

# Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV)

Narrative, Annexes  
1 - 30 November 1962

**Series:** AWM95 - Australian Army  
commanders' diaries

**Item:** 1/2/6



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COMMANDERS DIARY  
NARRATIVE

UNIT/FORMATION AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM - VIETNAM

MONTH AND YEAR November 1962

SECRET

COMMANDING OFFICER Col F.P. Serong CBE

Place and grid reference	Day of Month	Hour	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
Saigon	1		<p>Prepared Field Service Regulations for COMUSMACV. This is a simple statement of six basic tactical principles and the purpose is to give them the full protection of the disciplinary code. This is essential if our operational plans are to have any military foundation. Canberra Committee meeting. US upset at deportation of journalist ROBERTSON for "criticism of the family" Attended lunch given by Sir Stephen Weir, the Ambassador for New Zealand.</p> <p>Major L. T. Fitzpatrick and S/Sgt Chambers returned from DANANG.</p>	
	2		<p>Addressed Senior Advisors Conference in the progress of the war and forecast future developments. WO2 L. A Williams and Sgt Cochrane visited Saigon from Hiep Khanh. Major L. G. Clark MC arrived from Duc My en route for attachment at Trung Lap. Capt J. B. Healy of Danang admitted to 8 Fd Hosp Nha Trang for minor surgical treatment.</p>	
	3		<p>Briefing by General Harkins to Senior Advisors - consisted almost entirely of extracts from my report.</p> <p>I advised the Ambassador in the facts of the most recent Cambodian border</p>	

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Army Form C 2118

COMMANDERS DIARY  
NARRATIVE  
**SECRET**

UNIT/FORMATION ARMY TRAINING TEAM ETNAM

MONTH AND YEAR November 1962

COMMANDING OFFICER Col. F. D. Serong

Place and grid reference	Day of Month	Hour	Event or information	OBE Annex letter and enclosure number
			incident. Major L. G. Clark MC departed for the Ranger Training Centre, Trung Lap.	
	4		I discussed with the Chief of Staff the nature of any Command structure in the likely event of British NZ participation. I recommended against a "Commonwealth Force Headquarters".	
Long Xuyen	5	0800	Departed for Long Xuyen. I visited section of the Cambodian border. From examination of this and other provinces it is becoming clear to me that the strategic initiative in planning here is in the hands of the hamlet Committees. Lt Col A. S. Mann departed for Nha Trang and Duc My. WO2 L. A. Williams admitted to US Dispensary Saigon for suspect ulcer condition.	
	6		Returned to Saigon	
	7		A new operational Zone has been formed by combining three provinces, a separate sector under III Corps. It covers most of War Zone D.	

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COMMANDERS DIARY  
NARRATIVE  
**SECRET**

Army Form C 211

AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM - VIETNAM  
UNIT/FORMATION .....

MONTH AND YEAR November 1962

COMMANDING OFFICER Col F.P. Serong

Place and grid reference	Day of Month	Hour	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number <sup>OBE</sup>
			I discussed with General TIMMES further implementation of the plan to reduce the scale of US participation in the three installations where Australian personnel are located.	
	8		Advised against the Australian gift of 303 rifles to the GVN. Coincidentally, on the same day, Combined Studies people located a GVN cache of several thousand small arms (including 303). Somebody's private Q. Store.	
	9		Worked on WESTMONT beacon and others. Very unsatisfactory but cleared the deck of a lot of misinformation. The WESTMONT is good on paper but bad in fact. Am preparing to try out a new beacon issued to Special Forces. Trouble with WESTMONT is that it was designed and manufactured by a group who had no knowledge of the state of this and, that in fact, better beacons exist. Monthly Report to AHQ.	10
	10		Lt Col Campbell, J3 MACV, gave me a photomap on which he asked for Lt Col HATFIELD, Australian Services Attache, Cambodia, to mark his position as he stood in the disputed border villages. Will try.	

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AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM VIETNAM  
UNIT/FORMATION .....

MONTH AND YEAR November 1962

COMMANDING OFFICER COL F. P. Serong

SECRET

Place and grid reference	Day of Month	Hour	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
	11		Discussed with the Ambassador the distribution by AATTV of maize to the MONTAGNARDS as a coordinated public relations effort. It seems a good idea. Is my birthday.	
	12		Public Holiday in lieu of Veteran's day.	
Tay Ninh	13		Visited Tay Ninh province by road with Major CONG. Escort of one platoon and two armoured cars. No incident. Saw an excellent SDC Training Centre and some very good Catholic strategic Hamlets which prove that things can be done. Sgt J. Cochrane departed for Hiep Khanh.	
	14		Checked on War Zone C. Not much in it. Arranged for extra ammunition for Hamlet CAU XA which is anticipating an attack. Returned to Saigon. WO2 Williams discharged from US Dispensary - Restricted Diet.	
	15		Canberra Committee meeting. Addressed by Mr. TOO, Director of Psychological Warfare, MALAYA. Knows his business though he had a bad	

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COMMANDERS DIARY  
NARRATIVE

Army Form C 2113

AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM (V) VNAM  
UNIT/FORMATION

MONTH AND YEAR November 1963

SECRET

COMMANDING OFFICER Col F. P. SERONG

Place and grid reference	Day of Month	Hour	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number <sup>OBE</sup>
			reception from General OUI, the VN opposite number. Pay acquittances to AHQ 4307.35 \$US; 23880 \$VN	
	16		Conference with Lt Col PURCELL, C1 KHOTA TINNGI, Sgt. FLANNERY arrived from DUC MY. WO WILLIAMS returned to Hiep Khanh.	
	17		Visited 5 Div by HUIA. Tac HQ at THU DAU MOT. I visited two battalion operations both of which were quite pointless. I suspect that the Comd 5 Div has deliberately committed all his troops to avoid having to disgorge them for the forthcoming operation in ZONE D. He wants to form a Jungle Battle School. We may help. Sgt Hacking arrived from Hiep Khanh for movement to 8 Fd Hospital Nha Trang - Knee trouble.	
	19		Good report by Lt Col DUNCAN on group at Hiep Khanh. Lt Col A. S. MANN DSO departed for SONG MAO Training liaison. Sgt. HACKING departed for Nha Trang.	
	20		Received a request from Col LAYTON, Combined Studies, to keep Sgt SIMPSON at KAE SON. Cannot accede infortunately as this would break faith with	

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COMMANDERS DIARY  
NARRATIVE

Army Form C2118

AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM BINH

UNIT/FORMATION.....

MONTH AND YEAR... November 1963.....

SECRET

COMMANDING OFFICER. Col. F.P. Serong.  
OBE

Place and grid reference	Day of Month	Hour	Event or Information	Annex letter enclosure and number
			PHU BAI and put the whole scheme in bad repute. Visited Tac HQ 5 Div and discussed Battle School and operations with Colonel THANG, Comd 5 Div. Sgt FLANNERY attached to TRUNG LAP.	
	21		Reported on Comd 5 Div to COMUSMACV. I recommended that he be left undisturbed. Capt HEALY discharged from 8 FD Hosp Nha Trang. Lt Col A. S. MANN returned from Song Mao.	
	22		Thanksgiving day. I visited the second day of Phase 1 of Zone D Operations. A great mass of aircraft (49 helicopters and about the same each of close support and transport aircraft) Few VC contacted. A completely air transported operation. As might have been expected, in the face of such a large force the VC moved elsewhere. Some crop destruction.	
	23		Discussed proposal for a National strategy with General ROWNEY (ACTIV)	



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NARRATIVE

AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM VIETNAM  
UNIT/FORMATION

MONTH AND YEAR November 1963

SECRET

COMMANDING OFFICER Col F. P. Serong

Place and grid reference	Day of Month	Hour	Event or information	OBE Annex letter and enclosure number
			aimed at integrating USOM and MACV efforts.	
			Capt HEALY departed for DANANG. Capt WADE arrived from DUC MY.	
Saigon	24		Discussed diplomatic list status of senior AATTV officers with Ambassador. No problems this end. All problems are with the Department of External Affairs, CANBERRA, who display a queer attitude. Fuss from JGS because press have compromised Zone D operational plans. They propose calling off the operation. A face saving excuse.	
	26		Discussed beacons at R & D. Not much progress there. Trying to locate a man from the North American Aviation Company who is promoting one. Discussed a device for fitting to vehicles (grenade projector) for counter ambush. Very hairy ideas. The decrees for the reorganisation of RVNAF are signed. Maj FITZPATRICK and WO VEZGOFF departed for NHA TRANG for pay and administrative liaison.	
	27		Conference with Minister for Civic Action on the present situation and	

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AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM - VIETNAM  
UNIT/FORMATION

MONTH AND YEAR November 1963

COMMANDING OFFICER Col. F. P. Serong  
OBE

SECRET

Event or information

Place and grid reference	Day of Month	Hour	Event or information	Annex letter and enclosure number
			future plans.	
			Maj Fitzpatrick and WO Vezgoff returned to Saigon.	
	28		Flew to CAMAU Province. Visited Sea Swallow (Fr HOA). Very impression. Later visited another (but small) hamlet run by a Catholic priest also very good; without outside help except weapons. Camau is the worst province. The administration is just managing to hold on to administrative installations-too extended.	
			Capt. B. WADE of the Ranger Training Center, DUC MY, reported for attachment to TRUNG LAP.	
Camau Prov.	29		Visited more hamlets. Not so good, but they're trying. Due to a typhoon warning no aircraft were available for the return to Saigon. All aircraft were evacuated to BANGKOK and to BAN ME THUOT etc.	
	30		Returned to Saigon by road. Two vehicle escort. No incidents. Traffic normal.	

AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM - VIETNAM  
Report No. 4  
For Month Ending 30 Nov 62  
By  
Colonel F. P. SERONG, O.B.E. Commanding

SVN 28

A. H. Q.

WELL BEING

1. The submission making suggestions for revision of the Scale of Allowances has been completed and is being forwarded under separate cover.
2. Briefly this indicates that the present scale of allowances requires a married man either to live under adverse social conditions, or to deprive his family in Australia of a portion of their income. It also indicates that, at the present scale, most married men will find themselves unable to make full use of the necessary recreational and leave facilities that have been provided.

HEALTH

3. No special comment.
4. W. O. Williams was briefly hospitalized with a stomach ulcer. He has returned to duty on a diet. This will need watching.
5. Appendix "A" lists status of sickness and minor casualties.

MORALE

6. Continues to be good. In most areas as the work load increases the morale rises. There has been a reduction in the strength of US personnel at two of the three major training establishments with which we are connected, leaving the Australian component with increased responsibility, and more opportunity to display special techniques appropriate to the operations.

GENERAL

7. Comments on Individuals

Much favorable comment on individuals and groups continues to come forward. In particular, during this month the work of Sgt Simpson, who has been temporarily detached to assist the Special Force Village Defense project at Ke Son is noteworthy, as also is that of Lt Young, who has organized a new Intelligence/Operations office at his establishment in Danang, and that of Capt Tinkler, who, in the absence of the US Senior Advisor at Hiep Khanh, has been performing that officer's duties.

DETACHMENTS

8. The policy of making temporary detachments to broaden the experience of team members is proving workable and satisfactory. Useful liaison has been built with the senior US Officers of various arms (in particular, Artillery, Signals and Armour) who are ensuring that the maximum training value compatible with their basic tasks is afforded to members of corps other than Infantry.

LANGUAGE TRAINING.

9. I am advised that all US NCOs and Senior Officers entering MAAG are now to be given a three months language course in the United States prior to posting here. This policy will give rise to a need for corresponding action in Australia for AATTV replacement personnel. Course instructional material, which includes general cultural and military briefing aspects, is available in the United States.

ACCOMMODATION

10. The house to be provided for Comd AATTV is currently being negotiated. Splendid co-operation from the US military authorities produced this house. Furthermore, I should like to place on record my appreciation of the speed with which permission to negotiate was received from A. H. Q.

CHRISTMAS GREETING.

11. AATTV takes this opportunity of extending to the Chief of the General Staff, Members of the Military Board, and the Staff of A. H. Q. Christmas Greetings for 1962, and good wishes for the New Year 1963.



Colonel  
Commanding

4 Dec 62

cc: COMUSMACV  
Embassy  
File  
Diary (2) ✓

APPENDIX "A" TO  
AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM  
VIETNAM  
Report No. 4

APPOINTMENTS OF DETACHMENTS

Reference Appendix "A" to Report No. 1

1. Due My

Major Clark in addition to being Senior Training Advisor, is also Deputy Senior Advisor at RTC and Deputy Security Officer for the MAAG Compound.

2. Hiep Khanh

No Change

3. Phu Bai

No Change

4. Da Nang

Lt Young Combined Studies Intelligence/Operations Officer.

Appendix B to  
Australian Army Training Team  
Vietnam  
Report No 4

CASUALTIES

- 335092 Capt HEALY J. B. Admitted to US 8Fd, Hosp - Nha Trang on 2  
Danang Detachment November for minor surgery.  
Discharged 20 November 1962.
- 335092 WOII WILLIAMS L. Member was admitted to Saigon Dispensary on  
Hiep Khanh Detachment 5th Nov and discharged 14th Nov. Diagnosis  
Ulcer, prepyloric, stomach-ache, without  
obstruction. Discharged for duty with  
instructions to undertake a soft bland ulcer  
diet. Member is progressing well.
- 26631 SGT HACKING W.F. Member admitted to 8th Field Hospital Nha  
Hiep Khanh Detachment Trang 20 Nov. Diagnosis twisted kneecap with  
slight amount of fluid accumulated. Member  
is shortly due for discharge from Hospital.