



I had wanted to become an army officer since 1980, the beginning of high school. That year my parents separated. The following year I joined the army cadets. I remained in the cadets until 1985. I applied for entry to the Australian Defence Force Academy but was unsuccessful on academic grounds. That year, after completing high school I joined the Army Reserve. I was on most of my Army Reserve courses failing only one drivers course. During 1986 I spent one term at Latrobe University but found it not to my liking. While unemployed, for the rest of the year I worked with the Army Reserve. I applied for the Commonwealth Public Service and was accepted but no position became available prior to the end of the year.

I applied for a position at RMC and was accepted. I was uncertain as to whether I should attend the next intake in January 1987. I wanted to defer entry till later but on the advice of a member of Army Recruiting in Melbourne and because of family expectations I decided to commence in January 1987. I wanted to spend a couple of years in the police force before joining the Army.

I was enthusiastic and wanted to do well but was hesitant. I found the class divisions of cadets at the college was not what I had expected. During Initial Corps Training (ICT) I began to believe that I didn't fit in with the rest of my class. I started to wonder whether I was suited to the profession or not. During this period I felt free to perform to the best of my abilities and was free from the subsequent harassment and pressures. My first instructors' report from ICT suggested that I was immature. My report said that I often asked immature questions which I can now see may have indicated my level of maturity. I had thought at the time that they were appropriate. My report after the first field exercise on ICT said that I had improved.

On returning to RMC, I found that the class structure not to be what I had expected. The class divisions were far wider. The biggest division is between the senior classes and the third class. The high handedness of some of the seniors was beyond my belief at this stage. One 24 year old married man in third class was told that he would ~~not~~ get his gear in inspection order or he would not get to see his family the following weekend even if he did have leave. I found the senior cadets singled out a couple of third class members, including myself and staff cadet Ridd. Staff cadet Ridd eventually went AWOL, returned briefly and resigned. He was also a little different from the other cadets. Staff cadet Ridd was continually harassed until he went AWOL. He simply ignored the seniors when they yelled at him and abused him. I was

