

## RNZAC ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER #236 October 2024

Meetings Happy Hour: Thursday 7 November 2024 at 1700 hrs at the Papanui RSA.

**Whose is it?**



**QAMR**



### **04/10 Warrant Officer Promotion Course 2024**

Congratulations to SSGT Marshall on successfully completing the WO's Course. He was joined by his wife, Susan, at last night's graduation dinner. We recognise the efforts of all students and wish them every success in their future roles.



### 09/10 Cambrian Patrol 2024

Congratulations to the unit team on securing a prestigious Gold Medal Award at the esteemed Cambrian Patrol competition. Exercise CAMBRIAN PATROL is an annual international military exercise involving teams navigating a 40-mile course while executing various military maneuvers and patrol activities across the rugged Cambrian Mountains in Wales. We express our appreciation to all individuals who contributed to the team's preparation and participation in the exercise. Special mention to MAJ Warner and WO2 Thurgood for their support to the team during their tenure in the UK.



### 09/10 Promotions.

Congratulations to the newly promoted SSGT Ogle and MAJ Wright, who received their promotions this morning from Commander 1(NZ)BDE. MAJ Wright was accompanied by his wife, Beka. We offer our best wishes for their future roles and acknowledge the invaluable support provided by friends and family. Your ongoing support is always appreciated.



### **10/10 Deputy Chief of Army**

Congratulations to BRIG Gibbons on his promotion to Brigadier and appointment as the new Deputy Chief of Army. As former Commanding Officer of QAMR and current RNZAC Regimental Colonel, BRIG Gibbons brings valuable experience to his new role. We extend our best wishes to BRIG Gibbons on behalf of the unit and corps.



### **14/10 Manawatu Rugby League Champions 2024**

Congratulations to the Linton Cobra's Wāhine Rugby League team on their outstanding achievement in the Women's Grand Final on Saturday. The match was marked by intense competition, with a low-scoring first half giving way to a superior second half performance, resulting in a 32-18 victory. This win represents their third consecutive Grand Final title since the competition's inception. The team's management, players, and supporters deserve accolades for their tireless dedication and unwavering support. Special mention to LCPL Oltaches and Leota-Cracknell for their commitment and season-long efforts. Well done Ladies.



### **15/10 NZLAV Light Obstacle Blade Course 24/02.**

Members of WEC Squadron participated in a unit-run course, focusing on blade operation, light obstacle clearance, and basic track preparation and maintenance.



### **16/10 WEC Sqn Promotion**

Congratulations to LCPL Viljoen on his promotion by the RSM this morning. We extend our best wishes for his successful transition as a Junior Non-Commissioned Officer and for the remainder of his JNCO Course in Burnham.



### **17/10 Unit March and Shoot**

Photos from Tuesday's March and Shoot activity which involved mixed Sqn teams engaging in Battle PT around the LAV Track, culminating in a simulation shoot at the Weapons Training System. Team 4 secured the top overall team. Credit goes to Training Wing for their design and execution of a very successful and enjoyable activity.



### **21/10 NZLAV Non Tactical Courses**

The unit recently conducted NZLAV Non-Tac Drivers and Crew Commanders Courses, aiming to certify personnel in commanding and test-driving vehicles, as well as loading and unloading them from transport platforms like the Heavy Equipment Transporter (HET) or HMNZS Canterbury. Attendees included personnel from Spt Sqn, 10 Tpt Coy, and LMGI. The unit extends its gratitude to all supporting personnel, particularly Training Wing and unit instructors.



### **21/10 Combat Corps Training 24/02**

Congratulations are extended to the 16 unit personnel who received their red diamonds at last week's ceremony in Burnham. Well done to all graduates from QAMR, 1RNZIR and 2/1RNZIR. Appreciation is also expressed to Depot Company staff for their efforts and dedication throughout the course.



### **21/10 Change of Command Parade**

The unit would like to recognise LTCOL Murray's leadership tenure that has been marked by significant achievements for the unit and alignment with the Army's future objectives. We acknowledge his efforts and commitment as the CO. The regiment would also like to thank Heather and the children for their support and sacrifices throughout LTCOL Murray's tenure. Your continued connection to the unit family is acknowledged, and we look forward to future visits. Big shout out to LTCOL Berry, Greer, and their children as we welcome them back to the regiment, our unit family and local community.



### **22/10 New Armoured Soldiers Welcomed**

The regiment extends a warm welcome to the 10 new soldiers who joined our ranks on Monday. We are delighted to have you on board as valued members of the QAMR family and eagerly anticipate your integration and future journey as part of the RNZAC.



### **25/10 Farewell and Appreciation for Service**

This week, we acknowledge the tireless efforts and devotion to the unit of Jenn Rose and Jo Te Kanawa. Jenn's efforts at the workshop and welcoming nature will be deeply missed. Jo's invaluable contributions to the S9 Cell and broader unit activities will also be greatly missed at Headquarters. We offer our heartfelt thanks for their work at QAMR and offer our best wishes for their future endeavours. Thank you ladies.



### **27/10 WEC SQN Longest Day**

This week, WEC SQN hosted a Longest Day competition, an intense 11-hour inter-troop competition! Designed to build resilience and test core trade skills under fatigue, this marathon pushed everyone to their limits. A huge congratulations to 6 Troop for their unexpected victory! Special thanks to the Squadrons JNCO's for organizing this fantastic mental and physical challenge! Challenges included: Battle PT, Con course, Pack marching, Equipment carry, Upload and action drills, Tire chain up, AFV recognition, Bail outs, Casualty extraction, WTS and Swim Test.



### **30/10 Community Support**

Photos of unit personnel assisting with the movement and setup of props for the Linton Military Camp Community Halloween event to be held on Thursday and Friday.

## Admin & Log

### **Cambrai Commemoration 2024 – Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November**

We will be commemorating Cambrai this year on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> November. Usual format, Church Parade at mid-day, followed by nibbles at the Papanui RSA and then the RNZAC Association Annual General Meeting.

At the AGM this year we will be approving an updated set of rules for the Association. The New Incorporated Societies Act has changed how we need to do things, so to register under the new Act we will need to update the rules. A draft of the new rules will be sent to members prior to the AGM.

Nominations are open for anyone who wishes to join the RNZAC Association Committee. Half a dozen meetings a year allow us to organise our functions and keep the Association functioning. Anyone that is interested in joining the Committee should talk to Len Haynes, our current President.

To get accurate numbers for catering please advise the Association Treasurer, Mike Sheppard, if you are planning to attend. ( [miksan@xtra.co.nz](mailto:miksan@xtra.co.nz) )

**Presidents Report** – Attached to email, Please Read



**Lt. Mike Sheppard, Col. Harold Harris, Lt. David Harrison**

## **Answer: Australia M1A1 Abrams**

### **Australia Sends 49 M1A1 Abrams Tanks to Ukraine in Latest Military Support Package**

The Albanese government in Australia has decided to send 49 M1A1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine, marking one of the most substantial contributions to the country's defence efforts against Russia's invasion. This decision, part of a broader A\$245 million (US\$163 million) aid package, highlights Australia's evolving role in global security dynamics and its growing commitment to Ukraine amidst the ongoing conflict.

The aid package, which brings Australia's total military support to Ukraine to A\$1.3 billion (US\$863 million) since the Russian invasion in 2022, is part of a larger A\$1.5 billion (US\$995 million) in comprehensive assistance that also includes humanitarian aid. While this package demonstrates Australia's strategic response to the war in Ukraine, it also underlines a complex process of decision-making, diplomacy, and logistical challenges involved in transferring military assets of this magnitude.

The decision to send the M1A1 Abrams tanks has raised eyebrows, especially given the Australian government's previous position. In February of this year, when pressed on the possibility of sending tanks, Australia's Defence Minister Richard Marles had categorically stated that it was "not on the agenda." At the time, Marles emphasized other forms of support that Australia was prioritizing for Ukraine, such as artillery, armoured vehicles, and other military hardware.

However, behind the scenes, government sources now reveal that the process of donating the tanks had been under consideration for months, though it was complicated by the need to secure approval from the United States. Since Australia had initially purchased the tanks from Washington, any transfer of these military assets to a third party required American consent. This created a lengthy process of negotiations, which were not made public earlier in the year.

Minister for Defence Industry and Capability Delivery, Pat Conroy, who was en route to a NATO defence ministers' meeting in Brussels when he announced the decision, emphasized the importance of standing by Ukraine in its fight against Russia's aggression. "We stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Ukraine in their fight against Russia's illegal invasion. These tanks will deliver more firepower and mobility to the Ukrainian armed forces, and complement the support provided by our partners for Ukraine," Conroy said.

Conroy's announcement was made in London, shortly before heading to Brussels, where he will meet with his Ukrainian counterpart. The Brussels meeting will bring together NATO allies and other key international partners to discuss further support for Ukraine. Of particular note is the participation of the "Indo-Pacific Four" group, which includes Australia, New Zealand, Japan, and South Korea—four non-NATO countries with growing involvement in global security issues.

The involvement of these Indo-Pacific nations in the Ukraine conflict underscores the widening scope of the war's global implications. While geographically distant from Europe, Australia and its partners in the Indo-Pacific region have increasingly seen the need to address security challenges that extend beyond their immediate borders, recognizing that

the fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine has reverberated across the world, particularly in terms of energy security, trade routes, and geopolitical stability.

Japan and South Korea, in particular, have also ramped up their own support for Ukraine, while New Zealand has contributed military assistance and training. Together, these countries are signalling a robust commitment to the rules-based international order, with Ukraine's fight against Russian aggression seen as a critical test case.

The M1A1 Abrams tanks represent a significant upgrade in Ukraine's defensive and offensive capabilities. Known for their firepower, mobility, and armour, these tanks have played a pivotal role in modern warfare for several decades. However, the 49 tanks being donated by Australia are nearing the end of their operational lives. Government officials have indicated that a portion of these tanks will need repairs before they can be sent to Ukraine, although there is also an option for the tanks to be used as spare parts to expedite their delivery.

Ukraine will ultimately decide how to use the tanks, with the choice of repairing them or deploying them for spare parts based on their immediate battlefield needs. While these tanks may not represent the most cutting-edge technology available, they will nonetheless provide a boost to Ukraine's armoured vehicle fleet, particularly as the country continues to grapple with intense ground combat in its defence against Russian advances.

Australia, meanwhile, will retain a small number of its M1A1 Abrams tanks to aid in its own military transition to the newer M1A2 model. The M1A2 tanks, which Australia is in the process of acquiring, offer enhanced targeting systems, improved firepower, and stronger defences, ensuring that the Australian Defence Force remains equipped with state-of-the-art technology as it phases out its older tank fleet.

The donation of the Abrams tanks is only the latest in a series of contributions Australia has made to Ukraine's defence. Since the onset of the full-scale Russian invasion in February 2022, Australia has steadily increased its military and humanitarian assistance to the war-torn country. In addition to the tanks, Australia has previously provided a range of military equipment, including Bushmaster Protected Mobility Vehicles, M777 howitzers, and anti-armour systems.

Australia's Bushmaster vehicles, in particular, have been widely praised by Ukrainian forces for their durability and effectiveness in the battlefield. These armoured vehicles have been used in a variety of operations, including troop transport, medical evacuations, and supply deliveries, highlighting their versatility and importance in a high-intensity conflict like the war in Ukraine.

Beyond military aid, Australia has also played a crucial role in providing humanitarian assistance to Ukraine. This has included financial support for international aid organizations operating in the region, as well as direct aid to Ukrainian civilians affected by the war. Australia's contributions to refugee assistance, medical supplies, and rebuilding efforts in Ukrainian towns and cities have been a critical component of the country's overall support package.

Australia's decision to donate 49 M1A1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine marks a strategic shift in its foreign policy and defence posture. While Australia has traditionally focused its military

efforts on the Indo-Pacific region, particularly in response to China's growing influence, the Ukraine conflict has underscored the interconnectedness of global security threats. Australia's involvement in supporting Ukraine sends a clear message that the country views Russia's invasion as a direct challenge to the international rules-based order, one that requires a concerted response from the global community.

By providing tanks, Australia is not only supporting Ukraine's efforts on the battlefield but also signalling its willingness to take a more proactive role in global security matters. This is in line with broader shifts in Australian defence policy, including the AUKUS agreement with the United States and the United Kingdom, which aims to enhance Australia's capabilities in the face of rising security challenges in the Indo-Pacific and beyond.

Despite the clear benefits that the tanks will bring to Ukraine, there are still logistical and operational challenges to be addressed. Transporting and repairing the tanks will require significant coordination between Australia, Ukraine, and other partner nations. The complexity of maintaining and operating the M1A1 Abrams tanks, especially for Ukrainian forces already stretched thin by ongoing combat operations, is another issue that may need to be addressed through additional training and support.

Furthermore, while Australia's contribution is significant, it comes against the backdrop of Ukraine's ongoing requests for more advanced weapons systems from Western countries, including fighter jets, long-range missiles, and more modern tanks. While many NATO countries have been hesitant to supply such weapons, Australia's donation of the M1A1 tanks could add momentum to calls for even greater military support for Ukraine.

The Albanese government's decision to send 49 M1A1 Abrams tanks to Ukraine is a clear demonstration of Australia's growing commitment to international security and its determination to support Ukraine in its fight against Russia's aggression. By providing tanks that can bolster Ukraine's ground forces, Australia is helping to ensure that Ukraine can continue to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity in the face of overwhelming odds

The Asia Live News Service - October 17, 2024 at 21:11

## **Humour**

### **An elderly woman takes the stand**

In a trial, a small-town prosecuting attorney called his first witness, a grandmotherly, elderly woman, to the stand. He approached her and asked, 'Mrs. Jones, do you know me?'

She responded, 'Why, yes, I do know you, Mr. Williams. I've known you since you were a boy, and frankly, you've been a big disappointment to me. You lie, you cheat on your wife, and you manipulate people and talk about them behind their backs. You think you're a big shot when you haven't the brains to realise you'll never amount to anything more than a two-bit paper pusher. Yes, I know you.'

The lawyer was stunned. Not knowing what else to do, he pointed across the room and asked, 'Mrs. Jones, do you know the defence attorney?'

She again replied, 'Why yes, I do. I've known Mr. Bradley since he was a youngster, too. He's lazy, bigoted, and he has a drinking problem. He can't build a normal relationship with anyone, and his law practice is one of the worst in the entire state. Not to mention, he cheated on his wife with three different women. One of them was your wife. Yes, I know him.'

The defence attorney nearly died.

The judge asked both counsellors to approach the bench and, in a very quiet voice, said, 'If either of you idiots asks her if she knows me, I'll jail you both for life!'

### **Reminders**

RNZAC Association Web site: [www.rnzac.co.nz](http://www.rnzac.co.nz)

Contributions to this newsletter are gratefully accepted. Email: [smithmd@xtra.co.nz](mailto:smithmd@xtra.co.nz)

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