FOR PRESS

BIG ARMY EXERCISE FOR QUEENSLAND

Statement by the Minister for the Army, the Hon. Malcolm Fraser, M.P.

A battalion group exercise involving 8th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, plus supporting elements, will be held in the rugged, 1200 square-mile Shoalwater Bay Army training area, north of Rockhampton, from July 26 to August 8.

The Commanding Officer of the Battalion is Lieutenant-Colonel J.O. Langtry.

Announcing details of the exercise today, the Minister for the Army, Mr. Malcolm Fraser, said the operation, which was code named 'Noisy Pita', would complete the training cycle of 8th Battalion, which would relieve 4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, in Malaysia later this year.

The setting of the exercise would be one of limited warfare in South-East Asia.

Troops taking part would be employed as a battalion group operating as part of a task force, and supported from a simulated task force maintenance area.

About 1500 troops would be engaged, and 'Noisy Pita' would follow the same pattern as other Army exercises held in the Shoalwater Bay area earlier this year.

A number of types of operations would be covered, including cordon and search, search and destroy, ambush and counter-ambush, and attacks on fortified camps.

'Noisy Pita' was also designed to improve certain techniques at sub-unit level. These would include patrolling, adequate night defensive techniques, co-ordination and control by junior leaders during hasty defence, quick reaction to information received, correct and timely use of battalion support weapons, control of artillery fire, and platoon and company administration, including water conservation.

Lists: A, B and C.

Further information:

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