

TWO THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THREE DAYS *2007 - 2013*

OPERATION BLUE RIDGE

The 101st Airborne Division's Mission in Afghanistan

By Major General Robert M. ...





An aerial photograph of a mountainous region, likely in Afghanistan, showing a military base in the foreground. The base includes several buildings, one of which has the number '5224' visible. The terrain is rugged and mountainous, with some vegetation. The overall tone is sepia or aged.

TWO THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THREE DAYS *2007 - 2013*

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OPERATION BLUE RIDGE
The IAF's 6-year Mission in Afghanistan

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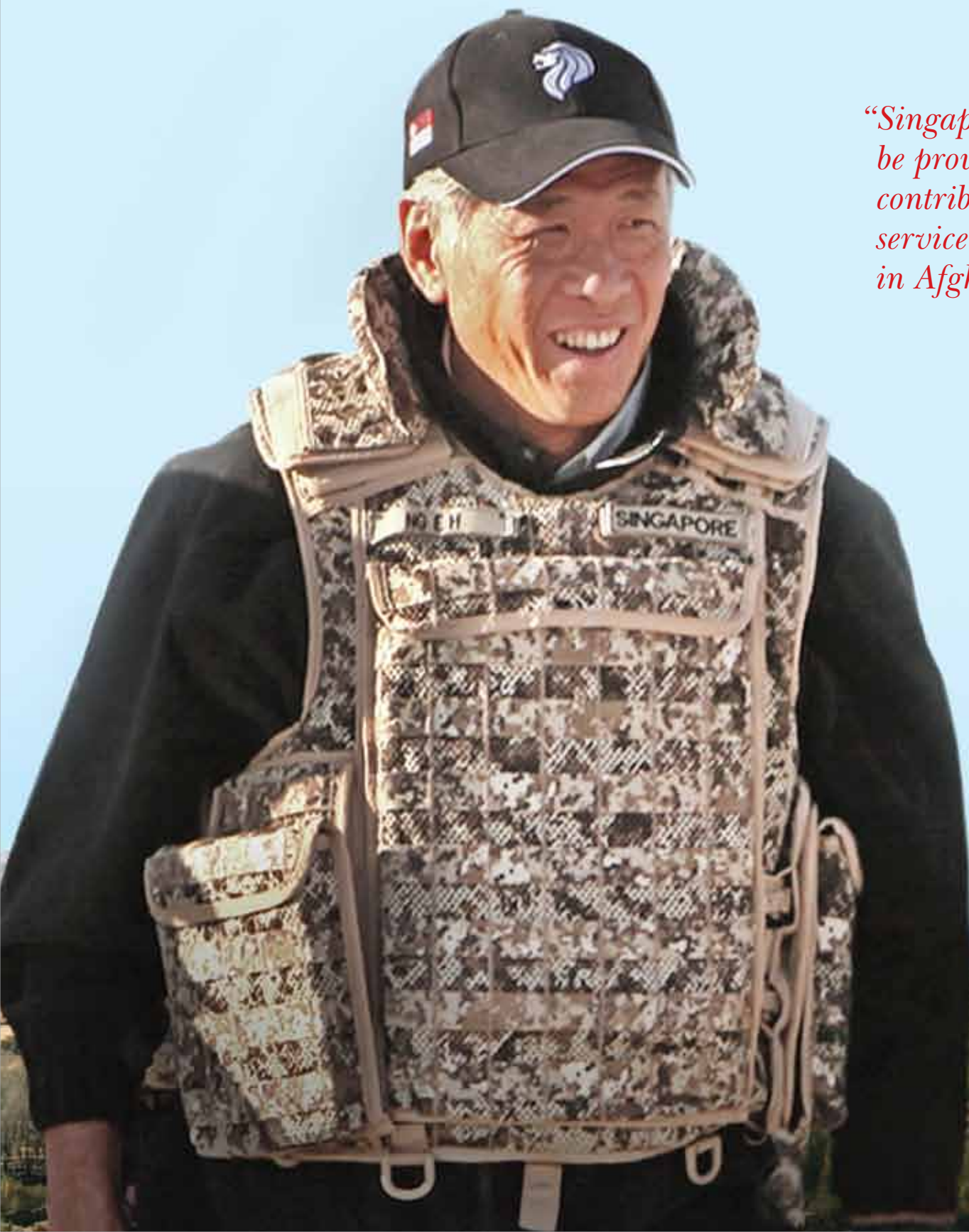
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Representing Singapore





“Singaporeans can be proud of the contributions of our servicemen and women in Afghanistan...”

Making a Difference

Foreword by the Minister for Defence

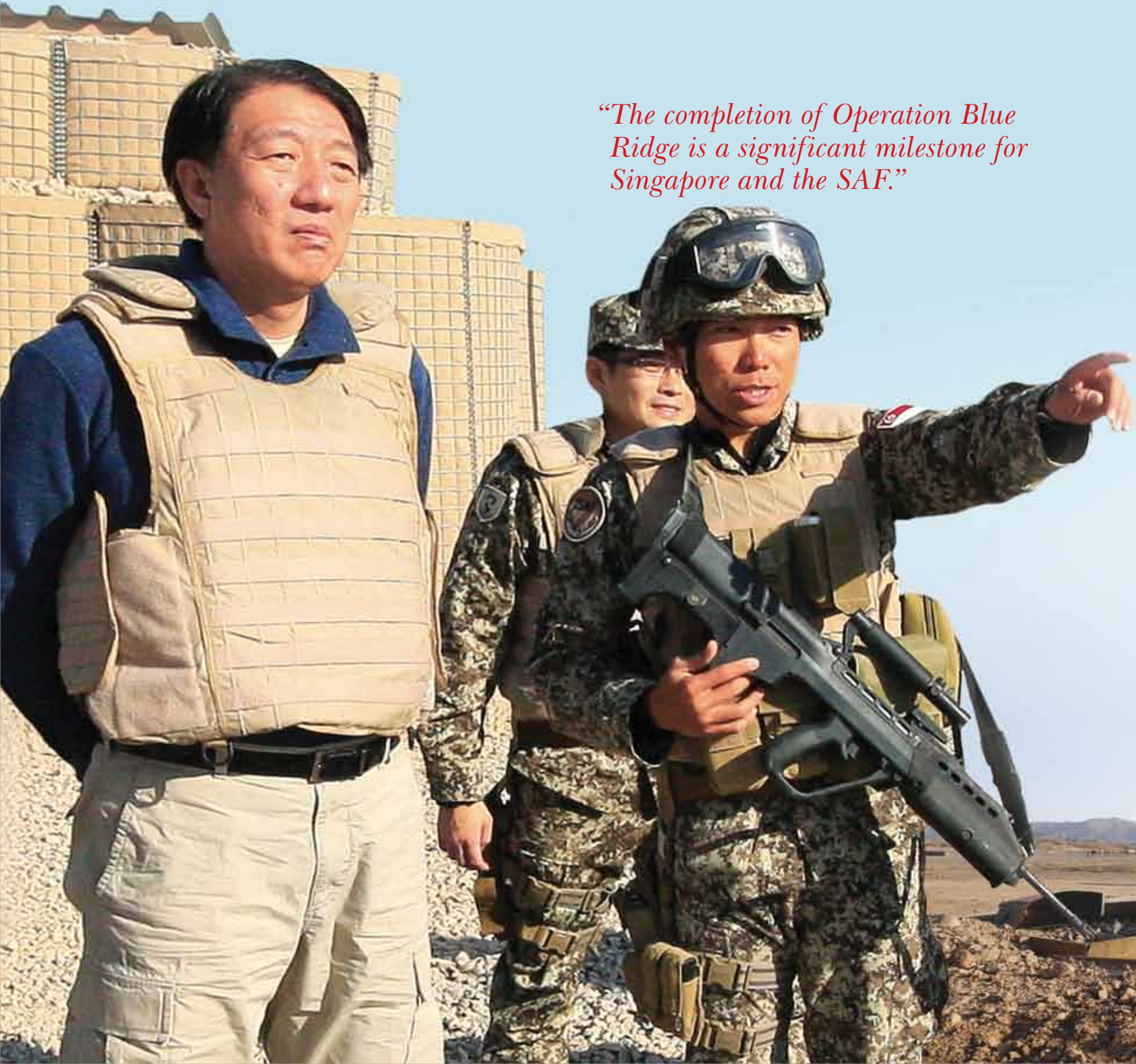
Terrorism is global and can affect all countries. In 2001, the Internal Security Department foiled plans by a Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) cell here that had planned to attack various targets in Singapore. Several JI members received their terrorist training in Afghanistan. If they had succeeded, many innocent Singaporeans would have been maimed or killed. Therefore, when we decided to deploy the SAF to Afghanistan in 2007 under the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), we recognised that Afghanistan was at the frontline of the global fight against terrorism. SAF's mission success in Afghanistan impacted peace and security in Singapore.

Working together with our coalition partners from Australia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and the US, the SAF, though small, was determined to punch above our weight and make a difference. The SAF reached out directly to the Afghan people to make their daily lives better. Our Engineering and Medical Teams built bridges, provided dental and medical care and clean water. Essential things we take for granted, but luxuries for the Afghan people. Our Surgical Team saved lives and limbs of innocents injured by Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs). Our Weapon Locating Radars also protected ISAF troops against in-coming rockets. Our aerial surveillance and imagery teams tracked down insurgents. The SAF trained Afghan soldiers in artillery and counter-IED skills, so that they can take charge of their own defences. These tasks were not easy in the harsh terrain and dangerous conditions of Afghanistan.

Our SAF men and women knew the personal risks they would face each day but despite this, more soldiers volunteered than we could send over the span of six years. The SAF has now completed its longest overseas deployment – **Operation Blue Ridge** – in Afghanistan. With this conclusion, I am glad that every one of our intrepid and resourceful soldiers has come back home, each with valuable operational experiences and memories that will be with them for the rest of their lives. They have done us proud and held high the flag of Singapore through their sterling performance and bravery. On behalf of the people of Singapore, I would like to express our gratitude to the families of our servicemen and women, whose unwavering support allowed us to complete this operation successfully. Singaporeans can be proud of the contributions of our servicemen and women in Afghanistan who made the difference.

Dr Ng Eng Hen





“The completion of Operation Blue Ridge is a significant milestone for Singapore and the SAF.”

Flying Our Flag High

Foreword by the Deputy Prime Minister
(Minister for Defence, 2003 – 2011)

The start of the 21st century saw terrorism emerge as a major threat to global security. Extremists made use of an unstable Afghanistan to train terrorists, and export violence and terror to the rest of the world, including Singapore. Several of the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) operatives detained for plotting terrorist acts in Singapore in 2001 and 2002 had trained in Afghanistan, and a copy of the JI reconnaissance video to bomb Yishun MRT station was found in the house of a senior Al-Qaeda leader in Kabul.

The international community recognised that the stabilisation and reconstruction of Afghanistan was critical in the efforts to combat terrorism. As a responsible member of the international community, Singapore deployed the SAF to support the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) to provide a safe and secure environment for the rebuilding of Afghanistan.

Over a period of six years, SAF servicemen and women were deployed to Afghanistan in areas where we were able to make useful and meaningful contributions. The SAF's contributions spanned a wide spectrum, from providing dental, medical and surgical treatment to the building of clinics, bridges and wells. The SAF also contributed to the safety and security of ISAF by providing early warning with a Weapon Locating Radar, Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and Imagery Analysis Teams. To help build up Afghanistan's security capabilities, the SAF partnered ISAF to train the Afghan National Security Forces in artillery and counter-

Improvised Explosive Device skills. Singapore is honoured to have played a small yet meaningful part in the ISAF's efforts to rebuild Afghanistan – contributions which were valued and appreciated by both the Afghan people and our coalition partners.

The completion of **Operation Blue Ridge** is a significant milestone for Singapore and the SAF. Besides being the longest and most diverse overseas mission that the SAF has undertaken, the operation showed that Singapore can play an effective role in helping to safeguard international peace and security. This in turn can have a significant impact on our domestic safety and security. I commend and thank our SAF servicemen and women who contributed to the success of our mission in Afghanistan. I would also like to thank the families of our servicemen and women for their support as their loved ones served our country and kept Singapore's flag flying high.

Mr Teo Chee Hean





“These deployments... covered a range of functional areas where the SAF was able to make niche and meaningful contributions.”

One Mission, Many Experiences

Message by the Chief of Defence Force

Operation Blue Ridge had been the SAF's longest and most diverse overseas mission. Spanning from 2007 to 2013, 492 SAF personnel were deployed in a myriad of roles and in various locations in Afghanistan. These deployments supported the multinational reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan, and covered a range of functional areas where the SAF was able to make niche and meaningful contributions.

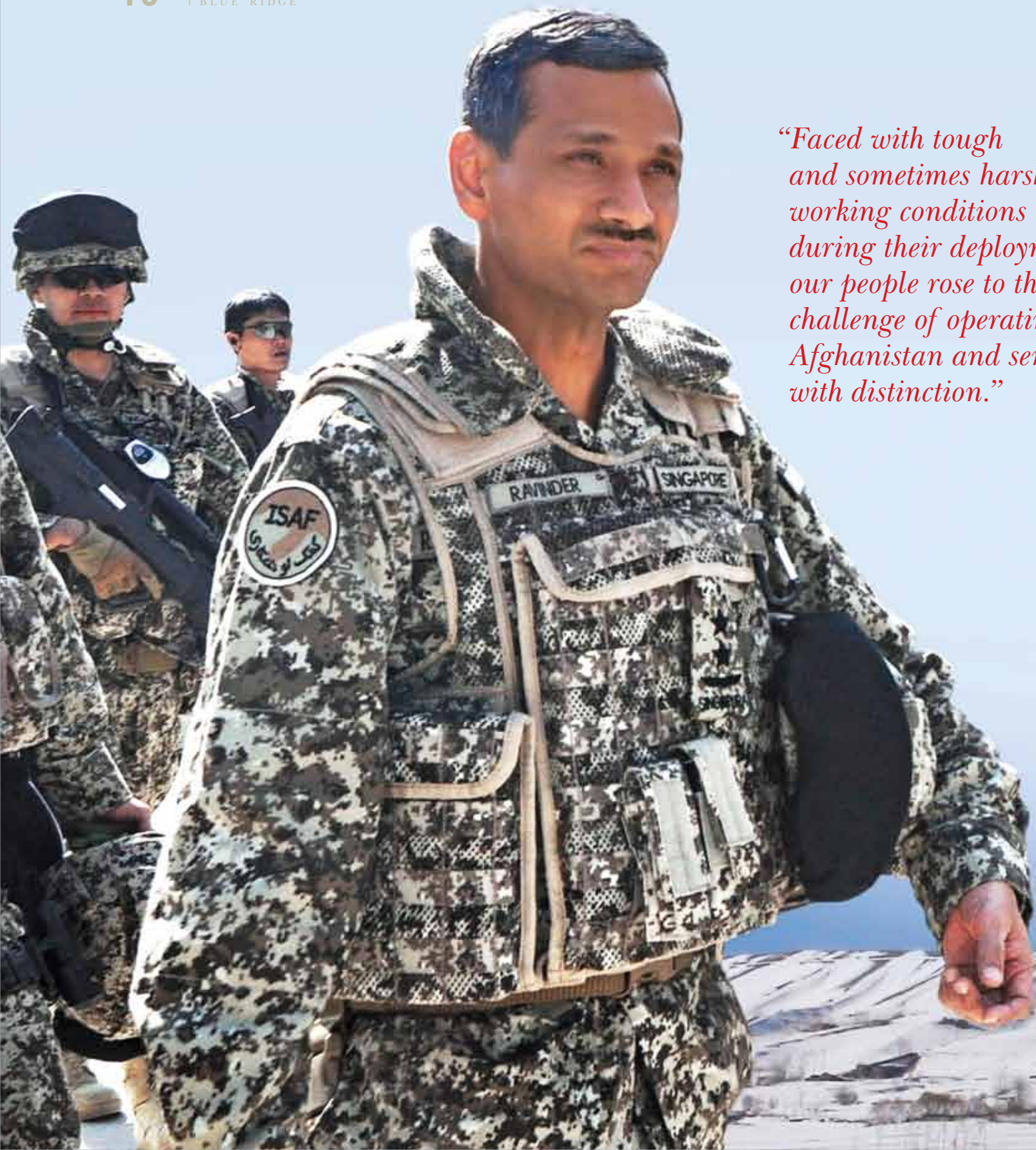
Our servicemen and women registered commendable service during their deployments. They provided dental services to Afghans who had not experienced dental healthcare before, built bridges to make travelling easier for the Afghan villagers, enhanced the provincial healthcare system by constructing clinics and wards, and provided convenient access to drinking water. Besides these, our people protected lives by providing early warning to troops against rocket attacks. Our Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Task Group and Imagery Analysis Teams provided our partners with valuable imageries and analyses that helped support their missions. Our people also taught the Afghan military to provide effective artillery fire support and shared our

expertise with the local security forces to detect and clear Improvised Explosive Devices. Over and above, we actively distributed humanitarian aid where and when it mattered.

We have gained invaluable experiences from our deployment in Afghanistan. With the completion of this operation, it is timely to capture our people's rich experiences during their days in Afghanistan. Through this book, I hope you will gain valuable insights into the essence and challenges of this deployment, and understand the various experiences of our people. This book is dedicated to the men and women of the SAF who participated in this operation, as well as our international partners, for making the SAF's mission in Afghanistan a success.

Lieutenant-General Ng Chee Meng





“Faced with tough and sometimes harsh working conditions during their deployment, our people rose to the challenge of operating in Afghanistan and served with distinction.”

Service with Distinction

Message by the Chief of Army

Our Army spearheaded the SAF's efforts in supporting international reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan from the start of **Operation Blue Ridge** in 2007. In the six years we were in Afghanistan, we took on a wide range of missions to do our part in making a difference to the lives of the Afghans. The Dental Project Team treated 993 Afghans who had never experienced dental healthcare, the Construction Engineering Teams constructed two wells and one water pump benefitting more than 20,000 Afghans, the Winter Deployment Teams distributed bags and stationery to 10,200 children, the Medical Teams treated 2,552 medical patients, and the Surgical Team operated on 85 patients, amongst many other contributions.

Our Army also contributed to making Afghanistan a more stable and secure place. Our Military Institutional Trainers trained 1,634 Afghan Artillery soldiers and qualified 211 Afghans in detecting and countering Improvised Explosive Devices. During their deployment, the Weapon Locating Radar teams detected 100 per cent of the rockets fired at the coalition base and the Imagery Analysis Teams provided valuable imagery analysis to our coalition partners. Working at the various coalition headquarters, our staff officers also performed very well, receiving commendations for their outstanding service.

These achievements would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of the men and women who made personal sacrifices to participate in this operation. Faced with tough and sometimes harsh working conditions during their deployment, our people rose to the challenge of operating in

Afghanistan and served with distinction. Indeed, the SAF received many accolades for the good work of our servicemen and women in Afghanistan from our partners, and these were testaments to the competence and professionalism of our people.

I would also like to extend my appreciation to all our support staff in Singapore, as well as the families of our deployed servicemen and women. The unwavering support that our servicemen received from home was critical to sustaining them throughout the duration of their deployment. This book is a fitting tribute not only to our people who had given their best and served with distinction, but also everyone who had contributed to making our Army's mission in Afghanistan a success.

Major-General Ravinder Singh



Closer Than We Think

The Threat of Terrorism
Touches Home

“...extremist terrorism remains a real and potent challenge. While Jemaah Islamiyah’s organisation has been disrupted, the underlying structures supporting terrorism in our region are still in place...”

Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong,

The International Conference on Terrorist Rehabilitation and Community Resilience, 26 March 2013

The global security landscape changed with the 9/11 attacks. Claiming over 3,000 lives from 85 countries, the attacks underscored the violent and catastrophic nature of transnational terrorism. In Southeast Asia, the Bali bombings in 2002 and 2005 showed that the scourge of terrorism remains a clear and present danger. Closer to home, the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) and its affiliates continue to pose a threat to Singapore. Transnational terrorism remains a serious and persistent threat to Singapore’s national security.

Harboured by the ruling Taliban government, the Al-Qaeda terrorist group used Afghanistan as a safe haven to train their operatives, launch terror attacks, and spawn a network of affiliated terrorist groups across the globe, including the JI. Based on evidence seized in Afghanistan, the authorities uncovered the Singapore JI operatives’ plans to attack Singapore. The targets included the Yishun MRT station and Changi Airport. In an inter-connected world, events that happen faraway are much closer to home than we think.



9/11 AND ITS AFTERMATH

The 9/11 attacks perpetrated by the Al-Qaeda terrorist network resulted in the US government launching a military operation in Afghanistan in October 2001. The objectives of the US were to remove the Afghan ruling Taliban government from power and to dislodge the Al-Qaeda network from its stronghold in Afghanistan.

Subsequently in December 2001, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1386, authorising the creation of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) as envisaged in the Bonn Agreement of December 2001. Led by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the

mission of the ISAF in Afghanistan was to assist the war-torn country in reinstating its key government infrastructure, engage in the on-going war against insurgents, and train the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF).

Nations which felt a shared sense of responsibility in helping to prevent the spread of terrorism came together to support the rebuilding of Afghanistan for long-term global security. As a responsible member of the international community, Singapore participated in the peace and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan in 2007.

The September 11 memorial in New York City.

AT THE FOREFRONT

Afghanistan is at the forefront in the global fight against terrorism. Extremists have made use of an unstable Afghanistan as a safe haven to train terrorists, and to export violence and terror to other countries, including Singapore. Terrorism knows no borders. The international community therefore has a stake in rebuilding Afghanistan, so that transnational terrorists cannot hijack the country to conduct its militant activities.



THE REGIONAL CONNECTION

Terrorism had been a significant security threat in Southeast Asia during the early to mid-2000s, and still is today. In 2002 and 2005, members of the regional terrorist group Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) carried out bomb attacks on the Indonesian resort island of Bali. The JI was known to be linked to both Al-Qaeda and the Taliban – some of their members had received terrorist training in Afghanistan, and were able to apply what they had learnt to carry out attacks in Southeast Asia.

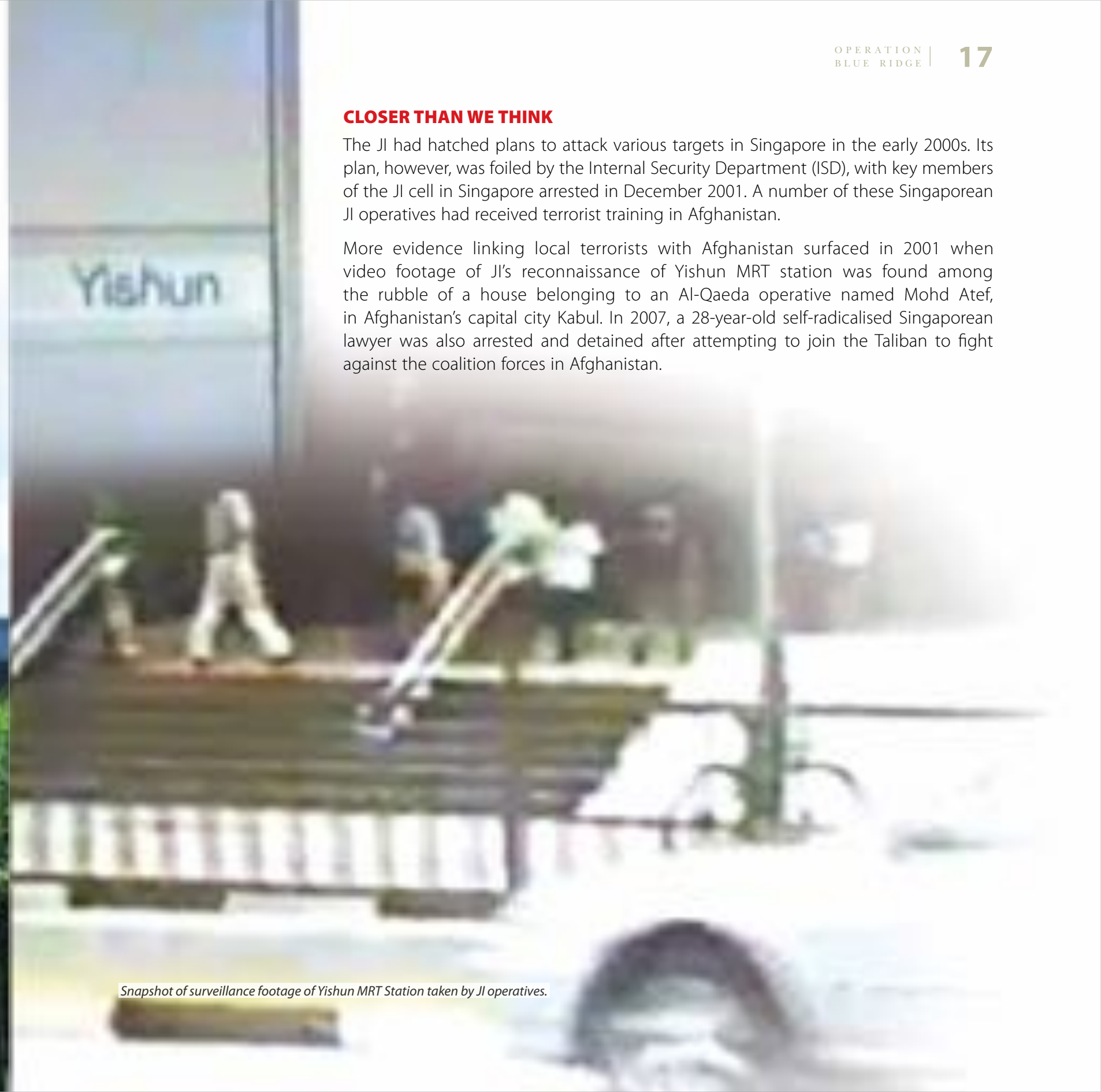


The memorial to the victims of the 2002 Bali bomb attack.

CLOSER THAN WE THINK

The JI had hatched plans to attack various targets in Singapore in the early 2000s. Its plan, however, was foiled by the Internal Security Department (ISD), with key members of the JI cell in Singapore arrested in December 2001. A number of these Singaporean JI operatives had received terrorist training in Afghanistan.

More evidence linking local terrorists with Afghanistan surfaced in 2001 when video footage of JI's reconnaissance of Yishun MRT station was found among the rubble of a house belonging to an Al-Qaeda operative named Mohd Atef, in Afghanistan's capital city Kabul. In 2007, a 28-year-old self-radicalised Singaporean lawyer was also arrested and detained after attempting to join the Taliban to fight against the coalition forces in Afghanistan.



Snapshot of surveillance footage of Yishun MRT Station taken by JI operatives.



5,221 km from Home

*On the Ground: The Crests and
Valleys of Afghanistan*

The breathtaking and rugged landscape of Afghanistan belies its war-torn history of foreign invasions, civil wars and militant insurgencies.

Despite cultural challenges and inter-tribal tensions, the nation continues to forge its path towards peace.



AFGHANISTAN

Situated between Central Asia and South Asia, Afghanistan is approximately 5,221 km away from Singapore. Almost 1,000 times the size of Singapore, it has a land area of about 652,230 km² and is administratively divided into 34 provinces.

BRAVING THE ELEMENTS

Afghanistan has a continental climate, with very harsh winters prevailing in the central highlands and in the glaciated northeast. Temperatures in winter can drop to minus 30 degrees Celsius. During summer, temperatures can exceed 40 degrees Celsius in the low-lying areas of the Sistan Basin, the Jalalabad basin, and the Turkestan plains.

The country is frequently subjected to minor earthquakes, mainly in the mountainous north-western area. The north-eastern Hindu Kush mountain range suffers earthquakes almost every year, which can cause destructive landslides or avalanches.

CAPITAL AND LARGEST CITY

Kabul (34°32'N 69°08'E)

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

Pashto, Dari (Persian)

ESTABLISHMENT OF FIRST AFGHAN STATE

October 1747

INDEPENDENCE (FROM THE UK)

19 August 1919

TOTAL LAND AREA

652,230 km²

POPULATION ESTIMATE (2012)

30,419,928

RELIGION

Islam (80% Sunni and 20% Shi'ite)

ETHNICITY

Pashtun (42%), Tajik (27%),
Uzbek (9%), Hazara (9%), Aimak
(4%), Turkmen (4%), Baloch (2%)
& others (3%)

CLIMATE

Continental, with hot summers
and cold winters.

MEET THE TRIBES

Afghanistan's population size is approximately 31 million, and is made up of four main ethnic groups. The major ethnic groups are the Pashtuns (42%), Tajiks (27%), Hazaras (9%), and Uzbeks (9%).

PASHTUN (42%)

The Pashtuns are the largest and traditionally the most politically powerful ethnic group in Afghanistan. They are mostly Sunni Muslims, with a small minority of Shi'ite Muslims.

Pashtun culture is governed by Pashtunwali – a legal and moral code that regulates values such as honour (namuz), solidarity (nang), hospitality, mutual support, shame and revenge, thus determining social order and individual responsibility. The defence of namuz, even unto death, is obligatory for every Pashtun.

TAJIK (27%)

The Tajiks form the second largest ethnic group in Afghanistan. They are mostly Sunni Muslims, although a sizable number living in areas ranging from Bamiyan to Badakhshan Province in north-eastern Afghanistan are Shi'ite.

HAZARA (9%)

Although the Hazaras' ancestors came from the Xinjiang region of north-western China, they speak an archaic form of Persian. Hazaras are Shi'ite Muslims.

UZBEK (9%)

About 1.3 million Uzbeks live together with the Tajiks across the northern plains of Afghanistan. In that area, there are numerous mixed Uzbek and Tajik villages, with each ethnicity living in separate residential quarters. Uzbeks are predominantly Sunni Muslims.

**A NATION RAVAGED BY WAR**

Over the last three decades, Afghanistan had endured political upheavals, invasions, and civil war. Following the Soviet invasion in 1979 and the ensuing decade-long conflict, Afghanistan was subsequently plunged into civil war in the early 1990s. The country suffered again under the repressive Taliban regime from 1996 to 2001, when it gained notoriety for becoming a base from which global terrorism was exported.

**DOING
OUR PART**

In today's inter-connected world, the fight against transnational terrorism requires a concerted effort by the global community. All countries must do their part to maintain security and stability, and Singapore holds fast to this commitment. Our contributions supported the larger multinational effort to prevent extremists from using Afghanistan as a base to breed and export terrorism to the rest of the world, including Singapore.

Operation Blue Ridge had been the SAF's longest and most diverse overseas mission. A total of 492 soldiers were deployed to Afghanistan since 2007, with a wide range of capabilities deployed. These capabilities included building health facilities, providing dental, medical and surgical treatment, as well as enhancing the security of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) with the Weapon Locating Radar, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, and Imagery Analysis Teams. The SAF also contributed Military Institutional Trainers to support the ISAF's effort to train the Afghan National Security Forces.

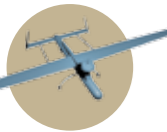
During the six-year deployment, our servicemen gained useful operational experiences that sharpened the entire SAF. Our servicemen had also performed well during their deployment, and in doing so, enhanced the SAF's reputation as a professional armed forces and a reliable partner.

ORUZGAN



85
2,552

MEDICAL & SURGICAL TEAMS
NOVEMBER 08 – OCTOBER 11
cases operated on
patients treated



68
112

UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE TASK GROUP
AUGUST 10 – NOVEMBER 10
imagery analysis and support missions carried out
mission sorties (450 hours)



204

IMAGERY ANALYSIS TEAMS
AUGUST 10 – JUNE 13
analysis missions carried out



2
7
211

MILITARY INSTITUTIONAL TRAINERS (MIT-U)
OCTOBER 11 – DECEMBER 12
All Corps Search Course
Explosives Hazards Reduction Course
graduates



6

STAFF OFFICERS
SEPTEMBER 10 – JUNE 13
officers deployed in Combined Team Uruzgan



27
100

WEAPON LOCATING RADAR TEAMS
SEPTEMBER 09 – DECEMBER 10
indirect fire attacks tracked successfully
per cent tracking success rate

KANDAHAR



2
4
7
10
12

STAFF OFFICERS
JUNE 09 – JUNE 13
officers deployed for counter-IED purposes
officers deployed at CJ2
officers deployed at CJ3
officers / Military Experts deployed as
National Support Element
officers / WOSPECs / Military Experts deployed as
Forward Support Team

KUWAIT



8
41

STAFF OFFICERS
OCTOBER 08 – JULY 13
WOSPECs deployed as National Support Element
officers / WOSPECs / Military Experts deployed as
Redeployment Task Force

BAMIYAN



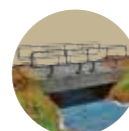
993
1,306
6,500

DENTAL PROJECT TEAM
MAY 07 – OCTOBER 07
patients treated
dental procedures performed
dental packs distributed



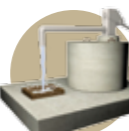
900
160,000
303,000

WINTER DEPLOYMENT TEAMS
NOVEMBER 07 – MAY 10
warm kits to needy families
kilogrammes of humanitarian food aid delivered to people
kilogrammes of tools and materials (spades, pit axes,
wheelbarrows, gabion baskets distributed)



1
2

CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING TEAMS
JULY 07 – OCTOBER 10
culvert constructed
bridges built



1
2

submersible water pump constructed
wells constructed



5

infrastructural construction projects completed: Regional
Health Training Centre, Foladi Comprehensive Health
Clinic, Bamiyan University female security wall, security
wall for Provincial Administrative Building, ramp cover for
Provincial Hospital's Female and Paediatric Ward

KABUL



22
28
1,634

MILITARY INSTITUTIONAL TRAINERS (MIT-K)
AUGUST 10 – SEPTEMBER 12
artillery courses completed
live-firings conducted
graduates



6
7
9
10

STAFF OFFICERS
NOVEMBER 08 – JUNE 13
officers deployed as National Contingent Commanders
officers / WOSPECs deployed as National Intelligence Cell
officers deployed at IJC, HQ ISAF Joint Command
officers deployed as National Liaison Officers

OPERATIONAL ACHIEVEMENTS



Leaning Forward, Reaching Out

The SAF contributed in niche areas where it had the relevant expertise, and made a significant operational difference to the overall coalition efforts.



GENESIS OF OPERATION BLUE RIDGE

NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND SURVEY TEAM • 06 NOVEMBER 2006 – 26 NOVEMBER 2006

To make a meaningful contribution, the SAF identified that it could best support International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) by providing medical and reconstruction management expertise. The New Zealand Defence Force Provincial Reconstruction Team (NZDF PRT) was in need of this assistance in Bamiyan. As the two countries have worked together in Timor Leste, a site visit was planned.

A Needs Assessment and Survey Team (NAST) was sent into Afghanistan in November 2006 to conduct a site visit and determine the types of assistance needed on the ground. Led by Colonel Yeo See Peng, the team met with the NZDF PRT and local Afghan officials in the province of Bamiyan.



The NAST 4 members, each representing the following functional areas: command & control, medical services, engineering, and logistics.

Over the duration of their visit, the NAST visited the local Bamiyan Hospital and satellite medical centres to assess the medical needs of the local population, as well as study the options through which the SAF could contribute medical assistance.

The NAST met the Bamiyan governor Dr Habiba Sarabi, who told the team that her people needed a dental clinic. The only dentist they had was an old man who treated patients on an old chair in the middle of the Bamiyan Market. The governor's comment prompted the SAF to send in its first deployment to Afghanistan in May 2007 – a five-man Dental Project Team.



Colonel Yeo See Peng engaging the local people of Bamiyan.

GENESIS OF OPERATION BLUE RIDGE

Answering the Call of Duty

It was an unusual situation because I was in the midst of preparing for my Surgical Fellowship Examinations in April 2007. Nevertheless, I recognised the importance of this mission to Singapore's security and proceeded to be part of the four-man NAST... Staying in Bamiyan was a whole new experience. Temperatures went as low as minus 16 degrees Celsius at night, and it was snowing. Bamiyan also sits 2,500 metres above sea level.

Lieutenant-Colonel (Dr)
Chua Wei Chong

How Did The Operation Get Its Name?

We picked Operation Blue Ridge because it was going to be an operation to support peace (represented by the colour blue) in Afghanistan. The place for our first mission was Bamiyan, which was on the ancient Silk Road along the ridge called the Hindu Kush.

Colonel
Yeo See Peng



Lieutenant-Colonel (Dr) Chua Wei Chong (2nd from left) and Colonel Yeo See Peng (1st from right) with their counterparts from the New Zealand Defence Force.



Visiting the Ghandak Basic Health Centre.

Making a Difference

Reconstruction and Humanitarian
Efforts in Bamiyan

The SAF's contributions provided the people
of Bamiyan Province the stepping stones to
build a better future.



BRINGING SMILES

Dental Relief Comes to Bamiyan

DENTAL PROJECT TEAM • 16 MAY 2007 – 29 OCTOBER 2007

This first mission allowed the SAF to bring smiles back to the faces of the Afghan people through the deployment of a five-man Dental Project Team to Bamiyan Province. The team operated as part of the New Zealand Defence Force Provincial Reconstruction Team (NZDF PRT) responsible for Bamiyan Province.

The Dental Project Team, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Lee Kuan Chung, together with two dental officers Major (Dr) Lee Chee Wee and Major (Dr) Tan Wei Yang, Bernard, established and operated the very first dental clinic in Bamiyan Province, which had about 600,000 residents.



Major (Dr) Lee Chee Wee attending to an Afghan child.

1 dental awareness workshop was conducted.

1 Afghan dentist and 2 dental assistants received on-the-job training in the Dental Assistant Course.

993 Afghan patients were treated.

1,306 dental procedures were performed.

6,500 dental packs were distributed.



CLOSING THE GAP

With the establishment of the dental clinic, some residents of the province travelled an entire day for a consultation. This resulted in long queues forming outside the clinic from midnight. The Bamiyan Provincial Hospital, where the clinic was situated, charged only a token administrative fee. This ensured that no one was turned away. Over the short four-month period, the SAF's dental team performed over 1,300 procedures on close to 993 patients, resulting in long but fulfilling days for the team.

Lieutenant-Colonel Lee said, **"Our contributions, though small in the overall development of Bamiyan, represented a significant milestone in providing a dental healthcare capability that did not exist prior to the mission. The smiles on their faces were all that mattered to us."**

**LAYING THE GROUND WORK**

Within three weeks of arrival, the team transformed a bare room into a dental facility. The manual assembly of the dental chairs, and the adapting and simplifying of dental training materials, were tasks that needed to be done. The two dentists also worked closely with the hospital's dentist to train the hospital staff as dental assistants, so that they could take over the clinic from the Dental Project Team.



BRINGING SMILES | DENTAL RELIEF COMES TO BAMIIYAN

MEETING NEEDS

Major (Dr) Lee Chee Wee shared that his most unforgettable experience was when a patient shed tears of appreciation. **“We had fixed her front teeth which were fractured eight years ago. I felt very fortunate to be a Singaporean where such things are taken for granted. This is a once in a lifetime experience and I hope other servicemen will have similar opportunities for overseas missions.”**



Distributing dental kits to the locals.



Lieutenant-Colonel Lee Kuan Chung with the Governor of Bamiyan Province, Dr Habiba Sarabi.

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

For Major (Dr) Tan, the challenges came from an unexpected quarter – the locals’ expectations. He elaborated, **“In a Humanitarian Aid & Disaster Relief (HADR) mission setting, the team had to pay special attention to managing the expectations of the locals. In the eyes of the locals, the mission was only accomplished when the expectations were met. Despite the language barrier, we were able to make the patients feel that we understood their problems and were there to do our best.”** The radiant smiles from the Afghan patients were a testament that the team had met their expectations.



Bamiyan at a Glance



TOTAL LAND AREA : 14,175 km²
POPULATION : 418,500 (2012)

Bamiyan’s name is translated as ‘The Place of Shining Light’, and Bamiyan City is the largest city in the central Afghan region of Hazarajat. Situated on the ancient Silk Route, the city was at the crossroads of flourishing trade between China and the Middle East.

Because of the many statues of Buddha carved into the cliffs facing Bamiyan City, the city of Shar-i-Gholghola, the ruins of the Monk’s caves, and the lovely local scenery, Bamiyan is one of the most visited places in Afghanistan.

The climate of Bamiyan can vary drastically through the seasons. Summer temperatures can easily reach 40 degrees Celsius and winter temperatures can go as low as minus 30 degrees Celsius with wind chill factor.

Bamiyan was also home to Camp Kiwi, which was the base from which the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) operated. The kiwi, a national symbol of New Zealand, is viewed by New Zealanders with pride and endearment.



BRIDGING PEOPLE

Closing the Distance

CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING TEAMS • 25 JULY 2007 – 29 OCTOBER 2007 • 03 MAY 2008 – 31 OCTOBER 2008
• 30 APRIL 2009 – 07 NOVEMBER 2009 • 02 MAY 2010 – 27 OCTOBER 2010

After an initial consultation with the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) partners, Afghan government officials, and the local Afghan authorities, it was identified that the construction of bridges would make the lives of the people of Bamiyan easier. Subsequent site visits established the need for the Chapdara and Monara Bridges, and Regashet Culvert for water channelling purposes. The construction of these projects would be overseen by the SAF Construction Engineering Team.



Regashet Culvert (before).



Regashet Culvert (after).

Built
Regashet Culvert.

Built Chapdara Bridge,
benefitting **150** villagers.

Built Monara Bridge,
benefitting **300** villagers.



Chapdara Bridge.

CROSSING THE RIVER

The villagers of Chapdara and Monara were using makeshift bridges made out of slumped tree trunks to avoid the cold waters of the mountain-fed tributary adjacent to their villages. They had to cross the river daily to get to the market for necessities and trade. In spring, the thawing of ice resulted in rapid waters flowing

through the river, making river crossing even more dangerous. The make-shift bridges would be washed away occasionally. With such make-shift bridges, only donkeys could be used for the transportation of potatoes from the fields to the market.



Monara Bridge (before).

NEGOTIATING AN AGREEMENT

The construction effort was not only difficult due to the physical terrain, but also due to the cultural sensitivity of village life. One of the team's biggest challenges was persuading two households to consent to the temporary removal of their stone walls that demarcated their households and farm plots.

Team leader Lieutenant-Colonel Ong Chia Choong explained, **"Through our pre-deployment briefings, we were aware that Afghanistan, including Bamiyan,**

remained a largely agrarian society. Land issues were naturally very sensitive in Bamiyan. The team was also aware that we needed to enlist the support of the local government officials for our projects in the villages. Everything added up to a big challenge, but we are very proud to have made the contribution."

The villagers of Chapdara and Monara were now able to access the market for trade and necessities throughout the year and in any weather.



Chapdara Bridge.



EVERY DROP COUNTS

Clean Water for All

CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING TEAMS • 25 JULY 2007 – 29 OCTOBER 2007 • 03 MAY 2008 – 31 OCTOBER 2008
• 30 APRIL 2009 – 07 NOVEMBER 2009 • 02 MAY 2010 – 27 OCTOBER 2010

Afghanistan has an arid to semi-arid climate. As a result, fresh water supplies are limited, and many Afghans lack access to clean water. While there are wells and active springs throughout the country, the water is of poor quality and is sometimes contaminated.



1 well was constructed at Shirin Hazara Girls' High School, benefitting **1,500** students per year.

Bamiyan University water supply project.

1 submersible water pump was installed for the Bamiyan Provincial Hospital, benefitting **7,000** patients per year.

1 well was constructed at Foladi Valley Basic Health Clinic, benefitting **12,000** people per year.



PROVIDING CLEAN WATER

Recognising the locals' need for access to clean water, a six-man team led by Lieutenant-Colonel Desmond Yeo was deployed to manage various construction projects in Bamiyan Province.

These projects included the installation of a submersible water pump for the Bamiyan Provincial Hospital, benefitting 7,000 patients annually. Wells were also constructed at the Shirin Hazara Girls' High School and the Foladi Valley Basic Health Clinic, benefitting a total of 12,000 people annually.

During the deployment of an earlier Construction Engineering Team led by Lieutenant-Colonel Ong Chia Choong, a water supply project was also undertaken to benefit the students of the Bamiyan University.



Access to Clean Water

In Bamiyan, clean water is a rare commodity, and the only access to clean water is from underground. Only the very rich can afford to dig wells. As such, the main source of water is from the river, which is also used for bathing and washing, leading to the spread of water-borne illnesses.

The construction of wells would have a lasting benefit to the local community, which would have access to clean water for up to 10 years.

The Bamiyan people were greatly appreciative of our efforts as they were fully aware that clean water was a way to improve their health. We were respected for our efforts. When we finally completed the wells and handed them over to the locals, the happiness of the people was something my team found memorable.

From my perspective, doing these projects gave me a great sense of achievement and fulfilment, as many people would benefit from them. It was even more amazing to think that a small team of six people could make such a huge difference and change the lives of thousands of people.

*Lieutenant-Colonel
Desmond Yeo*

SHARING WARMTH

Providing Humanitarian Aid

WINTER DEPLOYMENT TEAMS • 24 NOVEMBER 2007 – 10 MAY 2008 • 16 OCTOBER 2008 – 08 MAY 2009 • 02 NOVEMBER 2009 – 01 MAY 2010



88 schools and Bamiyan University received Dari-English dictionaries.

900 families received winter kits (heating stoves, coal and blankets).

2,000 school children in Foladi Valley received stationery.

2,000 free dental kits were delivered.

8,200 school packs and materials were distributed to students.

303,000 kg of farming tools and materials were distributed.



The harsh winters of Afghanistan made construction a difficult task to execute. However, it became an opportune window to plan for future projects, while providing the locals with humanitarian aid to overcome the cold winter.



Distributing farming equipment to the locals.

WHEN IT MATTERS, WHERE IT MATTERS

The first Winter Deployment Team (WDT) comprised Lieutenant-Colonel Tan Leong Boon, Lieutenant-Colonel Yeo Sik Chew and Captain Hong Mook Yong. They facilitated the delivery and distribution of medical and dental supplies donated by the SAF to the people of Bamiyan. The team also planned and recommended the Regional Health Training Centre (RHTC) and Bamiyan

University Female Security Wall construction projects for execution in the coming summer.

PASSING THE BATON

During the next winter, Lieutenant-Colonel Pang Chong Han and Captain Teo Yong Kiong continued the effort to deliver and distribute humanitarian aid. This included

emergency medical supplies to the province and winter kits for needy families. The team also donated Dari-English dictionaries to over 80 schools and the Bamiyan University to facilitate the teaching of English in the province.

FINISHING THE COURSE

Led by Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Chan, the last WDT focused on capacity building efforts, in addition to providing humanitarian assistance.

2nd Warrant Officer Khor Chin Siong, Team Sergeant Major, shared, **“Through our extensive site visits to stakeholders in central Bamiyan, we found a large gap in its healthcare coverage – one of the most densely populated valleys, Foladi Valley, lacked a comprehensive health clinic to serve its 15,000 residents. The absence of a comprehensive health clinic meant that the Foladi valley residents had to rely on the Bamiyan Provincial Hospital, unnecessarily loading the overstretched hospital. Through our consultations with the stakeholders, we were able to secure a suitable site for a comprehensive health clinic in Foladi valley, which was then built during the summer team’s tour.”**



READING THE GROUND

Captain Huang Wen Yao observed, “We had many opportunities to interact with the local populace to find out about their needs. We visited schools, villages, hospitals and clinics. Through these trips, I learnt more about the challenges that the Afghans had to endure, such as hot summers and harsh winters, low

literacy and high infant mortality rates. Despite their difficult circumstances and lack of opportunities, the Afghans in Bamiyan were incredibly resilient. I am glad to have made a difference, and am encouraged that the Afghan people are positive in making progress in their lives.”

Lieutenant-Colonel Andrew Chan having Chai (tea) with the Head of Shariah, Foladi Valley.

The ‘Cave People’ of Central Bamiyan

After the Taliban were driven off, many Bamiyan natives returned from their exile to a stark reality of destroyed homes and land disputes. Without land or houses, many of them were forced to live in caves scattered across mountainous Bamiyan. One of these ‘cave districts’ was near the giant Buddha statues that the Taliban destroyed.

In the sub-zero winters of Bamiyan, these ‘cave people’ lived without the basic necessities that we take for granted in Singapore – potable water and sanitation, often wearing tattered and ill-fitting clothes.

Heating came from carefully collected dried cow-dung (there are little or no trees available for firewood in winter), while water was collected from streams with jerry-cans.

While the people of Bamiyan persevere and continue rebuilding their lives bit by bit, our modest contribution of blankets offered some comfort amidst the hardship.

*Lieutenant-Colonel
Andrew Chan*



PROVIDING HEALTHCARE

Enhancing Healthcare, Building Clinics

CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING TEAMS • 25 JULY 2007 – 29 OCTOBER 2007 • 03 MAY 2008 – 31 OCTOBER 2008
• 30 APRIL 2009 – 07 NOVEMBER 2009 • 02 MAY 2010 – 27 OCTOBER 2010



800 school packs were distributed within Bamiyan.

160,000 kg of food aid was distributed.

Managed the construction of Bamiyan Regional Health Training Centre.

Managed the construction of Foladi Comprehensive Health Clinic.

Healthcare in most areas of Afghanistan was fairly inadequate due to the many years of conflict. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), through the regional Provincial Reconstruction Teams, had identified specific areas where healthcare assistance could be rendered.



The Bamiyan Regional Health Training Centre.



EMPOWERING THE LOCALS

Building on the SAF's reconstruction efforts in Bamiyan Province, a Construction Engineering Team (CET) led by Lieutenant-Colonel Tan Ming Chong, James, supervised the construction of the Regional Health Training Centre (RHTC), which was a one-stop centre for training all healthcare workers in Bamiyan Province.

The two-storey RHTC was built to support between 80 and 100 doctors, nurses, midwives and community health workers to upgrade their job skills. These skills included pre- and post-natal care, vaccination, and public health education programmes.

By empowering the locals to train more healthcare

workers, the SAF helped Afghanistan to better provide for the needs of her people in critical healthcare areas. Dr Habiba Sarabi, the Governor of Bamiyan Province, said her government was amazed that the SAF team had achieved so much in such a short period of time. Dr Sarabi added, **"To the people of Singapore and the SAF Project Team, the people of Bamiyan are grateful to you for meeting our needs."**

Another CET led by Lieutenant-Colonel Royston Lim managed the construction of the Foladi Comprehensive Health Clinic (CHC). The CHC benefitted over 10,000 families living in the Foladi Valley.



PROVIDING HEALTHCARE | ENHANCING HEALTHCARE, BUILDING CLINICS

Baba Mussini, an influential and respected community leader in Bamiyan, indicated that his people would always welcome Singapore and the SAF as valued and reliable friends. He said, **“No one here knew much about Singapore and the SAF before you came, but we are so grateful that you have come to help us rebuild our war-torn land.”**

Lieutenant-Colonel Lim made this observation, **“The first impression I had was the resilience and independence of the locals in Foladi Valley... they are united and would always help themselves in times of crisis. These traits were clearly demonstrated when the valley suffered its worst flooding in nearly 40 years.”**



National Contingent Commander Colonel Kenneth Liow with Bamiyan Governor, Dr Habiba Sarabi, at the opening ceremony of the Foladi CHC.



A Peek at Life in Bamiyan

As we flew into Bamiyan, I was definitely captivated by its scenery. The terrain was mountainous and surrounded by snow-capped ridge lines. We landed on a runway of sand and dust, lined by mud houses. The weather was chilly and dry, unlike Singapore which is usually hot and humid all year round. Our project site was a mere 12 km away in Foladi Valley, but the journey there took about 45 minutes. Tarmac roads were a luxury.

The Afghans were friendly and hospitable. They led a simple lifestyle, making do with whatever they had. One could clearly see the strong bonds amongst the locals. The older kids would take care of the younger kids and piggyback them around. They were ever ready to lend a helping hand whenever the need arose. Foladi Valley suffered its worst flooding in 40 years in August 2010. Roads and bridges were washed away, making transportation inaccessible. Instead of waiting for help to arrive, the locals got their hands dirty, repairing the roads and bridges themselves.

3rd Warrant Officer
Lee Kow Yong

Working Hand in Hand

Security and Force Protection in Oruzgan



Answering an emergency medical distress call, tending to a bullet wound, tracking incoming indirect fire, capturing and analysing images for security and force protection – these were all in a day's work for the SAF servicemen and women deployed in the Afghan province of Oruzgan.



THE GOLDEN HOUR

Medical Teams Go On Call 24/7

MEDICAL TEAMS • 08 NOVEMBER 2008 – 28 FEBRUARY 2009 • 17 FEBRUARY 2009 – 29 MAY 2009 • 01 DECEMBER 2009 – 31 MARCH 2010
• 03 MARCH 2011 – 07 AUGUST 2011 • 16 APRIL 2011 – 31 OCTOBER 2011

Even as SAF deployments continued their reconstruction efforts in Bamiyan Province, the SAF was also called upon to support the Dutch-led Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) in Oruzgan by providing healthcare and ward capabilities.



2,552 patients were
attended to.

HEALING HANDS

The first two rotations of 20-man medical teams were deployed to Tarin Kowt in Oruzgan Province. Working alongside the Netherlands Armed Forces (NAF) and later the US military, the teams provided medical support to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) and Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF). They also provided emergency medical care for the Afghan locals. The teams treated victims of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and rocket attacks through medical procedures that were complex and resource-intensive. To save the lives of these casualties, many of them had to be treated promptly, within a short period

of time from sustaining the injury, otherwise known as the 'golden hour'.

WORKING IN THE WARDS

Captain Lum E Von, the first ever SAF servicewoman deployed to Afghanistan, shared her experience as a ward nurse in charge of a 14-bed ward, **"Though living in a war-torn country, some patients walked a few days just to seek treatment. I also had to be very sensitive to cultural differences as the Afghan females are not allowed to show their faces."**



SAVING LIVES, BUILDING TRUST

The SAF Medical Teams established a reputation as a credible, professional and dependable force. Their provision of emergency medical support, primary healthcare, as well as pre- and post-operative medical care to ISAF personnel and Afghans was well-received. The Medical Teams' tireless efforts earned them the trust and appreciation of international partners and the local Afghan population.

Relating his experience as a member of the Medical Team, Military Expert 3 Mazlan Bin Mohd Khalid shared, **"What was most satisfying was the joy in the eyes and the faces of the people when they walked out of the hospital alive; you know you have made a difference in their lives."**



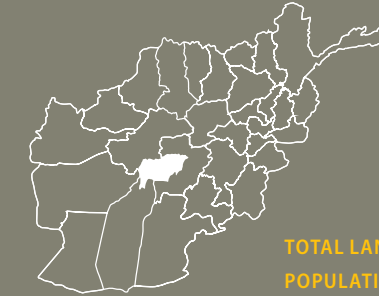
The first SAF servicewoman deployed in Afghanistan – Captain Lum E Von.



Sharing his thoughts on his deployment, Military Expert 3 Timothy Rajah said, **"Helping the people of Afghanistan teaches us how important it is to contribute to the Total Defence of our nation, and being in a war zone reinforces the importance of training hard and effectively during peace-time."**



Oruzgan at a Glance



TOTAL LAND AREA : 12,640 km²
POPULATION : 333,500 (2012)

Oruzgan (Uruzgan) is one of the 34 provinces of Afghanistan. It is in the centre of the country, although the area is culturally and tribally linked to Kandahar Province in the south.

Nearly three-quarters of the province are mountainous or semi-mountainous terrain, while a little more than one-fifth of its area is made up of flat land.

When the Dutch PRT took over at Oruzgan, they brought a little flavour of home with them by naming their base 'Kamp Holland'. Unique to the base was the Windmill dining area, where all soldiers in the base could get a drink or meal when off duty.



STEADY HANDS

Saving Lives: Battle in the Operating Theatre

SURGICAL TEAM • 18 MARCH 2010 – 31 MAY 2010



One of the Medical Teams deployed was unique, as it included an eight-man Surgical Team with three Operationally Ready NSmen. This Surgical Team, comprising two surgeons, a general practitioner, an anaesthetist, and four other medical personnel, was deployed to a field hospital at the Multinational Base Tarin Kowt (MBTK). The team performed surgical procedures for International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) personnel, including US and Australian soldiers, as well as local Afghans.

85 patients received surgical treatment.

LEAN AND READY

Besides operating within a hostile and rugged environment, the Surgical Team performed its tasks under manpower constraints – the team had eight men, compared to a typical operating theatre in Singapore which often had 10 to 15 personnel.



Major (NS) Dr Tan Wah Tze, an anaesthetist, elaborated, **“In terms of operations, there was no typical day in Afghanistan. Every day was different and challenging. We had to perform more roles, do more things. Besides monitoring the vitals of patients, I had to be the attendant helping the surgeon during a procedure.”**



STEADY HANDS | SAVING LIVES: BATTLE IN THE OPERATING THEATRE



Major (NS) Dr Mathew Cheng, an orthopaedic surgeon by practice, was also pushed into new territory as he found himself trading his medical whites for desert fatigues.

Though a new father of a four-month-old baby daughter at that point, he decided to answer the call of duty, citing the importance of security operations in Afghanistan. **"I thought I could put my expertise and skills to good use and contribute,"** he shared.



Major (NS) Dr Tan Wah Tze going through the medical records of a patient.

**REALITY CHECK**

The deployment was not without risk. During Major (NS) Dr Cheng's two months in Camp Holland which was within MBTK, the camp was hit by more than 10 rocket attacks, with some rounds landing close to the soldiers' accommodation and the field hospital.

Another challenge the team faced was the need to manage emotions. Major (Dr) Muhammad Bin Idu Jion elaborated, **"The change in environment, traces of homesickness, managing cohesion and working with our counterparts all added to the challenges of practising medicine in an austere environment."**

WORKING WITH INTERNATIONAL PARTNERS

The Surgical Team members also found themselves serving as ambassadors of Singapore. Major (NS) Dr Tan remarked, **"The interaction with our counterparts from the coalition forces provided a great opportunity to share and exchange knowledge as well as build new friendships. These interactions have been professionally beneficial, both to me and the SAF."**



Major (NS) Dr Philip Lau added, **"We complemented our colleagues from the Netherlands Armed Forces very well...their military surgeons were accomplished general surgeons who were more than capable."**

SHIELD OF SAFETY

Weapon Locating Radar Teams

WEAPON LOCATING RADAR TEAMS • 08 SEPTEMBER 2009 – 18 JANUARY 2010 • 19 JANUARY 2010 – 10 JUNE 2010
• 20 MAY 2010 – 08 OCTOBER 2010 • 21 SEPTEMBER 2010 – 28 DECEMBER 2010

In Oruzgan, insurgents would often attack the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) troops within the Multinational Base Tarin Kowt (MBTK) with mortar and rocket fires. Following a spike in such attacks on MBTK, the ISAF looked for ways to enhance the protection of the base. The SAF

conducted a site survey, and determined that the Weapon Locating Radar (WLR) would provide the critical early warning against mortar and rocket attacks. The WLR Teams' success in detecting these attacks led the Netherlands Armed Forces (NAF) to call them the 'Shield of Safety'.



100% success rate in tracking incoming rocket attacks.

A MATTER OF SECONDS

The WLR Teams had to stay vigilant 24/7 during the mission, since mortar and rocket attacks could occur at any time. Despite the challenge of working long hours, the WLR Teams were able to adapt quickly to

the local terrain and threat profiles. They managed to track all incoming indirect fires successfully, giving ISAF troops within MBTK the critical seconds needed to get to safe cover.



Major Chan Kum Teck shared, **“The greatest take-away from the deployment was the self-affirmation that our Army and the Singapore Artillery were capable of rising to the expectations when the demands in operation arose. The first WLR detachment was quickly assembled and trained to answer the call of duty with less than six months’ notice.”**

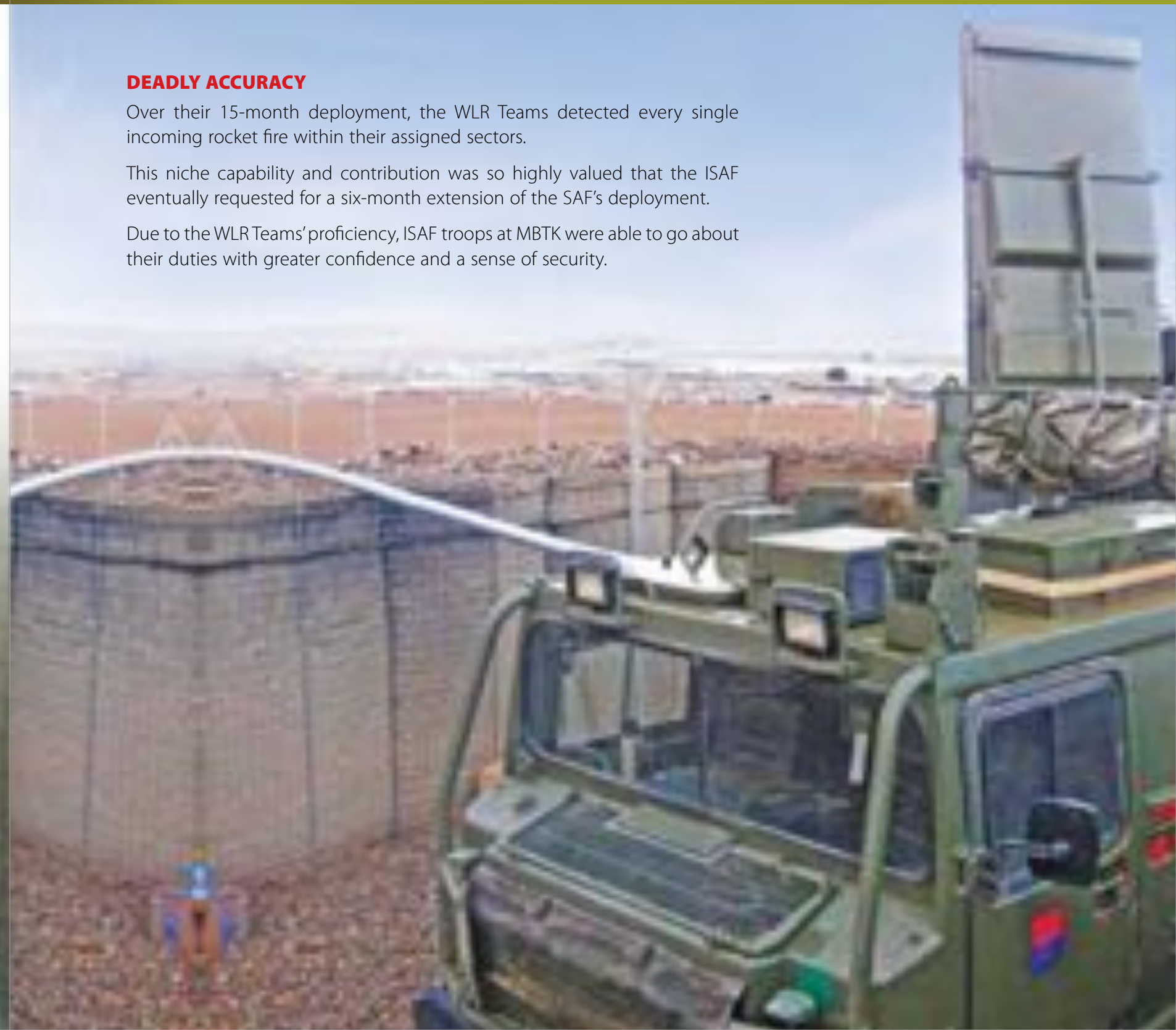


DEADLY ACCURACY

Over their 15-month deployment, the WLR Teams detected every single incoming rocket fire within their assigned sectors.

This niche capability and contribution was so highly valued that the ISAF eventually requested for a six-month extension of the SAF's deployment.

Due to the WLR Teams' proficiency, ISAF troops at MBTK were able to go about their duties with greater confidence and a sense of security.



EYE IN THE SKY

Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Task Group

UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE TASK GROUP • 12 AUGUST 2010 – 28 NOVEMBER 2010

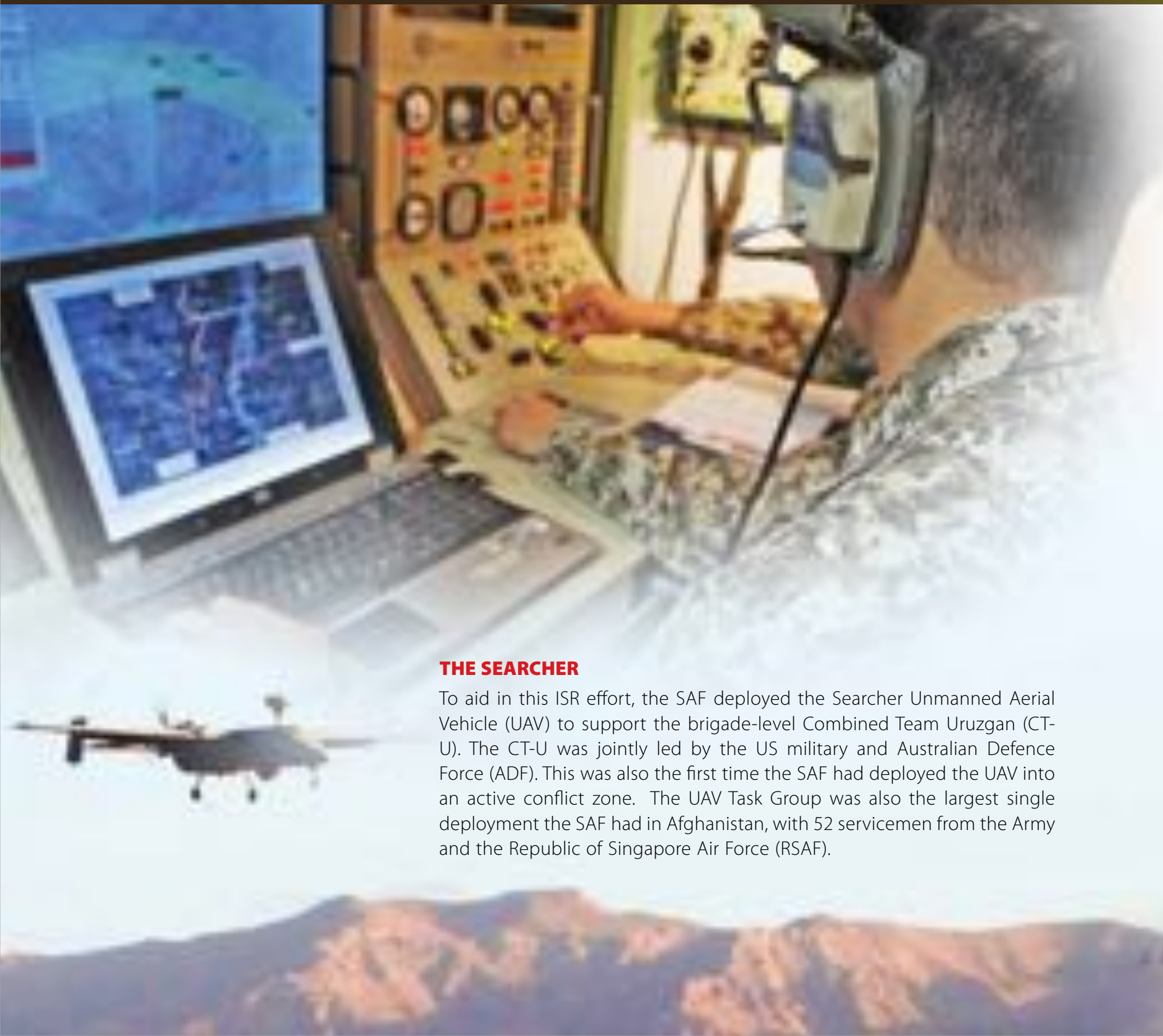
The insurgents operating in Afghanistan lived amongst the people and carried out attacks from within the sanctuary of the population. Their modus operandi included the laying of ambushes, firing surface-to-surface rockets at stationary targets, and setting Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) to target International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) vehicle convoys. In the effort to maintain force protection, the ISAF employed Imagery Surveillance and Reconnaissance assets to track and identify the threats early.



112 UAV ISR missions
were flown.

450 flying
hours.





THE SEARCHER

To aid in this ISR effort, the SAF deployed the Searcher Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) to support the brigade-level Combined Team Uruzgan (CT-U). The CT-U was jointly led by the US military and Australian Defence Force (ADF). This was also the first time the SAF had deployed the UAV into an active conflict zone. The UAV Task Group was also the largest single deployment the SAF had in Afghanistan, with 52 servicemen from the Army and the Republic of Singapore Air Force (RSAF).

PREPARATION FOR MISSION SUCCESS

To prepare for the mission, both Lieutenant-Colonel Chan I-Harn, Alvin (UAV Task Group Commander) and Lieutenant-Colonel Paul Tan (UAV Detachment Commander) went in-theatre twice. These trips were necessary for the commanders to understand the actual operating environment, so that the UAV Task Group could collectively develop plans to overcome any potential challenges. Lieutenant-Colonel Tan shared, **“The challenges of operating our Searcher in this hostile desert environment were many, for both our crew and UAV**



system. At the end of the day, it was the dedication and tenacity of our people, coupled with the effectiveness of our training and preparation that enabled us to successfully accomplish each and every mission tasked to the UAV detachment.”

CLIMBING A STEEP CURVE

Lieutenant-Colonel Chan recounted the steep learning curve as the team needed to learn to operate seamlessly with the Imagery Analysis Team. He shared, **“We had to return to our fundamentals as Combat Intelligence analysts to understand mission and ground demands...so as to customise a report that could be of value to our coalition partners.”**

MANAGING RISKS

Operating in the open airfield increased the exposure to indirect fire from insurgent mortar and rocket attacks. On one occasion, the UAV Task Group was redirected to conduct an ad hoc reconnaissance mission when ground troops reported an IED attack. When the UAV arrived at the incident site, it found a mangled military vehicle. This was a sobering reminder of the real dangers surrounding the base.



PATTERNS OF LIFE

Imagery Analysis Teams

IMAGERY ANALYSIS TEAMS • 12 AUGUST 2010 – 03 NOVEMBER 2010 • 04 NOVEMBER 2010 – 20 APRIL 2011 • 22 MARCH 2011 – 27 JULY 2011
• 28 JUNE 2011 – 28 OCTOBER 2011 • 25 OCTOBER 2011 – 22 FEBRUARY 2012 • 23 FEBRUARY 2012 – 22 JUNE 2012
• 05 JUNE 2012 – 29 OCTOBER 2012 • 06 OCTOBER 2012 – 10 MARCH 2013 • 15 FEBRUARY 2013 – 22 JUNE 2013

Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) captured images of the surroundings. These images needed to be analysed to identify what was happening on the ground. This was done by an expert in the field of imagery analysis. The ability of this expert to tell the difference between a stationary person lying in wait and a rock could make the difference between life and death for soldiers and civilians.



Over **200** analysis missions carried out.

ART OF INTERPRETATION

The SAF's Imagery Analysis Teams (IATs) deployed at Multinational Base Tarin Kowt (MBTK) provided this critical support in Afghanistan as they augmented the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities at MBTK.

The first team was deployed together with the UAV Task Group and since then, the IATs had been deployed independently. These independent deployments were significant as the IATs analysed

the images captured by coalition UAV detachments. Entrusting the analysis to the SAF's IATs highlighted the level of confidence the other militaries had in the SAF's professionalism.

This professionalism was put to the test in July 2011 when a coordinated insurgent attack took place. Insurgents attacked the Deputy Provincial Governor's compound and the Radio Station at the same time, all within two kilometres of MBTK.



Lieutenant-Colonel Alan Yeoh Keat Hoe recounted, **“Our team was activated by Headquarters Combined Team Uruzgan shortly after the attack commenced. We provided UAV imagery analysis and assessments over these attacked sites.”** The impact of the team’s effectiveness was most pronounced in this particular mission, as the lives of those besieged by the insurgents were saved.



VALUED PARTNERS

Not all support tasks were exciting and the team had to deal with its fair share of routine surveillance. However, the IATs did not see these as merely routine work. They improved on the analysis reports to enhance the overall security of the mission.

Major-General John Patrick Cantwell, Commander Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) 633, Australian Defence Force (ADF), said, **“Singapore’s IAT reports have set new benchmarks in standard and quality for patterns of life analysis.”** The Commanding Officer of the ADF UAV Task Group was so impressed by the teams’ reports that he led a team from Kandahar to visit and learn from the SAF’s IATs.



Reflections on Tarin Kowt

Tarin Kowt is a district in the province of Oruzgan. It sits on an alternate highway between Kandahar and Ghanzni – both of which were ancient cities and the seats of power of empires long ago.

It sits in the middle of a bowl, ringed by high mountains all round into the distance. Some of the mountains are so high that even in spring, they are capped with snow. Being the lowlands, Tarin Kowt’s rivers are fed by tributaries from the mountains. The mountains trap the moisture in the atmosphere and encourage rain to fall.

The mountains, the valleys, the plains and the rivers of Tarin Kowt are old. They have seen the rise and fall of the Timurid, Mughal, and the Ottoman Empires. They have seen the defeat of the Great British Empire, the Soviet Union, and the Taliban.

They were there when the ISAF came, and they will still be there when the ISAF leaves.

Lieutenant-Colonel
Tan Yueh Phern



Shona Ba Shona

Training the Afghan National Security Forces

'Shona ba Shona' – a phrase that means 'shoulder to shoulder' in the Afghan language, embodies the spirit of comradeship and camaraderie as our servicemen trained the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) to deliver accurate artillery fires and disable Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).



GUNS READY!

Artillery Training in Kabul

MILITARY INSTITUTIONAL TRAINERS – KABUL • 17 AUGUST 2010 – 10 DECEMBER 2010 • 11 DECEMBER 2010 – 01 MAY 2011
• 01 MAY 2011 – 14 SEPTEMBER 2011 • 15 SEPTEMBER 2011 – 14 JANUARY 2012
• 15 JANUARY 2012 – 19 MAY 2011 • 04 MAY 2012 – 19 SEPTEMBER 2012

Recognising that it was the responsibility of the Afghans to secure the future of their country, the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) commenced training programmes to build up the Afghan National Army (ANA). A well-trained ANA would prevent the spread of insurgent activities and secure the safety of the Afghan people.



22 Artillery Courses conducted.

28 Artillery Live Firing Exercises conducted.

1,634 Afghan National Army Soldiers trained.

Training schools were established across the nation with coalition partners supporting the training efforts to build a credible defence force. One such centre was the Australian Defence Force (ADF)-sponsored Artillery School at the Kabul Military Training Centre (KMTC). This school focused on artillery training, doctrine development and the design of 'Train-the-Trainer' programmes.



GUNS READY! | ARTILLERY TRAINING IN KABUL

**TRAINING THE FORCE**

Having worked with the ADF successfully over the years, our first four-man SAF Military Institutional Trainer Team was deployed to the ADF-led Artillery School in KMTC.

Together with our counterparts from Australia, the US, and Mongolia, the school ran a series of training courses for Afghan officers, Non-Commissioned Officers and other ranks.

OVERCOMING HURDLES

In their effort to impart their knowledge, the teams had to overcome the differences in language and practices. Major Tan Jian Long shared that due to the wide ethnic variety in Afghanistan, there was no single unifying language in use. Although Dari was the official language, many Pashtun students were unable to understand Dari. Major Tan said, **“As a result, training lessons had to be conducted in both Dari and Pashto, and thus lessons took twice as long to conduct.”**

Second Warrant Officer Chu Cheng Chwee recounted, **“The inability of the students to even read numbers made it difficult to perform tasks like the setting of the gun and accounting for ammunition. To add on to the challenge, the guns were manufactured in Russia and the instructions were in Russian. However, the commitment and perseverance demonstrated by the people to learn was commendable.”**

‘PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE!’

Thankfully, the trainers did not let their students’ lack of academic foundation daunt them. Major Tan shared, **“To overcome this challenge, the mantra ‘Practice! Practice! Practice!’ proved important and useful. With repeated practice and drills, the students gradually improved and successfully graduated.”**



THE WARRIOR'S SPIRIT *In the fasting period of Ramasan (the Afghan term for Ramadan), the Afghans were strictly not allowed to consume water. This prompted the concern of the SAF trainers who were mindful of the danger of heat stroke and heat exhaustion.*

The trainers took special care and ensured that training was carried out safely and effectively. Determined to protect their nation, the Afghan soldiers persevered. They completed the training and achieved the standards required, demonstrating their unwavering warrior's spirit.



GUNS READY! | ARTILLERY TRAINING IN KABUL

'BUNKER BUNKER!'

Training was not without risk. In July 2012, the Camp Alamo compound suddenly experienced ground tremors, followed by multiple explosions. The alarm started wailing 'Bunker Bunker!'. Senior Lieutenant-Colonel Ng Hock Sing recounted, **"We all wondered if that was a magnetic IED attached to a tank, or if there were insurgents at the gates... after 30 to 45 minutes, the intelligence came in. It was due to a propane gas explosion nearby, wounding at least 140 people."**

The synergy and trust shown during the incident also revealed the deep and strong relations between the SAF Team and their Australian counterparts. Senior Lieutenant-Colonel Ng shared, **"We were very proficient as a team and among the coalition forces. When the Australian contingent commander had to return home, he handed over command of the entire Artillery Training Advisory Team to the Singaporean contingent commander. He said that he trusted the Singaporean commander and would stand 'Shona ba Shona' (shoulder to shoulder)."**

*Kabul at a Glance*

TOTAL LAND AREA : 4,462 km²
POPULATION : 3,950,300 (2012)

Kabul is the capital and largest city of Afghanistan. It is also the capital of Kabul Province, located in the eastern section of Afghanistan in a narrow valley between the Hindu Kush mountains along the Kabul River.

Kabul is the country's cultural and learning centre. More than 3,500 years old, many empires have fought over the valley for its strategic location along the trade routes of South and Central Asia.

Kabul has a semi-arid climate with relatively cool temperatures compared with much of Southwest Asia, mainly due to the high elevation of the city. The annual mean temperature is 12.1 degrees Celsius.

Kabul was also home to the Kabul Military Training Centre (KMTC), where many coalition forces conducted training for the Afghan National Army (ANA). Within KMTC, the US forces established Camp Alamo, in memory of the Alamo outpost in Texas during the Texas Revolution of 1835.

*My Darkest Day*

Captain Hazrat was the manpower officer that Lieutenant Tan Wen Jie and I mentored for the Afghan Artillery School.

In the first week of April, he was killed by a suicide bomber who detonated himself on a bus. He did not die instantaneously. Instead, he sustained the loss of limbs, open abdomen wounds, and subsequently died 3 to 4 hours later due to severe haemorrhage. Hazrat was survived by a then-pregnant wife and two children.

I started to question myself: What am I doing here? Was our work here futile? After the tragedy, our presence with the Afghans was even more appreciated as we mourned with them – united as one.

I recalled Hazrat sharing about his days during the Soviet-Afghan war, and how things became slightly peaceful under the Taliban rule before worsening towards the late 90s. I was most impressed by him when he shared, "There is nothing we can really do but to stay brave for our family. We are accustomed to conflict but that does not mean that we are not peace-loving. Family is my top priority."

These words of his made sense to me, and continues to ring true.

Major
Robin Lee



MINE!

Counter-Improvised Explosive Device Training in Oruzgan

MILITARY INSTITUTIONAL TRAINERS – URUZGAN • 14 OCTOBER 2011 – 30 JUNE 2012 • 16 JUNE 2012 – 05 DECEMBER 2012

Every year, many Afghan civilians lost their lives to Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) set by the insurgents against the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). To safeguard its people, the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), which comprised the military and police, had to be able to detect and disable IEDs.

Working with our Australian Defence Force (ADF) partners, a two-man Pre-deployment Survey Element (PSE) was first sent to identify the specific training needed to assist the ANSF. The team then proceeded to develop and establish a training programme. This was followed up with two five-man teams, who shared with the ANSF soldiers and policemen how to spot, identify, avoid, and disable roadside IEDs.



2 All Corps Search Courses were conducted.

7 Explosive Hazards Reduction Courses were conducted.

17 ANA instructors were trained.

211 counter-IED personnel were trained over 9 courses.

Upgrading of the counter-IED training facility.

BUILDING A CORE

Colonel Benjamin James, Deputy Commander, Combined Team-Uruzgan (CT-U) said, **“I am very appreciative of the contribution by SAF in deploying Training Project Teams.”** Lieutenant-Colonel Fegan Kahlil, Commanding Officer, Mentoring Team 4, added, **“My team is fortunate to have such a professional team from the SAF to help conduct courses. I am confident that your professionalism and knowledge in your**

respective areas of work back in Singapore will greatly benefit my team.”

Beyond just training the ANSF soldiers, the teams also designed the instructor development syllabus and conducted training to build up a core team of 17 ANSF instructors. This ensured that the counter-IED capabilities in the ANSF would not diminish once the ISAF had withdrawn.



MINE! | COUNTER-IMPROVISED EXPLOSIVE DEVICE TRAINING IN ORUZGAN



Teaching the fundamentals

GREEN-ON-BLUE

Amidst all the training, the threat of attacks from insurgents impersonating as an ANSF soldier or policeman was real. These attacks, commonly termed 'Green-on-Blue' by the ISAF, eroded the confidence and trust between the ANSF and ISAF. This method of impersonation and attack targeted the will of the ANSF as it blurred the line between insurgent and comrade. Yet Captain Li Zhiren Ranon, felt that to let this concern overshadow the interaction with the ANSF would be counter-intuitive and counter-productive.

Captain Li elaborated, **"We did adopt suitable force protection measures when required, such as chambering our weapons during our lessons, as well as searching our trainees before they entered the training compound. But communication was key when we had to explain to the Afghan trainees why we had to do so. Surprisingly, they were actually very receptive and supportive of it. One even said, 'Yes, you need to do this. You don't know who is a friend and who is the enemy. Sometimes the enemy might wear our uniforms and pretend to be an ANA soldier. So, for your safety, and for ours, you should check us.'"**

Ties that Bind: Our Common Threads of Humanity

The team as a whole was very successful in connecting and relating with the ANSF. At the end of the day, it was useful to remember that they, like us, were soldiers who were serving their country.

I remember countless occasions where we sat down with our trainees, during our breaks, to have a cup of tea together and just chat. Through an interpreter, the quality of these conversations only served to humble us further. We had soldiers who shared with us why they joined the army, and the reasons always centred round the need to protect their loved ones, and to make sure they never had to return to the days of Taliban rule.

One student shared about how his brother was killed by the Taliban, and how his family was then forced to work and repair weapons for them. He shared about being brought up in an environment of constant fear and worry. He said he joined the army because he never ever wanted to go back to that life again. Instead, he wanted to take charge of his life; the defence of his country and loved ones was his responsibility, not anyone else's. We were inspired, to say the least.

I think the Afghans connected well with the team because we made an effort to listen and to empathise; not to sympathise, but to empathise. Offering a listening ear, showing that we were willing to make a much deeper connection beyond a superficial professional level, made the biggest impact.

I think that we learned about humility and humanity at the same time. This idea of a universal bond and humanity manifested itself right before us. We were soon learning about them, not as Afghan soldiers on course, but as fellow human beings.

We understood what motivated them, what inspired them, what they thought about the war and the ISAF. In turn, they listened to us share our stories of Singapore and what being in the SAF was like.

Captain
Li Zhiren Ranon



Leading from the Front

The National Command
Elements In-theatre

With deployments in Bamiyan, Oruzgan and Kabul, the SAF's mission in Afghanistan was diverse in geography and forces deployed. To ensure the safety and security of our deployed troops, it was necessary for the SAF to be plugged into the International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) conversations in-theatre; officers were deployed at various ISAF Headquarters and bases in Kabul, Kandahar, and Kuwait. These are the stories and thoughts of the men deployed behind the scenes to provide that vantage point.



FORWARD LEADERSHIP

National Contingent Commanders

Based in Kabul, the National Contingent Commander (NCC) was the SAF's representative to the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Headquarters.



6 National Contingent Commanders.





Colonel Desmond Tan

FOCUSED ON INTENT

For the National Contingent Commanders who had to helm the troops, mission focus and building relationships were paramount to success.

For Colonel Desmond Tan who was the first NCC, this meant having a clear understanding of Singapore's policy intent to ensure that focus was maintained and the desired outcome was achieved.

Understanding this allowed for the SAF to focus on niche contributions. Colonel Tan elaborated, **"There are many bigger armed forces able to perform the security aspects of the operation. However, not many can perform medical operations at our proficiency level."**



Colonel Kenneth Liow

A long-term focus on mission was also important to avoid mission creep when being pushed to support. Colonel Kenneth Liow added, **"You must have the discipline in maintaining the mission statement, agreeing only on exceptional cases, and you must quickly take it back and reset. Otherwise, the guys cannot sustain, and chances are, we are more likely to make mistakes through fatigue."**

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

To Colonel Kenneth Liow, building relationships with our partners was crucial, "to know who you can trust



Colonel Chia Choon Hoong

when you press the button, who you can get information from, who you can get resources from, and who can help you rescue your soldiers if something happens."

Besides lateral relations, the vertical relationship with subordinates was essential. Believing that trust allows one to lead, Colonel Chia Choon Hoong shared, **"My belief is that you need to train your people and then, after that, you have to let them go. From time to time, they will make mistakes, but if you believe that you have chosen the right people and you have not misplaced your trust, they will actually do wonders for you."**



Colonel Wong Yu Han

PUNCHING ABOVE THEIR WEIGHT

Colonel Wong Yu Han explained how the SAF's people worked towards upholding the Army's effectiveness during this mission. A key action was to clarify mission focus and purpose prior to entry, which Colonel Wong did with key leaders of his rotation during pre-deployment preparation. Such clarification enabled members of the various teams to bring the Army's credibility and values to bear during the mission, despite its distributed footprint and diverse tasks. Colonel Wong recalled with pride that each team stayed strong and committed despite its individual stresses. He elaborated, **"My visits always left me feeling refreshed and warm, and most importantly, proud that our people were well**



Colonel Lee Wei Cheng

able to punch above our weight in the international community."

Colonel Lee Wei Cheng elaborated on other operational challenges faced by the troops and commanders, which encompassed **"the frequent presence of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) exploited by insurgents to achieve both tactical and strategic effects, the threats of 'Green-On-Blue' in which insurgents infiltrated masked as local security forces to attack ISAF forces, and the sudden surge of violent protests arising from the unfortunate Koran burning incident."** These highlighted the need for the NCC to be on top of the situation at all times to ensure the safety and security of the deployed troops.



Colonel Lim Kwang Tang

DOING THEIR BEST

Doing their best during the deployment was something that got noticed. Colonel Lim Kwang Tang cited an instance when the Commander ISAF General John Allen showed up for Singapore's National Day celebration – a significant gesture because he did not always attend the celebrations of other partner countries in ISAF. Colonel Lim added, **"That year, our celebration was very well attended with 19 generals and Commander ISAF. As Commander ISAF does not attend all functions he is invited to, his attendance was a testament to the SAF efforts."**

EMBEDDED TO SUPPORT

Staff Officers in the International Security Assistance Force

Deployed at the various Headquarters within the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the staff officers worked closely with the partners from other nations.



10 National Liaison
Officers.

35 Staff Officers /
WOSPECs.



Run for a Good Cause

The Bombsuit Charity Run was organised by the coalition forces to raise funds for the families of fallen Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) soldiers. I felt that this was a very heartening effort to aid the families of those killed or wounded in action during their time in Afghanistan.

Lieutenant-Colonel
Adrian Lee

NEXUS OF CONNECTIONS

The first National Liaison Officer (NLO) Lieutenant-Colonel Alfred Fox recounted his deployment in Kabul. He said, **“In Kabul, I was a National Contingent Commander, National Liaison Officer, and Senior National Representative all rolled into one, spending time between the other locations and the role of widening our involvement, on top of the HQ role that was assigned to me. We spent a significant amount of time building relationships, riding on the already solid foundation that the SAF had built with key partners such as the US, Australia, and the UK in previous deployments and exercises.”**

For NLO Lieutenant-Colonel Pang Tzer Yeu, his memorable takeaway was the experience of working closely with international partners with little or no boundaries. He shared, **“I worked directly with a multinational team of American, British, Canadian, Norwegian, and Bulgarian officers. As I was not a strategic communication (Public Affairs or Information Operations) officer by trade, I learnt a lot from them as they provided professional insights. I provided**

operational insights, and together as a team, we were able to produce robust plans and direction to support the ISAF.”

TOUCHING BASE

NLO Lieutenant-Colonel Percival Goh, a staff officer at HQ ISAF, recalled his meeting with the Dutch Task Force commander and his people to share with them how the SAF's Weapon Locating Radar (WLR) detachment could enhance the base security.

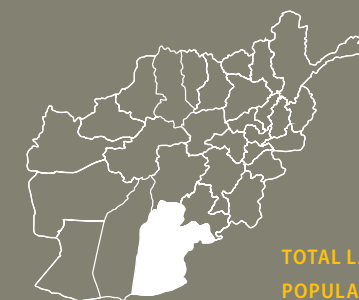
He elaborated, **“The contingent went on to recon the possible WLR sites, shared the likely directions of incoming rounds, figured the ways to meet the accommodation needs for our WLR soldiers, and worked with us on the details to bring in contractors to build the perimeter fence and protective shelters for our WLR deployment site. They were very professional and helpful, and together, we were able to reconcile our respective national guidelines and operationalise an early warning capability for the base.”**

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

Even though they worked within a relatively secure environment, our staff officers did have their fair share of risks on the job.

Lieutenant-Colonel Dinesh Vasu recounted a rocket attack where three rockets were fired with great accuracy – all landing around the living accommodation of the WLR detachment with one of the rockets damaging two of the armoured SUVs.

He shared, **“As the attack was close to the time of a shift change, I instructed the team on shift to remain in position until after the attack. While the camp was under lockdown, I led the next team to the radar to relieve the on-shift team and do the first-cut analysis... There was considerable risk and I was proud of how professional our young radar operators and security troopers were.”**

*Kandahar at a Glance*

TOTAL LAND AREA : 54,022 km²
POPULATION : 1,151,100 (2012)

Kandahar is also known in older literature as Candahar. Its capital Kandahar City is the second largest city in Afghanistan. In Pashto, Kandahar translates to the 'land of plenty'.

Kandahar City is one of the most culturally significant cities of the Pashtuns and has been their traditional seat of power for more than 200 years. It is a major trading centre for sheep, wool, cotton, silk, felt, food grains, fresh and dried food, and tobacco.

Kandahar has a subtropical arid climate with high variation between summer and winter temperatures. Summer temperatures peak in July with a 24-hour daily average of around 31.9 degrees Celsius. Winter begins in December and temperatures average 5.1 degrees Celsius.

Interestingly, some US soldiers have dubbed the 'land of plenty' as 'Candyland', perhaps drawing inspiration from Kandahar's alternative spelling – 'Candahar'.

Kandahar was also home to Camp Baker, situated on Kandahar Airfield. The camp was run by the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Camp Baker was unique due to the fact that it was the only area on the airfield that had grass growing. This was the envy of all personnel based on the airfield.



MAKING IT HAPPEN

Logistical Support Behind the Scenes

Deploying to Afghanistan meant that the SAF had to move troops and equipment, some of which were unique. Resources from both within the SAF and external parties had to be sought in order to accomplish this task. The personal equipment needs of the SAF's troops also required special attention, as they had to function in a very different physical environment. To this end, the logistics supporting the SAF's deployment in Afghanistan was critical to achieving mission success.



12 Forward Support Team Officers /
WOSPECs / Military Experts.

18 National Support Element Officers /
WOSPECs / Military Experts.

41 Redeployment Task Force Officers /
WOSPECs / Military Experts.



CO-ORDINATION

The SAF's troops were deployed in many rotations over the six years in diverse locations and missions, resulting in frequent movement of equipment and personnel. To ensure that the deployed personnel focused on their mission, these administrative challenges were undertaken by the National Support Elements (NSEs) and Redeployment Task Forces (RDTFs).



Outgoing Head, National Support Element Lieutenant-Colonel Choo Jui Sheng (far right) handing over his appointment to Military Expert 5 Daryl Cheong Tze-Min.

The NSE was deployed at the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Life Support Area in Kuwait, at the Ali Al-Salem Air Base, and Kandahar, Afghanistan. The RDTFs were deployed when necessary to facilitate the redeployment of personnel and equipment at the end of each mission.



TRANSPORT

Just as the SAF's troops travelled by commercial and military aircraft, some equipment needed to be transported by special cargo aircraft into the theatre of operation.



The SAF Weapon Locating Radar being delivered into Afghanistan by the Australian Defence Force's C-17 aircraft.



The Antonov cargo aircraft was used to transport heavy equipment to Afghanistan.

**TRANSPORT**

The SAF's C-130 squadron supported Operation Blue Ridge by air-lifting essential equipment such as the Protected Light Utility Vehicle (PLUV), and the Unmanned Aerial Vehicle (UAV) and its control equipment into the theatre of operations. The squadron was also responsible for the safe return of our leaders and servicemen during their visits to Afghanistan. In total, the C-130 squadron air-lifted three PLUVs, two UAVs, as well as 28,000 pounds of equipment and personnel. These efforts by the C-130 squadron were instrumental to the success of Operation Blue Ridge.



GEAR

As the theatre of operations had extreme temperatures as compared to Singapore and a vastly different physical environment, the standard-issue personal items were not sufficient in meeting the requirements of the mission in Afghanistan. The equipment needed to withstand the harsh operating conditions that the servicemen would potentially be subjected to. Thus, to ensure survivability and sustainability, the servicemen were equipped with items that were customised to meet the specific requirements of their mission.



Force Preparation

Equipping Our Troops



In 2008, then-Minister for Defence Mr Teo Chee Hean said, "...Deployments do involve risks to our servicemen, which can be significant. However, where there is real important work to do, there will be attendant risks. Therefore, our personnel are well trained and well prepared for the role in their assigned deployments, and to deal with any contingencies."



ENABLING THE MISSION

Pre-deployment Training

All deployed servicemen undergo a comprehensive three-week Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) package conducted in Singapore. Some deployments also proceeded to train with their international counterparts in their home countries before deploying together.



Shooting practice.



Operational drills.

Servicemen undergoing 'cold room' training in Singapore in preparation for the extreme weather conditions in Afghanistan.



Unarmed combat.



Physical training.

The PDT package incorporated training realism, so as to give the servicemen an idea of the challenges that they would face in-theatre. Besides physical training, close combat training, and operational drills, deployed servicemen also underwent 'cold-room' training to prepare them for operating in low-temperature environments.



R.S.O.I.

Sharpening the Skills In-theatre

Just prior to entering Afghanistan, all troops had to undergo Receive, Staging and Onward-Movement & Integration (RSOI) training at the Life Support Area (LSA) in the Ali Al-Salem Airbase, Kuwait. They underwent training on the latest tactics, techniques, and procedures for executing operations, medical training to provide critical first aid to the wounded, and cultural awareness training.

In addition to the physical preparation, the mental health of our servicemen was of critical concern. This preparation commenced from the selection of candidates, to the PDT, deployment, and the subsequent post-deployment period. This included psychological decompression sessions at the LSA just prior to their return home, to facilitate their transition to a non-operational environment.



Training for medical emergencies.



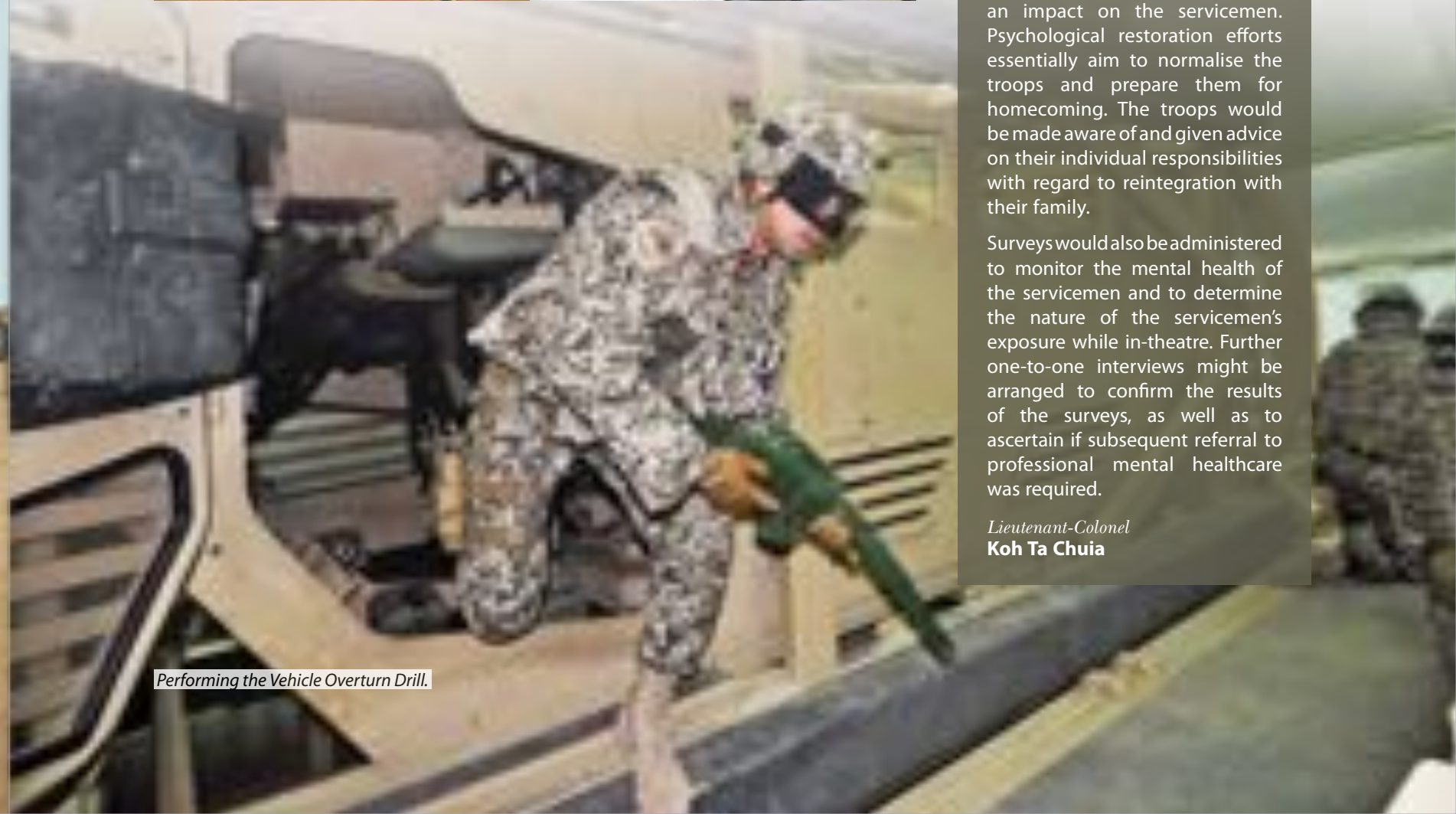
A psychological decompression session.

Psychological Decompression

However positive the experience of an operation may have been, it remains a significant event for the troops. The duration of the deployment and exposure to the operation are likely to have an impact on the servicemen. Psychological restoration efforts essentially aim to normalise the troops and prepare them for homecoming. The troops would be made aware of and given advice on their individual responsibilities with regard to reintegration with their family.

Surveys would also be administered to monitor the mental health of the servicemen and to determine the nature of the servicemen's exposure while in-theatre. Further one-to-one interviews might be arranged to confirm the results of the surveys, as well as to ascertain if subsequent referral to professional mental healthcare was required.

Lieutenant-Colonel
Koh Ta Chua



Performing the Vehicle Overturn Drill.

Family and Friends

Our People and Partners

This is a tribute to the bedrock of strength that supported the deployed servicemen – their family and friends from home who had rallied around them in love and encouragement, as well as the new friends that they had made during their time in deployment. The unwavering support of the people from home, together with the bonds of friendship with international counterparts that were forged in-theatre, enabled the deployed SAF servicemen to achieve mission success, and bring back truly memorable experiences.



Welcome Home
♥ Capt. Leon ♥

PILLAR OF STRENGTH

Family

SETTING OFF

While an official send-off ceremony was held for each deployment, leaving for Afghanistan was perhaps most difficult for the deployed SAF servicemen during the actual send-off at the airport. Being away from their loved ones for months at a stretch would not be easy, but the servicemen knew that their mission awaited them.



FAMILY ENGAGEMENT

Keeping in constant touch via Skype, the sights and sounds of their loved ones became their emotional lifeline and reason to return safely. Family engagement sessions were organised to allow the

deployed servicemen to stay connected with their loved ones. These were also opportunities for the families and friends of the servicemen to interact and get to know one another better.



HOME AWAY FROM HOME

In the absence of their families, the deployed SAF servicemen became family to each other away from home. Gatherings, complete with Singaporean-style food, kept homesickness at bay. Welfare parcels were also an eagerly awaited treat in-theatre. Containing articles and food

from home, these parcels arrived on a monthly basis. The parcels were a source of sustenance for our servicemen, and served as a psychological clock that gave them a sense of how close they were to seeing their loved ones again.



Goodies from the welfare package.



Taking a hike up PT Hill in Bamiyan.

SHOWING SUPPORT

The work that the deployed SAF personnel did in Afghanistan was recognised by the leadership. Over the six years of the SAF's deployment in Afghanistan, numerous visits by the Ministers for Defence and the SAF's top leadership gave the servicemen the motivation and encouragement to press on in their mission.



PILLAR OF STRENGTH | FAMILY

HOMECOMING

After a long deployment, the servicemen finally had a well-deserved reunion with their families and friends.



FORGING TIES

Building Friendships



Lieutenant-Colonel Yang Si Cheng with US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates.

Ties with the SAF's international partners such as Australia, the Netherlands, New Zealand, and the United States, have been strong and close. The SAF has had the privilege, over the last six years of deployment, to work shoulder to shoulder with them. The SAF salutes its valued partner militaries through its deployed servicemen's reflections on working together in-theatre.





Australia

The experience of working with our partners from the Australian Defence Force (ADF) was invaluable. They were professional, knowledgeable, and highly skilled in their area of work. Our constant knowledge exchanges and collaboration with them in-theatre also proved to be enriching, as we worked towards the collective goal of contributing to the reconstruction efforts to bring peace in Afghanistan. This deployment has not only allowed the SAF to strengthen our military ties with ADF partners, but also allowed us to forge friendships with them that would last a lifetime.

Captain
Joe Tan
Imagery Analysis Team





Major (NS) Dr Philip Lau receiving the ISAF medal.



The Netherlands

When we first set foot into Camp Holland, we were greeted with strange looks from our Dutch counterparts. Many of them have never worked with us and thought we were probably from China or Japan. Only a few have heard of us Singaporeans, or even the SAF. Things were tough in the beginning, but after we started to engage them at various levels, we were welcomed into the Camp Holland community. The relationship was sealed when we tracked the first incoming rocket. From there, we were seen as full-fledged war fighting partners.

We became friends with many of them and we still keep in contact with each other. Off duty times were not just spent with our own people but also with our Dutch friends. Their warmth and helpfulness helped us overcome the mundane 24/7 operations. They were ready to risk indirect fire threats and run over to our bunks, informing us of any impending threats. We really appreciated small gestures by our Dutch friends such as checking if the environment around our radar post had been properly cleaned by the Afghan contractor.

While many of us were happy when it was time to return home, there was a part of us that wanted to stay just a day more with our friends – one more day of eating stroop waffles and sharing a cup of green tea. I had the privilege of my Dutch pals sending me off at the flight line. Their parting words to me were: "We should do an operation together again."

Major
Vincent Koh
Weapon Locating Radar Team





New Zealand Prime Minister John Key with the Construction Engineering Team led by Lieutenant-Colonel Royston Lim.



New Zealand

The manner that they went about in managing (an IED attack on a patrol where a fatality was sustained) attested to their mental fortitude and resolve. Everything went like clockwork, just like how we had rehearsed during our pre-deployment training in New Zealand. This capability did not come by accident. It was because of the deliberate and meticulous pre-deployment preparation. My team is proud to have served side by side with CRIB 16, New Zealand Defence Force.

Lieutenant-Colonel
Royston Lim
Construction Engineering Team



New Zealand Minister of Defence Wayne Mapp with Lieutenant-Colonel Desmond Yeo.



Commander ISAF General John Allen arriving at Singapore's National Day Celebration 2012.



The United States of America

I enjoyed good working relations with the US medical team at the Role 2E hospital, largely due to the relationships formed during the pre-deployment integration training.

We operated as a cohesive unit in the Emergency Room, Operating Theatre and wards. Our team also conducted weekly lectures and on-the-job training for the Afghan National Army (ANA) medics.

As such, our relationship was similar to that of a family during the mission, as everyone lived, worked, and played closely together.

This mission has allowed me to witness a wider spectrum of military medicine and sub-specialties; it has definitely been an enriching professional experience.

Military Expert 4

See Yen Ling
Medical Team



National Contingent Commander
Colonel Wong Yu Han with Commander
ISAF General David Petraeus.

FLYING OUR FLAG

Accolades and Compliments

The deployed SAF servicemen performed well and made a meaningful contribution to the International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan. This was evidenced by the accolades given by our partners to honour the spirit of excellence in our servicemen.





"I am proud of each serviceman because they demonstrated a high level of skill, professionalism and resilience while carrying out their duties. When I visited Afghanistan, and met the commanders from other militaries, they had high praise for the capability and professionalism of our soldiers. I knew they were not saying this to me because they had to. I didn't solicit for it; I knew that there was actual conviction that what our boys did there made a difference."

Minister for Defence
Dr Ng Eng Hen

"The six-man Singapore Team had worked in the areas of healthcare and infrastructure, completed many projects, especially the RHTC, different clinics in Bamiyan Province, and the Dental Clinic. Their projects were very beneficial for the people of Bamiyan and we thank you and appreciate your efforts deeply."

Provincial Governor, Bamiyan
Dr Habiba Sarabi

"The team from the Singapore Armed Forces has been a significant member of the PRT since 2007 and at the time they have provided dentistry assistance to the Bamiyan Hospital, significant engineering and construction work throughout the central Bamiyan region including construction of bridges and security walls, the provision of water wells, humanitarian assistance during the winter months and now, the construction of this magnificent comprehensive health clinic. The Singaporean Team has worked as an integral part of the PRT and they provided the value of contributions to the people of Bamiyan. We are all proud of their efforts."

Civilian Director
New Zealand Defence Force Provincial Reconstruction Team
Mr Richard Newlands

"When you look at the weapon locating radar, they provide us now with early warning...this gives us more time to react and to find shelter...now we can work and sleep more safely than before."

Commander, Task Force Uruzgan
Brigadier-General Marc Van Uhm

"If I can say to my Singaporean friends, you do important work in the development of some key projects throughout this area. As New Zealanders, we are fortunate to serve alongside you."

Commanding Officer
New Zealand Defence Force Provincial Reconstruction Team
Lieutenant-Colonel John Boswell

"The Singapore Detachment here at Tarin Kowt has been excellent in all regards; the professionalism is of high standard and everybody is dedicated to their particular role, and it is certainly at the standard that I have come to expect from the SAF over many years of working with them."

Chief of Staff, Task Force Uruzgan
Lieutenant-Colonel Matthew Brummley

"The SAF and ADF are old partners; your contributions are focused and effective and we value them here."

National Contingent Commander, Australian Defence Force
Brigadier Simon Roach

"Your analysis teams are world class. I am glad you decided to stay and continue to contribute."

Commander, Combined Team Uruzgan
Colonel James Creighton

"I can honestly say that the SAF officers are some of the finest officers, of any country, that I have ever had the pleasure to serve alongside. Rarely do you find officers of such competence and poised professionalism. Thank you for sending your best, it is making a difference in Southern Afghanistan."

Commander Regional Command (South)
Major-General James Terry

"The Singapore Armed Forces team may be just a small team... but the weight they pulled and the effect they had felt like so much more, that now when they leave, the gap feels much greater..."

Commander, Kabul Military Training Centre Training Advisory Group
Colonel Peter Williams



NETHERLANDS ARMED FORCES COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL FOR PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS

- LTC Dinesh Vasu Dash (2010)
- LTC Chan I-Harn, Alvin (2010)
- MAJ (Dr) Muhammad Bin Idu Jion (2010)
- MAJ (NS) Dr Cheng Mathew Hern Wang (2010)
- MAJ (NS) Dr Philip Iau Tsau Choong (2010)
- MAJ (NS) Dr Tan Wah Tze (2010)

US ARMY BRONZE STAR

- MAJ Cai Dexian (2012)

US ARMY COMMENDATION AWARD

- LTC Lock Wai Leck, Willy (2012)
- LTC Chan Ming Hoe (2012)
- MAJ Wong Wei Han, Gareth (2011)
- MAJ Lim Kian Peng, Adrian (2011)

US JOINT SERVICE COMMENDATION MEDAL

- LTC Mohd Fahmi Bin Aliman (2013)

Lieutenant-Colonel Chan I-Harn, Alvin

Major Cai Dexian

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Mission Accomplished

In-theatre Closing

With the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF) in the final stages of taking over full responsibility for its country's national security, the SAF concluded its deployments in Afghanistan. The completion of Operation Blue Ridge was commemorated by a ceremony held on 22 June 2013 at the Multinational Base Tarin Kowt (MBTK) in Oruzgan, officiated by Chief of Army Major-General Ravinder Singh. During his visit, Major-General Ravinder Singh also called on Commander International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) General Joseph Dunford in Kabul, where he expressed his appreciation to the ISAF for the support rendered to the SAF troops over the last six years in Afghanistan.



MISSION ACCOMPLISHED

In-theatre Closing

"The Singapore Armed Forces has been a valuable contributor to the ability of the Afghans to take the lead; from their artillery forces to supporting us with our intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities, to assisting us in our strategic communications, to the medical and dental support. All those contributions by Singapore have truly made a difference."

Commander ISAF
General Joseph Dunford

"The SAF's deployment in Afghanistan has been one of the longest and most wide-ranging overseas deployments for us. Our soldiers have consistently demonstrated a high level of professionalism and commitment in carrying out their duties. Our international partners speak highly of the SAF as a ready and reliable partner. We are grateful for this opportunity to contribute to the global fight against terrorism and help the Afghan people. The deployments have also allowed the SAF to gain valuable operational experience."

Chief of Army
Major-General Ravinder Singh



End-of-Mission Ceremony at MBTK, Oruzgan.



Chief of Army Major-General Ravinder Singh with Commander ISAF General Joseph Dunford.

The Flag Bearers

Representing Singapore

492 SAF servicemen and women were deployed to Afghanistan. They came forth selflessly to answer the call of duty. They flew the flag high and did Singapore and the SAF proud.

THE FLAG BEARERS

Representing Singapore



DENTAL PROJECT TEAM

16 MAY 2007 to 29 OCTOBER 2007
LTC LEE KUAN CHUNG
MAJ (DR) LEE CHEE WEE
MAJ (DR) TAN WEI YANG, BERNARD
2WO LEOW PEOW MING
SSG TOK KOK THYE



CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING TEAM

25 JULY 2007 to 29 OCTOBER 2007
LTC ONG CHIA CHOONG
MAJ MING FOOK KUEN
CPT HEOK KAY LIONG, BENJAMIN
2WO BORIS LEAW KOK CHUAN
MSG CHAN CHEE YUAN



CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING TEAM

03 MAY 2008 to 31 OCTOBER 2008
LTC TAN MING CHONG, JAMES
CPT QUEK CHEE TIONG
MAJ YEO KIN TEOW
MAJ NG CHEE MENG
MSG LIM TECK HWAI
SSG LOO POH CHYE
SSG DINEASH PILLAI
SSG SIM CHEE JIN
SSG TAY YANG KWANG, ROLAND
SSG CHEY WAI KHEONG



CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING TEAM

31 APRIL 2009 to 07 NOVEMBER 2009
LTC YEO JOON HUA, DESMOND
CPT HOW SEE KIAN
CPT PANG KAH YIE
2WO JOSEPH GOH HEE KOON
SSG WONG CHER SIANG
SSG LOW JING EN

CONSTRUCTION ENGINEERING TEAM

02 MAY 2010 to 27 OCTOBER 2010
LTC LIM BOON KENG, ROYSTON
CPT LIM YIH RONG
ME3 SANDRABALA S/O KAYAMPU
3WO LEE KOW YONG
SSG LIM ZHIHONG, WILLIAM
1SG LIM MENG YEOW

WINTER DEPLOYMENT TEAM

24 NOVEMBER 2007 to 10 MAY 2008
LTC TAN LEONG BOON
LTC YEO SIK CHEW
CPT HONG MOOK YONG

WINTER DEPLOYMENT TEAM

16 OCTOBER 2008 to 08 MAY 2009
LTC PANG CHONG HAN
CPT TEO YONG KIONG

WINTER DEPLOYMENT TEAM

02 NOVEMBER 2009 to 01 MAY 2010
LTC CHAN WEI KIAT, ANDREW
CPT HUANG WENYAO
2WO KHOR CHIN SIONG

MEDICAL TEAM

08 NOVEMBER 2008 to 28 FEBRUARY 2009
LTC CHIN SUN WERN, KEVIN
MAJ (DR) ADRIAN TAN CHONG BENG
MAJ (DR) KOH CHOONG HOU
MAJ WEE SHEN WEN
CPT KOH CHOO LIANG, BERNARD
1WO LIM BOON KER
2WO KASINATHAN S/O KANARAN
2WO MAZLAN BIN MOHAMAD KHALID
2WO TAN PUAY MENG
MSG CHAN HON, GALVIN
MSG CHUA CHIN LEONG

MSG NICHOLAS KOH SWEE SIONG
MSG POH JING SONG
SSG TAN BOON HIAN
SSG CHEW YONG KUAN, BERNARD
SSG TEE YONG HWA
SSG HONG CHET HENG
SSG YEO TSE SHYONG, TERENCE
2SG ALFATAH ABDUL KARIM
1SG POK YAO MIN, DANIEL

MEDICAL TEAM

17 FEBRUARY 2009 to 29 MAY 2009
MAJ (DR) LO HONG YEE, EDWARD
MAJ (DR) NG WEI LIK JARED
MAJ ROZARIO GARVIN ARNOLD
CPT SOLIANO PAULINHNO ENRIQUE TAN
CPT NEO CHOON CHEA
1WO SUBRAMANIAM SELVARAJ
2WO MOHD HANAFI BIN MAKSOM
2WO WONG TENG LEONG
2WO TIMOTHY ZACHARY RAJAH
2WO TAY GEK HONG
MSG TEO CHEE HIONG
SSG ENG YEW KIANG
SSG LIM SI-YUAN
SSG NG YONG KEE
SSG LEE YEW SEN, JAMES
SSG HOON TIANJIE
SSG GOH BENG LEONG, MELVIN
2SG BENITEZ YU MIN, BRIAN
3SG WOO YING MING

MEDICAL TEAM

01 DECEMBER 2009 to 31 MARCH 2010
MAJ (DR) HO MING LI, LEONARD
MAJ (DR) CHUA CHOON GUAN
CPT LUM E VON
2WO ZAINAL ABIDIN BIN SHUKOR

SSG LOW KIM PIEW
SSG KWONG SOON WENG, KELVIN
SSG TEO GUAN JIE
SSG GUEK SOON PENG
1SG LAI QIN FENG
1SG XU SHIXIANG
1SG CHIA KWANG KHIAN, KENNY
3SG MUHAMMAD ZULHILMI BIN
LUKMANUDDIN
3SG TOH ZI XIANG, JONATHAN

SURGICAL TEAM

18 MARCH 2010 to 31 MAY 2010
MAJ (DR) MUHAMMAD BIN IDU JION
MAJ (NS) DR CHENG MATHEW HERN WANG
MAJ (NS) DR PHILIP IAU TSAU CHOONG
MAJ (NS) DR TAN WAH TZE
ME5 NG GEOK CHENG
ME4 LIM POH THIAM
ME2 OH CHEE CHYE
ME1 WONG ZHEN WEN

MEDICAL TEAM

03 MARCH 2011 to 07 AUGUST 2011
LTC YEE KOK MENG
MAJ (DR) KUA EE HSIANG, JONAH
MAJ CHUA WEE CHIK
CPT (DR) CHEONG SIEW MENG
ME4 SEE YEN LING
MWO LOW HAK CHIA
ME3 CHUA CHOON LIN
2WO TEO YEOW THIAM
3WO POON TECK WAH, SILVESTER
1SG TAN BEE HOCK
ME1 NG WEI NI
ME1 TAN WEE SIANG
ME1 JOEL QUEK WEE TECK



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MEDICAL TEAM

16 APRIL 2011 to 31 OCTOBER 2011

LTC FOO CHEK BOON
MAJ (DR) TAN NAN GUANG
MAJ (DR) SOH TECK HWEE
CPT LOW JUN MING, ADRIAN
ME4 JIVA ANANTHAN S/O VISEIKUMARAN
MWO WEE HOCK CHYE, DANIEL
ME2 OH KOK SIONG
ME2 BENJAMIN NG KHENG WEE
ME2 LEE JIN HAN, JOSEPH
MSG LIM CHIEW PHENG
MSG NEO SZE KAI
SSG RISHI KUMAR S/O DANABATHY
ME1 CHEN LIFFONG



WEAPON LOCATING RADAR TEAM

08 SEPTEMBER 2009 to 18 JANUARY 2010

MAJ KOH HAN SEAH
CPT HO SIJIE
CPT ZHUO JINCHENG
CPT HO KOK BOON
1WO CHEN KEE WUI
MSG YEO KAH LOON
MSG TEO CHING KHAI, VINCENT
MSG HOO TUCK YONG
SSG LEE CHENG YONG
SSG SURESH S/O PANNEERSELVAM
SSG CHAN TZE PENG
SSG WILLIAM S/O NADAN
SSG ANG YENG HUI
SSG TAN CHUNG MENG, SHAUN
SSG LOW KAY KEE
SSG ONG CHONG HOW
2SG RASHPAL SINGH S/O AMARJIT SINGH



WEAPON LOCATING RADAR TEAM

19 JANUARY 2010 to 10 JUNE 2010

MAJ LIM CHUN KIAT, VINCENT
CPT NG SI WEN, MELVIN
CPT CHOK YUAN YI
CPT CHOY WAI HONG
CPT LIN JINTAO, ARTHUR



1WO TEO SENG CHYE
2WO LIM KIM LENG
2WO NG CHIN HUN
MSG SEE CHEE MENG
MSG TAY CHOON MONG
SSG NG SHIAN HUAT
SSG YAP KOK HUA
SSG CHUA SENG BOON
SSG LAWRENCE WONG ZHENG KIONG
SSG TEO WEE TIONG, DERICK
SSG KAN CHEE YONG
1SG NG WEIMING
1SG XIE ZHOUXIANG, DEREK
1SG SIM WEE LENG
2SG HONG GUANGYANG
2SG KANG LIEDONG
2SG LIANG CHENGXUN, BRUCE

WEAPON LOCATING RADAR TEAM

20 MAY 2010 to 08 OCTOBER 2010

MAJ LEONG SIU WENG, JEREMY
MAJ SUNIM SINGH
CPT KWEK KIAN LEONG
CPT MUHAMMAD RASHIK BIN OMAR
MWO LIM SIN SOON
ME3 TAN CHOON PHENG
2WO SOW YONG KWANG
2WO YEO HAI CHAY
MSG TAN KUAN YEOW, JASON
MSG GOH CHEE WEE
MSG TAN TZE MENG, KELVIN
SSG LEE CHOON LIANG
ME1 LEE KWANG FONG, ROYSTON
2SG MOHAMAD FADHIL BIN MOHD FATHLAN
2SG KHAIRUDDIN BIN MOHAMED SALLEH
2SG MUHAMMAD ASHIK BIN SOKHAIMEE
2SG LEE HAN SHENG
2SG NGIAN ZHI WEI
2SG TAN KOK SOON
2SG WONG KAO YU
3SG YEO YAN DE, DARYL

WEAPON LOCATING RADAR TEAM

21 SEPTEMBER 2010 to 28 DECEMBER 2010

MAJ LIM SOON MENG
MAJ CHAN KUM TECK
CPT WONG MUSHAN
LTA LAU WEI YONG
MWO CHOONG KENG ON
ME3 TEY JIA HUEY, HIDEKI
2WO TAY HONG KIAN
ME2 CHIA CHYE MING
ME2 CHENG WEI HONG
MSG KOK CHEE LEONG
MSG TERRENCE NG CHENG YONG
SSG TOH CHUN WUI
1SG AHMAD ISKANDAR BIN ABDUL LATIF
1SG ONG WEI MENG
1SG TAN ZHIMING
1SG WONG XIUPING, ANGELINE
2SG MEVINJIT SINGH DHILLON
2SG MOHAMMAD MOHSEN BIN AGOS
2SG MUHAMMAD SUFIAN BIN ANUAR
2SG YAP YIK YONG
3SG YEO KAH WAI, DONOVAN

UAV TASK GROUP

12 AUGUST 2010 to 28 NOVEMBER 2010

LTC CHAN I-HARN, ALVIN
LTC TAN HONG SIAN, PAUL
MAJ TIEN LI CHIH
MAJ CHARLES THOMAS
MAJ GERARD NG KWANG HAN
MAJ SEAH PI YEE
MAJ LOW JUN HORNG
MAJ TAN SEEK HAO, AUGUSTINE
ME5 LIM TIONG HOW
ME4 LEE KOK LEONG, RICHARD
CPT TANG POH SAN
CPT MAHESH S/O ROSS NAIR
CPT LIM JEAN HOE, OWEN
LTA CHER WEI SHUEN, LESTER
SWO K CHANDRAN
MWO CHAN CHOON SENG
ME3 CHUA TECK HIEN
ME3 SIAH CHU THONG

ME3 LOW FOO MUN, EUGENE
ME3 LIM CHIN HOE
ME3 TEO SOON HOCK
1WO LIM TECK SENG
1WO KRISHNASAMY S/O K RAMASAMY
2WO CHANG WEE LEONG
2WO CHIN WEI KIAT
3WO SEE THO WENG HONG
ME2 KOK HON MUN
ME2 LEE KIM HOCK
ME2 TAN CHEE KEONG
ME2 TAN HON LI
ME2 LIM TONG HUNG
ME2 LEE YONGZHI
ME2 CHANG WEI KEONG
MSG OON KOON CHEW
MSG CHEW KENG SIANG
SSG LEE YUNE LONG
SSG TEO CHEE WEI
SSG XIE QINHAO
SSG LIM SHIN CHUN
ME1 VIKNESHWARAN MANICKAM
ME1 D KARTHIKEYAN PILLAI
ME1 LESTER NEO CHIN SENG
ME1 NG WEI MING, ASTON
ME1 POH SOON CHYE
ME1 LEE YING JIE, ALEX
ME1 WANG YU CHENG, CALVIN
ME1 LIM HONG TAT
ME1 TOH CHENG HONG
1SG MOHAMED EFFENDI BIN MASNAWI
1SG TAN WEI MING
1SG TEOW HAN SIONG
2SG TAN ZHI YONG, ERIC

IMAGERY ANALYSIS TEAM

04 NOVEMBER 2010 to 20 APRIL 2011

MAJ YEO HAI KWAN, WILSON
CPT LEE JINGAL
CPT WONG KANGHUI
LTA HO WAI BOH
ME3 TEO JOO LAM
ME2 PENG ZHENRONG



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IMAGERY ANALYSIS TEAM

22 MARCH 2011 to 27 JULY 2011

LTC KOH HAR YONG
CPT PHUA CHAO RONG
CPT DAVID S/O VINCENT DANIEL
ME4 KAN SOON KEONG, SHAWN
2WO LOH HOE KUAN
ME2 JEEVARATHINAM S/O SUBRAMANIAM



IMAGERY ANALYSIS TEAM

28 JUNE 2011 to 28 OCTOBER 2011

LTC YEOH KEAT HOE
CPT LEE JIAN ZONG, JASMON
CPT TEO WEI CHE
CPT CHAN JINGZHONG
ME3 RAMESH S/O KRISHAN
ME1 LI CHUN HEI



IMAGERY ANALYSIS TEAM

25 OCTOBER 2011 to 22 FEBRUARY 2012

CPT NG NIANLONG
CPT LEE YIU WING
ME4 TAN PENG KOON
MSG LIAO WEILONG, DENNIS
ME2 TEO KWANG LOONG, RANDALL



IMAGERY ANALYSIS TEAM

23 FEBRUARY 2012 to 22 JUNE 2012

LTC LIM KWANG ENG
CPT SEE MITE
MWO WONG WENG KEE, JEFFREY
ME3 TAN CHUN GUAN
3WO HO JUN MING
ME2 WONG HANG KEONG, ADRIAN

IMAGERY ANALYSIS TEAM

05 JUNE 2012 to 29 OCTOBER 2012

LTC LIM KAH KENG
MAJ SUE SIANT
ME4 THNG BOON HUI
CPT TAN KWANG HENG
MWO NEO CHEE WEE
ME2 OH ZHEN CHANG

IMAGERY ANALYSIS TEAM

06 OCTOBER 2012 to 10 MARCH 2013

LTC HENG AIK FINE
ME4 JAMES LIM KOK CHONG
CPT HIRANPAL SINGH S/O PREM SINGH
ME3 LEE KUM YEW
3WO TAN BOON SIONG, SIMON
ME1 CHIN YONGXIN, SAMUEL

IMAGERY ANALYSIS TEAM

15 FEBRUARY 2013 to 22 JUNE 2013

LTC TAN YUEH PHERN
CPT KWEK XIAO HAO
CPT LIU KAISHENG, NICHOLAS
MWO NG SOY SOY
ME3 YAP CHEE MENG
ME2 HO KAI SENG

MILITARY INSTITUTIONAL TRAINERS-KABUL

17 AUGUST 2010 to 10 DECEMBER 2010

LTC SEOW LOONG, NICHOLAS
CPT GOH KENG WAH, PREM
LTA WU WENJIE
1WO NEDUNSEZHIAN S/O SUBRAYALU

MILITARY INSTITUTIONAL TRAINERS-KABUL

11 DECEMBER 2010 to 01 MAY 2011

LTC LEK SENG KHOON
MAJ LEE SWEE HOUNG, ROBIN
MAJ DEVIEASH JAMES S/O HARSHAD RAI PANDYA
CPT TAN JIANLONG
MWO CHUA WAH YONG
ME3 S SUSAI PILLAI
2WO CHU CHENG CHWEE
2WO CHANDRA S/O KARUMANAN
SSG CHUA WEN HAO
SSG CHAN JIAN DA

MILITARY INSTITUTIONAL TRAINERS-KABUL

02 MAY 2011 to 14 SEPTEMBER 2011

LTC TOH SZE CHOON
MAJ SOH CHUN KIAT
MAJ YANG CHOON SIONG

CPT LEE WEN JUN, EDWIN
ME3 R ARIVALAGAN
1WO TAN HAI SENG
1WO SIN SOO HIANG
1WO TAN KIAM SEONG, DESMOND
2WO NG KIAN BOON
MSG GOH ZHENJIANG, NICHOLAS
SSG LIM JIASHENG, CLARENCE

MILITARY INSTITUTIONAL TRAINERS-KABUL

15 SEPTEMBER 2011 to 14 JANUARY 2012

SLTC TAN KAY KIAN, VINCENT
CPT TAN YONG MENG
CPT LEE YONG KENG
CPT CHOONG JIN GONG, KEVIN
2WO NG KIAN BOON
ME2 SHAHUL ALI BIN ABDUL MUTALIB
SSG MUHAMMAD BUKHARI BIN SUHAIMI
SSG KOH HUAN NENG
SSG YEO JOO LONG
SSG HENG SEN CAI, DANIEL

MILITARY INSTITUTIONAL TRAINERS-KABUL

15 JANUARY 2012 to 19 MAY 2012

SLTC LO WENG WAH, CHRISTOPHER
CPT HO WEE PENG
CPT SEAH JUN WEN, HENRY
CPT TAN HUI ZE
ME3 LOI CHIN THYE
1WO SNG HUEE KWANG
2WO BABA MAHARAUF CARRIM
SSG LI XUANYANG
1SG LIU ZHIZHONG
1SG TEO ANN KAI, MARVIN

MILITARY INSTITUTIONAL TRAINERS-KABUL

04 MAY 2012 to 19 SEPTEMBER 2012

SLTC NG HOCK SING
CPT LIM WEE HUAT
CPT ONG JIAWEN
CPT CHUA ENG HWEE
ME3 KWOK CHEE MENG

2WO ANTHONY LEE HUEY TONG
3WO POH WEE YAM
SSG HOW TIAN WEN
1SG NG CHING BOON
1SG AFFANDI BIN AZIZ

MILITARY INSTITUTIONAL TRAINERS-URUZGAN

14 OCTOBER 2011 to 30 JUNE 2012

MAJ LIM YOUJIA, CHESTER
CPT CAI WEIZONG
1WO TAN CHUAN SOON
2WO PEH CHEE KEONG
3WO LIM BOON SENG
MSG TIONG YAOQIN
SSG TAN BOON GUAN

MILITARY INSTITUTIONAL TRAINERS-URUZGAN

16 JUNE 2012 to 05 DECEMBER 2012

CPT LI ZHIREN, RANON
2WO ANG CHEE SIONG
2WO TAN YONG KOON, ALBERT
3WO LO KOK FU
3WO ALOYSIUS S/O JOSEPH
3WO LIAO CHENBIN, ALEX

NATIONAL CONTINGENT COMMANDER

05 JANUARY 2010 to 04 JULY 2010

COL TAN KOK MING, DESMOND

NATIONAL CONTINGENT COMMANDER

01 JUNE 2010 to 22 DECEMBER 2010

COL LIOW MENG KWEE, KENNETH

NATIONAL CONTINGENT COMMANDER

09 DECEMBER 2010 to 04 MAY 2011

COL CHIA CHOON HOONG

NATIONAL CONTINGENT COMMANDER

21 APRIL 2011 to 28 OCTOBER 2011

COL WONG YU HAN



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NATIONAL CONTINGENT COMMANDER
06 OCTOBER 2011 to 30 APRIL 2012
COL LEE WEI CHENG

NATIONAL CONTINGENT COMMANDER
13 APRIL 2011 to 29 OCTOBER 2012
COL LIM KWANG TANG

NATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER
28 NOVEMBER 2008 to 20 MAY 2009
LTC FOX ALFRED GEORGE



NATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER
05 MAY 2009 to 04 DECEMBER 2009
LTC GOH BENG NGAN, PERCIVAL

NATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER
17 NOVEMBER 2009 to 10 JUNE 2010
LTC GOH TIONG CHENG



NATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER
25 MAY 2010 to 05 DECEMBER 2010
SLTC MA LUP HOE, MICHAEL

NATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER
23 NOVEMBER 2010 to 03 JUNE 2011
SLTC PHAY NAI YANG, LUIS

NATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER
17 MAY 2011 to 27 NOVEMBER 2011
LTC TAN WEE KIAN



NATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER
12 NOVEMBER 2011 to 13 MAY 2012
SLTC TAN TECK GUAN

NATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER
30 APRIL 2012 to 25 OCTOBER 2012
LTC MOHD FAHMI BIN ALIMAN

NATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER
06 OCTOBER 2012 to 05 MARCH 2013
LTC PANG TZER YEU

NATIONAL LIAISON OFFICER
15 FEBRUARY 2013 to 22 JUNE 2013
SLTC LUM HON YUEN

STAFF OFFICER, CJ3, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
23 JUNE 2009 to 19 JANUARY 2010
MAJ WU CHEOK KWAN, JACKSON

STAFF OFFICER, CJ3, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
17 NOVEMBER 2009 to 04 JULY 2010
MAJ GOH SWEE KHIANG

STAFF OFFICER, CJ3, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
08 JUNE 2010 to 22 DECEMBER 2010
MAJ XU YOUFENG

STAFF OFFICER, CJ3, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
23 NOVEMBER 2010 to 03 JUNE 2011
MAJ GOH PEI MING

STAFF OFFICER, CJ3, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
09 JUNE 2011 to 27 NOVEMBER 2011
MAJ WONG WEI HAN, GARETH

STAFF OFFICER, CJ3, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
12 NOVEMBER 2011 to 30 APRIL 2012
MAJ SIEW ZHI XIANG, KEVIN

STAFF OFFICER, CJ3, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
13 APRIL 2012 to 13 OCTOBER 2012
MAJ CAI DEXIAN

STAFF OFFICER, CJ2, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
17 NOVEMBER 2009 to 10 JUNE 2010
MAJ NG LAI KHIM, STEVEN

STAFF OFFICER, CJ2, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
25 MAY 2010 to 05 DECEMBER 2010
MAJ TAN JIAN YUAN, RYAN

STAFF OFFICER, CJ2, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
09 DECEMBER 2010 to 22 JUNE 2011
MAJ CLARENCE CAI GEREN

STAFF OFFICER, CJ2, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
17 MAY 2011 to 27 NOVEMBER 2011
MAJ LIM KIAN PENG, ADRIAN

SAF COMMANDER ORUZGAN
17 NOVEMBER 2009 to 10 JUNE 2010
LTC DINESH VASU DASH

STAFF OFFICER, ISAF JOINT COMMAND
01 JUNE 2010 to 22 DECEMBER 2010
LTC TAN TENG KWANG

STAFF OFFICER, ISAF JOINT COMMAND
09 DECEMBER 2010 to 22 JUNE 2011
LTC YANG SI CHENG

STAFF OFFICER, ISAF JOINT COMMAND
09 JUNE 2011 to 03 DECEMBER 2011
LTC LOCK WAI LEK, WILLY

STAFF OFFICER, ISAF JOINT COMMAND
23 NOVEMBER 2011 to 21 DECEMBER 2011
LTC TAN CHENG HOCK, JASON

STAFF OFFICER, ISAF JOINT COMMAND
04 JANUARY 2012 to 13 MAY 2012
LTC CHUA WOON KIAN

STAFF OFFICER, ISAF JOINT COMMAND
30 APRIL 2012 to 29 OCTOBER 2012
SLTC TAN CHENG KWEE

STAFF OFFICER, ISAF JOINT COMMAND
06 OCTOBER 2012 to 05 MARCH 2013
LTC YONG YIK FUNG

STAFF OFFICER, ISAF JOINT COMMAND
15 FEBRUARY 2013 to 29 JUNE 2013
LTC ONG KAH KEONG, PATRICK

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CELL
09 NOVEMBER 2010 to 03 JUNE 2011
MAJ JUSTIN TEO KOK SEONG
2WO WONG TECK WEE

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CELL
17 MAY 2011 to 27 NOVEMBER 2011
CPT CHAI CHIAN BOON
2WO SOH SAY GUAN
2WO TAY CHIN CHYE

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CELL
12 NOVEMBER 2011 to 30 APRIL 2012
CPT TAN SHYH TSAIR

NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE CELL
13 APRIL 2012 to 29 OCTOBER 2012
CPT CHENG TECK LEONG



THE FLAG BEARERS | REPRESENTING SINGAPORE



STAFF OFFICER COUNTER-IED, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
23 NOVEMBER 2011 to 13 MAY 2012
LTC LEE MENG LI, ADRIAN

STAFF OFFICER COUNTER-IED, REGIONAL COMMAND (SOUTH)
31 APRIL 2011 to 29 OCTOBER 2012
LTC CHAN MING HOE



STAFF OFFICER, HQ COMBINED TEAM URUZGAN
13 JANUARY 2012 to 06 JULY 2012
MAJ TEO CHEE WEE
CPT YEO BOON LEONG

STAFF OFFICER, HQ COMBINED TEAM URUZGAN
16 JUNE 2012 to 31 DECEMBER 2012
MAJ NG RONG FUH
CPT NG CHUN WEE



STAFF OFFICER, HQ COMBINED TEAM URUZGAN
04 JANUARY 2013 to 22 JUNE 2013
MAJ NG KOK LAM
MAJ YEO THIAM SOON, ERIC

NATIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT
15 OCTOBER 2008 to 25 FEBRUARY 2009
MAJ IGNATIUS THAM
2WO SIVAJI RAJAH S/O MARIAPPAN



NATIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT
10 FEBRUARY 2009 to 18 SEPTEMBER 2009
MAJ CHIA THUANG PING
2WO SEAH CHEE KENG

NATIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT
01 SEPTEMBER 2009 to 10 MARCH 2010
MAJ PANG TOW VOO
1WO TAN CHRISTOPHER, DOMINIC

NATIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT
23 FEBRUARY 2010 to 27 AUGUST 2010
ME5 LO KWOK WAH, DENNIS
LTA LAU WEI YONG
2WO SEAH KOON MENG
1WO S C NANTHABALA
SSG TOH CHUN WUI

NATIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT
12 AUGUST 2010 to 27 FEBRUARY 2011
ME5 LING CHONG TECK
1WO AZMI BIN AHMAD

NATIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT
17 FEBRUARY 2011 to 02 SEPTEMBER 2011
ME5 NG KOK LEONG
2WO NG BENG SENG

NATIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT
20 AUGUST 2011 to 19 JANUARY 2012
MAJ LEE TECK SIONG

NATIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT
30 JANUARY 2012 to 05 SEPTEMBER 2012
LTC CHOO JUI SHENG

NATIONAL SUPPORT ELEMENT
14 AUGUST 2012 to 05 MARCH 2013
ME5 DARYL CHEONG TZE-MIN

REDEPLOYMENT TASK FORCE
25 JULY 2010 to 18 AUGUST 2010
LTC TEO HUP GIN
MAJ CHOW WING CHEONG
ME4 SEE CONGYAO
ME3 HARJIT SINGH S/O MUKHTAR SINGH
1WO S C NANTHABALA
2WO HO LUP CHOY

REDEPLOYMENT TASK FORCE
21 OCTOBER 2010 to 17 NOVEMBER 2010
LTC SOH CHIH PING
ME5 LEE CHAU CHYUN
ME2 VICTOR LEE ROBERTS
MSG GOH WEE BENG
1SG TONG CHUAN WEE

REDEPLOYMENT TASK FORCE
09 NOVEMBER 2010 to 05 DECEMBER 2010
COL CHUA THIAN CHEONG, DANIEL
LTC CHUA YONG CHIN
ME5 YONG CHONG KIAT
MAJ TAN KOK HIN
LTA CHONG GUAN TAT
2WO MOHD ALIF BIN BIDIN
2WO HO LUP CHOY
ME2 GAN ENG TECK
ME2 GOH TIAN PENG
ME2 RAVI KUMAR S/O GOVINDASAMY RAMASAMY
MSG TAN WEE TECK
ME1 ZHENG DONG, DERRICK
ME1 TEO WEIRONG, DANIEL JUSTIN

REDEPLOYMENT TASK FORCE
18 DECEMBER 2010 to 14 JANUARY 2011
ME6 TJHIN POI CHUNG
ME4 MOK SHAO WEI
MWO CHENG CHEE KWONG
ME2 CHIA JIAN-HONG, WINSTON
ME2 TEO KWEE TECK
MSG KOH HOCK SIONG

REDEPLOYMENT TASK FORCE
24 AUGUST 2012 to 26 SEPTEMBER 2012
MAJ LEE TUCK KUEN
ME3 LIM KAI HOCK
ME3 TIRUMAL S/O AYARU
3WO ONG SENG KEONG, JAMES
MSG HENG WEI MING

REDEPLOYMENT TASK FORCE
18 MAY 2013 to 04 JULY 2013
MAJ ERIC TEO HAN KIAT
CPT TAN CHIANG SHENG, KENNY
ME3 HAMZAH BIN IDRIS
1WO ANG CHIN PENG
2WO MAK CHEE WAI, MATHEW
MSG SWEE MAURICE

FORWARD SUPPORT TEAM
12 AUGUST 2010 to 09 MARCH 2011
MAJ JERRY LIM CHUNG HWEE
ME3 KOH DUEN HAUR

FORWARD SUPPORT TEAM
17 FEBRUARY 2011 to 02 SEPTEMBER 2011
LTC TAN BAK LIANG
ME4 PHUA CHENG EE

FORWARD SUPPORT TEAM
20 AUGUST 2011 to 04 MARCH 2012
MAJ CHUA KIAN SAN
ME3 ASHOK KUMAR

FORWARD SUPPORT TEAM
30 JANUARY 2012 to 05 SEPTEMBER 2012
MAJ LEONG CHEE WEE
2WO ANG KOON MENG

FORWARD SUPPORT TEAM
14 AUGUST 2012 to 05 MARCH 2013
ME5 CHANG RHUI-DE
2WO POH CHEE CHEN

FORWARD SUPPORT TEAM
15 FEBRUARY 2013 to 22 JUNE 2013
ME5 NG SWEE YEW
2WO ALEX TEO





TWO THOUSAND TWO HUNDRED AND SIXTY-THREE DAYS *2007 - 2013*

From 2007 to 2013, the SAF contributed to the international community's reconstruction efforts to restore stability in Afghanistan. Under the ambit of Operation Blue Ridge, a total of 492 soldiers were deployed to Afghanistan, with a wide range of capabilities deployed. The SAF's contributions included building health facilities, providing dental, medical and surgical treatment, as well as enhancing the security of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) with the Weapon Locating Radar, Unmanned Aerial Vehicle, and Imagery Analysis Teams. The SAF also contributed Military Institutional Trainers to support the ISAF's effort to train the Afghan National Security Forces.

This book chronicles the SAF's journey in Afghanistan, and serves as a journal to capture the memories and experiences of our servicemen and women from their deployments. The book also highlights the challenges that they faced, and is a record of the SAF's achievements during this six-year operation – the longest and most diverse overseas mission in the SAF's history.

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