

**DEFENCE FORCE OMBUDSMAN
DEFENCE ABUSE REPARATION SCHEME**

COMPLAINT OF HISTORICAL ABUSE BY FORMER STAFF CADET JULIAN KNIGHT (3204059) CSC No 5266

I, **JULIAN KNIGHT**, Prisoner, of Port Phillip Prison at Truganina in the State of Victoria, make the following declaration under the *Statutory Declarations Act 1959* (Cth):

My submission to the Defence Abuse Response Taskforce (DART) related to my service as a staff cadet at the Royal Military College, Duntroon, from 13 January 1987 to 10 July 1987. During the period from 13 January to 30 May 1987, I was a 3rd Class cadet in 45 Section, 15 Platoon, Kokoda Company. My submission was submitted to the DART via facsimile on 26 November 2013. My Personal Account was taken from my own recollection, extensive notes that I made during 1987-1988 of my experience at Duntroon, my service records, and a number of other secondary sources.

Since I made my submission to the DART I have obtained various records through Freedom of Information (FOI) requests I have made, and court and tribunal proceedings that I have prosecuted during 2014-2021. This complaint constitutes both a redrafting of my submission to the DART and new complaints that includes material obtained through FOI requests and court proceedings.

I have also relied upon the three most recent books published about RMC Duntroon:

- (1) Bruce MOORE, *A Lexicon of Cadet Language: Royal Military College, Duntroon in the Period 1983 to 1985*, Australian National Dictionary Centre, Australian National University, Canberra, 1993.
- (2) Darren C. MOORE (RMC Class of 1991, CSC No 6368), *Duntroon: The Royal Military College of Australia 1911-2001*, Royal Military College of Australia, Canberra, 2001.
- (3) Jason HEDGES (RMC Class of 1992, CSC No 6580), *The Royal Military College of Australia 1911-2011: Celebrating 100 Years at Duntroon*, Big Sky Publishing Pty Ltd, Newport, 2012.

This complaint concerns not only the abuse (“bastardization”) that I was subjected to at Duntroon and mismanagement by the Department of Defence of a plausible report of abuse, but also the involvement of the Director of Army Legal Services (DALs) in the prosecution of *R -v- Knight* in the Supreme Court of Victoria, and the mismanagement of my submission to the DART.

I have outlined in detail my experience at the Royal Military College, rather than just describe the incidents of bastardization that I was subject to, so that a clearer picture emerges of my overall experience at the college. A number of the incidents described below were of a minor or vexatious nature, but they happened on a daily basis and in combination with each other and with incidents of a more serious nature, they made my tenure at the college unviable.

I have also outlined in detail the legal and other actions I have taken since I made my submission to the DART.

Previous Bastardization Scandals at Duntroon

I note that it is a notorious fact that “bastardization” at Duntroon has been the subject of periodic reporting by the media (see Darren MOORE, at page 385 - *see Attachment 28*). It has also resulted in two major public scandals; in 1967 and again in 1983 (*see Bruce MOORE, at pages 26-34*). The journalist who broke the 1983 scandal, Andrew RULE, has also reported on my case (*see Attachment 33*).

I note also that the Commandant of the college during my time there made specific reference to “bastardization” in public comments to the ABC in 1988 (*see Attachment 27*).

Introduction

I was born on 4 March 1968 in Melbourne, Australia. My father had enlisted in the Australian Regular Army (ARA) before I was born, and he was an officer in the Royal Australian Army Education Corps (RAAEC) during 1968-1988. My earliest memories are of my father in uniform and the Centurion tanks at Puckapunyal, where we lived during 1970-

1972. I attended kindergarten at Puckapunyal and later at RAAF Point Cook. I then attended British armed forces primary schools at Gun Club and Stanley Fort in Hong Kong, during 1973-1975.

I later lived in the town of Laverton on the western outskirts of Melbourne (1975-1982), and attended the Epsom Street Primary School and Westbourne Grammar.

My parents separated in March 1980 and were divorced a year later. In December 1982, my mother, younger brother and younger sister and I moved to Clifton Hill, a small suburb at the northern end of Collingwood in inner-city Melbourne. During 1983-1984, I attended Fitzroy High School. In March 1984, I transferred from Fitzroy High School to Melbourne High School and I completed Years 11 and 12 there.

I had wanted to enlist in the Army for as long as I can remember. From around the age of 12 my ambition was to emulate my father and become an officer in the Australian Army. During my school years my goal was to attend the Officer Cadet School (OCS), at Portsea.

As a precursor to military service I was a Boy Scout in the 1st Point Cook Scout Troop at RAAF Point Cook during 1976-1979 (during the ages 8-11). I rose to be a "Sixer" in the Cubs and a "Pack Leader" in the Scouts. In my last year as a Cub, I was awarded the prize for the most badge work completed but I was also demoted from "Sixer" to "Seconder" after pushing over another Cub.

During my entire childhood and adolescence, I inundated myself with all things military, books, movies, etc. I particularly liked the novels of Sven HASSEL, which were fictionalized accounts of his service in a German army punishment battalion during the Second World War.

Cadet Service

During 1982-84 (ages 14-16), I served as a cadet in the Norwood High School Cadet Unit (NHSCU), although I was a student at Fitzroy High School during this time (* *The NHSCU was one of only two Army Cadets units in Victoria to accept cadets from outside their school*). Whilst

a cadet in the NHSCU, I attended two annual camps and two training weekends. I also completed junior NCO and senior NCO courses in 1983, and I rose to the rank of corporal. I also obtained the prestigious Adventure Training Award (ATA) in 1983. The Cadet Under Officer (CUO) of the NHSCU Senior Platoon in 1983 was CUO Jason THOMAS (CSC No 4758), who attended RMC/ADFA during 1984-86 and who was a 2nd Class cadet at Duntroon in January 1987. In 1984, I was on track to become one of the two CUOs at the NHSCU (The CUO course was the only cadet course I had not attended). In March 1984, I transferred from Fitzroy High School to Melbourne High School, and I transferred from the NHSCU to the Melbourne High School Cadet Unit (MHSCU).

During 1984-85 (ages 16-17), I served as a cadet in the MHSCU. When I transferred to the MHSCU I kept the rank of corporal. In mid-1984, however, I was discharged from the MHSCU after failing to attend a training weekend (I simply failed to turn up). I was later allowed to re-join the MHSCU but I was forced to forego my rank. I served as a cadet for the remainder of my time with the MHSCU. I served in the unit's 5 Platoon, the "adventure training" platoon (and also the platoon for demoted cadets or those cadets expelled from other platoons). The platoon leader and platoon sergeant of 5 Platoon in 1985 were CUO Dechlan ELLIS (CSC No 5693) and Sergeant Patrick "Pat" BELL (CSC No 5678), both of whom (along with three other Melbourne High School cadets) attended the Australian Defence Force Academy in 1986 (* ELLIS would be awarded both the Sword of Honour and the Queen's Medal when he graduated in December 1989).

Rather than strive to regain my previous rank I adopted an attitude that I coined "Digger's Initiative" (Melbourne High cadets will recall this phrase), and made insubordination, cheekiness, malingering and theft an art form. Instead of finishing my Army Cadets service with the highest rank (CUO), I finished it with the lowest rank (Cadet). The Melbourne High School yearbook for 1985, *Unicorn 85*, refers to me as the 'Cadet Unit looney' (page 104).

Whilst a cadet in the MHSCU, I attended two annual camps and two training weekends, and three training weekends with the 4th/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse Regiment (an Army Reserve armoured reconnaissance unit).

During my service as a cadet, I marched as a guidon bearer in the ANZAC Day parades in Melbourne in 1983, 1984 and 1985.

On 28 July 1985 (at age 17), I applied for entry into the January 1986 intake of the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA). At the examination day on 13 August 1985, I was deemed to be not academically strong enough for ADFA, and I was told to re-apply for entry into the Royal Military College, Duntroon (RMC Duntroon), as soon as I was old enough (* *Duntroon candidates had to be at least 18½ years old upon entry to the college*). The final recommendation of the army psychologist, Captain J.R. WARN, was recorded as being that I needed 'more development. e.g. work for a year after HSC, ARES, and he could be a good prospect for RMC. Too weak academically for D.A.' [Defence Academy]

In November 1985, I completed my Higher School Certificate (HSC) at Melbourne High School. I knew that I only needed my HSC to gain entry into RMC Duntroon so I did not apply myself, I only aimed to pass. I was subsequently awarded my HSC in January 1986, with C-grade passes in five subjects (English, Australian History, 18th Century History, Geography, and Politics) and with an Anderson Score of 271/410.

Army Reserve Service

On 1 October 1985 (at age 17), I applied for enlistment into the Australian Army Active Reserve whilst still at school. I was subsequently enlisted as a private on 26 November 1985. From 4 December 1985 to 12 January 1987, I served as a trooper in the 4th/19th Prince of Wales's Light Horse Regiment (4th/19th PWLH).

In February 1986, I worked briefly as a door-to-door promoter. During March-May 1986, I attended La Trobe University in Melbourne as an undergraduate student in the Bachelor of Arts degree course. I withdrew from the course to devote my time to Army Reserve service. For the remainder of 1986 I was unemployed and devoted most of my time to Army Reserve service and service at Puckapunyal's Armoured Centre. During 1986, I served over the maximum 100 training days allocated to Reservists.

I attended my 16-day Army Reserve Recruit Course in February 1986 (at age 17), an Assault Troopers Course in April 1986 (at age 18), an A Vehicle (M113 Armoured Personnel Carrier) Drivers Course during April-May 1986, and a Radio Operators Course in October 1986. I obtained above average marks in all categories of assessment in my Recruit and Assault Troopers courses. I initially did well on my A Vehicle Drivers Course, being chosen as one of two students to give a driving demonstration to a local TV news crew, but I developed a personality clash with my ARA instructor and I was later ejected from and subsequently failed the course. On my next course, my Radio Operators Course, I was the course's Student of Merit.

During 1-15 February 1986, I attended my **Recruit Course** at the Army Reserve's 3 Training Group at Puckapunyal. I passed all the tests and examinations, and I was the top recruit in my platoon with ratings of '1' in all the assessment categories ('1' being the highest grade on a scale of 4 - Unsatisfactory, 3 - Below Average, 2 - Average, and 1 - Above Average). I attained all 1 ratings when assessed at both the end of week one and at the conclusion of the course, with the assessment categories being the following: acceptance of discipline, self-discipline, teamwork, determination, navigation, dress and bearing, personal organization, drill at halt, drill on march, weapons, field training, and physical assessment. I passed my Physical Training Test (PTT) (** Which had to be completed by all Army personnel on an annual basis and which required the completion of: 60 sit-ups in 2 minutes, 7 complete chin-ups to a high bar and a 5km run in under 25 minutes*) with a high B grade, and I ran the 5km run portion of the PTT in 19:45 minutes. My platoon commander, 2nd Lieutenant Max DE WAN, made the following Course Final Assessment: 'REC KNIGHT achieved good results throughout the course. He worked hard to assimilate the training. REC KNIGHT invariably participated in platoon activities with enthusiasm. His dress and bearing was adequate but there was room for improvement in this area. REC KNIGHT displayed a good acceptance of self and military discipline. His physical fitness and co-ordination was good.'

During 4-20 April 1986, I attended my **Assault Troopers Course** at Site 6, Puckapunyal. My section corporal, Corporal John RAIKE, told me mid-way through the course that I was the best student on the course. I slackened off towards the end of the course for no real reason and another student became the course's Student of Merit. The course's Senior Instructor, Captain G.L. SMITH, made the following comments in my Course Report: 'Tpr Knight was

adequately prepared for the course. He participated in all course activities. He readily assimilated most instruction with ease and rarely required additional assistance. His dress and bearing was adequate.'

During 26 April-11 May 1986, I attended my **A Vehicle (M113 APC) Drivers Course** at 4th/19th PWLH's A Squadron depot in Sale and at the Dutson bombing range. I grasped the driving aspects of the course quite quickly but I developed a personality clash with my ARA instructor, Sergeant Gary WYND. On 6 May 1986, I failed the verbal test on Instant Panel Reactions. On 7 May 1986, the twelfth day of the 16-day course, I failed the re-test. Failing this re-test effectively meant that I had failed the entire course. That afternoon a regional TV station sent a reporter and a camera crew to the Dutson range to file a story on the A Vehicle Drivers Course. The training was suspended while two APCs were used to provide a demonstration of the recovery of an APC from a bog, and a display of cross-country driving. Two trainees were required to drive the two APCs used throughout the demonstration and the driving display. The two trainees chosen by the course's Senior Instructor, Lieutenant O'DOWD, were Lance-Corporal BROWN (who was subsequently the course's Student of Merit) and me. The TV crew filmed the recovery demonstration and the display of cross-country driving. During the cross-country driving demonstration, the TV crew filmed me driving my APC from the back of Lance-Corporal BROWN's APC. The story was broadcast that night during the TV station's evening news broadcast. The following morning, I was seen by the driving course's ARA Trade Testing Officer (TTO), Warrant Officer Class 2 (WO2) Kevin HUNTER, in one of the offices at the Sale barracks. WO2 HUNTER informed me that I was being thrown off the drivers course because I had failed my Instant Panel Reactions re-test. Sergeant WYND made the following comments in my Course Report: 'Tpr Knight approached the course with an immature attitude. During the course he did not apply himself and required constant supervision. He lacks mechanical aptitude and will find this aspect difficult to improve unless he is prepared to get himself dirty rather than watch others work. Although he grasped the techniques of driving early in the course, he developed a brash and overconfident manner which at times placed both vehicle and crew in jeopardy.'

When I returned to B Squadron I sought a "Redress of Wrongs" over being ejected from the driver's course. I was persuaded not to pursue this avenue after being told that I would not

be prevented from attending a future course. Despite not gaining my A Vehicle driver's licence, I was permitted to drive APCs on a number of occasions after I failed my A Vehicle Drivers Course. The two other trainee drivers in my crew both obtained their licences (one of whom caused an accident the first time he drove an armoured vehicle after the course).

During 3-19 October 1986, I attended my **Radio Operators Course** at Sale. I was the course's Student of Merit on the basis of my 'hard work, determination and responsibility.' The course's Senior Instructor, Lieutenant CHAMBERS, made the following comments in my Course Report: 'Tpr KNIGHT was adequately prepared for the course. He worked well throughout to achieve good results. He is determined, aggressive in his studies and seeks responsibility. Tpr KNIGHT has a good knowledge of all subjects. To attend the next available A VEH [Vehicle] D & S [Driving and Servicing] Course.' During the course I passed my PTT with a high A grade.

During my service with the 4th/19th PWLH Regiment I attended weekly training nights and various training weekends, and a number of Freedom of Entry and other ceremonial parades (i.e. Beersheba Day at the Shrine of Remembrance). I also volunteered for camp advance parties, dining-in nights and general full-time service both with 4th/19th PWLH and at Armoured Centre, Puckapunyal.

In November 1986, I attended the 4th/19th PWLH Regimental Annual Range Shoot weekend at Puckapunyal, and attained the highest score in the Regiment with the L1A1 Self-Loading Rifle (SLR), at the time the Army's standard issue weapon.

In November 1986, I also represented the 4th/19th PWLH Regiment in the annual 3rd Military District Army Reserve Inter-Unit Military Skills Competition at Fort Gellibrand, Williamstown.

RMC Selection

In January 1986, the Australian Defence Force Academy (ADFA) opened in Canberra as a tri-service officer training establishment as a campus of the University of New South Wales. It replaced the Army's RMC Duntroon, the RAN's Jervis Bay and the RAAF's Point Cook

officer training establishments. The "old" RMC Duntroon, which had operated from 1911-1985 as a 4-year training college, was transformed into a "new" 18-month officer training establishment as a replacement for the 12-month course that had operated at OCS Portsea during 1952-1985. Although I had dreamed of attending OCS Portsea, by the time I was old enough to enlist as an officer cadet it had been replaced by the "new" Duntroon.

On 4 March 1986, I turned 18-years-old.

On 30 July 1986, I applied for entry into the January 1987 intake of RMC Duntroon. I do not know how many applicants there were for the January 1987 intake, but I believe it was in excess of 3,000.

On 1 September 1986, I attended the examination day for entry to RMC at the Defence Force Recruiting Centre in Melbourne. I passed this stage of the selection process and proceeded on to the Officer Selection Board.

In the Commanding Officer's Report to the Selection Board my Squadron Commander at 4th/19th PWLH, Major Peter ALKEMEDE, made the following final assessment of me: 'Tpr Knight has only served in B Sqn for a short time but since joining has impressed his NCOs with his enthusiasm and willingness to undertake additional duties. I consider that Tpr Knight is suitable for consideration by the Selection Board for Officer Selection.'

On 2 October 1986, I attended the Selection Board for RMC at Simpson Barracks, Watsonia. The Board consisted of four middle ranking serving officers (Lieutenant-Colonel P.E. BUNYAN (RMC Class of 1967, CSC No 2257), Lieutenant-Colonel J. ROBERTSON, Major O. STRACHAN and Major P.J. NEUHAUS (RMC Class of 1975, CSC No 3065)). I later learnt that the Board believed that I had been "fully briefed" by my father before attending the Board. This was not the case. My father was living in Townsville at this time. I do not know how much this mistaken belief affected the Board's assessment of me. All of the Selection Board members rated me as borderline or satisfactory in nearly all of the assessment areas. They were unanimous in grading me as weak in Intellectual Potential and Academic Potential. My Peer Group Assessment in both Friendship and Leadership were rated as good, the highest category. The other members in my group, three serving soldiers and three

civilian applicants, rated me as 1 in both categories, which was the highest mark of a scale of 1 to 6. The Selection Board members were also fairly consistent in their final evaluation of me as a potential ARA officer. In the 'Comments' section of their Profile Reports, three members of the Board expressed their opinion that I might not be able to cope with the academic work at RMC. The President of the Board, Lieutenant-Colonel BUNYAN, noted that I 'was able to contribute to most of the exercises and the rest were prepared to follow. He is well motivated to the Army and is keen to learn... He has more than he is showing although he may find the academic work at RMC difficult.' The Board Psychologist, Lieutenant-Colonel ROBERTSON, wrote that I was a 'strong performer' who was 'effective and supportive of others.' He also noted that during the practical exercises in the gymnasium I 'showed strong verbal skills and virtually ran the group.' He also noted my 'Strong motivation for the military.' The Academic Member, Major STRACHAN, commented that I 'presented strongly, he was confident and forthright in his manner. He participated in and directed group activities. However consider he may be overconfident and his ability may not match his belief in himself.' The Military Member, Major NEUHAUS, noted that I was; 'Generally a reasonable candidate', although 'his performance today was made to appear better because of a very weak group.' Each member of the Selection Board was required to give an overall grade on a scale of: Not Suitable, Not Yet, Marginal, Adequate, Satisfactory, or Good. Although I was graded as Adequate by the Psychologist, I was graded as Marginal by the President, Military Member and Academic Member. My Final Board Grading was Marginal, the lowest grade for acceptance to RMC. This grade was defined as; 'Has definite limitations which make him ... a marginal selection. Could develop into an adequate junior officer.' As a result of my final grading, I was placed on the short list for the January 1987 intake at RMC. One other member of my Selection Board group, Glynn LOVEGROVE (CSC No 5275), was also placed on the short list for the January 1987 intake (** It needs to be noted that LOVEGROVE was also accepted into the 1987 class, was in my section during initial training, and he graduated along with the rest of our class in June 1988. LOVEGROVE was a civilian entrant with no prior military service. If I was placed first in this group and LOVEGROVE was second or, at best, on par, the fact that he graduated would support a contention that I was also more than capable of graduating*).