

(B) **CORONATION YEAR KING GEORGE VI – 1937**

1. **THE CORONATION CONTINGENT**

(a) **The Departure**

The Coronation Contingent (with the exception of the Western Australian detachment) assembled in Melbourne on 1st February and were completely organised and clothed as a battery of Field Artillery. Full details pay 5, 6, 10, 11, 12, and 13 of Minister's Statements. The personnel were either enlisted as members of the R.A.A., or attached thereto, in order that legal status for command and discipline should be established. The unit and the nurses detachment of A.A.N. Service, 1 Matron-in-Chief and 6 Principal Matrons embarked on the 16th February on the R.M.S. "Cronsay" Personnel are given in AAO 82/1937

(b) **The Return**

The Coronation Contingent returned and disembarked on the 3rd July. Throughout the tour, the unit drew very favorable comment, particularly regarding physique, turnout and discipline. As they were the only organised and uniformly clothed unit from any Dominion, their identity both on and off duty led to easy recognition and to whole hearted welcome from the British people. Unfortunately, the tour was marred by the accidental death of Private A.P. Sullivan, V.C., outside Wellington Barracks. A tablet to his memory has been erected by the Guards occupying Wellington Barracks.

During the Coronation celebrations the Contingent relieved the Welch Guards at Buckingham Palace for a tour of duty as guard to Their Majesties the King and Queen. For details See AAO 1861/1937.

(C) **TRAINING ASPECTS**

(a) **General aspects of training**

(i) **The training period**

The training period for the incoming year was laid down as 6 days Home Training and six days camp

Week-end voluntary courses and classes had proved to be very beneficial and tactical efficiency had improved.

(ii) **Training of units with full establishments**

By June, 1937, the majority of units had reached their permitted strength and had to cease enrolling, although waiting lists were kept of applicants.

The test was now upon C.Os and officers to retain the newly enlisted personnel for the full period of their enrolment, by maintaining the interest of all ranks in their training. In this regard the training of the large number of recruits in each unit became a matter of great importance and instructions contained many essential details for carrying out the course of training during this period. Refer to para 1 MBI by 33/1937.

(iii) **Necessity for pre-camp tactical training**

In the cavalry regiments, the addition of an extra squadron to each regiment not only involved the urgent selection and instruction of new officers and N.C.Os but required Brigadiers and Commanding Officers to study the tactical handling of the enlarged regiments before the actual camp training period of the unit commenced.

(b) **Camp Training**

(i) **Training in areas connected with mobilization plans**

For camp training, the selection of sites in coastal areas connected with mobilization plans was continued and night operations were to be carried out therein, as were also training exercises without troops for officers and N.C.Os as elementary training of recruits did not require their service.

Considerable advance was made in training methods by the increased issue of cinema films and apparatus obtained from the War Office, particularly films showing employment and new designs of tanks, troops in Australia but whose theoretical and tactical employment was being studied from War Office manuals, and practised with extemporized War Office manuals, and practised with extemporized material.

(ii) **Leave for attendance at camp training**

Camp attendance was affected by difficulty of members obtaining leave from employers. It was found that whilst directors of large associations and organisations such as banks, insurance and mercantile firms were whole heartedly behind a policy of leave to their employees to attend camps and courses, branch managers and foremen in many cases refused the leave or dissuaded the employee from applying.

(iii) **Engineer training**

The training programme for engineer units covered Collective training, Defence Electric Light, Anti-Aircraft Companies, Field Engineers, Field Works, Demolition, Anti-tank Mines, Tubular scaffolding and Anti-gas defence. Details contained in Section 20 of MBI G33/1937.

(iv) **Infantry training**

Owing to the large influx of new personnel, most attention had to be given to elementary recruit, section and platoon training particularly in fire control and discipline.

(v) **Intelligence and Transport Section Training**

Training of Intelligence and Transport Sections was not uniformly satisfactory.

(vi) **Service Corps & Medical Corps Training**

Training carried on in these corps is suitably commented on.

(d) **Results of musketry and voluntary Rifle practices**

Again, this year, the high standard of weapon training obtained by some units was maintained, showing the interest taken by the individuals in their weapons, and the systematic training that must have been carried out at musketry and voluntary rifle practices.

(e) **Senior Cadet Training**

Attention was again drawn to the fact that training of cadets at educational establishments was not deliberately carried out with the

object of imbuing cadets with a taste for military training, and as a consequence many do not continue their service into the adult forces after leaving school. MBI G33/1937, para 25 refers. Appendix 'A' contains a syllabus for infantry recruits which are suitable for Senior Cadets.

(3) **PROGRESS OF THE RECRUITING CAMPAIGN AND THE NECESSITY TO REFORM DORMANT UNITS**

(a) **Waiving of medical standards in certain cases**

The recruiting campaign to increase the Citizen Forces to a strength of 35,000 Refers to MBI A52/1936 produced satisfactorily and the numbers were attained, although, in several localities, the medical standards of height and chest measurement were waived in order to enlist personnel who at time of enlistment were slightly under these standards, but were capable of leave development. [sic]

(b) **The raising of new units and the reforming of dormant units**

(i) The new units which were raised as a consequence of the opening of new localities are referred to later in the chronological table for this year. AAO 83/1937 gives full details.

(ii) **Raising of dormant units**

Due to the increase in numbers obtained as a result of the recruiting campaign, many dormant units were again established and redesignated. AAO 83/1937 gives full details.

(4) **APPOINTMENTS**

(a) **Changes in Appointments**

(i) **Quartermaster-General**

The rank of the Quartermaster-General was raised to that of Major-General, thus making positions for 3 officers of that rank in the Staff Corps. Brig-Gen O.F. Phillips was promoted, Major-General. C of A Gazette 187/1936.

(ii) **Finance Member**

Mr J.T. Fitzgerald from 1st Military District was appointed Finance Member of the Military Board, 23rd February, 1937, vice T Jolliffe, retired.

(iii) **Defence Resources Board**

The Defence Resources Board of which Brevet LT-Col Beavis was Chairman was changed in composition by his relinquishment of that position. AAO 122/1937.

(iv) Major G.C. Rowe was seconded to P.S.O. Committee and Executive Officer. C of A Gazette 22/1937.

(b) **New Appointments**

(i) **GSO (Tanks)**

The increase in mechanization of units (A.L.H., Arty, A.A.S.C.) and the proposed expansion of the Tank Corps required an officer on the Training Directorate at A.H.Q with up to date knowledge of the development of mechanical vehicles and their tactical employment, particularly of armoured fighting vehicles.

The services of Major F.K. Brook were accordingly obtained on loan from the British Army and appointed as G.S.C. Tanks in the Branch of the C.G.S. AAO 122/1937.

(c) **Staff Corps Appointments**

(i) **Re-appointment to**

In order to increase the strength of the Staff Corps wherever possible permission was obtained to re-appoint ex-members who qualified and were desirous of re-appointment CofA Gazette 30 Sept 1937 gives details of names.

(ii) **Shortage Junior Officers**

The serious shortage of Junior Staff Corps Officers was further accentuated during the year when 27 Militia Officers had to be appointed Militia Acting Adjutant to fill appointments for which no Staff Corps officers were available. There were also 13 militia

officers who had to relinquish such acting appointment during the year, the majority being unable to give the time demanded by the duties of the appointment.

With the 47 changes in such appointments last year, the total changes of 87 in two years illustrates the number of units carrying on with inadequate staff. These are in addition to units without Adjutants but where a Quartermaster of the A.I.C. was acting as Adjutant.

(iii) **Junior Army HQ's Promotion and Selection Committee**

In view of the slow rate of promotion of captains and majors of the Staff Corps and the fact that for the few vacancies there were always many more officers qualified by length of service, examination and recommendation of formation commanders, it was considered by the Military Board that in equity the merits of each officer should be carefully gone into and compared.

As the member of the Military Board could not spare the time to collect and tabulate this detail, a committee of senior directors at Army Headquarters was approved to review records of service and confidential reports of captains and majors (Staff Corps) for the consideration of Army Headquarters Promotion and Selection Committee. MBI A70/1937.

5. **ESTABLISHMENT OF THE A.I.C.**

An increase of 100 in the establishment of A.I.C. promised a welcome relief to the understaffed Citizen Force units, but results would not be seen until after candidate had passed the necessary schools of instruction.

6. **PAYMENT OF EFFICIENCY ALLOWANCE**

In considering the rates of pay that would be employed on mobilization for defence of Australia, it was realized that provision was made in the improved conditions for militia service for the 3/- per day efficiency allowance to continue to be payable after mobilization. MFR&I 323/(a).

It was therefore decided to clarify the position and refer to the allowance as a peace training allowance, which would automatically cease to be payable on the outbreak of war. AA018/1737.

7. **ADOPTION OF TERRITORIAL TITLES**

In view of the important fact that much of the success of the recruiting campaigns in 1930 and in this year were due to the close co-operation between the Unit Headquarters, local civil authorities and citizens' committee, the adoption of local territorial titles and mottoes by units began to have a greater significance as a national activity associated with the district or city. A list of the territorial nomenclature of all L.H. and Infantry Units was therefore completed. For list see AAO 175/1937.

As these militia units have now been called out for war service would have probably been in action, reference to their territorial titles might be of value to historians or archivists when later distinguishing between the numbered A.I.F. unit (that has no connexion with any particular locality) and the Militia unit of the same numerical nomenclature but composed entirely of citizens from the locality connected with the territorial title.

8. **MARKING OF STORES TO PROVE OWNERSHIP BY DEFENCE DEPARTMENT**

Attention was drawn to the fact that unless stores are marked to indicate that they are the property of the Defence Department, action at law to recover same from civilians is rendered difficult, if not impossible. MBI Q54/1937.

Owing to the constant change of personnel during the first years of militia training and understaffed units many articles were issued without any markings, and petty robberies and pilfering (where the perpetrators were suspected or known) could not be proved or the articles recovered.

The necessity for marking all stores that have been disposed of by gift or sale to the public is equally important, as the fact that such unmarked articles in civil possession are common renders proof of illegal possession almost impossible.

9. **STRENGTH OF CITIZENS FORCE**

The strength of the Citizen Forces was –

Officers	-	2697 – increase of 262
O.R.s	-	31976 – “ “ 5339 over the previous year.
Snr Cadets)	-	4389 - “ “ 1216
att. to)		
Militia)		

10. **REPORTS BY THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MEDICAL SERVICES**

Reports on the health etc of A.M.F. and R.A.A.F, have been issued by D.G.M.S. for years 1930, 1931, 1933, 1935, 1936 and 1938.

11. **DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES**

Satisfactory progress was made towards completion of the fortifications at Sydney and Perth MBI Q54/1937.

12. **MILITARY MAGAZINE**

Arising out of the Militia recruiting drive, and to stimulate interest in matters affecting Defence, Military Magazines were instituted in all of the larger states by private enterprise – the majority being of a very satisfactory standard.

(C) **INTERNATIONAL EVENTS AND THEIR EFFECT ON THE DEFENCE POLICY AND THE ARMY DURING 1938**

1. **INTERNATIONAL EVENTS: 1938**

March 13	Germany invaded Austria and incorporated same in Reich.
April 24	Germany made demands on Czecho-Slovakia for Sudetenland.
July 1	Hitler announced construction of Siegfried Line.
September 12	Hitler demanded freedom for Students and threatened German action to obtain same.
September 15	Prime Minister of Great Britain flew to Munich and met Hitler at Berchtesgarten. British Fleet mobilized. Anti-aircraft and coast defence units called out in Great Britain. Trench digging in parks throughout England.
September 29/31	Munich Conference – Chamberlain, Hitler, Mussolini, Deladier. <u>Decision</u> : Sudetenland to be evacuated by Czechs within nine days
October 1	German Troops entered Czecho-Slovakia.
December 4	Broadcast by Prime Minister – Campaign to increase Militia to 70,000. Broadcast made from Canberra.
December 6	Australian Minister for Defence's speech at Canberra- Australian Defence Policy.
December 6	Speech by the Treasurer on Loan Bill for an Expanded Defence programme.

2. **THE DEFENCE POLICY AND ITS EFFECT ON THE ARMY PROGRAMME**

(a) **Speech by Minister for Defence**

In the speech by Minister for Defence, Canberra, 6th December, 1938 issued in pamphlet form Brig. The Hon. G.A. Street the increase in funds and defence activities of the three Services was promulgated. The Speech also contained reference to:

- (i) Difficulties peculiar to a defence programme.
- (ii) Material requirement and their sources.
- (iii) Works aspects of defence.
- (iv) Training of specialists in the permanent Services.
- (v) Co-ordinated development of various parts of defence programme.
- (vi) The strategical distribution of the Australian Defence Force.
- (vii) Basis of sound criticism.

As a consequence of Munch [sic], the necessity of trying to provide the most effective defences in the minimum of time was realized to be the only safe policy for Australia.

The Army programme was to be increased from £11,612,000 to £19,704,000, the main items to be:

- (i) Accelerated enlistment of permanent personnel under existing programme.
- (ii) Increase of the Militia Forces from 35,000 to 70,000.
- (iii) Reserve of ammunition and war equipment.
- (iv) Increase in anti-aircraft defence.

(b) **Function of the Army in War**

The function of the Australian Army in war was laid down and also an assessment made of the risk of invasion.

Adequate defence was stated to depend on:

- (i) The presence of an adequate British Fleet at Singapore.
- (ii) An Australian Army and Air Force of sufficient force to require the enemy to come in great strength.
- (iii) An Australian Army and Air Force of sufficient strength to defeat an enemy should be secure foothold in the country. [sic]

(c) **Government Policy for development of Army**

The Government policy for the development of the army took into account:

- (i) Relative probability of various forms of attack.
- (ii) Financial provision that could be made.
- (iii) The rate at which it was possible in peace to increase length war material.

The Government was concentrating in the first stage on providing direct protection of main ports, including larger coastal cities and some of the smaller distant seaboard towns.

Progress in rearmament was reviewed showing the fixed coast defences as approaching completion, and the requirements of arms, armament, ammunition, mechanization and equipment of the first line component of 3 Cav. Bdes., 4 Mixed Bdes., 2 Infantry Divisions, and necessary supporting and maintenance troops receiving additional funds.

(d) **Effect of Munich crisis**

- (i) On page 10 of what the effect of the crisis in September, 1938, (Munich) on the process of developing the Army was commented on briefly as under:-

Previously, it had been considered that there would be sufficient time, after the first warning of an emergency, to expand the peace establishment of troops to an effective war footing, the order of priority of preparation being:-

- (i) Training of Commanders, staffs, junior leaders and specialists.
- (ii) Provision of arms, armament, and war equipment.
- (iii) Training of rank and file.

(ii) **New view**

Now the outstanding present lesson was that in future there may be no time, and it was consequently decided to raise and train a stronger peace nucleus of 70,000 Citizen Force.

Additional funds were to be allocated for:

- (a) Increasing strength of Militia.
- (b) Accelerating enlistment of permanent personnel for coast defences, anti-aircraft and permanent staff of Militia.
- (c) Expediting acquisition of arms, ammunition and war equipment of all natures for first line component of Field Army.
- (d) Speeding the construction of permanent defence works, barracks and drill halls.

The development of a base at Moresby for Mobile Naval and Air Forces was decided on, the fixed defences to be provided by the Army.

(e) **Munitions Supply Programme**

Provision was to be increased from £3,057,000 pound to £4,855,00 for extension of factories and production.

Essential basis of local self sufficiency:-

- (i) Adequate reserves of ammunition.
- (ii) Establish factories for local production of munitions not normally produced by industry.
- (iii) Aircraft production.
- (iv) Fostering of primary and secondary industries.
- (v) Organization of industry for the supply of the Services in war.

(f) **Manpower Committee**

The Manpower Committee formed in September 1938 consisted of the:

Adjutant-General as Chairman
Second Naval Member
Air Member for Personnel
Controller-General of Munitions
War Book Officer
Mr R.J. Murphy – Secretary

To enable the Manpower Committee to proceed with its work, and to leave the Adjutant-General free for the responsible task of raising the additional personnel for the Permanent and Citizen Force expansion to 70,000, it was decided to appoint a permanent Chairman who would be able to concentrate of this work. Major-General Sir T.A. Blamey was appointed in civil capacity, and the taking of a National Register became a most urgent task. For further reference see Appendix (iii).

(g) **National Register**

A committee, consisting of the above Chairman, the Commonwealth Statistician, and the Secretary, Department of the Defence, was appointed by Cabinet to report on measures necessary for a National Register.

(h) **Comments on the Army Programme**

In connection with the foregoing, historians and reviewers should bear in mind when considering the large increase in Defence funds and the ambitious expansion programme for the year 1938/39:-

- (i) The speech by the Minister for Defence was made and the estimates for the 1938/39 passed in December, 1938, only six months for implementation before June 1939.

- (ii) The time required in peace before allocated funds can be converted into an adequate output of the commodity (either trained personnel or munitions) which they were intended to provide.
- (iii) Supplies of shell and technical equipment which had been ordered from Great Britain were frozen after Munich till Great Britain had made up her own armament lag, and so further search for local supplies or local manufacture had to be instituted.

3. **THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ARMY PROGRAMME**

(a) **Command of Districts in War**

In connection with the question of command in Military Districts, it was always understood by Army Headquarters that on mobilization the number of Formations corresponding direct with Army Headquarters would have to be reduced, and that in the 2nd and 3rd Military Districts a senior Commander could have to be appointed to command troops in those districts.

This logically should be the senior Permanent Officer, the District Base Commandant, who had been responsible for preparation of mobilization plans and defence schemes; but because the Militia Formation Commanders were always senior both in ranks then held and those held on active service, the matter had been a delicate one to insist on during peace.

Promotion of all formation Commanders to the rank of Major-General now made them of equal rank and accordingly an amendment to A.M.R's. AMR 49A – (D854/2/67) was issued placing District Commandants in command of all troops in the District in time of war.

(b) **Stages taken to meet the officer shortage**

As it could be foreseen that on the outbreak of war there would be a serious shortage of officers for the increased force of 70,000 Militia, amendments were made to A.M.R's. AMR 116 and AMR 151A, permitting officers of the unattached and Reserve Lists to attend schools or courses of instruction and receive pay and allowances as for other officers of the Active Citizen Forces.

(c) **Raising of Darwin Mobile Force**

As a consequence of the Government's plan for improving the coast defence and because of the isolation of Darwin, approval was given to the increase of the Permanent Garrison was to include a mobile force for the close support of the fixed defences.

Attempts to raise militia infantry from local residents had been unsuccessful, a small nucleus of Army Medical Personnel being the net result.

As the Defence Act prohibited the raising of Permanent Infantry, the only solution was that the force must be produced from members of the permanent garrison, and accordingly an increase in the total establishment of the R.A.A. was made to enlist the additional personnel required.

The Force was to consist of:-

Headquarters.....	156
Headquarters Wing	14
Rifle Company77

Total – 12 Officers 235 O.R.s.

Officers – To be posted from volunteers from Staff Corps

N.C.O.s – Volunteers from the Permanent Forces.

Civilians – single – willing to enlist in R.A.A. for 5 years

The normal period of service at Darwin was to be 5 years at the end of which time members would then be retransferred to any branch of the Permanent Forces for which their rank and military training qualified them.

The force was to be concentrated at Randwick for initial training on December 1st, 1938. The personnel that were accepted were of an excellent type and training progressed rapidly so that it was a well organized and drilled force that left Sydney for Darwin early in 1939 and continued its training in the bush country of the Northern Territory.

Much experience of bush tracks and mechanized transport in coast country under wet and dry conditions was gained which was later very valuable for training in bush warfare. Memos 19031 of 21 Oct 1938.

Experience of the first year of this unit's existence should be worth considering by the Committee planning Post-War Permanent Forces and peace-time conditions of service and promotion.

(d) **Guarding of vulnerable points**

During the tension over the Sudetenland crisis, and until the result of Munich – many weaknesses were seen in our Defence policy and arrangements.

One of these was that whilst provision had been made in Defence Schemes and mobilization plans for selected citizen force personnel to be called out on the

imminence of war, to guard vulnerable points and militia military works, no authority for doing so, or for their pay and maintenance, existed until the issue of a proclamation of the imminence of war

If the situation deteriorated, and vulnerable points were wrecked, because no safeguards provided, the Government would be held responsible.

On the other hand, if early action was taken to call out part of the Citizen Forces by proclamation for the purpose, criticism of the Government as alarmists might be engendered even if such action was later found necessary.

The Military Board was therefore made responsible for security without being given any extra powers or facilities. By utilizing members of the inadequate permanent forces, representative protective detachments were posted during the crisis wherever possible – in many cases totally inadequate for the tasks that might be required of them if enemy agents had been active.

It therefore became necessary to involve some way of obtaining personnel for effective protection of vulnerable points in the event of a recurrence of a similar situation. This was later arranged and is referred to in events and comments from 1939.

(e) **Inadequate formation Staffs**

It was also seen that in the event of a sudden general mobilization, the inadequate staffs with which formations and bases had been administered since the depression would not be capable of dealing with the calling up of the citizen forces until additional Citizen Force officers had been called up and trained in their duties as Staff Officers.

As time elapsed the training of these officers in Staff Duties at the newly instituted Command and Staff School would lessen the time required after the declaration of war, but in the meantime, arrangements were made in each District for regular instruction of militia designate Staff Officers.

(f) **Raising of the Army Pay Corps**

Reg 563(A) authorizing the formation of an Army Pay Corps as a unit of the Citizen Forces was promulgated. A/849/3/775.

(g) **Mobilization Plans**

The mobilization plans generally were found to be on practical lines and capable of being applied if the situation deteriorated.

The difficulty of completing the more important detailed sections of the plan was increased by the fact that each expansion in personnel or units of the Citizen Forces or changes in the composition of the First Line component of the Field Army involved an alteration or, perhaps, complete rearrangement of the Order of Battle by the General Staff. This required time to complete and issue to the administrative branches of Army Headquarters for their implementation of mobilization plans and machinery. The progress of mobilization planning is reviewed in App. Part III hereof.

(h) **Establishment of Master General of Ordnance Section in Quartermaster-General Branch**

With the increase in production of mechanical vehicles and modern equipment, the necessary for more constant and effective supervision by the Quartermaster-General became apparent, and it was seen that with further development, or in case of war, a separate Department of Ordnance would have to be formed.

Approval given for the Quartermaster-General to also be Master-General of Ordnance with a section under a Deputy Master-General Branch this section could later be developed into the Master-General of Ordnance Branch. Col T.R. Williams was appointed Deputy Master-General of Ordnance in the Department of the Quartermaster-General.

4. **APPOINTMENTS**

(a) **Appointment of H.M. The King as Field Marshall of the Australian Army**

In June, 1938, H.M. The King honored the Australian Military Forces by assuming the rank of Field Marshall in the Australian Army. Previously, the highest rank in the Australian Army held by His Majesty was that of Colonel in Chief of the Australian Infantry.

(b) **Rank of Formation Commanders**

With the influxion of time, officers of the rank of Major-General in command of Formation had reached the retiring age, and it had not been possible to secure Ministerial approval to promote in their stead, the reason quoted being the small size of the Australian Army. However, with the increase in strength and the increased public interest, approval was given to promote the senior Citizen Force Formation Commanders in the 2nd and 3rd Military Districts to the rank of Major-General, and to promote the commanders of Cavalry Divisions and the Staff Corps officers commanding the 1st and 4th Divisions to the rank of local Major-general.

(c) **Rank of Brigade Commanders**

The above promotions enabled the Commanders of Brigades (who previously held the rank of Temporary Colonel) to be appointed to the appropriate rank of Temporary Brigadier whilst holding their appointments.

(d) **Inspector-General of Military Forces**

As no Inspector General of the Military Forces had been appointed since the retirement of Sir Harry Chauvel in 1930, it was realized that with the increased measures being taken for defence and in order to obtain the most efficient service from the Permanent and Citizen Forces, an opinion by the competent authority from the British Army was desirable

The Government therefore obtained the services of Major-General E.K. Squires, C.B., D.S.C., M.C., of the Royal Engineers who was appointed Inspector-General with the rank of Lieut. General on Jun 30th, 1938.

His report, produced early in 1939 was issued except secret matter in pamphlet form to Part 111 of this report.

(e) **Commandant Command and Staff School**

Col H.D. Wynter, was selected for the position of Commandant in January 1938 for the proposed school.

5. **TRAINING DEVELOPMENTS DURING 1938**

(a) **Training Abroad**

Throughout the year the policy of enabling as many officers as possible to receive training abroad was continued, and in view of the additional funds that were being made available for modern equipment for the Forces, the value of having Australian Officers trained and ready to instruct in the new weapons, and equipment, as it was issued, became very apparent.

(b) **Increase in unit efficiency**

The high marks gained by the first 27 Infantry Battalions for the R.S.S.I.M.A. Trophy gives a definite indication of the improvement in the interior administration and training of the units.

The marks are assessed entirely on normal activities of the unit throughout the year in which the performance of every individual soldier counts, and were allotted on:

Camp Attendance	Possible Marks	50
Home Training Attendance	“ “	50
Weapon Training	“ “	100
Maintenance of Establishment	“ “	50

The First unit 11th Battalion, West Australia, obtained 230 out of 250, and 27 other units obtained over 200 points out of 250.

(c) **Weapon Training**

Results

- (i) The results of weapon training are shown in item No.21 of chronological record for this year – in Rifle L.M.G. and Vickers the winning L.H. Reg. and Inf. Bn had both qualified 100 per cent.

Unit Rifle Clubs

Interest in Weapon training and the increase in Unit Rifle Clubs continued, and approval was given for the issue of Rifles to Rifle Clubs of Units, such as Artillery, Ordnance, etc., where the Unit was not normally equipped with one rifle per soldier.

(d) **Training Programme 1938/1939**

The additional funds allocated, made it possible to cover out more advanced training during the oncoming year, particularly in schools, courses and bivouacs, and most bivouacs held in conjunction with camps of continuous training. The opening of the Command and Staff School catered for Commanders and staffs of Formations who were then required to pass on the instruction received to their Unit Commanders at week-end courses, etc.

Skeleton force tactical exercises were also carried out to enable Divisional Signals and Intelligence Sections to co-operate, and to enable Commanders to make appreciations and issue and distribute orders and messages in the Field.

During training for mobilization, advanced instruction of WO's and N.C.O.'s was now possible, because of the advanced efficiency of N.C.O.'s of Citizen Forces. In view of the large number of officers that would immediately be required on mobilization to bring units up to war strength, provision was made for attendance at camps and classes of those officers of the Unattached List and Reserve of Officers who were listed for immediate appointment on mobilization. Full particulars are given in MBT G21/38.

(e) **Camp Training**

Camps were again held in mobilization and coastal areas to enable troops to become familiar with the localities and to enable local camp improvements to be planned and tested, to satisfactory camps for long occupation to be established without delay immediately troops were called out for war service.

Bush fighting and night operations were practised, particularly in their connection with beach defence and close defence of fortifications.

(f) **Corps Training**

(i) **Engineers**

A feature of the training of Field Engineers was to be the tactical employment of Field Coys in their duties in the field. Previously much time in camp had been devoted to detailed or elementary instruction of the individual sappers, with the consequence that young officers with many years' service had received no (or very little) practice in Engineer Officer's duties in the field.

(ii) **Infantry**

A special feature of training was to be provision of anti-tank protection during all phases of tactical training, though the only provision that could be made for anti-tank weapons was the supposition that each Battalion was equipped with 2 two-pounder anti-tank guns and that each Platoon was armed with a Boys rifle – token guns having to be improvised.

The use of the rifle grenade was also to be increased, so that troops would be familiar with its value as a close support weapon when Artillery or mortar support was not available.

(iii) **A.A.S.C.**

As the AASC was now almost entirely mechanised, training was to be based on the new organisation of Supply Columns replacing Supply Coys and Corps Ammunition Park replacing Maintenance coy.

It was also essential that at one period during camp training, the whole of the A.A.S.C. of a Formation should be in camp to carry out Corps training and functioning in conjunction with other Sections and Units of the Army Service Corps.

(iv) **A.A.M.C.**

Field ambulances were to hold their camps in conjunction with the units they were designed to serve in war, and to take part in the tactical operational training of those Formations and Units.

(v) **A.A.O.C.**

The A.A.O.C., which had been considerably increased in strength and organisation, was catered for on an advanced syllabus of instruction for an Army Field Workshop, a Headquarters Base Ordnance Depot and Headquarters Base Ammunition Depot and Ammunition Corps.

(g) **ESTABLISHMENT OF A COMMAND AND STAFF SCHOOL**

- (i) The need for a school where a senior officers of the Staff Corps and Citizen Forces could receive instruction in the tactical handling, administration and logistics of modern forces consisting of Brigades or large Formations had been apparent to the Military Board for some time, but could not be instituted for lack of funds and accommodation. The necessity for such a school was each year becoming more important, as, with the influx of time, more officers, who had no war service and whose widest actual experience with troops in the field had been limited to one or two days camp training annually with peace strength Militia Brigades, were being appointed to command of Citizen Forces units.

On the transfer of the R.M.C. from Victoria Barracks, Paddington, to Duntroon, the quarters previously occupied by the College became available. With the provision of the necessary funds, approval was gained for the establishment and opening of the command and Staff School in July, 1938, at Victoria Barracks, Sydney.

- (ii) The objects of the school were stated as
 - (a) To instruct and practice Commanders and Staff Officers in minor strategy, staff duties, and a administration in the field.
 - (b) In conformity with principles laid down, to ensure uniformity of method in their application and a uniform standard of tactical thought throughout the Australian Army.
- (iii) For Permanent Forces the syllabus was to include:-
 - (a) Organisation, armament and equipment of all units and formations.
 - (b) Tactical employment of all arms in co-operation with R.A.A.F.
 - (c) The principles of training and systems to be adopted.
 - (d) Staff duties.
 - (e) Administration.
 - (f) Movements.
- (iv) For Militia Forces the syllabus was based on that laid down for the Permanent Forces. In addition for officers of the Militia Forces three types of courses were to be held:-
 - (a) For senior officers of rank of LT. Co. and above - to include handling of a Division and Cavalry Brigade.
 - (b) For Majors certified as suitable for promotion to LT. Col.
 - (c) For Militia Officers holding or nominated for staff appointments on bomilisation.
- (v) Col. H.D. Wynter, Staff Corps, was selected for the position as Commandant in January, 1938
- (vi) The first course at the school Divisional Commanders and delected Brigade Commanders was held from 8th to 13 August, 1938. Refer to AAO 285/1938.

(h) **For Permanent Force NCO's**

(i) The increased interest and desire for advancement by junior non-commissioned officers of the Permanent Forces is known by the greatly increased numbers presenting themselves for R.A.A. (P) examinations. A total of 225 comprising 43 for promotion to Sergeant and 182 for promotion to Bombardier presented themselves.

(ii) **For first commission and promotion in the Citizen Forces**

In connection with examination for first commissions and promotion, the extra interest engendered and the improved type of aspirant obtained during the recruiting drive is shown by the very large increase in numbers with necessary service and rank qualifications sitting for first appointment and promotion in the Citizen Forces. The average results did not reach a high standard of Military education, this due to the absence of trained Staff Corps instructors in units, rather than to any absence of the intellectual ability on the part of the candidates the standard of military education would be over come as additional instructors were posted to units from the A.I.C. Despite the lack trained instructors many of the successful examinees produced results of a very high standard.

(iii) **For Certificates of Education**

The standard of mentality and keenness for advancement among the recently enlisted rank and file of Permanent Forces is amply illustrated by the large number of young soldiers presenting themselves for examination for certificates of education. For names of candidates refer to AAO 260/1938.

6. **EXPANSION OF THE PERMANENT FORCES**

(i) **Coast Defences, AACC and Survey Corps**

A further expansion of the Permanent Forces by 959 during the year for coast defences A.A.O.C. (Permanent) and Survey Corps enabled much of the planning for increased efficiency and employment of those Forces to be implemented, although personnel were not available for employment until they had passed their recruit training.

(ii) **A.I.C.**

The most welcome increase was in the number of W.O.'s of the A.I.C. Not only did the Central School of Instruction at Randwick commence to turn out qualified instructors for appointment to the Citizen Forces on probation, but conditions were sufficiently attractive to induce many trained non-commissioned officers of the R.A.A. and R.A.E. to transfer to the A.I.C. and be posted for immediate duty on the staff of the technical arms of the Citizen Forces.

7. **UNIT STORES ACCOUNTING**

Frequently throughout the preceding years of this report, reference has been made to weakness in Unit Store accounting and to losses of Unit stores due to insufficient permanent staff being available with Units.

The appointments to Units, of new W.O.'s A.I.C. from the Randwick School of Instruction made it possible to insist on these weaknesses being rectified, and accordingly instructions were issued, removing shortage of staff was removed from the acceptable reasons for further losses of Unit stores. MBI Q12/1938.

8. **WEARING OF SUMMER CLOTHING BY MILITIA UNITS**

As a result of complaints from 1st Mil. District that the pattern and thickness of issue clothing was unsuitable for Queensland climate, approval was granted for Militia Units to wear summer dress consisting of khaki drill jacket or shirt and khaki shorts, provided no extra expense was incurred by the Department and certain conditions for details see MBI Q68/1938 were complied with.

Like many other questions where public opinion has to be gauged, the issuing of the summer dress silenced the criticism, but beyond a few officers and N.C.O.'s who appeared in the kit occasionally no Unit adopted the dress.

D. THE YEAR 1939

I. On the Eve of War

The Tempo Increases

With increased funds for defence, the recruiting campaign for raising a force of 70,000 Militia proved very effective, and early in 1939 it could be seen that the target would be attained.

The publicity given to Defence matters generally also assisted in securing some good class recruits for the Permanent Forces and two heavy batteries of R.A.A. and a proportionate number of R.A.E. for new fortifications were enlisted.

The Citizen Committees of Formations and Units again proved their value in publicity and recruiting, and helped materially in recruiting a good class of recruit, particularly in large country towns where there had been no Military training for many years.

With the increased tempo of recruiting for the Militia Forces, however, came the associated difficulties of obtaining instructors and staff. The imminence of war, plus the sudden increase in the numbers of untrained recruits called for a revision of training methods and threw a heavy additional burden on unit administration.

Increased Peace Establishments of Militia Units

To ensure that Militia units would be of average war strength (not war establishment) during camps, and thus enable leaders to learn tactical handling of sub-units in true relation to their war-time size and organisation, it was decided to limit the number of new Battalions that could be raised and to increase the strength of all existing Battalions.

New country centres were organised, and some, for the time being, were allotted as part of metropolitan Battalions with which they had no territorial or even nominal connections. At first there was some dissatisfaction on the part of both the parent unit and the new detachment, but after the first experience of camp life together, the mixture of town and country outlook and experience was found to be a uniting factor making for friendly rivalry and unit efficiency.

Changes in the Australian Instructional Corps

(I) Instructors

The effective enrolment and recruit training of the new recruits for the Citizen Force was only achieved by the timely graduation of numbers of N.C.O.s after training at the Central School of Instruction.

Though lacking in experience of administrative unit procedure, they were up to date as recruit instructors, and as assistants to the overworked senior Warrant Officers relieved them of much drill and detail, till experienced enough to take over higher responsibilities.

For technical units, there was still a lag in the provision of trained instructors, as after passing through the preliminary instruction candidates had to qualify in the technical subjects of their Branch of the Services before they could be of use as instructors to the Citizen Force units.

To provide instructors to cover this interim period, 38 trained Sergeants and Corporals of Artillery and Engineers were transferred direct from the Permanent Forces to the A.I.C. and promoted to W.Os. for duty with Militia Forces of their own arm.

In June, a further additional 101 N.C.Os. qualified at the Central School of Instruction for appointment as W.O.'s A.I.C. attached to Cavalry and Infantry units. In September, 51 temporary appointments were made from A.I.C. Cadres and 34 from Darwin Mobile Force (1).

With its expansion in the A.I.C., it was possible to relieve Senior Warrant officers of the duties of R.S.M. and where suitable to utilise them to replace those Militia Acting Adjutants who, for various reasons, such as inability to devote the time necessary, inexperience, etc., were finding difficulty in carrying out their duties effectively. (2)

(II) Status of A.I.C. Officers

The status of officers of the A.I.C. had never been accepted by its members as satisfactory since the formation of the Corps in 1920, and many requests for improvement had been submitted from time to time.

The main grievance lay in the fact that when commissioned an A.I.C. Warrant Officer lost all recognition of his previous service, as he received no discharge or other record covering his long service

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- Notes:**
- (1) See A.A.Cs. 178/39; 255/39; 285/39.
 - (2) See A.A.Cs. 202/39; 268/39; 228/39 – the latter records relinquishment of appointments of 10 Militia Acting Adjutants.
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in the ranks. The record of his commission in the Australian Military Force List gave the impression that that was his first connection with the Military Forces (1).

To overcome this anomaly, A.M.R. & O. 277(11) was amended (on the lines of the King's Regulations) to include "Discharge on appointment to commission" as a reason for discharge and to provide for the necessary certificate of past service.

It was intended that the status of these A.I.C. officers would be stabilised at the same time as this amendment, but, at the desire of the then Inspector-General (LT-Gen E.K. Squires) the matter was deferred for further consideration and recommendation and was not finalised by the end of 1939.

(iii) **Additional Temporary Instructors**

The necessity for additional staff or Militia units still continued, and approval was granted for the temporary enlistment in the A.I.C. of suitable personnel with Military experience to be appointed direct to units, without the delay caused by attending the Central School of Instruction. Candidates' past services were reviewed and, after tests, the temporary W.O.s. were posted to units where their services would be of most benefit.

The acute shortage of permanent staff for Militia units so frequently referred to in this report, assumed serious proportions with the imminence of war. It was realised that the retirement at an arbitrary age of a trained instructor still mentally and physically fit was illogical at a time when there was no qualified person to take this place, and semi-trained men were being appointed to similar positions in the Army

It was decided, therefore, to retain selected Warrant Officers so desired and when the retention was clearly in the interest of the Service and not that of the individual (2).

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- Notes:**
- (1) See A.R.O. 64/39 for examples.
 - (2) See M.B.I. A/6/1939.
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Militia Staff Officers on full-time duty

To enable war plans to be amended to suit the altered conditions arising from the expansion of peace-time Forces, H.Qs. staffs had to be increased.

Because of the shortage of Staff Corps Officers, approval was granted for certain Militia Staff Officers to be employed temporarily on full-time duty (1).

In April, the progress of planning and the increased activities of the Forces necessitated further increases in the Staffs of Formations to prevent bottle-necks occurring in Unit implementation of Army plans and in consequence a further 12 Military staff Officers were employed temporarily on full-time duty (2).

Later, in order to complete and issue Formation mobilisation orders and instructions, it became necessary to employ trained officers at Formation Headquarters to frame those documents for dispatch to lower units. As the only field of supply was the few junior Staff Corps Officers still remaining as Adjutants of Militia, these had to be withdrawn temporarily and recourse again made to appointment of Militia Adjutants in their place (3).

Special Entry at the Royal Military College

Whilst the increase of W.Os A.I.C. attached to unit of the Militia Forces relieved the strain of elementary training and administration details, the acute shortage of trained Adjutants for tactical and advanced Instruction of officers and senior N.C.Os was still a serious matter in most infantry battalions. The limited yearly output from the Royal Military College could never catch up with the demand; moreover, by the terms of the Defence Act, appointments to the Staff Corps could only come from graduate of the College and any increase in the intake would not normally have produced more officers from this source until three years later.

Notes:	(1)	See A.A.O. 98/39 shows first appointees.
	(2)	See A.A.O. 130/39.
	(3)	See A.A.O. 131/39.

In 1939 the international situation was so critical, and the shortage of trained Adjutants so acute, that some full-time assistance had to be given to C.Os. of units, and provision was made for special entry to the Royal Military College of two short-term classes of students, under the following conditions:-

- (a) Candidates to be within the ages of 20 to 25 years.
- (b) If a member of the Defence Force, to be the holder of a Leaving Certificate.
- (c) If not a member of the Defence Force to have done at least one year Science or Arts Course at a University.

The first class selected, of 21, commenced at the R.M.C. in January, 1939, the second class in July, 1939, both graduating in December, 1939.

The result was that in December, only three months after war had broken out, the output of junior Staff Corps Officers was 57 instead of the normal 13.

Northern Defences

It will be recalled that the Government's Defence policy, enunciated in 1938, (1) provided for a base for mobile Naval and Air Forces at Port Moresby, of which the fixed Defences were to be provided by the Army.

From the few remaining trained members of the R.A.A. & R.A.E. not engaged in completing other fortifications, a working party to commence the emplacements was dispatched under Major K.D. Chalmers, Staff Corps, on 18th March, 1939 (2).

Medical Services

In order to view the latest developments in Army Medical Services in India, Middle East, Europe and United States, the Director-General of Medical Services (Major-General R.M. Downes) visited these countries to study organisation, both in its post-war aspects and in regard to the policies and plans for preservation of manpower in any future war. He returned via America soon after the outbreak of war

Notes: (1) See speech by the Minister for the Army, 6th December 1938.
(2) See A.A.O. 78/39.

To facilitate closer relationship between Voluntary Aid Detachment and the Service Medical Corps in time of war, a Joint Central Control Council and State Control Councils, representative of the Armed Services the appropriate civil organisations, were set up (1).

Revised Training Programme and Methods

(I) Changes in the Syllabus, etc.

As already mentioned, the swift expansion of the Militia, and the looming shadow of war, demanded a complete revision of militia training for all Arms, and in May Special Training Instructions (2) were issued, which, significantly, called for "the utmost realism in all training". They also provided for 12 days' camp training and 6 days' home training annually 6 days of the camp training to be carried out with the member's own unit, and the balance at bivouacs or at camp of other units.

To enable the programme to function, separate unit camps were to be held as far as possible, and, in addition, casual camps were to be held in each formation towards the end of the financial year. Where brigade camps were held, each regiment or battalion was to work on its own syllabus of training.

The enrolment of recruits was to cease two months before the date of the camp in each case, to enable elementary training of recruits to be completed before the camp commenced. So that recruits would not be lost, a waiting list was to be maintained of recruits offering during this two month period and enrolment and training of these would be resumed after the camp was held.

(II) **Courses for Reserve Officers**

Provision was made for officers of the Unattached and Reserve Lists, who were posted for appointment on mobilisation to attend special courses of instruction, with pay and allowances applicable to Militia officers on the Active List.

Notes:	1.	See A.A.O. 78/39.
	2.	See M.B.I. G. 17/1939 for full details.

(III) **Training of Armoured Units**

Special Instructions (1) were devoted to the training of Armour units, and these stressed that the increased mobility and greater dispersion of armoured sub-units in action, demanded the highest standard of individual intelligence and training, if the unit was to operate as an articulated whole.

Collective training was to be limited to troop or section tactical exercises, involving cross country driving and maintenance, wireless instruments and communication, and crew training.

(IV) **Other Measures**

Artillery, technical and administrative units were covered in some detail in the Special Training Instructions, and a suggested command organisation for a Headquarters of a Light Horse Regiment was included in detail for a try-out.

Provision was also made for the issue of 1 Cooker and 2 G.S. Wagons with necessary Harness to infantry battalions for use at week-end exercises and bivouacs. These were used by units to provide tea and suppers for members on night parades, and mess evenings, and did much to familiarize new unit cooks with field cooking arrangements before going into camps of continuous training.

There are many other details and it might be mentioned here that these special Training Instructions are not without historical significance, as they give a very good picture of the administrative and training methods adopted at a time when the Citizen Force, under the impetus of the threat of war, had doubled itself almost overnight and units were faced with the task of clothing, equipping and training raw recruits, often equal in number of the complete strength of the unit a comparatively short time before.

Physical Training etc.

As will be remembered, the Army Physical Training Staff, with the exception of the Director of Physical Training, had been retrenched in 1931, although some units had continued physical training as part of their recreational training, whilst others had formed

Note: (1) See M.B.I. G.29/1939.

voluntary gymnastic classes with little or no equipment. In 1939 ample issues of P.T. equipment were made but no trained Army instructors could be provided. This problem was overcome by employing qualified gymnastic instructors, paid on an hourly basis, and although the system had not been operating widely enough at the outbreak of war for any comment on results, it appeared the only practical and economical way of coping with demand.

Increased Officer Reserves

In view of the known shortage of officers if war establishments of units were required to be filled on mobilization, every advantage was taken of adding to the Reserve of Officers persons with qualifications for service as commissioned officers. Many Citizen Force Officers with efficient service (including war service) had, through the dull years of soldiering since the First World War, ceased to report their addresses annually, and as a consequence had been struck off the Reserve.

Other younger officers, during the lean depression years, had to seek employment in places remote from a military unit and, not having sufficient service to qualify for the unattached list, had to resign their commissions.

Moreover, it was known that many ex-officers of His Majesty's Forces from other parts of the Empire were resident in Australia, and would be available on the outbreak of war.

As a result of effective publicity, many of the above were induced to report to the nearest military headquarters, and when their previous status was established, arrangements were made to include their names and addresses of officers available to fill wartime appointments (1).

Classes A & B Reserves

In April, a scheme was inaugurated for organising Military Reserve Forces for every unit of the Militia Forces, from citizens with previous military experience who were not already members of the Military Forces.

Note:)1) Refer Army List, Part II, June, 1940, page 1089 et seq.

The Reserve consisted of two classes, as follows:

Class A

This Class consisted the immediate reserve of units of the Militia Forces, and was drawn from men under the age of 45 years who had either served on active service or who had had not less than 3 years' peace-time service in any of the Armed Forces of the Empire.

Class B

This consisted of men between 45 and 60 years of age, with similar service qualifications as Class A, and its primary role was to provide garrison battalions on mobilization.

Each Militia Unit was required to set up a Reserve Depot for administering these Reserves, and those reservists who would be required by units immediately on mobilization (i.e., all of Class A and those of Class B allotted to Garrison Battalions) were organized into Reserve companies and allotted to the units concerned. No actual training was carried out, but the Reservists were required to attend periodical muster parades.

Officers were not included in the A & B Reserves themselves, but they were allotted to the Reserve Companies for purposes of administration and command on muster parades.

As will be seen later, these measures were to pay dividends when war was declared in September.

Army Schools

Another important adjunct to training was the establishment on a permanent basis of Army Schools which had previously been represented by intermittent courses and classes, the more important of which were:-

- (i) **Central Training Depot**:- At the Hospital Block, Liverpool, for training of candidates for Australian Instructional Corps (except Artillery Engineers and Signals) and for specialized training and refresher courses of A.I.C. (1)

Note: (1) See M.B.I. 41/39

(ii) **Australian Army Service Corps School** (School of Mechanization) at the Mechanical Transport Depot, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne. (1)

(iii) **School of Anti-Aircraft and Fortress Engineering** at the Engineers Depot, Chowder Bay, Sydney. This school was also to carry out temporarily the functions of a school of field engineering. (2)

Efficiency Grant and Badges

On the recommendation of the Inspector-General, an efficiency grant of £12 after 3 years' continuous efficient service was instituted, the first payment to be due after June, 1939.

As a result at the pay parade for the half year ending June, 1939 –

- (i) Privates who had served 3 years received as much in bonuses as their platoon commanders received for a year's service.
- (ii) A sergeant (£8/8/- pay plus £12 bonus) received more for the year than a Captain (£18)
- (iii) Lieutenants who qualified for and received their commissions during the three years concerned were ineligible for the bonus. This was later amended to enable them to receive bonuses for the period served in the ranks.

Badges, to be worn in civilian clothes, were prepared and forwarded to Military Districts for issue to those qualified for the grant.

(2) **The Second World War – September, 1939**

(a) **The early phases**

Contrary to all previous long range planning, the declaration of a state of war was not immediately followed in Australia by mobilization of the Army in its various stages. In fact, the Australian Military Forces, in September, October and November, of 1939, presented most curious and complex anomalies, viz:-

Notes: (1) See M.B.I. 42/39.
(2) See M.B.I. 43/39.

- (i) The Citizen Forces were on war service, and yet many units had not been called up for even an extra drill.
- (ii) Whilst some members were in camp for 30 days, others were awaiting their call-up and were still attending normal home training parades.
- (iii) Units had not been made up to war strength, but on the other hand some of their men were being placed on the Unit reserve, or transferred to A.I.F., thus upsetting unit.
- (iv) Courses and classes had to be held to replace these losses of officers, N.C.Os. and specialists, before the units could proceed to camp.
- (v) It was not yet definite that the 2nd A.I.F would proceed overseas or be retained as Permanent Forces in Australia.
- (vi) All modern arms, munitions, technical equipment and motor vehicles were being earmarked with 2nd A.I.F. priority.
- (vii) Till 2nd A.I.F requirements were known and fulfilled, planned issues of stores and equipment to units had to be withheld.

As a result, Army and Formation Headquarters, in addition to war administration and training and equipping of formation for service overseas (if required) were carrying on the routine procedure of other formations at peace strength or alternately carrying out 30 days' continuous training and practically peace conditions.

(b) **Provision of Officers**

As a consequence of the transfer of senior officers (shown in A.A.O. 21/1939) at the outbreak of war, the whole of the members of the Military Board, and the senior permanent officers commanding military districts, who had been responsible for planning, coordinating and bringing into operation the changes from peace to war conditions of the Military Forces were changed to new appointments.

The Inspector-General became Chief of the General Staff.

The C.G.S. became G.O.C. Southern Command.

The Adjutant-General became Chairman of the Services Manpower Committee.

The Quartermaster-General and Master-General of the Ordnance became Inspector of Coast and Anti-Aircraft Artillery.

From the Royal Military College, the Commandant became Adjutant-General.

The Military Liaison Officer in London became the Quartermaster-General.

The Deputy Master-General of the Ordnance became Master-General of the Ordnance.

The Commandant, 2nd Military District, became Inspector-General Administration, being succeeded by the Director of Staff Duties from Army Headquarters.

The Commandant, 3rd Military District, became Commander of Fourth Division only, his duties as District and Base Commandant being taken over by Brigadier-General i/c Administration, Southern Command.

The Commandant, 4th Military District, became Brigadier-General administering training camps in New South Wales being succeeded by C.O.R.A.A. of 5th Military District.

The Commandant, 5th Military District, had retired on reaching the retiring age, being succeeded by the Commandant, 6th Military District.

The Commandant, 6th Military District, was succeeded by the Commandant, 7th Military District.

At Army Headquarters the D.M.O. & I became Deputy Chief of the General Staff.

In the Adjutant-General's Branch, the Director of Organization and Personal Services became the Commandant of the 1st Division A.M.F. in Eastern Command.

For the 6th Division A.I.F. and ancillary troops the required senior officers to form the staffs and commanders of a Corps and Divisional Headquarters and commanding officers of units were selected from Militia Formations throughout the Commonwealth.

The promotions, up-grading, and transfers of other officers throughout the Army as a consequence affected all Headquarters and formations and vacancies had to

be filled by promotion of other officers, many inexperienced and command, or in staff work of their new appointments.

Staffs at Formation Headquarters were further increased by employment of Militia officers on full-time duty, but as no assurance could be given of security or length of their private affairs, and replaced by officers perhaps not so suitable, but who were available and desirous of taking on temporary Military employment.

The demand for increased Formation Staffs was rendered more urgent by the fact that in addition to having troops always in camps of training under war conditions, other units at home training required more administration because of the placing of their interior economy on a war footing.

The replacement of officers, NCOs. and men who had volunteered and been accepted for the 2nd A.I.F. also affected Formations and Units, particularly the 3rd Division, Victoria, from which a large number of senior officers were selected for 6th Division and ancillary units.

The expansion of Army headquarters on to a war footing also took many Staff Corps and Militia Staff Officers from Formations as shown by allotment to war appointments of Staff Corps Officers in A.A.O. 300/39.

(c) **The Class A & B Reserves**

The plan for raising, enrolling and organizing Reserves, Classes A and B, proved very effective.

On the outbreak of war, the existence of the plan and the provision of the unit depot staff proved effective, and the inclusion of A Class Reservists into the Citizen Forces was carried out very smoothly.

From Class B the required numbers for Garrison Battalions for full-time service was readily obtained. The Garrison Battalions for full-time service were readily obtained. The Garrison Battalions were organised in accordance with Defence Schemes, and prior to the end of the year 1939 had taken over from the Citizen Forces the guard and garrison duties they were intended to perform.

At the outset, owing to the great demand for Service uniforms from the inadequate Departmental reserve stores, only large sizes of A.I.F. jackets were available, and for a time some members of Garrison Battalions had to appear in singularly ill-fittings garments till augmented supplies of jackets were received from the contractors.

(d) **Defended Ports**

The troops allotted to defended ports were called up in accordance with their Defence schemes, the numbers required for manning tables being replaced from time to time.

(e) **C.M.F. Liability**

The remainder of the Citizen Forces at peace establishment were made liable to be called up for 30 day's continuous training in rotation of units, and arrangements were made to grant leave to men in protected undertakings, or key personnel of munitions works of Army contractors.

(f) **The Introduction of the Command Organization**

As recommended in the report of the Inspector-General (Lieutenant-General Squires) in February, 1939, a command organization was instituted to place all formations and units in each military district under some commander.

The necessary instructions to inaugurate the change were promulgated on the 9th October, 1939, about 5 weeks after the outbreak of war. The net result was that Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia remained unchanged, as in accordance with A.M.R. & O's all units came under the District Commandant on the outbreak of war – that officer in N.S.W. and Victoria being promoted to Lieutenant-General, and in Queensland and Western Australia to the rank of Major-General.

In South Australia and Tasmania the system of command (Mixed Brigade) and organization was unchanged. Direct communication with Army Headquarters was prohibited however, and were to be regarded as integral parts of Southern Command for all purposes.

Notes:	(1)	See M.B.I. 58 of 9 th October. This M.B.I. is self explanatory as to the objects and methods of procedure, whilst diagrams attached illustrate the chain of command, Training and administration.
	(2)	See para 9 of M.B.I. 58

In Victoria, the newly appointed Brigadier-General in charge of Administration had not only to institute the new system of communication, organization and administration in Victoria, but had in addition to act in the former A.H.Q. role in regard to local problems submitted by the Headquarter in South Australia and Tasmania.

(g) **Small Arms Ammunition**

As a consequence of the inroads into War Reserve of S.A.A. during the financially lean years of the depression, the S.A.A. reserve situation at the outbreak of war was a matter of some anxiety, as the arrangements for increased production instituted when additional funds were made available in 1939 had not been able to provide an output commensurate with requirements.

S.A.A. for units called up for 30 days' training and for recruits or the A.I.F. had to be carefully conserved and only expenditure absolutely necessary for musketry proficiency was to be incurred.

Instructions issued at the time show the restrictions made, and the abridged musketry courses for 2nd A.I.F. and Militia Regiments and Battalions. See M.B.I. 62/1939.

(h) **Creation of the Service and Supply Departments**

In November, 1939, the Defence Department which, under the Minister for Defence had previously controlled all services and munitions, was divided and additional separate Ministries of Navy, Army, Air and Supply and Development were created.

The then Minister for Defence became Minister for the Army, whilst the then Chief Finance Officer, in addition to that appointment, became Secretary to the Army Department.

Conclusions

The three major decisions during the years 1929/1939 affecting the strength and efficiency of the Australian Forces, and hence ultimately the preparedness for war, were the suspension of Universal Training in November, 1929, the increase of the Citizen Forces to 35,000 in July, 1936, and the doubling of this strength to 70,000 after Munich, in 1938.

Note: See M.B.I. 62/1939.

On the suspension of Universal Training in 1929, the objective set by the then Prime Minister (Scullin) was "a Defence Force just as adequate or, if necessary, more adequate than that existing" (1). As already pointed out, no worse time could have been selected to inaugurate a voluntary force. The financial depression was approaching a critical stage of wholesale unemployment, funds were very limited for purposes, including training and publicity, and practically the only field from which younger recruits could be drawn was from the former universal trainees to who citizen soldiering was no novelty.

In the worst financial year for the military estimates (1932/33), the year of the Disarmments Conference, the Defence allocation was reduced to £955,400, cuts were made in the permanent forces, and the threat of disbandment (which, however, never actually eventuated), hung over many units - conditions which offered little incentive to prospective Citizen Forces recruits.

In increasing the ceiling to 35,000 in 1936, the then Minister for Defence (The Hon. Archdale Parkhill), commented: "The voluntary system was inaugurated and the efforts for its sound establishment have been carried out under rather adverse conditions. It is evident, and results confirm it, that adequate (financial) provision has not been made". (2). The additional amount provided in estimates (1936/37) to cover this increase was only £420,000, but the onus was thrown very definitely on the Military Board by the Minister for Defence to make a success of the voluntary system, viz:- "The Government having laid down a policy it is for the Army staff to carry it out with the funds provided by the Government.

Given the funds, the responsibility rests on the Army staff... to make the system a success.... It is proposed to place on the Army staff, in very definite terms, the responsibility for exerting every effort to make a success of the voluntary system."(3)

Notes: (1) Report of Inspector-General 1930, para. 11.
(2) & (3) M.B.I. 52/1936, page 2.

Approval to increase the strength of the Forces to 70,000 was promulgated in December, 1938, so that implementation of the proposal to double the strength of the Military Forces and obtain the uniforms, weapons, and technical equipment, and other materials of modern war for which increased funds were being provided, could not begin to operate till well into 1939.

Nevertheless, at the outbreak of war in September, 1939, the impressive results had been attained by the Military Board with the loyal aid of Commanders and Staffs of Formations and units viz:-

Strengths

- (I) A skelton force of 25,000 makes [sic] of average age 20, subject to 6 days camp training annually, had been increased to 70,000 active members with an average age of about 26 and subject to 12 days camp training annually.
- (II) Units in 1929 were at nominal strength below one-third of war establishment, whilst in December, 1939 they were at an actual strength of two-thirds war establishment.

Modernization

- (III) Mechanised organization had been introduced into all units similarly organised in the British Army, and though in many Units the number of Military vehicles was few, training was carried out on effective lines by the hiring of Motor Transport of the type and pattern that was to be requisitioned from the public on mobilisation.
- (IV) Similarly, where modern technical instructors and equipment were available, opportunity had been taken to instruct officers and N.C.Os. so that they in turn could immediately take charge of Unit equipment as it became available, and act as Unit Instructors.

Note: (1) M.B.I. A88/1939.

- (V) Of the Staff Corps, an equivalent of 246 officers had received training abroad for at least one year with the British or Indian Armies; whilst Warrant Officers of the A.I.C. had attended courses overseas in technical duties connected with modern equipment of their arms of the Service.

Permanent Forces

- (VI) **The Staff Corps** had been increased in strength from 277 to 344 officers.
- (VII) **The Instructional Corps** had been increased from 600 Warrant Officers (1930) to 1422.
- (VIII) **Artillery:** One section Field Artillery (horse-drawn) had been increased to one Battery (Mechanised).
Heavy, Mobile and Anti-Aircraft Artillery had been increased in personnel from 534 (1929) to 1427, including a Mobile Force at Darwin, after providing in addition many Non-Commissioned Officers to the A.I.C.
Coastal Fortifications had been increased and heavier armament had been emplaced.
- (IX) **Engineers:** The strength of all branches had been increased from 154 to 512.
- (X) **A.A.S.C.:** From 121 in 1929 had increased to 390 personnel, of which 256 were Supply and Transport (M.T.).
- (XI) **A.A.M.C.:** Increased from 18 other ranks to 34 other ranks.

- (XII) **A.A.O.C.**: No permanent unit existed in 1929, but in 1939 the Corps consisted of 27 officers and 219 other ranks of Ordnance Artificers.
- (XIII) **Survey**: The Survey section, R.A.E. had been increased with consequent larger output of new maps, whilst earlier maps had been checked and necessary corrections made.
- (XIV) In aggregate these changes amounted to a total increase in the Permanent Forces (other than Staff) of 2266.

Militia

- (XV) **Cavalry**: The 19 L.H. Regt., at lower establishment in 1929, had been increased to two-thirds war establishment and included 2 Armoured Car Regiments and 6 Machine Gun Regiments (Mechanised).
- (XVI) **Artillery**: Whilst the number of Units showed no increase, each Unit was doubled in strength, and the Anti-Aircraft Artillery had increased from 1 Battery to the equivalent of 1 Brigade, plus 1 Detachment. The Field Guns and limbers were equipped with rubber tyres, whilst those of Units of the First Line Component were motor drawn.
- (XVII) **Engineers and Signals**: These units had been similarly expanded, and great advancement had been made in equipment, training and procedure. In the Signals, local types of instruments and parts had been developed. The change to mechanisation from horse-drawn equipment had been almost completed.
- (XVIII) **A.A.S.C.**: had been doubled in strength and was entirely mechanized.
- (XIX) **Infantry**: 46 Bns. of youths in 1929 at peace strength had been increased to 57 Bns. of adults at two-thirds of war establishment, whilst in addition 3 Garrison Bns. of ex-servicemen had been organised, and were in being and on duty before December, 1939. (Total 63 Bn).
- (XX) **A.A.M.C.**: Units had been increased by the provision of 3 Garrison Coys. And 2 Casualty Clearing Stations and strengths had also increased. Units of the First Line Component were on a mechanised basis.
- (XXI) **A.A.O.C.**: From 4 Ammunition Coys. In 1929 the A.A.O.C. had been increased to:
4 Command Depot Coys.
3 Command Workshops.

3 Base Workshops.
5 Field Workshops.
2 Base Depots.
2 Base Ordnance Store Coys.
3 Ammunition Coys.
11 Light Aid Detachments.

(XXII) **Army Pay Corps**: A unit had been organised and was in training at each District Base Headquarters.

(XXIII) **Veterinary Corps**: 9 Sections had been increased to 13.

Training Institutions, etc

(XXIV) **R.M.C.**: The Royal Military College had been reestablished at Duntroon, buildings and equipment extended and the output increased from an annual average of 13 in 1938, in December, 1939.

(XXV) The following permanent training institutions had been set up for advanced training of Officers, N.C.Os and specialists of both Permanent and Militia Forces:

Command and Staff School.
A.A.S.C. Training School.
School of Signals.
School of Mechanisation.
Central Training Depot.
School of Anti-Aircraft and Fortress Engineering.
School of Field Engineering.

Buildings

(XXVI) Up to date Barracks had been erected for Permanent troops, and many modern brick drill halls had been built to replace the galvanised iron or wooden drill sheds, which in most cases had been in existence since the inception of Militia.

Defence Works

(XXVII) Modern Defence works had been constructed, armament and equipment installed, extra personnel enlisted and trained at Darwin, Rottneest, Swanbourne, North Head and Maroubra (Sydney), Newcastle, Hobart, Brisbane and Moresby.

Preparedness for War

(XXVIII) The precautionary stage of mobilisation, and the calling out for active service of the Citizen Forces in accordance with the Government policy had been carried out in accordance with previous war planning, whilst a Military area organisation was in being for implementing the calling up of males for war service.

(XXIX) Plans and instructions for partial or full mobilisation had been finalised.

(XXX) Plans for raising the 2nd A.I.F. were ready before the decision of the Government to raise such a force.

(XXXI) Manpower machinery for controlling enlistment into the Services and for conserving skilled and essential personnel for munitions and industry was organised through the Man Power Committee and Man Power officers in conjunction with the Military Area staffs organisation which had been instituted for mobilisation of personnel under D.A. 59 and 60.

(XXXIV) For reasons of brevity, the types, scales and state of equipment have not been included in this report, but it may be said that whatever the Army was lacking in modern Arms and technical equipment was due to two causes, both outside the control of the Military authorities, viz:-

- (a) the strictly limited amounts of money that had been made available to place orders overseas or for manufacture locally
- (b) the fact that supplies of equipment on order from the United Kingdom were withheld for the British Forces and no further orders were accepted for an indefinite period after Munich.

In general, it may be said that by October, 1939, when the strength of the Militia exceeded 70,000, a virile and well organized volunteer force of Australian officers and men had been developed, which the Army authorities of 1939 could justly claim as being "more adequate than that existing in 1939", and it was from this force, that the Commanders, officers and N.C.O.s were drawn for the Headquarters and 6 Division of the 2nd A.I.F.

Special credit also must be given to the strength and stability of the administrative framework that had been built up in the military system, and to the staff officers and clerical staffs who remained in their original appointments and who so ably carried on with routine and advice till the new occupants of senior appointments were assimilated into the full responsibilities of their appointments.

Militia formation and unit commanders, whose depleted units had to be brought up to strength, are also deserving of great credit and it is appropriate here to quote the words of Gilbert Mant in his publication, "You'll be sorry" (1942):-

"It is a great pity that in the public mind the term "Militia" is now synonymous with the called up soldier.

In 1940 we knew the Militia as those who had voluntarily joined up before the war when many of us were not heedful of the march of events in Europe. They persevered with their training in the face of some mockery, while we played tennis and cricket.

To the Militia Officers and N.C.O.s must go the full credit for training the original A.I.F. Divisions – without them we would have been a ragtime Army indeed. They were keen and efficient and nearly all of them transferred to the A.I.F. when war broke out."