

RNZAC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER #243 June 2025

Meetings Happy Hour: Thursday 3 July 2025 at 1700 hrs at the Papanui RSA.

Whose is it?



QAMR



05/06 Australia bound cargo. More than 300 soldiers and more than 35 vehicles - including Light Armoured Vehicles (NZLAV) and Bushmaster protected mobility vehicles - are Australia bound for two of our most significant exercises of the year.

This morning, personnel and capability were loaded onto Royal New Zealand Navy's HMNZS Canterbury for the trip across the ditch, before a packed schedule of training and exercises gets underway. First up, Exercise Diamond Strike, where our Combat Team will embed with our allies at 7th Brigade - Australian Army to fine tune our interoperability ahead of Exercise Talisman Sabre - one of the largest multinational exercises of its kind, with 19 nations and up to 30,000 personnel participating.

“Nothing sharpens the blade better than high-quality complex field training opportunities, at scale alongside your partners. These two exercises are key milestones for us on our interoperability journey with Australia, but they're also a vital test of our ability to deploy world-class, lethal combat forces. We can't wait to get after it.” ~ LTCOL Caleb Berry, Commanding Officer QAMR



13/06 Combat Team arriving into Australia.

During the voyage the CT integrated into the HMNZS Canterbury's ship routine, conducting PT and supporting daily activities.

HQ staff reinforced procedures through the trip with professional development focusing on SOPs, while crews positively engaged with the ship's company with informative lab and vehicle tours.

Overall, the trip was smooth, with only a few experiencing mild seasickness.



19/06 Exercise Diamond Strike Firepower Demonstration

The live firing demonstration at Shoalwater Bay Training Area was an impressive showcase of military capability, featuring tanks, armoured fighting vehicles, artillery, infantry support weapons and small arms, with 3 Troop's contribution of 2 x NZLAV from the Combat Team demonstrating the team's skills and expertise.



27/06 Purpose Built Range Conducting Officer Course

Recently, the unit ran a PBRCO Course, with students from QAMR, 1RNZIR, and 2/1 RNZIR taking part.

Students showed a solid understanding of safety protocols, Defence Force Orders, and Range Standing Orders while planning and executing a small arms purpose-built range practice and performing the duties of a Range Conducting Officer.

A big thank you to Training Wing and everyone who helped plan and support the course.



27/06 Interoperability packs a punch. Our Combat Team has kicked off Exercise Diamond Strike in Australia by leading the advance of Battle Group Ram (8/9 Royal Australian Regiment), including an attack onto the Urban Operations Training Facility at Raspberry Creek.

Admin & Log



The Association held a mid-winter luncheon at the Richmond Working Men's Club in Christchurch on 29th June. It was well attended and a good opportunity to catch up with fellow members.

Answer: Germany Puma IVF

Germany to acquire more Puma Infantry Fighting Vehicles in response to European security threats.

According to the German defence budget draft 2025, Germany has earmarked €1.48 billion to procure additional Puma infantry fighting vehicles IFVs, with committed payments planned at €503.6 million in 2028 and €976.8 million in 2029. This investment is a cornerstone of Germany's broader rearmament initiative, aimed at reinforcing its mechanized forces and modernizing the German army (Bundeswehr) in response to growing geopolitical instability across Europe.

The Puma IFV (Infantry Fighting Vehicle) is the backbone of the German Army's mechanized infantry units. It serves as the primary combat vehicle for the Panzergrenadier units, combining troop transport, fire support, and digital battlefield integration in one platform. Developed by Projekt System & Management GmbH, a joint venture between Rheinmetall and Krauss-Maffei Wegmann, the Puma is widely recognized as one of the most advanced infantry fighting vehicles in the world. It was designed to operate in high-intensity, multi-domain operations alongside main battle tanks, ensuring speed, protection, and firepower for frontline infantry.

In terms of firepower, the Puma is equipped with a fully stabilized 30mm MK30-2/ABM automatic cannon capable of engaging moving targets with high accuracy and using programmable airburst munitions to defeat entrenched infantry and drones. It also integrates twin-launchers for Spike-LR anti-tank guided missiles, providing precision strike capability against armoured threats at ranges up to 4,000 meters. A coaxial 5.56mm machine gun complements the primary armament for close-in defence.

For protection, the Puma features a modular armour system adaptable to mission requirements, including add-on composite armour that meets NATO STANAG Level 6 ballistic protection. The vehicle is fitted with the MUSS 2.0 soft-kill active protection system that detects and neutralizes incoming anti-tank guided missiles using directional countermeasures. Its interior is designed to protect the crew and dismounted infantry against mines and improvised explosive devices with energy-absorbing seats and underbody blast protection.

In terms of mobility, the Puma is powered by a 1,090 hp MTU V10 diesel engine coupled with a Renk HSWL 256 automatic transmission, allowing it to reach speeds over 70 km/h on road and maintain agility across rough terrain. Its hydro-pneumatic suspension and low ground pressure ensure high cross-country performance, while its compact dimensions allow for rail and air transportability. The Puma is also equipped with full NBC protection, an advanced battlefield management system, and integrated thermal imaging for all-weather, day-and-night operations.

Germany's procurement strategy for the Puma IFV has evolved over more than a decade. The initial contract in 2009 covered 405 units, later revised to 350, with deliveries completed by 2021. In June 2021, Germany signed a €1.04 billion contract to upgrade 154 vehicles to the S1 standard. This was followed by a €770 million contract in 2023 to modernize another 143 vehicles. In May 2023, an additional €1.1 billion contract was approved for 50 new

Puma IFVs, bringing total deliveries to over 400 units. The latest 2025 allocation confirms Berlin's intent to fully standardize and operationalize the Puma fleet by 2029.

This new defence push comes as Germany redefines its role within NATO following the war in Ukraine. On June 24, 2025, the German government announced a plan to raise defence spending to 3.5 percent of GDP by 2026, with further increases expected through 2029. This declaration came just hours before the NATO Summit in The Hague on June 25, where alliance members agreed to a historic commitment of raising defence investments to 5 percent of national GDP. The decision reflects the alliance's response to mounting threats from Russia, which continues to militarize its western frontier and conduct aggressive military manoeuvres near NATO borders.

Germany, historically criticized for underinvestment in defence, is now undergoing its most ambitious rearmament since the Cold War. Alongside the Puma IFV program, the Bundeswehr is acquiring Leopard 2A8 main battle tanks, advancing the Main Ground Combat System MGCS, modernizing PzH 2000 howitzers, expanding air defence assets, and investing heavily in electronic warfare, logistics, and digital command infrastructure. The German Army is being reshaped into a fully digitized, rapidly deployable force structured around high-readiness brigades capable of large-scale combat operations within NATO's collective defence architecture.

The Puma IFV is at the heart of this transformation. As the foundation of Germany's mechanized infantry, it ensures the Bundeswehr maintains operational dominance in future European battlefields. With its blend of firepower, mobility, and advanced protection systems, the Puma positions Germany to fulfil its NATO obligations and assume a leadership role in securing the alliance's eastern flank in the face of rising strategic challenges.

Defense News Army 2025, www.armyrecognition.com 28 June 2025 - 15:07

Humour

June 27th is International Pineapple Day - who knew!

And since we love pineapples, we thought we'd share some bad pineapple-puns with you:

What do you get when you mix a Christmas tree and an iPad?

A pineapple.

Everyone thinks I'm weird because I'm addicted to ham and pineapple sandwiches.

But that's just Hawaii roll.

What do you call a fat pineapple?

A pineapple chunk.

The next person that asks me for a pineapple juice, a cranberry juice and some lemonade with a slice of orange all in the same glass ...

is gonna get a punch.

A man goes to the doctor with a pineapple in his nose and bananas in his ears. He says, "Doctor, what's wrong with me?"

The doctor says, "Isn't it obvious? You're not eating properly."

What is a bank card's favourite fruit?

A PIN-apple.

Why did the strawberry go out with the pineapple?

Because he couldn't get a date.



Reminders

RNZAC Association Web site: www.rnzac.co.nz

Contributions to this newsletter are gratefully accepted.

Email: smithmd@xtra.co.nz Phone 0220130778.

Mike Smith, Editor