

# History of Intelligence Activities in Queensland from September 1939 to September 1945

## Object

The object of this report is to present in concise form a history of Military Intelligence activities carried out in Queensland during the period from September, 1939, to September, 1945, in order to assist in future planning and to provide a record for reference purposes.

## PART I INTELLIGENCE ORGANISATION, 1939-1945

### Initial Establishment

At the outbreak of war with Germany in September 1939, the Military Intelligence organisation in Queensland consisted of a GSO 3 and two Intelligence Officers employed on a Militia basis. This establishment was too small to meet the demands which it was anticipated would be made on it, and approval to increase the Intelligence staff was received within a few days of the declaration of war. Five Intelligence Officers were appointed for part-time duty in the main coastal towns in Queensland, and within three days of war being declared there were six Intelligence officers on full-time duty, and six on part-time duty.

In 1940, Northern Command Section, Intelligence Corps, went on War Establishment 111/1940/80B/1, which was as shown below:

### NORTHERN COMMAND SECTION (INTELLIGENCE CORPS)

#### WAR ESTABLISHMENT (Provisional)

#### (i) Summary of ranks

	Officers	Warrant Officers	Staff- Sergeants and sergeants	Rank and file	Total
<b>Intelligence Officers</b>					
Major	1				1
Captains	7				7
Lieutenants	8				8
<b>Cipher Personnel (a)</b>					
Captain	1				1
Lieutenant	1				1
WO1		1			1
WO2		1			1
Staff-sergeants			4		4
Sergeants			2		2
Corporals				2	2
<b>Security Police</b>					
Captains	2				2
WO2		3			3
Staff-sergeants			3		3
Sergeants			3		3
Corporals				30	30
<b>Draughtsman (WO2)</b>		1			1

<b>Batmen</b>				8	8
<b>Batmen-Drivers, A.A.S.C.</b>				2	2
<b>Drivers, M.T., A.A.S.C</b>				2	2
<b>Total, Northern Command Section (Intelligence Corps)</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>82</b>

(a) Attached to Northern Command signals together with 1 batman.

Northern Command Section, Intelligence Corps, was directed by a GSO 2 (Int), who was carried on the War Establishment of Command Headquarters. The appointment of GSO 3 (Int) was not filled at this stage, the duties being also carried out by the GSO2 (Int). Clerical assistance was obtained from the General Staff pool.

### **Raising of Field Security Police**

At this stage it is convenient to explain the raising of a detachment of Field Security Police which was employed on investigational duties of a special nature, including supervision of subversive organisations. It is understood that in other Commands such duties were performed by personnel of the State Police Departments under an arrangement whereby the Commonwealth Government paid the salaries and other expenses of such police officers whilst engaged on the work. In this Command it was considered that the duties could be performed by enlisted military personnel wearing plain clothes. One advantage of this system was that it enabled personnel to be attached for duty with Intelligence Officers in country areas where their association with Intelligence could, to a large extent, be concealed. In 1941, the name was altered to Field Security Wing, and in June, 1942, the remaining personnel were transferred to Commonwealth Security Service, when that organisation took over certain functions of Intelligence as appears later. The functions of the Field Security Wing were then taken over by three Field Security Sections raised on the Order of Battle. It is considered that in any future planning provision should be made to raise and train an appropriate number of Field Security Sections on a normal basis. Any special supervisory duties incapable of being performed by Field Security Sections could be carried out by police officers under arrangements with the Police Department, subject to the necessary financial commitments being previously adjusted between the Commonwealth and State authorities.

### **Local Intelligence Officers**

Owing to the vast size of this State, the presence of large alien communities, the difficulties of communication with the Northern areas, and the lack of topographical information, it was decided to appoint Intelligence Officers in certain country districts. For this purpose the State was divided into areas and an Intelligence Officer was appointed to Cairns, Townsville, Mackay, Rockhampton, and Bundaberg respectively. Subsequently the office at Bundaberg was moved to Maryborough. In October 1940, an Intelligence Officer was appointed at Thursday Island. Each of these Intelligence Officers carried out the duties of an Intelligence Section on a modified scale and at all times they remained under direct control of Northern Command. During this period, Papua, New Guinea, New Britain, New Ireland and the Solomon Islands were under control of Northern Command and Intelligence Officers were appointed at Port Moresby and Rabaul respectively. Their duties were to assist the local Commander, and to report generally to this Headquarters on matters of Intelligence interest. After Japan entered the war, the information provided by these Intelligence Officers and collated by I(a) proved of considerable value in relation to the operations against the enemy in the areas mentioned. After the evacuation of the civil administration and population from Thursday Island subsequent to the entry of Japan into the war, the Intelligence Officer was withdrawn. In 1942, the appointment of an Intelligence Officer at Cloncurry was approved, by owing to the rapidly changing circumstances and the difficulty in finding a suitable officer, such appointment was not filled, and it was later abolished.

## Allocation of Duties

Under the War Establishment the duties were allocated as follows:-

- (a) G2:
  - (a) Organisation of Intelligence service in the area,
  - (b) Intelligence planning,
  - (c) Liaison with Intelligence of other services, District Censor and civil authorities and correspondence with same,
  - (d) Dealing with all questions of policy.
- (b) I(x) (one IO)
  - (a) Administrative, discipline and supervision of Intelligence personnel,
  - (b) Appointments and promotions within the Corps,
  - (c) Records and Registry,
  - (d) War Diary,
  - (e) Unit transport.
- (c) I(a) (two IOs)
  - (a) Military Directory,
  - (b) Military Reporting Officers' Organisation (see Pt 8),
  - (c) Production of maps of coastal areas,
  - (d) Topographical information,
  - (e) Control and issue of maps.
- (d) I(b) (three IOs) (see Pt 4)
  - (a) Security of information, personnel, material and operations,
  - (b) Internment and restriction of subversive individuals,
  - (c) Collection of information by special methods,
  - (d) Supervision of suspects and subversive organisations,
  - (e) Issue of security instructions,
  - (f) Control of security matters under National Security Regulations,
  - (g) Maintaining security lists and records,
  - (h) Passport control,
  - (i) Control of photography and permits,
  - (j) Security, collection and despatch of documents requiring safe hand treatment,
  - (k) Investigation and supervision or elimination of untrustworthy personnel from units and establishments,
  - (l) Security of offices,
  - (m) Security of Prisoner of War and Internee Camps (see Pt 6),
  - (n) Security of military establishments.

## Liaison with Censor

At this stage the GSO 2 had direct liaison with the District Censor, and the Commonwealth Investigation Branch had a liaison officer in the office of the District Censor, and any relevant information of military importance was obtained by I(b) through such officer. It was considered that all censorship requirements were provided by such method, and it was therefore deemed unnecessary to appoint an Intelligence Officer for duties of I(c) (see Pt 5).

## **GS (Int) and C.I.B.**

Up to the end of 1941, the activities of the section were mainly concerned on control of aliens and matters relating to control of aliens and problems of internal security, and the officer performing the duties of GSO 2 (Int) and GSO 3 (Int) was also the officer in charge of the Commonwealth Investigation Branch. He was then in a position to combine the joint activities of both Military Intelligence and the Commonwealth Investigation Branch. For personal reasons this officer was not formally called up for duty, and this position remained until September, 1941, when another officer was appointed GSO 2. The arrangement was not entirely satisfactory as the purely military function was, to some extent, not performed in the normal manner. It is considered that the officer in charge of General Staff (Intelligence) should not be required to perform any such duties.

## **Control of Aliens**

As already stated, in 1939 the control of aliens was the major function of General Staff (Intelligence), and immediately after the outbreak of war with Germany, acting upon information already held, and supported by additional details taken from the files held by Commonwealth Investigation Branch, action was taken to arrest and intern enemy aliens known or suspected to be the leaders of the German community. Such aliens were arrested by Intelligence Officers assisted by the civil police in conjunction with Field Security Police personnel upon orders issued by the GOC pursuant to a delegation from the Minister under the National Security Act and National Security (Aliens Control) Regulations. The effect of the prompt arrest of the leaders was to disrupt enemy plans and to break up the Nazi organisation in this Command. Subsequent action is outlined in Part IV.

## **Division of Responsibilities**

It is convenient at this stage to set out the major alterations which occurred during the period of hostilities. Such alterations may be briefly described as follows:-

- (a) From the outbreak of war until March, 1941, the Army was responsible for the general internal security of the Commonwealth and the Minister for the Army administered most of the National Security Regulations. The executive authority in this Command was the GOC, who derived his authority under a delegation from the Minister. In March, 1941, Commonwealth Security Service was organised to take over a number of activities formerly carried out by General Staff (Intelligence). Such organisation was responsible to the Attorney-General, but executive action, particularly in regard to aliens control and restriction of subversive persons, remained with the GOC who acted upon the recommendation of Commonwealth Security Service submitted through General Staff (Intelligence).
- (b) In June, 1942, administration of National Security Regulations were transferred from the Minister for the Army to the Attorney-General, and the executive authority became the Deputy Director of Security for Queensland. The position was then reversed, and any contemplated action in regard to persons whose activities were deemed to be adversely affecting the interests of the Army was made the subject of a recommendation by the GOC to the Deputy Director. The delegations formerly held by the GOC were retained, but were to be used only the event of active enemy operations in the area, and then upon the request of the Army Commander. The general result was that the responsibility for internal security was transferred to Security Service, and General Staff (Intelligence) was left with its primary task of military security (see Pt 4).

- (c) In January, 1942, Headquarters, North Command was divided into an operational Headquarters which took over all responsibility for operations, and Base Headquarters, which, from the point of view of General Staff (Intelligence), was to relieve the GOC of any difficulties relating to military security.
- (d) In April, 1942, Headquarters, First Aust Army arrived at Toowoomba and took over operational command of the area from Headquarters, Northern Command, which then became Headquarters, 5th Australian Division, and Base Headquarters was renamed Headquarters, Queensland Lines of Communication Area. Subsequently as a result of conferences between Army and General Staff (Intelligence) First Australian Army and General Staff (Intelligence), Queensland Lines of Communication Area, it was agreed that the necessary intelligence duties would be divided on the following basis:-
  - (i) All operational intelligence (see Pt 2) to be the responsibility of First Aust Army,
  - (ii) Maintenance of Military Directory (see Pt 8) to be carried on by this Headquarters,
  - (iii) This Headquarters to be responsible for intelligence relating to Prisoners of War and Internees (see Pt 6),
  - (iv) This Headquarters to attend to all matters relating to National Security Regulations where a delegation was held by the GOC of this Headquarters,
  - (v) This Headquarters to attend to censorship (see Pt 5), except in the portion of North Queensland where Field Censorship had been imposed, and which was under the direct control of First Aust Army,
  - (vi) First Aust Army to be responsible for security of Field formations using Field Security Sections attached to such formations; Field Security Sections allotted to this Headquarters to remain for local security duties.
- (e) The departure of First Aust Army to New Guinea and the abolition of Field Censorship in the area.

### **Changes in War Establishment**

The effect of the alterations set out in the preceding paragraph was to cause consequential changes in War Establishment. When the Headquarters was divided as stated above, the position was as follows:-

- (a) **Headquarters Command:**  
GSO 3 (Int), two IOs and five ORs for Intelligence Duties
- (b) **Base Headquarters:**  
GSO 1 (Int), GSO 2 (Int), GSO 3 (Int) two, 1 Major, 9 Captains, 7 Lieutenants and 33 other ranks for intelligence duties.

It was considered desirable to strengthen Base Headquarters by the appointment of a GSO 2 (Int) to assist the GSO 1 (Int), and by the appointment of a GSO 3 (Int) to control and direct I(a), and another GSO 3 (Int) to control and direct I(b) and I(c), owing to the increase in duties due to the concentration of large numbers of troops in the area. Three Field Security Sections were placed under command as stated in the paragraph above (dealing with the raising of Field Security Police) and in addition three Field Security Sections were placed under command.

When certain functions were taken over by Commonwealth Security Service, in June, 1942, five officers engaged in I(b) duties were transferred to that organisation and the Field Security Wing was disbanded as stated above.

After First Aust Army had taken over responsibility for operational intelligence as stated above, it was not necessary to retain the same personnel in I(a) and the War Establishment was further amended, deleting the appointment of the GSO 3 (Int) engaged in I(a) duties.

After the departure of First Aust Army to New Guinea and the abolition of Field Censorship in the area, the problems of military security were considerably reduced, resulting in the appointment of GSO 3 (Int) I(b) and I(c) being dispensed with, the closing of the Maryborough office, and a corresponding reduction in other ranks. Subsequently, the remaining country offices were closed, the position as at September, 1945, being as follows:-

GSO 1(Int),  
GSO 2 (Int),  
I(x),  
I(a),  
I(b),  
I(c),  
2 draughtsmen, 7 clerks and typistes, and  
2 drivers, M.T.

### **Enlistment of Recruits**

Throughout the period under review it was found that the best method of obtaining recruits was by voluntary enlistment of recommended and selected personnel who had special qualifications. In most instances the personnel were the older type of low medical categories, who were unfit for service outside Australia. It was found more satisfactory to obtain recruits who could be retained on duty over a long period, as the experience gained could thus be fully utilised.