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Talisman Sabre 15





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On the Cover Two year old Bannon Harm, standing on the tray of a Humvee, exchanges a look with US Army Specialist Lawrence Osborne from Bravo Company 2nd Brigade, 27th Infantry Division. (Imagery by Australian Navy Leading Seaman Justin Brown, 1st Joint Public Affairs Unit).

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Spc. Lawrence Osborne, Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division, talks to a local resident during the Opening Day activities for Talisman Saber 15 began at the Rockhampton Showgrounds in Rockhampton, Australia on July 5th, 2015. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Brian C. Erickson, 3rd Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Office).

I Corps celebrates Independence Day during Talisman Sabre 15



Above: U.S. service members serve themselves barbeque made by the Australian army to help celebrate U.S. Independence Day in Brisbane, Australia, July 4. Approximately 300 I Corps Soldiers are participating in Talisman Sabre 15, a combined exercise between the United States and Australia and a certification exercise to validate I Corps as a Combined Forces Land Component Command. (U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Megan B. Lobos/Released).

Left: Australian Pvt. Nicholas Priestley, a chef in the 1st Signal Regiment, prepares barbeque for United States service members in Brisbane, Australia, July 4, to help celebrate Independence Day. Approximately 300 I Corps Soldiers are participating in Talisman Sabre 15, a combined exercise between the United States and Australia and a certification exercise to validate I Corps as a Combined Forces Land Component Command. (U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Megan B. Lobos/Released).

Story by U.S. Army Sgt. Daniel Schroeder
5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

BRISBANE, Australia – July 4th is an important holiday in the United States where families and friends come together and celebrate U.S. Independence. For approximately 300 I Corps Soldiers, they spent the day celebrating with their Australian counterparts prior to the start of Exercise Talisman Sabre 15.

To help the U.S. forces celebrate, the host country prepared a barbeque, both as a way to show their appreciation for the U.S. holiday and to welcome them to Australia.

“We know the 4th of July is important,” said Australian Maj. Steve Young, camp commandant, 1st Signal Regiment, 1st Division. “Some of us have worked with U.S. forces in the past and wanted to do something a little more special than just another meal in the [dining facility].”

The Australian chefs decided on the menu for the barbeque, added Young. They went out and bought some special meat to grill and added more flavor to the various salads to help make this barbeque feel more like home for the U.S. Soldiers.

Lt. Col. Ben Bird, Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion Commander, expressed his gratitude for the event.

“Our counterparts hosted the barbeque to bring us all together for a chance to learn more about the local customs and culture while enjoying some amazing Australian food,” he said.

Other I Corps Soldiers continued to express their appreciation to the Australian chefs during the barbeque.

“The barbeque was about reciprocation,” Young said, “showing we are keen to having them here sets the scene for the next few weeks.”

The barbeque was the second opportunity for U.S. and Australian soldiers to create and build friendships before the exercise since landing in Brisbane. The first was a social gathering designed for both forces to meet with their counterparts and introduce themselves in a positive environment followed by dinner the previous night.

“I have spent time with U.S. Soldiers during other exercises,” said Young. “I was blown away by the hospitality when I visited them and this is just a small way to repay the favor. It also sets us up well to work together for the next few weeks.”

Talisman Sabre 15 is a biennial exercise, consisting of U.S. and Australian forces. It is the sixth iteration of Talisman Sabre with a contingent of 30,000 participants. I Corps is using Talisman Sabre as a certification exercise to validate as a Combined Forces Land Component Command.

“We love working side-by-side with the U.S. Army, like we did in the First World War,” said Brigadier Mick Ryan, Commander Australian 1st Brigade. “It’s a relationship that we, the Australian soldiers, really treasure and it’s part of the ongoing nurturing of that relationship that we look forward to these events.”



Service members from 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division parachute onto the Kapyong Air Field, Australia in support of Talisman Sabre 15 July 9. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David N. Beckstrom, 19th Public Affairs Detachment).

Talisman Sabre 15: 4-25 ID jumps Down Under

Story by U.S. Army Sgt. David N. Beckstrom
19th Public Affairs Detachment

ROCKHAMPTON, Australia – Over 400 Army paratroopers from the 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division have parachuted from seven C-17 Globemasters onto Kapyong Air Field, Australia as part of Exercise Talisman Sabre 15, July 8.

Talisman Sabre is a biennial exercise that provides an invaluable opportunity for nearly 30,000 U.S. and Australian personnel to conduct operations in a combined, joint and interagency environment that will increase both countries' ability to plan and execute a full range of operations from combat missions to humanitarian assistance.

“The first and foremost reason we are here today, is not only to deepen the already strong relationship between the U.S. Army and the Australian Army, but between the Australian Defense Force, U.S. military and the United States of America and Australia,” said Brigadier Mick Ryan, Commander Australian 1st Brigade.

Major exercises like these train service men and women to enhance interoperability and employ skills needed for long range, high tempo and short notice missions around the world.

It builds the basics to planning, communicating, and deploying around the world said Ryan. “Those fundamental skills can be adapted across the board from humanitarian aid and disaster relief to high-end operations and deployments that our governments might

want to engage in,” he added.

The U.S. military regularly deploys in joint operational environments, both in conflict and in peacekeeping missions. Being able to operate effectively with other nations and services can facilitate the accomplishment of key objectives.

“With the current operating situation around the world; being able to conduct exercises like this, in a combined operating environment, allows us the opportunity to showcase the capabilities in the pacific region,” said Capt. Zachary Miller, the commander of 3rd Battalion, 509th Infantry, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division.

Talisman Sabre 15 preparations have been happening for several months, and the Strategic Air Drop was one of the larger events of the Central Queensland part of the exercise. Concurrent activities are occurring in Northern Australia.

It is always exciting to watch the culmination of months of training and coordination between the Australians and the U.S., said U.S. Army Pacific Exercise Commander

Brigadier General Brian Alvin. “The beautiful thing about this jump was that the Australians flew two of their aircraft up to Alaska, joining five of the U.S. aircraft and after a 17 hour flight back they enabled the U.S. Soldiers parachute onto the airfield in Australia,” he added.

The U.S. and Australian military has had a long history of working together and cooperation. The partnership has been forged out of mutual trust and respect.

“The relationship that the U.S. and Australians have is a wonderful thing and it is growing,” said Alvin. “I just spoke with the Australian Chief of Army and we believe that the partnership we have will only become stronger as time progresses.”

“We love working side-by-side with the U.S. Army, like we did in the First World War,” said Ryan. “It’s a relationship that we, the Australian soldiers, really treasure and it’s part of the ongoing nurturing of that relationship that we look forward to these events.”

Service members from the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division set up a security perimeter after parachuting onto Kapyong Air Field, Australia in support of Talisman Sabre 15, July 8. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David N. Beckstrom, 19th Public Affairs Detachment).



Members of the U.S. and Australian militaries as well as local civilians in the Rockhampton community, came out to support the 60th annual commemorations of St. Christopher's Chapel in Rockhampton, Australia, July 5, 2015. The chapel was finished and consecrated in 1943. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Youtoy Martin, 19th Public Affairs Detachment).



A Soldier from the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Airborne), 25th Infantry Division parachute onto the Kapyong Air Field, Australia in support of Talisman Sabre 15, July 8. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David N. Beckstrom, 19th Public Affairs Detachment).





Australian Brigadier Mark Brewer (Left), Deputy Mayor of Rockhampton Tony Williams (Center), and U.S. Army Brigadier General Brian Alvin pose for a photo in front of an Australian Tiger Attack Helicopter during the Exercise Talisman Sabre 15 Open Day Ceremony. The event had service members from U.S., Australian and New Zealand militaries, static displays, military history re-enactors and cultural displays. The exercise is a biennial event where all militaries practice their interoperability skill and to strengthen the partnership between the forces. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. David N. Beckstrom, 19th Public Affairs Detachment).



Australian Col. Ash Gunder, assistant chief of staff for 1st Division, speaks to both U.S. and Australian service members about the history of the two armies in Brisbane, Australia, July 3. Approximately 300 I Corps Soldiers are participating in Talisman Sabre 15, a combined exercise between the United States and Australia and a certification exercise to validate I Corps as a Combined Forces Land Component Command. (U.S. Army Photo by Spc. Megan B. Lobos).





Chapel builds international bonds

Story by U.S. Army Sgt. Sinthia Rosario
5th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

ROCKHAMPTON, Australia – Australian and American service members have gathered at St. Christopher’s Chapel in Nerimbera, Australia to celebrate the chapel’s 60-year commemoration, July 5, 2015.

Built in 1943, the chapel was constructed by the 542nd Engineers Ship and Shore Battalion under the supervision of four chaplains to bring solace to U.S. service members recovering from injuries.

“The chaplains consecrated St. Christopher’s Chapel as a place of Divine Worship where non-denominational services could be held, with each chaplain contributing to the service,” said Chaplain Steve

Wayne William Carter, Australian Army retired Special Forces and dual Australian-U.S. citizen speaks during the 60th annual commemoration of St. Christopher’s Chapel in Rockhampton, Australia, July 5, 2015. The chapel was built by members of 542 Engineers, Ship and Shore Battalion and the annual service remembers and reflects on the relationships formed by U.S. troops and members of local community. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Youtoy Martin, 19th Public Affairs Detachment).

Cloudsdale, garrison chaplain for Talisman Sabre 15. In 1984, more than 170 American veterans left their homes in the U.S. to visit the chapel in Australia.

Cloud went on to say, “These veterans of WWII were returning to the site that had given them strength of mind and body... that was St. Christopher’s Chapel.”

Throughout the years, the chapel has been maintained in honor of the relationship between Australia and the United States.

June and Graham Bell, a married couple, return to this event every year to keep the tradition alive.

“I think it’s important to honor the strong relationships and friendship forged and to pause for a moment to remember the bonds that go

back to WWII,” said Graham.

Graham comes from a military family. His grandfather was a Marine engineer who served in 1910, and Graham and his wife also both served in the Australian Army.

“As two people who have served in the military, we both understand the importance of this ceremony, of remembering the past, maintaining new and future relationships,” added Graham. “We are proud to be here today and you’ll be seeing us next year.”



Brig. Gen. Brian Alvin U.S. Army Pacific exercise commander, Australian Army Lt. Col. Michael Scott Camp Rocky exercise control commander, Tony Williams, the deputy mayor of Rockhampton and other distinguished guests give a round of applause during the 60th annual commemorations of St. Christopher's Chapel in Rockhampton,

Australia, July 5, 2015. The non-denominational chapel was a place of worship for over 70,000 U.S. Army Soldiers fighting in the Pacific during the Second World War. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Youtoy Martin, 19th Public Affairs Detachment).



Members of the Salvation Army Band Capricorn Region play hymns during the 60th annual commemorations of St. Christopher's Chapel in Rockhampton, Australia, July 5, 2015. The non-denominational chapel was a place of worship for over 70,000 U.S. Army Soldiers fighting in the Pacific during the Second World War. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Youtoy Martin, 19th Public Affairs Detachment).

U.S., Australian militaries conduct an opening day ceremony for Talisman Sabre 15

Story by Australian Army Capt. Jesse Platz

1st Joint Public Affairs Unit

ROCKHAMPTON, Australia—Over 5,000 Rockhampton residents flocked to the Exercise Talisman Sabre 2015 Open Day at the Rockhampton Showgrounds on July 5, marking the official commencement of the biennial military activity.

One of the largest crowds in Open Day history spent the day meeting Australian, United States and New Zealand service men and women, looking at military hardware, exploring vehicles and enjoying Military Working Dog (MWD) demonstrations and performances from the Australian Army Band Brisbane.

Deputy Mayor of Rockhampton, Councillor Tony Williams said the day is always one of the highlights on the local calendar.

“This is something our community always look forward to, it’s a great event, and especially after the way the ADF helped with the recovery and cleanup after Cyclone Marcia, it’s a great way for the community to express their thanks and support,” Cr Williams said.

While this year’s Exercise Talisman Sabre will be run concurrently in Northern Australia and Central Queensland, over 9,000 troops will be based in Rockhampton and Shoalwater Bay Training Area (SWBTA) over 5 – 20 Jul 15.

Australian Director General Training Brigadier Mark Brewer said Exercise Talisman Sabre is the peak activity for high end war fighting in the perfect location.

“This area is big enough to allow

us to manoeuvre two brigades and exercise our full range of capabilities. We want to give the soldiers the widest range of activities, from disaster relief or emergency assistance to close combat and everything in between,” Brigadier Brewer said.

“It’s the biggest exercise we conduct with our major alliance partner, the United States. You can’t build interoperability unless you do it on the ground; it’s fundamental we do it over a long period of time to figure out where we have those stress points and where our systems may not work effectively together.”

Brigadier General Brian Alvin, the Exercise Commander from U.S. Army Pacific Command, said his forces will help the Brisbane based 7th Brigade certify as the Ready Deployment Force (RDF) and continue building exceptionally strong relationships and interoperability.

“Our relationship has gotten stronger and stronger every year and we intend to build on everything we’ve done in the past. We see it evolving and growing, that’s our hope in the future, and we want to help forge this partnership to an even greater degree.”



A roleplayer, wearing a World War I Australian Light Horse uniform, poses in front of a ARH Tiger helicopter at the Rockhampton Showgrounds. (Imagery by Australian Navy Leading Seaman Justin Brown, 1st Joint Public Affairs Unit).



Local Aboriginal performers entertain the public during the Exercise Talisman Sabre Open Day in Rockhampton, Queensland. (Imagery by Australian Navy Leading Seaman Justin Brown, 1st Joint Public Affairs Unit).



Shyanne Bonner, 9, from Yeppoon, is shown the ARH Tiger cockpit by Captain Mark Overton from the 1st Aviation Regiment. (Imagery by Australian Navy Leading Seaman Justin Brown, 1st Joint Public Affairs Unit).





Service members from 4th Brigade Combat Team, 25th Infantry Division parachute onto the Kapyong Air Field, Australia in support of Talisman Sabre 15, July 8 (U.S. Army photo by Capt. Pete Mrvos, 19th Public Affairs Detachment).