## Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV)

Narrative, Annexes 1 - 31 January 1965

Series: AWM95 - Australian Army

commanders' diaries

Item: 1/2/32

Army Form C2119

#### COMMANDERS DIARY

of

AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM, VIETNAM

Colonel F. P. Serong, OBE

From. 1. Don 65. To. 31. Jan 65

(Signature of Comd or Senior Staff Officer)

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AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

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Army Form C 21)

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## COMMANDERS TARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION .....

COMMANDING OFFICER.

MONTH AND YEAD

Place and grid Day of Hour reference Month		Hour	Event or information  Annex letter and enclosure number			
	l Jan		New Years Day 1965. Telephone call from GENERAL WESTMORELAND thanking us for 1964,			
			and looking forward hopefully to 1965. Town quiet. Weather clear.			
	2		Advice that MAJOR TINVSHER and WO WEIR received MBE and BEM respectively in New Year's			
			Honors. Maybe we've broken through at last.			
	3		To HONG KONG with family. C54 Via DA NANG. Battle of BIEN GIA over. Longest and			
			worst of the war. There will be others like it, soon.	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·		
· ·····	4					
	5					
••••••	6					
	7		Reports of student and Buddhist demonstrations in SAIGON.			
·	8		Returned SAIGON. Airfields comparatively bare, with most of the PACAF jets gone.			
	9		Town quiet. Weather fine. Night cool (about 65°F.)			
	10		Report of AATTV (Two WO's - WALLNER AND OSTARA). Decorated by KHANH for small battle			
			near HUE.			
······································	11		CAPT DEVITT reports "Situation in QUANG NGAI terrible" Collateral word from BINH DINH,			
			when GVN no longer attempts control outside province capital, which is full of refugees.			
			HAM NGHIA almost abandoned. Arranged CSD deployment - DEVITT to BINH DINH BROCKETT -			
			QUANG NAM THOMPSON - PHU YEN. Concern in some quarters on separation in I Corps zone.			

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### COMMANDERS CIARY NARRATIVE

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Army Form C 2113

MONTH AND YEAR

COMMANDING OFFICER

Place and grid reference	Day of Month	Hour	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
	12		Briefed new CSD personnel on their tasks. Conference at US EMBASSY on detail of	
			deployment. Ambassador advices visit 31 Jan - 2 Feb of SENATOR PALTRIDGE (DEFENSE)	
			whom I'll aim to take to DUC MY in a RAAF Caribou.	
	1			······································
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### COMMANDERS DERY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION AATTY

AATTV

MONTH AND YEAD

COMMANDING OFFICER Col F.P. SERONG

Place and grid reference	Day of Month	Hour	Event or information	Annex letter enclosure nu
**************	13			
	14		Captain PETERSEN reports VC tax collecting within 5 miles Ban Me Thuot	
	15		To PHU BAI. Cold, some rain. Much action in DONG DA Trg Area now. Another small battle yesterday. Truck mined. Staff now avoid vehicle tracks where possible. One battalion of 6 Regt has come in for training	
	16		Arranged AATTV deployment details with Lt Col MONAGHAN. Instructed him to "maintain an	
•	17		Australian presence" at DONG DA, and to keep a reserve. To Danang Nang.  Discussed posting - some AATTV personnel in battalion burning themselves out with  overwork Arranged rotation. To Saigon.	4
	18		Briefed Ambassador, with particular reference to deteriorating military & political position in I Corps.	***************************************
	19 20		- WOs OSTARA & McGARRY reported in for posting to CSD. GVN still have cabinet trouble- nominated generals do not want to give up their commands. Another big battle near BINH GIA. Some rioting and police reaction at Buddhist Institute as senior monks begin hunger strike against HUONG Government.	
	21		To BMT; dropped McGARRY picked up pope for reposting to 2 Div; to KONTUM, ambush out-	······································
•	22		DANANG saig goodbye to 2 Div. Returned Saigon.	
	ZZ	2	Col JACKSON, OD, arrived 1035 from Singapore to take over Command AATTV Riots down town, in front of US Embassy. Buddhist.	
	23	· .	Took Col JACKSON to call on COMUSMACV and Senior US officers, USIS HUE attacked.	

8.0.1730 Wt. T5777/5802 11m 2/61 999/267 JHL Ltd.

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# COMMANDERS D ARY NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION AATTY

MONTH AND YEAD

Place and grid Day of Hour reference Month		Hour	Event or information  Annex letter and enclosure number			
	24		Half Lao Air Force destroyed in an accident. Further calls with Col JACKSON			
	25	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	10000 protesting against Huong government march in Hue. Orderly. Calls			
	26		More calls. Demonstration in high school in Saigon. Suppressed by troops. Two small			
		***********	bombs on J4 Office MACV2. One minor casualty	······································		
	27	·	Khanh and AFC deposed SUU and HUONG. Wanted SUU to stay on as Head of State; but			
			he refused. Several ministries taken over by generals. Khanh virtual dictator (in			
······································		•••••	collaboration with Tri Quang). Trouble in Da Nang. All advisory personnel restricted			
			in movement. Discussed situation with Ambassador. Dinner at Embassy residence for			
			visiting Defence Minister (Shame Paltridge). Present, Westmoreland, Johnson, Thieu			
			Minh.			
······································	28		To Duc My RAAF C47 + H34 helicopters with Minister. Met AATTV people (Major Bannister			
			Senior Advisor) Discussed military + political position with Minister en route. Dinner			
ġ			at Foreign Affairs Ministry by Minh, with Thieu, Nhon, Vien,			
	29		Minister departed 1430. Text of press release attached			
	30		Farewell ceremony MACV1130			
	31		Depart for Singapore from Tan Son Nhut	· ·······		
				· ·· ·····		

FOR PRESS

# STATEMENT BY AUSTRALIAN MINISTER FOR DEFENCE SENATOR THE HONOURABLE SHANE PALTRIDGE

This visit to Vietnam has been one of great importance and interest for me. The Australian Government has been giving very close attention to the situation in Vietnam and considers that the maintenance of an independent South Vietnam is a matter of vital importance. In this conviction, the Australian Government has been assisting South Vietnam in non-military fields and by providing military advisory assistance and logistic support. Australian aid to Vietnam commenced in 1956 and was substantially increased last year in both the military and non-military fields. I shall shortly be saying something further about aid.

While in Vietnam I have visited Australian soldiers working as jungle warfare instructors as Duc My Ranger Training Camp near Nha Trang and I shall, within an hour, be talking to the men serving with the RAAF Transport Flight, Vietnam, which is based at Vung Tau.

I have also had useful coversations with His Excellency the Acting Head of State and leading members of the Government, including the Acting Prime Minister, Vice-Premier Vien and the Minister for the Armed Forces, General Tran van Minh, Ambassador Taylor and General Westmoreland and with the Australian Ambassador and his staff. I shall leave Vietnam with a much more intimate understanding of the difficulties and frustrations of this people's struggle and of the defence needs and problems of the country.

Reverting to aid, I am pleased to announce that, following discussions in recent weeks with the Vietnamese Government, the Australian Government has agreed to make available additional non-military aid to Vietnam to assist in the pacification programmme. Some supplementary military aid will also be given. Last year I announced that a special aid investigation team would be sent to Vietnam to investigate ways in which Australian aid could be increased. This team conducted investigations throughout South Vietnam and made numerous specific recommendations covering assistance to agriculture and in the fields of engineering, medical services and social welfare. Some of these recommendations, including the despatch of a surgical team, have already been put into effect. Others which I am now able to announce are.

(1) An Australian engineering team will arrive in Vietnam shortly. This team will work on the development of the Bien Hoa town water supply as a major project and, at the same time, will help improve road construction and maintenance techniques in conjunction with the provincial road authorities. The team will also investigate the possibility of undertaking additional tasks, including a proposal for the building of two canal bridges in the port of Saigon.

- (2) A further shipment of 3,000 tons of galvanised corrugated iron will be sent to Vietnam to complete satisfaction of the Vietnamese Government's request for 6,000 tons to be used for the military dependants' housing acheme.
- (3) About one million copies of text books will be printed in Australia in the Vietnamese language for use in village primary schools throughout South Vietnam.

The Australian Government will also provide additional military aid to Vietnam in the form of seventeen more army training instructors, briging the total in Vietnam to one hundred, and a replacement for the Caribout aircraft damaged some time ago.

I am sure that these additions to the sum of aid Vietnam is receiving from over twenty of her allies will be a further encouragement to the Vietnamese people to continue their struggle against aggression with ever-increasing determination. The Australian Government and people will continue to watch their progress with close and sympathetic interest. It is, of course, clear that the efforts of the Vietnamese Government and people and those of their allies can be fully effective only on the basis of a balanced political structure. In Vietnam, as alsewhere, a stable government will be an indispensable prerequisite to the auccessful outcome of the struggle against Communist subversion and terrorism.

SAIGON, 29th January, 1965 OFFICE OF THE SENIOR ADVISOR
DONG DA NATIONAL TRAINING CENTER
Advisory Team 5, APO 158
Phu Bai, Vietnam

13 January 1964

SUBJECT: Letter of Commendation

THRU:

Chief Training Branch O&T Division, USASEC Headquarters MAAG Saigon, Vietnam

TOS

WO 2 John C. Swanson, 32128 Australian Army Training Team Adjutant Piviaion Headquarters NAAO Saigon, Fistness

- 1. Upon your departure from the Dong Da National Training Center, Republic of Vietnam, I wish to take this opportunity to commend you and express my sincere appreciation for the outstanding manner in which you have performed your assigned duties.
- August 1963 to January 1964, with this training center has been exceptional. You have accomplished your mission with test and diplomacy. You have been loyal, and vigorous in the execution of all actions assigned you, and have set an example by your nest appearance and military bearing. Because of a language barrier between you and your counterparts, you have faced seemingly insurmountable problems, but through patience, perseverance, and self-improvement you have evercome them in a minimum amount of time.
- 3. It is with regret that we love you, however, I wish you continued success in your future assignments, and should the opportunity present it-self in the future, I would gladly accept you as a member of my command. Well done and good luck.

JOHN H. HEWELL La Golonel, Inf Sentor Advisor

La respense

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# OFFICE OF THE SENIOR ADVISOR ADVISORY TEAM 2 APO US FORCES 96337

27 January 1965

MAGTN-DN

SUBJECT: Letter of Appreciation

THRU:

Senior Officer Australian Advisory Group Danang, Vietnam

TO:

WO2. S.J. CARRUTHERS Advisory Team 2 APO US Forces 96337

Upon my departure from the Third Battalion, Fourth Regiment, I want to express my sincere appreciation to you for the outstanding manner in which you conducted yourself as the Assistant Battalion Advisor from 22 August 1964 to the present.

Your complete knowledge and application of aggressive infantry tactics and your tactful manner of making recommendations increased the efficiency of the team considerably. Regardless if you were working with the Battalion Headquarters or rifle company, you gave the appropriate advice in a professional and honest manner.

During those times of poor living conditions and circumstances when being an advisor was most demanding, your good nature, sense of humor, military bearing and neat apperance were always a welcome sight to everyone.

When you assumed the additional responsibilities of Battalion Advisor, during my absence from the battalion, you cheerfully took the responsibilities in stride and continued to present sound plans and recommendations to the battalion staff that more than once produced successful operations.

The respect you acquired from the Vietnamese officers and men speaks for itself. I would like to add to that my highest respect for you personally.

The best way I can express my respect and appreciation is to say that there was never a moment, under any circumstance, that I did not feel that I was associated with a soldier of the highest caliber.

Your conduct during the past few months brings great credit upon yourself and the combined Australian, American advisory effort in South Vietnam.

JAMES F. BARBER Captain Arty Bn Adv 3/4

#### AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM

VIETNAM

REPORT NO 30

FOR THE MONTH OF JANUARY 1965

BY

COL F.P. SERONG, OBE, COMMANDING

#### GENERAL

1. Both the political and military department of this war suffered badly during the month under review, with, on one hand, the final ejection of the HUONG government by the Armed Forces Council; and on the other, a marked step-up in the scope of VC initiated activities.

#### WELL BEING

2. Some inconvenience has been caused by movement restriction consequent upon civil disturbances.

#### MORALE

3. Continues excellent

#### SECURITY

4. In all areas, including Saigon, the battle has moved closer to the barracks. Contact is common now, and tactical security of living areas becomes a serious consideration

#### HEALTH

5. Minor ailments of short duration.

#### COMMENDATION

- 6. WOs K.F. McDONALD, S.J. CARRUTHERS and J. HUSBAND, all with infantry battalions of 2 Division, have made outstanding reputations for themselves through long months of intense operations.
- 7. WO NC CAMM who has served as interpreter, trainer and at present as adviser to the I Division Reconnaissance Company, is producing a splendid result.
- 8. WO B. OSTARA has recently distinguished himself by outstanding personal skill and bravery in action on the training area at DONG DA.

- 9. Captain D.W. McDOWELL is handling most capabley an extremely difficult situation in PHUOC TUY province, where major operations are continuing.
- 10. Letters of commendation for the following are attached to this report (Copy 1 only)

WO2 K.G. GABRIEL WO2 R.J. PENMAN WO2 K.J. RUDD

#### CURRENT ACTIVITIES

11 DONG DA (National Training Centre)

Normal training proceeds - with the good news that a battalion has at last come in for training. The atmosphere at DONG DA is now stimulating with the daily prospect of any routine training activity becoming an operation.

12. DUC MY (Ranger Training Centre)

No battalion in training at present. Other activities proceed.

13. SPECIAL FORCES

Quiet - to quiet

14. R/F - P/F

No Change

15. CAT LO RIDGE CAMP

Expanding for increased intakes.

#### VISIT OF DEFENCE MINISTER

- 16. AATTV was delighted to welcome Senator SHANE PALTRIDGE, Minister for Defence, who made time in a most difficult programme to call on our members in the field at DUC MY, bringing the good news of a further increase in establishment.
- 17. In this latter regard, it is essential that any increase contain a number of officers. The last major increase badly stretched our officer/WO proportion. It is assumed that the present standard of WOs will be maintained. Nothing less could meet the exacting requirements of the operation, nor maintain the splendid reputation already established.

#### CONCLUSION

18. This is my final report as commander AATTV. On 1 Feb 65, command passes to Colonel O.D. JACKSON, OBE. I leave this command with the highest regard for the men who have so well sustained the reputation of the Australian soldier in this theatre; for the splendid support of General W.C. WESTMORELAND and his MACV personnel; and for the generous help and wise direction of Army Headquarters, and Austarm Singapore, whose patience and understanding may have been, at times, surely tried, but who proved unfailingly responsive.

de l'Ecol.
Comd, AATTV.

#### DISTRIBUTION

AHQ (8)
COMUSMACV
AUST EMBASSY
AUSTARM SINGAPORE
DANANG DET (4)
DONG DA DET (3)
DIARY (2)
FILE
FLOAT.

Annex 'A' to AATTV Report No 30

#### Arrivals

Number	Rank Na	me	Scheduled Date of Arrival	Actual Date of Arrival	Station
2111		JACKSON	22 Jan 65	22 Jan 65	SAIGON
213542		CHAPMAN	22 Jan 65	22 Jan 65	DUC MY

### Departures

25 Jan 65 52925 WO2 S. BALCOMRE marched out to SINGAPORE for medical examination and return to AATTV or on movement to AUSTRALIA. Member admitted to hospital in SINGAPORE.

Annex 'B' to AATTV Report No 30

#### CASUALTIES

13163	W02	K. KEALY	Readmitted NHA TRANG hospital 18 Jan 65 for operation on abscess. Operated on 29 Jan 65
210576	W02	A.J. SEAL	Has suspected malaria
31967	WOI	E.J. MORRISON	Discharged from hospital 7 Jan 65 No marching or long standing
24492	W02	R.S. SIMPSON	ZAMA Field hospital JAPAN
52925	W02	S BALCOMBE	To SINGAPORE 25 Jan 65 for medical examination of torn cartilage.

Annex 'C' to AATTV Report No 30

#### APPOINTMENTS

#### 1. SAIGON

Col F.P. SERONG : Comd
Capt A.S. COCHRANE : Adm Offr
WO2 L.D. OSBORN : Adm WO
WO2 K.C. HOLLAND : Adm WO

#### 2. CSD

Capt I.C. TEAGUE DANANG - QUANG NGAI WO2 J.P. CLARKE DANANG - QUANG NGAI Capt A.B. PETERSEN BAN ME THUOT WO2 B STOKES BAN ME THUOT WO2 L.G. McGARRY BAN ME THUOT WO2 H.W. HAMMOND VUNG TAU VUNG TAU Capt D.W. McDOWELL WO2 E.H GRAHAM VUNG TAU TUY HOA - PHU YEN Capt A.G. THOMPSON Capt J.H. DEVITT BINH DINH - QUI NHON Lt R.J. BROCKETT : QUANG NAM - HOI AN WOI B OSTARA VUNG TAU

#### 3. DANANG (SPECIAL FORCES)

Maj J.C. HARDING 'B' Team DANANG WO2 A.J. LANE 'B' Team DANANG WO2 K.W. RAMSDALE 'B' Team DANANG WO2 WM BAXTER 'B' Team DANANG (Trg NUNG Coy) 'B' Team DANANG (Trg NUNG Coy) WO2 B.H. HAGUE WO2 R.A. MONKHOUSE 'B' Team DANANG WO2 R.J. BRAY 'A' Team KHE SANH 'A' Team KHE SANH WO2 P.M. CERDA-PAVIA Capt W.J. GREGG 'A' Team KHAM DUC WO2 R.F. SIGG 'A' Team ASHAU 'A' Team ASHAU WO2 G.E. MUNRO 'A' Team TAKO WO2 A.R. FOLBIGG 'A' Team ARO WO2 H.E. PATCH WO2 C.B. JUDD 'A' Team ARO : 'A' Team GIA VUC WO2 A.J. SEAL '

#### 4. DONG DA

Lt Col J.G. MONAGHAN : Senior Advisor Capt G.C. SKARDON : Chief Tactics Committee

CONFIDENTIAL

Jan 68

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#### Annex 'C' to AATTV Report No 30

	Capt K.W. MACKENZIE WOI AC DUNCAN WO2 J. McEWAN-FERGUSON Capt J.C. JACKSON WO2 D.G. HILL WOI W.D. HODGART WOI E.J. MORRISON WO2 A.S. SELVA WO2 N.E. RICHARDSON WO2 R.B. WADE		Chief General Subjects Committee General Subjects Committee Weapons Committee Chief Weapons Committee Tactics Committee Administrative WO/Tactics Committee Det 1 Div Det to 1 Div Det to 1 Div Det to 1 Div
5.	DUC MY		4
	Maj T.C. BANNISTER	:	Senior Training Advisor, Senior Australian Advisor
	WO2 C. KEALY WO2 D. CASSIDY WO2 B.E. CHAPMAN WO2 A.J. THORP WO2 A.H. MORRIS WO2 S.J. CARRUTHERS	: : : : : :	Advisor Jungle, Mountain Swamp School Ranger Unit Training Medical Advisor Ranger Basic Training To replace WO2 KEALY Ranger Unit Training
6.	LONG THO		
	WO2 W.J. LAPTHORNE WO2 A.A. YOUNG	:	Training Advisor Training Advisor
7.	VAN THANH	:	
	WO2 J.A. McRAE	:	Training Advisor
8.	QUANG TRI SECTOR		
	WO2 L HOAD	:	Training Advisor
9.	DONG HA		
	WO2 D.R. CHERRY WO2 J.H. STEEN WO2 R.J. KENNEDY		Sector Advisor Sector Advisor Sector Advisor
10.	QUANG NAM		
	WO2 J.T. MALONE WO2 J.D. ROY		Sector Advisor Sector Advisor

		3	Annex 'C' to AATTV Report No 30
11.	QUANG TIN		
	WO2 R.D. PRATT WO2 M. COFFEY	:	Sector Advisor 2 Sector Advisor
12.	THUA THIEN		
	WO2 H.J. CHARLES	:	Training Advisor
13.	<u>I DIV</u>		
14.	WO2 G.D. HARRIS WO2 R.J. PENMAN WO2 R.A. GABRIEL WO2 K.J. RUDD WO2 H.F. HUDSON WO2 D.G. YENCH WO2 R.G. CARTER WO2 J.R. STEWART WO2 D. WALLNER WO2 NC CAMM WO2 RG HARRIS		Battalion Advisor Tiger Company Tiger Company
14.	WOI G.E. CHINN WO2 K.F. McDONALD WO2 W.T. THOMPSON WO2 F.W. RILEY WO2 V.A. WATTS WO2 J.V. FERGUSON WO2 J. HUSBAND WO2 J.C. STEWART WO2 J.H. COLEMAN WO2 J.C. MOODY		HQ 2 DIV Liaison WO.  Battalion Advisor  Battalion Advisor
15.	I CORPS HQ		G3:
	Maj I.G. McKEOWN	:	S3 and Liaison Aust personnel 1 Div and 2 Div.

Annex 'D' to AATTV Report No 30

#### LOG OF INCIDENTS

Date	Location	Occurrence
1 Jan	KHE SANH	Small VC probe. Withdrew when fired upon.
4 Jan	ASHAU	VC fired on OP.
5 Jan	GIA VUC	5 VC suspects captured.
6 Jan	KHE SANH	Suspected VC carrying explosives captured between camp and airstrip.
7 Jan	DONG DA	Company on training area at DONG DA made contact with undetermined number of VC. No friendly casualties 9 VC KIA.