

FOREWORD

BY THE
THE COMMANDING OFFICER
LIEUTENANT COLONEL R.C. SMITH



1996 has been another challenging year for the Battalion. It has signalled the coming of age of the Battalion, with its first overseas deployment and first commitment to a large exercise. The most significant event this year was the raising of C Company, which has gone from strength to strength since forming.

Much has been achieved this year with plenty of activity across all areas of the Battalion. A Company has continued to grow and develop its capability and its standards continue to improve. This is evident in the way it has effectively detached its members to deploy as part of the Full Time companies on activities like Sub Unit Training at Canungra and Exercise Swift Eagle 96. B Company has had a busy year with exercises all over the country and has developed a solid reputation. It reached MLOC in June and successfully deployed as Rifle Company Butterworth, participating in Combined Exercises in Thailand and Borneo, as well as conducting its own training in Peninsula Malaysia. C Company quickly raised and, after a brief shake down period, deployed on HMAS Tobruk to Exercise Swift Eagle 96. Here it displayed its versatility, operating both dismounted and airmobile in vastly different terrain types, achieving significant successes. BHQ after a shaky start on Exercise Four Close developed to a good standard, evident in the successful results achieved in its complex tasks on Exercise Swift Eagle 96. Of course, none of this would have been possible without the ever effective support provided to all of these activities by Administration Company. Reacting at short notice, with limited information and manning, the platoons in Administration Company have always managed to keep the Battalion going. Additionally, we have started to have successes on the sporting fields, though we will need to continue to put effort into this area if we are to remain competitive.

Yet again we have all been well supported by our families throughout all of the activities this year. Without their continuing support the Battalion cannot be effective.

Many more challenges lay ahead. 1997 will be dominated by the conversion of the Battalion to the Commando role. I have been pleased by the manner in which you have approached the conversion so far. We will need to maintain this enthusiasm in order to meet the new requirements. Training as Commandos will be tough, demanding and challenging but it will be very rewarding. This new role will ensure a vibrant and secure future for the Battalion well into the next century. Give it your best shot.

Duty First.

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