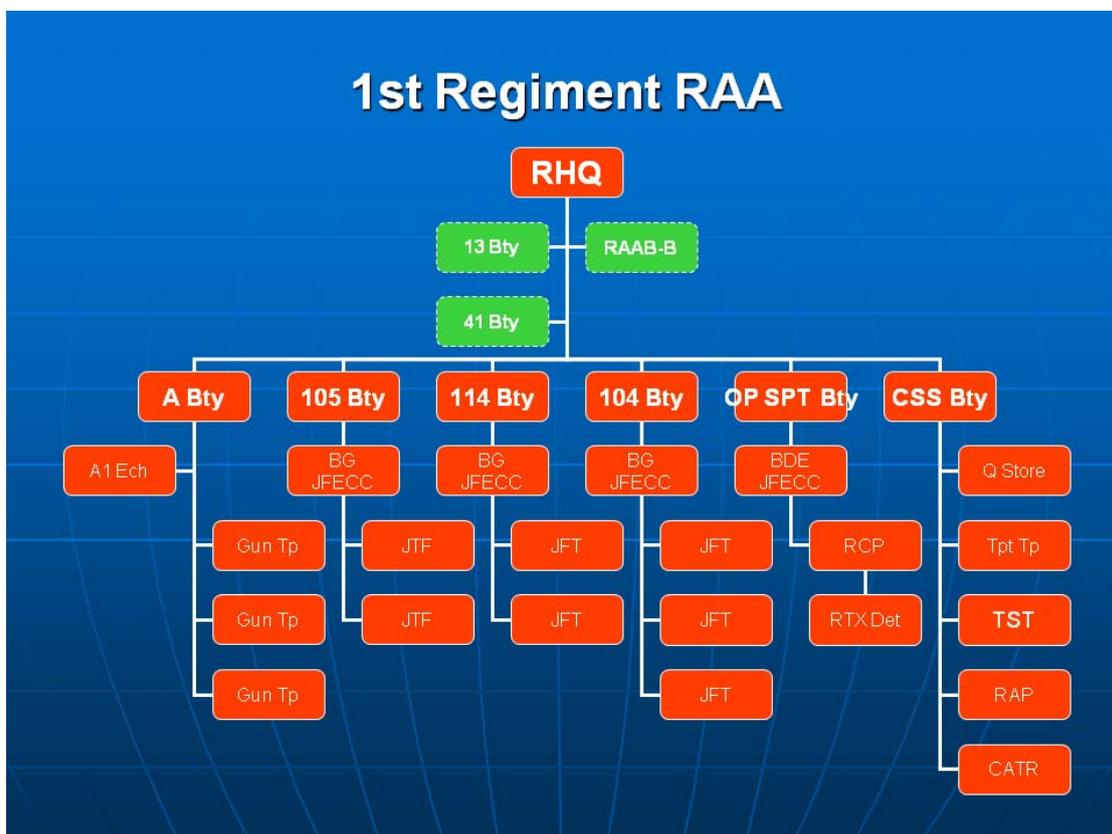


1st Regiment RAA



Reorganisation

The full-time field and medium units of the Royal Australian Artillery are undergoing a most significant reorganisation, probably the most notable since that of 1940 when howitzer batteries were removed and field regiments converted to the British Second World War establishments.

The schematic above shows the outline reorganisation of 1st Regiment (note that descriptors such as ‘field’ and ‘medium’ have now disappeared):

RHQ—remains basically unchanged.

13 & 41 Btys, RAA Band—Army Reserve—unchanged.

A Bty—becomes the gun or delivery battery with all 12 guns in the full-time batteries being brought under command in three troops each of a command post and four guns (deja vu?)

105, 114 & 104 Btys—all to be observation batteries consisting of a battle group joint fires and effects coordination centre (BG JFECC sic BC’s Party) and two or three joint fires teams (JFT sic FO Parties). 104 Bty will be reorganised imminently whilst 114 Bty will not appear till 2013.

Op Spt Bty—Operations Support Battery will combine the former Arty Tac (now brigade joint fires and effects coordination centre, BDE JFECC) and the Regimental Command Post (RCP) which incorporates a retransmission detachment (RTX Det). The former BC HQ Bty (sic OpsO) commands this sub unit.

CSS Bty—Combat Service Support Battery takes all the logistic elements of the unit (Q Store, Transport, Technical Support Troop [sic LAD], RAP and Catering) and places them under command of a non artillery major.

The concept of operations in Afghanistan has been the determinant for this organisation. Guns are deployed in small groups (one, two, three or four) whilst there is a high demand for more battlegroup and combat group RAA liaison parties than the current organisation can provide. All calls for fire are directed to the RCP.

When digital sights for the guns are procured, it is envisaged that the troop command posts will revert to control posts whilst the actual firing data will be transmitted direct from the RCP to each gun platform.

Now, don’t begin saying, ‘But what if they have to fight in a jungle environment in direct support of an infantry battalion?’ because the reply is, ‘Well, we’ll just change the organisation again.’ Think back to the late 1950s when the Korea establishments were thrown into Malaya. That’s correct, the RAA changed from two troops of four guns to a battery of six guns which had the capability to divide into two x three gun sections. This became known as the Tropical Warfare establishment which has remained until now.

Whilst this is, perhaps, a mind-blowing exercise for some old Gunners to come to grips with, accept the change until the wheel turns again.

However, the rather sad part of this whole reorganisation is that, for the first time in its life (which extends back to 1916), the 105th Battery will not have guns on its equipment table. Does this make the battery a toothless tiger? Perhaps readers would like to provide their thoughts on this one.

Arthur Burke