**SUBMISSION FOR THE AWARD OF THE**

**UNIT CITATION FOR GALLANTRY**

**TO THE**

**AUSTRALIAN ARMY TRAINING TEAM VIETNAM**

**FOR EXTRAORDINARY GALLANTRY IN ACTION**

**AND**

**OUTSTANDING SERVICE IN WARLIKE OPERATIONS**

 **IN VIETNAM 1962-1972**

**References:** A. [Commonwealth of Australia Gazette S25 of 4 February 1991 (Letters Patent and Regulations)](https://www1.defence.gov.au/sites/default/files/doc/files/S25-91-Unit-Citation-Letters-Patent-Regulations.pdf)

 B. Commonwealth of Australia Gazette S297 of 4 November 1991 Determination

 C. Unit Citation Regulations Amendments of 13 July 2020

 D. To Long Tan by Author and Historian Ian McNeill

 E. The Team Australian Army Advisers in Vietnam 1962-1972 by Ian McNeill

 F. The Men Who Persevered by Bruce Davies and Gary McKay

**Introduction**

This belated submission is presented direct to the Minister for Defence on the basis of the Department’s continuous policy of no retrospectivity and the subsequent amendment to the Regulations preventing such action.

**Stakeholders**

The principal stakeholders in the process of developing and authorising honours and awards in respect of this submission are listed below.

**The Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia**

The Governor-General, as the Sovereign’s representative, exercises all powers and authorities of the Sovereign in respect of approving and administering awards within the Australian Honours and Awards System, except for approving awards of the Victoria Cross for Australia, which remains with the Sovereign. The Governor-General signs all administrative documents such as Instruments of Declaration and Determination made under relevant medal Regulations.

**The Minister for Defence (or the Minister’s delegate)**

All matters concerning Defence awards are vested in the first place in the Minister for Defence, particularly in relation to honours, decorations and regulatory control for service awards. Accordingly, all recommendations to the Governor-General are made by the Minister for Defence or a delegate acting on behalf of the Minister. The Minister for Defence may also delegate responsibility for the routine day-to-day administration of Defence service awards to a subordinate minister or parliamentary secretary. The Parliament may pass a valid Act directing the Minister to recommend a particular award.

**Submission**

It is requested that the Minister recommend to the Governor-General who, being the Sovereign’s representative, has the power to approve awards, that the Unit Citation for Gallantry (UCG) be awarded to the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV), commonly referred to as The Team, either by excepting or exempting AATTV from the ‘no-retrospectivity’ clause in the Regulations, or as a special case using his reserve powers if necessary.

It is considered that Defence and particularly Army were very remiss in not submitting a recommendation that The Team be awarded a UCG before they put forward a recommendation that retrospectivity not be allowed. It demonstrates a complete lack of pride and even interest in the unit’s achievements.

For nigh on 50 years the veterans of The Team have felt very aggrieved that no official Australian recognition has been forthcoming.

**Australian Unit Citations**

Australian Unit Citations were created for the purpose of ‘officially recognising occasions when a unit as a whole and each member individually performs to an outstanding degree either in a single action or operation or over time’.

The Australian UCG was established by Letters Patent on 15 January 1991 (Reference A) for the purpose of:

*… recognising gallantry in action or outstanding service in warlike operations by units of the Defence Force and by units of defence forces of other countries*.

The honours are governed by Regulations set out in the Schedule (Reference B) which provides the conditions for the award of a citation:

*The* ***Unit Citation for Gallantry*** *shall be awarded to a unit only for acts of extraordinary gallantry in action.*

However, Reference C amended the Regulations by including:

*After "gallantry in action" in subregulation (I), insert "on or after 15 January 1991.*

This had the effect closing off any retrospectivity although a number of units had previously been awarded the Citation on such grounds.

**Does AATTV satisfy the above Requirements?**

**Was AATTV a Unit of the Defence Force?**

Yes. AATTV was formally raised and placed on the Australian Army Order of Battle (ORBAT) on 1 July 1962 and was disbanded on 16 February 1973.

**Did AATTV perform Acts of Gallantry in Action or Outstanding Service in Warlike Operations?**

Yes. See discussion below.

**Brief History of AATTV**

Officially formed on 1 July 1962 and after a two-week course at the Intelligence Centre followed by another course at the Jungle Training Centre, the majority of the specially selected group consisting of 30 officers and senior NCOs landed in Vietnam on 3 August 1962. Most were assigned to training centres in the northern provinces of I Corps Tactical Zone (I CTZ).

Initially restricted to training activities, permission was eventually given to accompany courses on operations to evaluate training. It was on one such operation that The Team suffered its first death when, on 1 June 1963 SGT Bill Hacking was killed by an accidental discharge of his weapon.

Following increases to the establishment, assignments were extended to operational advising. Personnel were attached to Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), Regional Forces (RF) and Popular Forces (PF), and the United States Special Forces (USSF). On 6 July 1964 WO2 Kevin Conway was killed during a full-scaled attack on the USSF camp at Nam Dong, thus becoming the unit’s first KIA.

Even after the Australian Task Force arrived, AATTV members remained dispersed, concentrated mainly in I CTZ and the Central Highlands where the war raged more fiercely and sustained. Further increases in size allowed further deployments until eventually members were employed in just about every type of military activity in the country and scattered from the DMZ to the Mekong Delta in small groups or as individuals.

During its deployment AATTV became the most unique and decorated unit in the history of the ADF. When finally withdrawn from Vietnam the unit had suffered 32 deaths with 122 recorded as wounded.

*AATTV was an extraordinary unit, elite and unique. Service in the training team was unlike that in conventional organisations. The normal role for team members was advising or leading forces of Vietnamese or Montagnards in combat or calling in artillery or airpower for their support, with only one other Australian or American close at hand. … While continuing to concentrate in the strategical critical northern provinces, the team spread over the length and breadth of South Vietnam. From the northern outpost of Gio Linh overlooking the Demilitarised Zone to the Mekong Delta in the south, and from the Laotian and Cambodian borders to the South China Sea, members operated among the multiplicity of ground forces employed by the Vietnamese. They served with distinction as individuals or in small groups with all the battalions of the two ARVN divisions, the Ranger units and the special regiment in I CTZ; with the Regional and Popular Forces; with village defence teams in the flat and often flooded ricefields of the Mekong Delta; with province and district chiefs; with the National Police Field Force and the US Mission; with artillery and armoured units and in training centres.[[1]](#footnote-1)*

**Setting Requirements**

In the past the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal (DHAAT) has been tasked with conducting a number of inquiries into the award of the UCG. They consider that the present requirement cited above is too broad and needs refining. To this end they have compiled criteria against which the award should be made. These criteria are discussed below.

**Individual and Collective Gallantry**.

DHAAT is of the view that there is a direct correlation between individual gallantry and collective gallantry – particularly as it relates to a unit performing ‘extraordinary acts of gallantry’. The Tribunal considered that for a unit to be recognised for collective gallantry it was likely, but not essential, that some individuals in the unit may have been recognised for their gallantry. The Tribunal further considered that where individual gallantry, performed on multiple occasions, combined with unit determination to achieve its mission and delivered to a standard which would set the unit apart from other units, a case could be made for collective recognition for gallantry.

Individual members of AATTV, with a total strength of 990 Australian and 10 New Zealand servicemen over a ten-year period, received over 700 Australian, Imperial and foreign awards (not all of which were for gallantry). In addition, the unit was awarded the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation and the Cross with Palm was awarded to 11 individuals. Numerous other members of The Team are authorised to wear the emblem of the United States Army’s Presidential Unit Citation and others that of the US Army Valorous Unit Award, both awards requiring a display of gallantry. Four Members were awarded the Victoria Cross:

WO2 K A Wheatley (Posthumous) 13 November 1965

MAJ P J Badcoe (Posthumous) 23 February, 7 March, 7 April 1967

WO2 R S Simpson 6 May, 11 May 1969

WO2 K Payne 24 May 1969

Because in many situations a member was the only Australian present (and sometimes the only non-indigenous) together with the quota system in operation at that time, other acts of gallantry went unrecognised or recommendations were downgraded. **Example.** Captain John Ernest Duckett White who was originally recommended for a Military Cross for command and leadership of a Mike Force Company during the battle and withdrawal at Ngok Tavak in May 1968. The recommendation was downgraded to a MID. When confronted over the downgrading it is alleged the Commander of Australian Forces in Vietnam replied that ‘he didn’t want two brothers to be awarded a Military Cross in the same honours list’. However, DHAAT on appeal in 2019, recommended that the Minister recommend to the Governor-General that Captain White be awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.[[2]](#footnote-2)

The individual and collective gallantry performed by members of The Team sets the unit apart from any other unit in the history of the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

It is submitted that AATTV satisfies this requirement.

AATTV was also awarded the US Army Meritorious Unit Commendation.

Although the gallantry and exceptional service rendered by The Team was recognised by both the United States Army and that of the Republic of Vietnam, the seemingly complete disregard and disinterest exhibited by Australian Defence and Army is considered a miscarriage of justice and a slap-in-the–face to those who served and especially those who gave their lives whilst adding prestige and honour to the Australian Defence Force.

**Shared Level of Risk.**

DHAAT considers that, in the context of unit gallantry, the majority of the unit should be shown to have been exposed to a similar level of threat and demonstrated bravery in the face of that threat. For example, where a unit’s support, administrative and headquarter sub-units are all exposed to a similar enemy or environmental threat and they contribute directly to the denial of the enemy’s intentions. Thus, it could be expected that administrative staff also shared the threat, for example, by patrolling, providing security and/or performing additional duties beyond their training.

The Commanders of AATTV had a policy that after six months, assignments generally changed between combat duties and less hazardous tasks. This ensured that all members were exposed to a similar level of threat and demonstrated bravery in the face of that threat. Even when in a less hazardous environment personnel were required to provide security and performed additional duties often beyond their training. Besides, there was no such place as a ‘safe place’ in Vietnam as the 1968 Tet Offensive clearly proved.

Members were placed in almost every military activity in the country. Such activities included but were not limited to, training and operating with units of ARVN and RF and PF, advisors with Infantry, Ranger, Special Forces, Armour and Artillery units, Sector and Sub-Sector Headquarters, commanding and advising United States Special Forces units and sub-units consisting of Montagnard and Nung soldiers, participation in Project Delta and the Phoenix Program conducted by the CIA, civil affairs, and conducting long range patrols.

An example of the widespread placement of Team members is shown at Attachment 1. This shows the placement as of February 1965. As the strength increased placement became even more widespread. This wide distribution, either singularly or in small groups, and the fact that the placement or change of location was often made by US or SVN authorities, made it impossible for the Commander AATTV to know the exact location of all members at any given time. This led to incorrect information often being entered into the Unit War Diary.

Many members did multiple tours.

It is submitted that AATTV satisfies this requirement.

**Extraordinary Gallantry and the Linkage to Individual Acts of Gallantry.**

DHAAT noted that the 1987 guidance in relation to the creation of unit citations stated that they should only be awarded rarely and for the ‘most outstanding acts or series of acts of gallantry’. The Tribunal considered that in establishing conditions for award of the UCG, this guidance and use of the term ‘extraordinary gallantry’ should be examined in conjunction with the criteria for the highest of the Australian individual gallantry awards which are also only awarded rarely. Significantly these criteria require ‘the most conspicuous gallantry’ and ‘acts of great heroism in action in circumstances of great peril’. The Tribunal therefore concluded that the award of the UCG should correlate with these eminent standards and that in making the decision to recommend a UCG, the nomination should be considered to be at a level commensurate with the highest individual Australian awards for gallantry. By taking this approach, the Tribunal was of the view that this would maintain the extremely high standard and status of the award of the UCG as envisaged by the IDC in 1987.

Four members of AATTV were awarded the Victoria Cross (VC) (Level 1). Two members were awarded the Distinguished Service Order (DSO), (Level 2). Of the 45 Distinguished Conduct Medals (DCM) (Level 2) awarded to Australian and New Zealand veterans during the Vietnam War, almost half were awarded to members of AATTV.

It is considered that such a record easily meets the requirement of ‘most outstanding acts or series of acts of gallantry’ and the term ‘extraordinary gallantry’.

It is submitted that AATTV satisfies this requirement.

**Conditions for the Award of the UCG.**

The Tribunal decided that to be eligible for the award of the UCG a unit should normally have met all of the following conditions:

1. operations were conducted in dangerous and hazardous circumstances;
2. most members of the unit were exposed to or threatened by the enemy;
3. the unit was in action for the duration of the campaign, operation or battle;
4. individuals from the unit are likely to have been recognised for their gallantry during the campaign, operation or battle;
5. the unit’s performance was extraordinary, where ordinary constitutes doing what the unit was trained, tasked and expected to do as part of its role and responsibility; and
6. the unit’s collective gallantry and overall performance noticeably set it apart from other units.

 **Assessment of the Performance of AATTV against the Conditions for the UCG**

**Were operations conducted in dangerous and hazardous circumstances?**

The very nature of the operations the unit conducted were dangerous and hazardous. Members of AATTV were involved in some of the fiercest and sustained battles of the war, especially in the Northern Provinces and Central Highlands. Some of the actions experienced were the 1968 Tet Offensive, Hue, Tun Tavern, Ba Gia, Dak Seang, Con Thien, Duc Lap, Nam Dong and Ngok Tavak. Some of these battles resulted in hundreds killed on either side and hundreds more wounded. Due to the unavailability of ARVN records, it is difficult to obtain accurate casualty figures of battles that did not involve either US or Australian units. The truth lies somewhere between those claimed by both sides.

The following examples are typical of the fierce and sustained battles fought in I CTZ in which Australian advisors were involved.

**Example 1**. In May 1965, the NVA launched a summer offensive, with Ba Gia in southern Quang Ngai, being its first target resulting in an entire [ARVN](https://historica.fandom.com/wiki/ARVN) task force being virtually annihilated in what was a horrendous defeat. Some reports claim that the ARVN force of about 2,500 troops suffered 1,885 losses. After the battle which lasted from 28 to 31 May, ARVN claimed to have killed 556 NVA and the NVA claimed to have inflicted 915 casualties plus hundreds more captured. In its report the NVA admitted that casualties amounted to over 500 on each side. No matter which figures are correct, the battle can certainly be considered as fierce and sustained. Several Australian advisors were attached to the battalions of ARVN’s 2 Division which comprised part of the task force.

Ba Gia was just one of many such battles in which members of AATTV participated.

**Example 2**. *A serious loss for the ARVN occurred in early December 1965 when the 11th Ranger Battalion was destroyed as an effective fighting force in a battle along the Thang Binh–Hiep Duc road in Quang Tin Province, but their Australian adviser, Warrant Officer Bruce Sutherland, was not on the operation. Warrant Officer Ken Stoker, serving with 1/5 ARVN Battalion, was on the Ranger’s left flank when two Viet Cong battalions attacked his unit and forced them to withdraw. Warrant Officer Bill Dickey, 1/6 ARVN Battalion, came in to reinforce the area, but they too were heavily attacked, but held their ground. US Marines air-assaulted to the west of the ARVN and joined the battle. Eventually, three Marine battalions plus were used in a counterattack, which caused the enemy to retreat into the Phuoc Ha valley west of Tam Ky. At the end of the battles, 45 Marines and 90 ARVN were killed, 218 and 141 wounded respectively, and 91 ARVN went missing. Viet Cong killed numbered 417 and numerous weapons and supplies were captured.[[3]](#footnote-3)*

It is submitted that AATTV satisfies this requirement.

**Were most members of the unit exposed to or threatened by the enemy?**

There is no dispute that each and every member of AATTV was exposed to and threatened by the enemy. As explained previously the policy was that after six months, appointments generally changed between combat duties and less hazardous assignments. Many were exposed to the enemy on a daily basis and sometimes fired upon very frequently. This was a significant and unexpected responsibility not usually experienced by other ADF units during the campaign in Vietnam. **Example:** In the period 24 July through to 24 August 1967 2/2 ARVN Battalion which included an Australian Advisor, located at Gio Linh close to the DMZ, received over 1000 rounds of in-coming rocket, mortar and artillery fire. Between 19 and 27 September near-by Con Thien, commanded and manned by an Australian staffed Mike Force Company and US Marines, received just over 3000 rounds of incoming fire. Such action was common in northern I CTZ.

It is submitted that AATTV satisfies this requirement.

**Was the unit in action for the duration of the campaign, operation or battle?**

AATTV sustained their operations for nearly ten years without break and operations were conducted on an almost daily basis in the presence and direct threat of the enemy for the duration of the deployment. The unit was undeniably ‘in action’ for the duration of the campaign.

It is submitted that AATTV satisfies this requirement.

**Were individuals from the unit recognised for their gallantry during the campaign, operation or battle?**

A significant number of The Team were recognised for their individual gallantry during the campaign. Imperial honours and decorations awarded to members included:

Victoria Cross (VC) 4
Distinguished Service Order (DSO) 2
Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE) 3
Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) 6
Military Cross (MC) 6
Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM) 20
Military Medal (MM) 15
British Empire Medal (BEM) 4

Queens Commendation for Brave Conduct 4
Mentioned in Dispatches (MID) 49

In addition, members received a total of 245 US awards and 376 Republic of Vietnam awards.

Apart from individual gallantry this record is a clear indicator of collective gallantry.

Examples of individual gallantry displayed by members are attached as Attachments 2. 3 and 4.

It is submitted that AATTV satisfies this requirement.

**Was the unit’s performance extraordinary?**

It is submitted that AATTV’s performance was extraordinary in comparison to what was expected to be the ordinary. What AATTV did for over ten years was beyond what many were trained, tasked, and expected to do as part of the unit’s role and responsibility. When considered collectively, it will be found that many individuals demonstrated the most conspicuous gallantry, and some performed acts of great heroism in action in circumstances of great peril. Most others performed their duties and additional higher duties with bravery and dedication which could only be described collectively as an extraordinary performance.

It is submitted that AATTV satisfies this requirement.

**Did the unit’s collective gallantry and overall performance noticeably set it apart from other units?**

The number of personnel actually cited for individual gallantry was proportionally greater than other Australian units during the campaign, thus noticeably setting it apart from them.

Gallantry in action does not always result from members acting in isolation and that often acts of gallantry could not have been performed without the full support of other members of the unit. It is considered that the performance of AATTV is a clear example where the unit as a whole, and every member individually, performed so outstandingly through the entire campaign that official recognition of all members of the unit is warranted.

In this instance, whilst individual awards for gallantry in action were completely justified, given the mutual interdependence specific to AATTV, it is considered it would be inappropriate if all members were not recognised for their extraordinary gallantry.

The diversity of the Training Team, both in roles and geographical locations, sets it apart from other units of the ADF.

It is submitted that AATTV satisfies this requirement.

**Does the Performance of AATTV Warrant the Award of a Unit Citation?**

AATTV was a unique unit drawn from almost every Corps in the Australian Army. Not all of the members had previous operational service and few of them had been under fire. A significant number were also required to perform additional critical roles for which they were not trained.

AATTV was continuously engaged in offensive operations throughout its ten-year deployment to Vietnam and members of AATTV carried out roles and tasks that bore no relationship to those of any other unit of the ADF. Its personnel were fully integrated into units from other countries, and they were required to perform tasks for which they had limited, if any, specific training, at levels well above their worn rank and experience, and in continuously hazardous combat circumstances. In many situations AATTV personnel tended to be more experienced than their US colleagues and subsequently they filled critical leadership, training and support roles and provided example, knowledge and dedication in the performance of their duties. They infused maturity, professionalism, dedication to duty and ‘sorely needed leadership in many vital areas of the command structure’.

The various bases that AATTV operated from were under constant threat of ground attack and on many occasions, were attacked, rocketed or mortared, and even over-run. Many bases were very isolated, some many tens of kilometres from the nearest friendly base and well outside artillery support. Many advisers experienced considerably more hours in combat than would normally be expected in other Australian units in Vietnam thereby setting The Team apart from such units.

AATTV did the ‘extraordinary’ in comparison to the ‘ordinary’. The performance of AATTV warrants the award of the UCG.

**Retrospectivity and Maintenance of the Integrity of the Australian Honours System.**

The Tribunal has noted that Defence does not support retrospective recognition but considered that this view had been examined and refuted. The Tribunal has also noted that, in relation to maintenance of the integrity of the Australian Honours system, previous Inquiries had extensively examined retrospectivity and concluded that the honours system would not be threatened by the award of a unit citation for an action before 1991.

It is difficult to see how the award of the UCG to the most unique and decorated unit in the history of the ADF would lower or tarnish the integrity of the Australian Honours system. Rather, it is considered it would give more esteem to the system.

**Conclusion**

Despite over ten years of operational service and participation in some of the fiercest and sustained fighting of the entire war, AATTV, an Infantry unit on the ORBAT, received neither Colours nor a single Battle Honour, or any other recognition by the Government, Department of Defence or, and especially, Army. However, all members, regardless of Corps, were granted the privilege to wear the Infantry Combat Badge.

The following quote from Ian McNeill’s book **The Team** Australian Army Advisers in Vietnam 1962-1972, sums up the esprit de corps of The Team:

*Men of the Training Team were subject to additional stresses not usually experienced by the soldier in battle. Not only did they undergo some of the heaviest and most sustained fighting of the Vietnam War, but they suffered additional disabilities in their position as advisers. They rarely had the formal authority to affect situations; too often poor Vietnamese leadership resulted in troops fighting badly and their position deteriorating; and the adviser was likely to be completely isolated from the support of his countrymen and only partly able to communicate with those around him. In these conditions it often befell the adviser to try to save the day by his own example which exposed him to greater risk. Driven by his sense of duty, and the knowledge that many looked to him for an answer, and supported only by his own inner strength and professional competence, many an adviser rallied faltering soldiers and turned the tide.*

**The Australian Army Training Team Vietnam, by the very nature of its name, will never reappear. Gone forever, the most individually decorated unit of the ADF, and one which should be celebrated and remembered with pride in Australia’s military history, but instead ignored and unhonoured by its own Government and those with the power to act.**

**By granting the UCG, the Governor-General has the opportunity to perpetuate The Team’s history, honour the members, and inspire generations to come.**



on behalf of the AATTV Association

**I take this opportunity to acknowledge the authors of References D, E and F, and various DHAAT Reports from which a lot of the above information was gleaned.**

Attachments: 1. Deployment of Australian Advisors February 1965.

 2. Citation in respect of award of Victoria Cross to Warrant Officer Class 2 Keith Payne.

3. Citation in respect of award of Victoria Cross to 41400 Major Peter Badcoe.

4. Citation in respect of award of Distinguished Conduct Medal to 53714 Warrant Officer Class2 Barry Tolley



**From *To Long Tan, The Australian Army and the Vietnam War 1950­-1966* by Ian McNeill**

**ATTACHMENT 2**

Citation in respect of award of Victoria Cross to Warrant Officer Class II Keith Payne:



**ATTACHMENT 3**

Citation in respect of award of Victoria Cross to 41400 Major Peter Badcoe:



**ATTACHMENT 4**

Citation in respect of award of Distinguished Conduct Medal to 53714 Warrant Officer Class II Barry Tolley:

*“Warrant Officer Tolley enlisted in the Australian Regular Army in 1959. After serving in the The Royal Australian Regiment in Malaysia and Borneo, he joined the Australian Army Training Team in Vietnam in June 1968.*

*On 22 May 1969, Warrant Officer Tolley was serving as Commander of 211th Mobile Strike Force Company, 5th Special Forces Group on an operation in Kontum Province when it was attacked by a North Vietnamese force. So heavy was the enemy’s initial assault, that the indigenous soldiers of the company began to scatter. Warrant Officer Tolley ran about his troops, exposing himself to heavy enemy small arms, rocket and mortar fire, in an attempt to hold them together. However, under increased enemy pressure, the majority of the soldiers fell back. Showing great courage and despite the overwhelming odds, Warrant Officer Tolley continued to hold his ground. Assisted by only three other soldiers, he held back the assault enemy and covered the withdrawal of the wounded and the remainder of his company. Together with these three soldiers, he finally fought his way back to the Battalion base.*

*Two days later on 24 May, Warrant Officer’s Tolley’s Company was moving as the rear element of his Battalion in the same area. The leading companies were heavily attacked by a superior North Vietnamese force, which also got between Warrant Officer Tolley’s company and the remainder of the Battalion. He quickly reorganised his company and led an assault on the enemy in an attempt to break through to the forward companies. However, they were driven back with heavy casualties by intense enemy fire. Warrant Officer Tolley rallied his troops and showing outstanding personal bravery, then assaulted the enemy a second time at the head of only 15 of his soldiers. Again, he was driven back. The remainder of his company, to the rear of Warrant Officer Tolley, were now under a very heavy mortar and rocket fire and began to withdraw in disorder. Not being in a position to rally them again, Warrant Officer Tolley stayed between his troops and the enemy who were starting to attack. Unselfishly exposing himself to heavy fire, he then personally covered the withdrawal until the wounded and the remainder of his soldiers were clear.*

*Warrant Officer Tolley’s exceptional bravery and aggressive leadership in these actions and on a number of other occasions during his long tour with the Mobile Strike Force were an outstanding example to those under his command. His professionalism and exemplary conduct reflect great credit on himself, the Australian Army Training Team and the Australian Army.”*

1. **Ian McNeill To Long Tan** [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. ***White and the Department of Defence [2019] DHAAT 01 (24 January 2019)*** [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. **The Men Who Persevered by Bruce Davies and Gary McKay** [↑](#footnote-ref-3)