STAGED
DIVERSIONARY ATTACKS

7 JUNE AN ACOY ARMED
FORCE CLEARS THE
MAMAGOTA RD TO
THE COAST

ACOY ADV	Red arrow
BCOY ADV	Blue arrow
CCOY ADV	Green arrow
DCOY ADV	Black arrow
ACOY PATROLS	Red arrow with cross
BCOY PATROLS	Blue arrow with cross
CCOY PATROLS	Green arrow with cross
DCOY PATROLS	Black arrow with cross



SCALE 1:25000
YARDS 1000 2000 3000

AUST
INF BN
(AIF)
X99A
Cpl
24 AUG '45

SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE OPS 24 AUST INF BN (A.I.F.) OPERATIONS HARI - OGORATA RIVERS AREAS

R.F. 1:25000



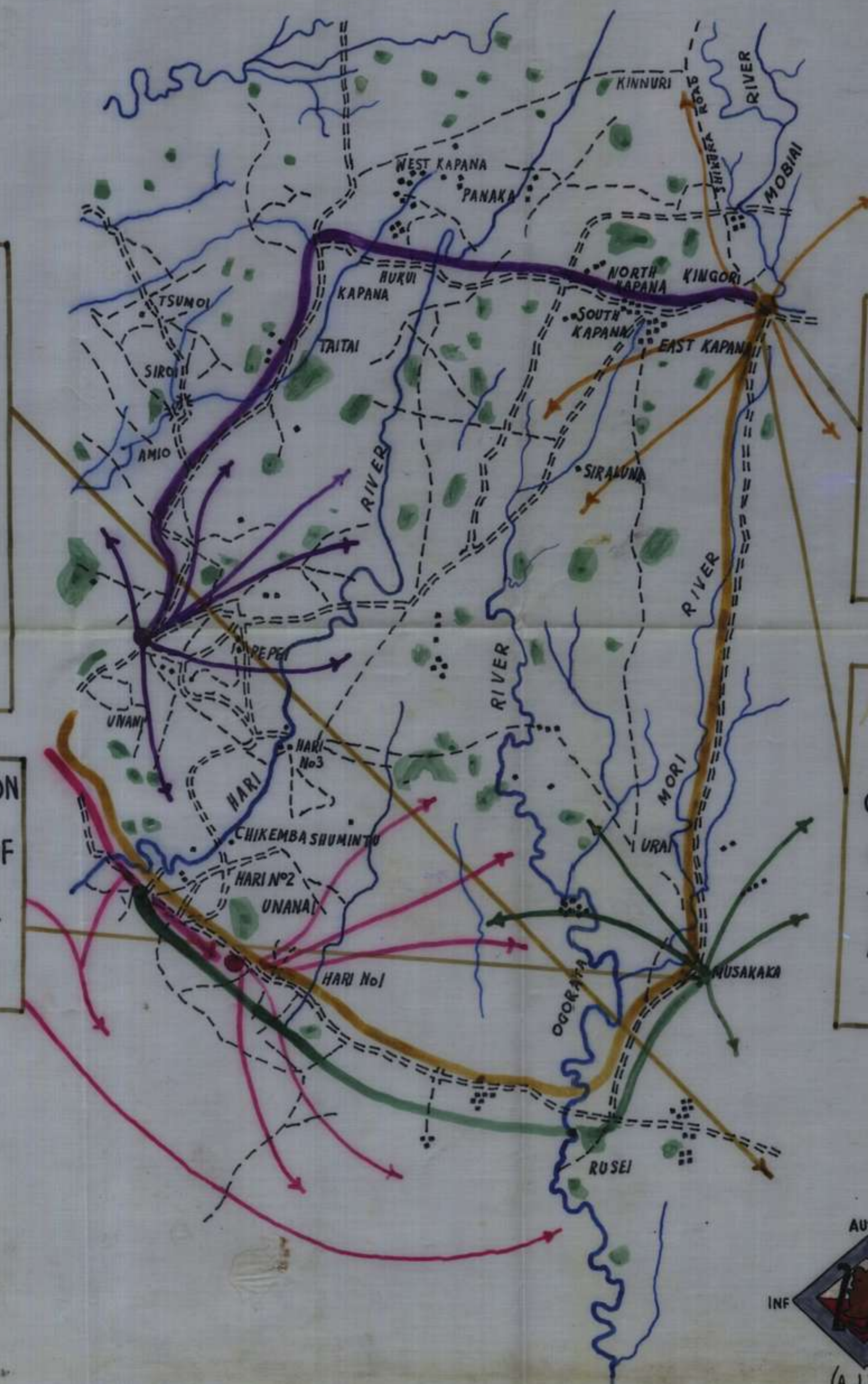
THROUGHOUT THIS PERIOD OPERATIONS WERE CONFINED TO EXTENSIVE FLANKING PATROLLING AS FAR EAST AS THE MOBIAI RIVER.

D COY IN PREPARATION FOR OUTFLANKING OF MOBIAI RIVER MOVE TO MUSAKAKA AREA.

17 JUNE B COY MOVE TO AND OCCUPY POSN ON COMMANDO RD IN KINGORI AREA.

20 JUNE C COY STAGE NIGHT B COY AREA ENROUTE MUSARAKA AREA TO JOIN THE ATKINSON'S FORCE OF 57/60 BN.

A COY	ADV	
B COY	ADV	
C COY	ADV	
D COY	ADV	
A COY	PATROLS	
B COY	PATROLS	
C COY	PATROLS	
D COY	PATROLS	



SCALE 1:25000

YARDS 1000 0 1000 2000 3000 YARDS



TX49A

SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE OPS 24 AUST INF BN (A.I.F) OPERATIONS OGORATA — MIVO RIVERS AREA

R.F. 1:25000

LAWN PATROL BASE EST.

BATTLE HQ's A & D COYS
MOVE VIA LAWN'S TANK
TRACK TO BN CONC AREA

D COY CONTACT ENEMY
IN POSN FWD OF COY
LOCALITY KILLING 9

EXTENSIVE RECCE PATROLS
ARE CARRIED OUT PRIOR
TO SEIZING BUIN RD

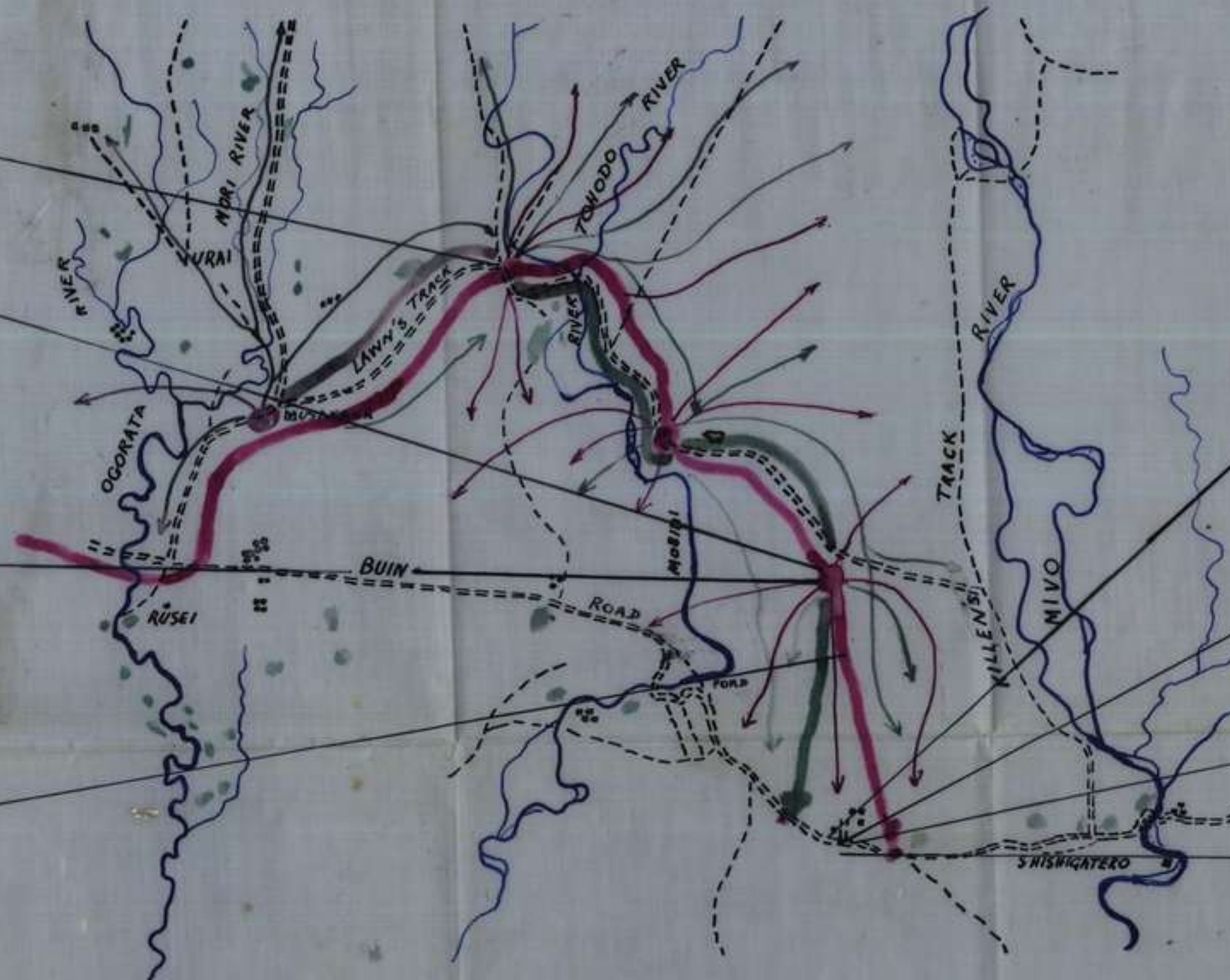
29 JUNE A & D COYS
MOVE TO AND OCCUPY
POSNS ASTRIDE BUIN RD

30 JUNE RD CLEARED FWD
TO 57/60 BN AND BACK
TO 58/59 BN

150 MM GUN FIRED SCORING
DIRECT HITS ON BULLDOZER

GUN FOUND BY PL D COY
DESTROYED

1 JULY UNIT RELIEVED BY 42 BN



A COY ADV
A COY PATROLS

SCALE 1:25000
YARDS 0 1000 2000 3000

D COY PATROLS
D COY ADV



SOUTH BOUGAINVILLE OPS.
24 AUST INF BN (A.I.F) OPERATIONS
KINGORI — KATSUWA AREA

R.F. 1:25000

CCOY ON 19 JUNE MOVED
VIA COMMANDO RD TO
BCOY AT KINGORI

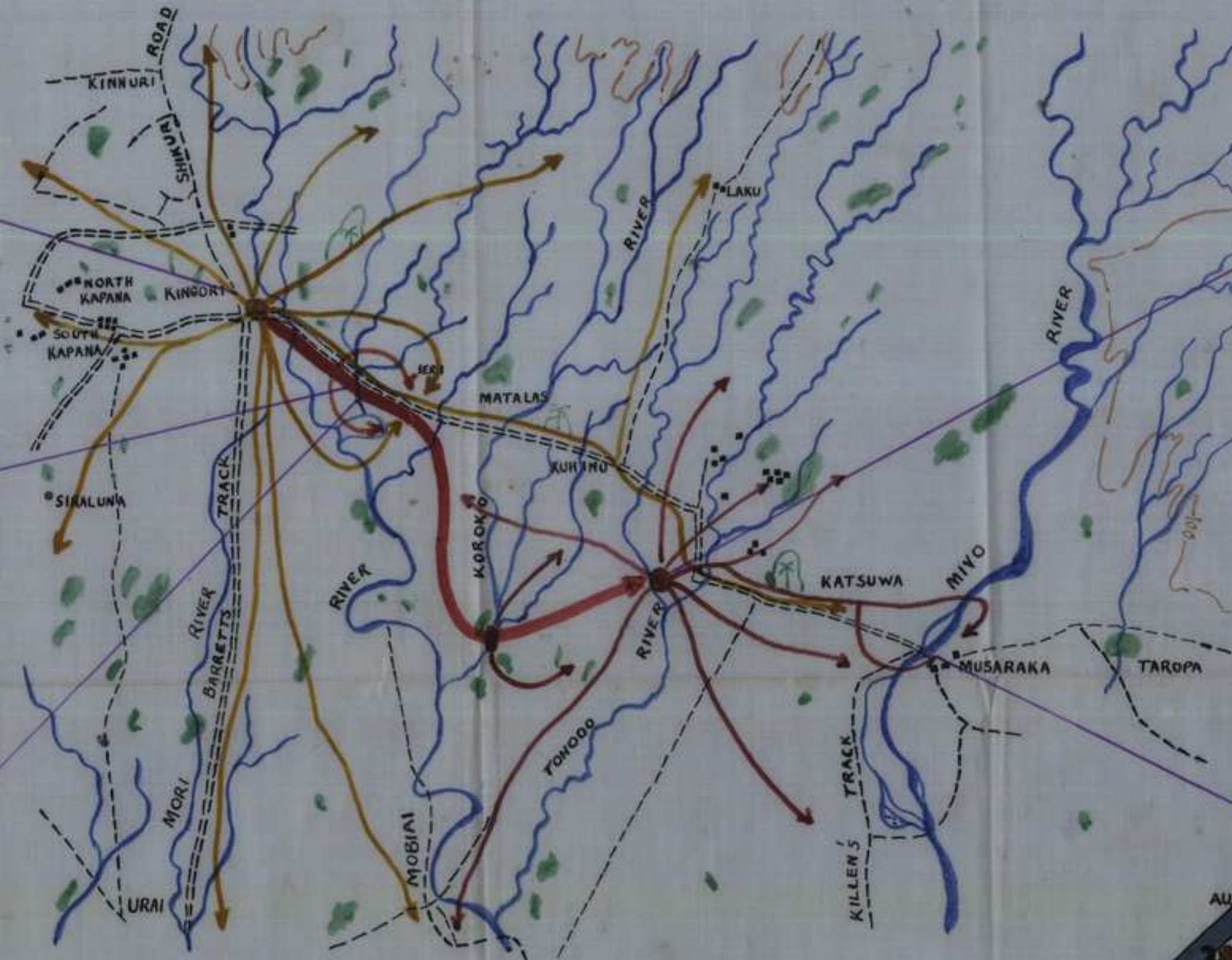
20 JUNE CCOY ENROUTE
MUSARAKA VIA COMMANDO
RD CONTACT ENEMY IN STR
AT IERI — POSN OUTFLANKED
AND COY MOVED ON

15 PL ENROUTE TO JOIN
COY CONTACTED ENEMY
AT IERI THEN MOVED TO
JOIN COY

22 JUNE COY LESS
15 PL FANATICALLY ATTACK
ED FOR 2½ HRS CAS
ENEMY 18K OWN NIL

THROUGHOUT THIS OPERAT
ION NUMEROUS PATROL
CLASHES OCCURRED
RESULTING IN HY CAS TO
ENEMY

6 JULY COMMANDO RD
CLEAR TO WEST BANK MIVO



BCOY PATROLS
CCOY ADV
CCOY PATROLS

SCALE 1:25000
YARDS 0 1000 2000 3000

AUST
INF BN
(A.I.F)
L.B. Purvis
LCPL
22 AUG '45