2ND/4TH BATTALION, THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT

A BRIEF HISTORY

With the reorganisation of the Army during 1973 due to the cessation of National Service, 2 RAR and 4 RAR were linked on 15 Aug 73 to form the 2nd/4th Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment (2/4 RAR).

The new Battalion was charged with the task of preserving the traditions, associations and museums of the two Battalions from which it was formed.

Between 1977 and 1979 the Battalion concentrated on conventional warfare including night and mechanised operations. In 1980 the unit was reorganised on light scales and trained as part of the Operational Deployment Force (ODF) in close country and conventional warfare operations.

The Battalion was placed on operational readiness, though not deployed, in 1987 and 1990. On each occasion the Battalion was prepared to evacuate Australian citizens from Pacific regional countries experiencing civil disturbance.

From 1990 to 1993 many individual soldiers from the Battalion served with the United Nations in Cambodia. In 1993, 54 soldiers from the Battalion were detached to 1 RAR for operational service in Somalia as part of Operation Solace.

In May 1993, 2/4 RAR was tasked to provide a Rifle Platoon for Operation Gemini in Cambodia. 12 Platoon Delta Company, deployed to Cambodia tasked with providing local security for Australian Army Aviation Assets.

In August 1994, 114 members of the Battalion deployed to Rwanda as part of the Australian Medical Support Force. The United Nation mission, UNAMIR II, was named Operation Tamar. The nucleus of the 2/4 RAR contingent was from A Company, tasked to provide security for the Australian Medical Support Force. Other 2/4 RAR personnel were employed in the Contingent Headquarters, as medical assistants and in logistical support functions.

The 1994 Defence White Paper directed the raising of an additional Infantry battalion to redress a perceived shortfall in the Army's capability to conduct land operations in accordance with strategic guidance. This additional battalion was formed on 1 February 1995 (the birthday of 4 RAR) by unlinking 2/4 RAR to reform 2 RAR and 4 RAR. The existing 2/4 RAR, complete, was retitled 2 RAR while 4 RAR will be formed incrementally over the period to 1998.

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COMMANDING OFFICERS

15 Aug 73 - 15 Aug 74       LTCOL L.D. Johnson
16 Aug 74 - 9 Jan 77        LTCOL J.P.A. Deighton, MC
10 Jan 77 - 31 Oct 78       LTCOL K.R. Schlyder
1 Nov 78 - 9 Nov 80         LTCOL R.B. Bishop
10 Nov 80 - 20 Aug 82       LTCOL D.J.F. Rowe
21 Aug 82 - 16 Dec 84       LTCOL M.J. Keating
17 Dec 84 - 15 Nov 86       LTCOL P.S. O’Sullivan, MBE
16 Nov 86 - 08 Dec 88       LTCOL I.J. Ballantyne
09 Dec 88 - 03 Dec 90       LTCOL M.G. Smith, AM
04 Dec 90 - 04 Dec 92       LTCOL P.L. Pursey
05 Dec 92 - 28 Jul 94       LTCOL P.F. McIntosh
16 Sep 94 - 1 Feb 95        LTCOL R.G. Wilson
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REGIMENTAL SERGEANT MAJORS

15 Aug 73 - 31 Aug 75  WO1 K.A. Hall
1 Sep 75 - 20 Nov 77  WO1 C.G. Evans
21 Nov 77 - 11 Dec 79  WO1 J.N. Hemerik
12 Dec 79 - 1 Dec 81  WO1 B.L. LeSueur, OAM, MM
2 Dec 81 - 12 Dec 83  WO1 T.R. Curtis
13 Dec 83 - 29 Dec 85  WO1 J.H. Dunshea
30 Dec 85 - Dec 87  WO1 R.W. Thompson
Dec 87 - Dec 89  WO1 G.R. Hansen
Dec 89 - Dec 91  WO1 C.W. Russell, OAM
Dec 91 - Dec 93  WO1 D. Bennett
Dec 93 - 1 Feb 95  WO1 G.L. Hughes
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MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

The linking of 2 RAR and 4 RAR to form 2/4 RAR was the first such linking in The Royal Australian Regiment. Since then 5/7 RAR and 8/9 RAR have linked. Consequently 2/4 RAR was, on linking the first RAR Battalion to possess two sets of Colours. It was also the first RAR Battalion to have two sets of Colours on parade. The parade was held on 15 Aug 73 - the day of the linking of 2 RAR and 4 RAR.

2/4 RAR holds in trust the Freedom of the City of Townsville for 2 RAR granted to 2 RAR on 15 Oct 71. This Freedom was exercised on 15 Aug 74, the linked Battalion's first birthday.

2/4 RAR also holds in trust and maintains the alliances of 2 RAR and 4 RAR. The Allied Regiment of 2 RAR is the Coldstream Regiment of Foot Guards, and the Allied Regiment of 4 RAR is the Irish Regiment of Foot Guards. 2 RAR is also a life member of the Old Coldstream Association in Australia, and 4 RAR maintains a close liaison with the Association of the 4th Infantry Battalions.