

PART 4

THE LATTER YEARS

1994 - 1997

Chapter 11

7 BASB Field Supply Coy

1994 - 1997

The Marszalek Year - 1994

7 BASB was officially raised on 28 February 1994, however, suitable accommodation was not available and the HQ was located at Wynter Road, Enoggera until June 1994. The BN had a manning of 516 personnel.

The Battalion was raised from the amalgamation of

- A. 2 Tpt Sqn
- B. 1 Dental Unit
- C. 7 Fd Sup Coy
- D. 77 Combat Supplies Platoon
- E. 104 Fd Workshops

The following units were raised to complete the structure.

- 1. HQ 7 BASB
- 2. 7 BASB Medical Coy
- 3. 7 BASB Admin Coy
- 4. Att 14 Mil Police Pl

The role of 7 BASB was to provide second line supply support to 7 Bde. The OC 7 BASB Fd Sup Coy now reported to the BN COMD instead of the Bde COMD.

In March 1994, selected 7 Bde personnel under the command of BRIG D. Low Choy (COMD 7 Bde) embarked on a one-week reconnaissance of the Derby/Broome area of north west Australia. This area had been designated as



the 7 Bde AO for future operations. The Sup Coy was represented by MAJ R.Z. Marszalek, CAPT A. Whiting (2IC ARA), CAPT P. Robinson (Pl Comd Warehousing) and 2 ORs. Bde personnel were transported by Hercules to RAAF Base Curtin, approx. 50km east of Derby. Curtin is a RAAF base, so all supplies had to be brought in by road from Brisbane. Accommodation was in demountable huts which were air conditioned as the daytime temperature was still 35 degrees celcius. During the week, time was spent visiting civilian contractors in Derby and Broome to establish if supply support could be provided to a Bde Gp on a two-week exercise. The conclusion was that it could. A logistics plan was put together and presented to the Bde COMD in the underground Ops Centre at RAAF Curtin at the end of the week.

A 7 BASB Camp was held at Greenbank in August 1994 and 7 BASB Sup Coy had the role of issuing combat supplies and manning a kerb-side refuelling point. This role was significant in itself in that full POL equipment was loaned from ARA sources and used by the Coy. The Coy was very fortunate that it had on its strength a Pet Op SGT who had recently taken discharge from 52 Cbt Sup Pl (ARA).

7 BASB Sup Coy held 7 Bde stock of general stores, combat rations, webbing and uniforms and carried out a bath unit role.

September 1994 saw the Unit again on the move to Meeandah, as Damascus Barracks had then become the home of 7 BASB. 11 Sup Bn had vacated the warehouses earlier. Unit members responded once more to relocation, some having quite some distance to travel with no public transport available.

The move of 7 BASB Sup Coy to its new home at Meeandah was completed in one weekend. This was due to the fine planning of key staff and the dedication/willingness of all ranks of the Coy. A lot of fun was also had particularly when looking at some of the old records/memorabilia/history of many years.

Work had to begin again on building security areas and office requirements in the deserted warehouse. This action took most of the parade time available and other activities were curtailed.



Loading the Stores Group Control Office demountable for move to Meeandah.

Having supervised the transfer to Meeandah and settling the Coy into its new role, MAJ Marszalek was not able to enjoy these successes as he had to tender his resignation in November 1994 due to work commitments with his civilian employment. He was transferred to the Inactive List on 1 December 1994.

In his 12 years in Ordnance, MAJ Marszalek gained wide respect from his superiors, peers and subordinates for his professionalism, enthusiasm and reliability. After being posted to 1 Ord Svc Unit as a 2LT in August 1982 following graduation from OCTU 1 Trg Gp, it was a great achievement on his part to progress through the ranks to become OC 7 Fd Sup Coy and then OC 7 BASB Fd Sup Coy.

The Hannan Years - 1994 to 1996

MAJ J.L. Hannan assumed command on the 17 November 1994. A former ARA Officer, he brought many years of experience to the role having served in many large Ordnance Units. He had been an ARES Officer since 1990.

7 BASB Fd Sup Coy role again was to provide a working environment for all units in 7 Bde. Regular issues were made to units on parade nights and days and delivery was provided by 2 Tpt Sqn to demanding units.



A Warehousing PL and Control Office provided the support requirements. The bath unit was not effectively functional.

No outside Camps were held in 1995 and 1996. No meaningful practical roles could be found for the Sup Coy. Instead, members worked at Meeandah issuing stores. As a result of this and a reduction in training days, morale fell and the unit's strength declined. Night parades had almost been eliminated to the extent of approximately one per month. Average attendance at most activities was 30. Although ARA personnel were posted on unit strength they rarely paraded with the Supply Company as they were used on other BASB activities.

The end of 7 BASB was signalled early in 1996 with Defence Force policy suggesting the total amalgamation of ARA and ARES units. 7 BASB had not been able to fulfil the role planned.

Defence Force planning had eliminated the Ready Reserve and a need to bolster full time units hastened the amalgamation.

The Hall Year - 1997

MAJ R.G. Hall, a former unit member who was commissioned in 1980, was appointed OC on 1 January 1997. He had the distinction of being the last Officer to command the ARES Ordnance unit. His role was to finalise unit activities with the demise of 7 BASB.

A camp was held in May 1997 at Shoalwater Bay with a role of receiving, storing and issuing foodstuff and combat supplies (Ammo and POL) and general stores to all units of 7 Bde.

All stores held in stock had to be returned to the distributing depot. This was a huge task and had to be completed by 30 June 1997. The task was successfully completed and signed-off by MAJ Hall. He had served with distinction in the units over a long period of time and had gained wide experience in general stores, repair parts and combat supplies. In addition, he represented the Corps with distinction in a variety of staff and training postings. He commanded the unit during a particularly difficult time and successfully maintained his troops as a viable group.



7 BASB units held a disbandment parade in May 1997 and was reviewed by its Commanding Officer, LTCOL S. Ham.

Unit members reported to Enoggera on the 1 July 1997 to begin a military career as part of an integrated ARA/ARES Unit .



MAJ R.G. Hall

With the exception of six years between 1942 and 1948, part-time soldiers had continually served from 1925 - 1997 in a part-time army, commanded and run that way. New and unknown horizons may now be open to the ARES soldier.

An Era had ended.

“SUA TELA TONANTI”

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