
KEI MUA I TE AROARO O TE RŌPŪ WHAKAMANA
I TE TIRITI O WAITANGI

BEFORE THE WAITANGI TRIBUNAL

WAI 2180

IN THE MATTER OF the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975

AND

IN THE MATTER OF THE TAIHAPE: RANGITĪKEI KI
RANGIPŌ DISTRICT INQUIRY

BRIEF OF EVIDENCE OF MAJOR PATRICK HIBBS

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Introduction

1. My name is Major Patrick Hibbs. I provide this brief of evidence on behalf of the New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) and I am authorised to do so.
2. I am a Major in the New Zealand Defence Force. I joined the Army in 1968 as a Regular Force Cadet and trained in Waiouru as an Infantry Instructor. On graduating I was posted to Burnham and spent time doing my Corps Training with the soldiers of Victor 6 who were subsequently posted to South Vietnam. Because of my age I did not accompany them and instead was posted to the National Service Training Unit as an instructor. On my return to the battalion I was promoted to Corporal and trained as an Assault Pioneer. In November of 1972 I was posted to 1 RNZIR Singapore and served there for two and a half years. On my return I was selected for Officer Training and was commissioned 6 December 1975. I remained at the Officer Cadet Training Unit as an instructor until being posted back to 2/1RNZIR in Burnham. In May 1978 I was again posted to Singapore and served for a year initially as a rifle platoon commander before becoming the mortar platoon commander.
3. On posting back to New Zealand, I was promoted to Captain and served as Adjutant in both 2 Cant NMWC and 2/1 RNZIR before being posted back to Waiouru where I served as the Senior Instructor Fieldcraft and as the first Officer Commanding of the newly established Corp of Officer Cadets. In 1985 I was promoted Major and returned to 2/1 RNZIR in Burnham and served there until being selected for Staff College in Whenuapai. On my return from Staff College I applied to remain in the South Island however was told my career plot was either six years in Wellington, or nine in Auckland. I chose to retire and took my release 30 April 1989.
4. In 2001 I re-enlisted and accepted a posting back to Waiouru as an Instructor with effect from 30 July. I remained in Waiouru until being appointed as the Senior National Officer Peace Monitoring Group Bougainville in March 2002. On my return to New Zealand, I served in various roles in Waiouru including Chief of Staff, Commanding Officer of the Army Depot and Senior Instructor NCO Company before being posted to Malaysia as an Instructor at their Tactics School. I was appointed as the Chief Instructor at the Officer Cadet School being posted to the Multinational Force and Observers in Sinai, Egypt,

where I served as the Senior National Officer and Deputy Chief of Operations for 12 months until December 2008 when I was again posted back to Waiouru. Since that time I have served as Chief of Staff, Operations Officer and for the last six years as Commandant of the Waiouru Military Training Facility. My entire military service has been either involved in training or command with around 20 years in Waiouru.

5. In my current role as Commandant I am responsible for the running of the base, support to the community and control of the Waiouru Military Training Area. I have under my command Range Control, the Army Marae, Hobby Hut and Community Services. My headquarters consists of only four persons.
6. Externally, I operate as the liaison officer for the NZDF with Ruapehu District Council, Police and Iwi. Additionally I hold the appointment as Rural District Fire Officer.
7. Broadly, this evidence addresses my role, the use of the Waiouru Military Training Area (WMTA), and how I interact on behalf of NZDF with all external groups to the Army, including Iwi.

Use of the training ground by NZDF

8. The WMTA comprises some 63,000 hectares and is located on both sides of the Desert Road (see map attached as **Exhibit PH1**). From my understanding the area has been used by Army since 1913 when the Territorials' fired artillery in the general area of what is now the Desert Road. In 1936, land was acquired and an Artillery Range gazetted. The outbreak of WW2 in 1939 saw the construction of a camp capable of housing 7,000 soldiers and much of the basic layout and some buildings remain.
9. Over the decades that followed the camp numbers increased and decreased as the Army went through its many forms. Compulsory Military Training, the move of the Army Schools from Trentham, the introduction of National Service, and the progressive move of the Schools back to cities has now resulted in a camp where only two major units remain; these being the Army Depot and Army Command School. These two units conduct all *ab initio* training for the new recruits and officer cadets for both regular and territorial force. A number of promotion courses are also conducted by these units.

Recent studies conducted have revealed that these units make up approximately 15% of the total use of Waiouru facilities and the WMTA. The largest users are the many small courses and exercises that come to make use of the ranges, roads and field firing opportunities afforded by the WMTA.

10. Over the years of my involvement in training there have been a number of different concepts proposed for the structure and manning of Waiouru. These have mostly been aimed at providing a better social environment for the families of service people. That is, live near a major population centre and travel to Waiouru to train. As a result the number of permanent uniformed personnel in Waiouru has dropped and the number of civilian contractors has increased. Anecdotal evidence would suggest that for every soldier out we gain 1.5 civilians in. As previously mentioned, if all standing units were withdrawn the actual training area use would hardly be affected. Year on year we are seeing an increased use by all units. Additionally, other government departments, NZ Police, USAR and the Youth Development Unit are only too willing to take up any slack left. Unfortunately for us the residents, this has invariably increased weekend work and in our attempts to satisfy NZ Inc we now have very limited opportunity to completely close the base down.
11. The concept of who and how the WMTA is used by has been the subject of many papers and proposals. The only constant among them all is the importance they individually placed on the WMTA. Most of the proposals have indicated a draw-down of the number of units and personnel permanently based in Waiouru and have favoured the development of the base as a field training camp. In the years since the draw-down commenced we have observed a corresponding increase in the number of civilian contractors needed to keep the place running. Long term planning continues to propose the move of one of the remaining units to Burnham or other alternate locations. At the time of writing this statement, the dates for such a move have become more distant and remain unfunded. Very recent discussions have looked towards maintaining the status quo for a considerable time yet.

Description of the WMTA

12. The current form of the WMTA has 24 training zones and three access zones. There are five templated small arms ranges, a grenade range, anti-armoured

range and the moving target range for Light Armoured Vehicles. The Urban Container village off the Tarn Track provides the opportunity to practise those skills that focus on urban operations. It was completed approximately six years ago and consists of single, two- and three-story structures in a variety of configurations. Other facilities include two satellite camps with cooking and ablution facilities for approximately 1000 personnel, a 1000 metre sealed airfield (currently deregistered) and a heliport with refuelling facilities. This is in addition to the combination of barracks and messes in camp that provide for approximately 1400.

13. The WMTA has varied terrain and sits between 700 metres and 1483 metres above sea level. To the west of the Desert Road lies Te One Tapu or in Army speak Zone One. It is a shifting sand volcanic desert and provides an extensive area to manoeuvre and live fire. It has many benefits not the least being sparse vegetation which limits the spread of fire. Immediately adjacent to the Desert Road is the safe air corridor which consists of a one kilometre strip on both sides allowing transit for light aircraft as the WMTA routinely includes the airspace to 13,000 feet above mean sea level. This can be adjusted upwards if necessary to allow for high angle firing of artillery. To the east of the Desert Road lies the majority of the training area extending back some twenty kilometres to the Rangitikei River. The ground cover is varied with red tussock and sub alpine mountain beech forests along ridges. As you transit east the ground becomes quite boggy and vehicle movement is restricted to ridge lines. Lake Moawhango and Zone 20, the closed impact area are the dominant features. The altitude rises as you move eastward to the highest point being Three Kings at 1483 metres.
14. There are approximately 100 kilometres of formed roads and 360 kilometres of tracks, often referred to as tank tracks. Many of these were formed as a result of movement by tanks and armoured personnel carriers during the period following the Second World War as New Zealand had retained a considerable inventory of vehicles post war. The APC's remained in service until the introduction of the LAV in early 2000.
15. In the late 60s and early 70s the use of some parts of the area was restricted by the lack of a roading system, the development of which commenced in 1968

and culminated in 1986. On completion of the Argo Road we were provided with reliable access to the eastern zones. Prior to this access was either by APC or RNZAF Iroquois helicopters. Even with the road in place the extreme east of the WMTA is very much dependent on favourable weather to provide effective training opportunities and is often closed in winter through snow. This places increased importance on those areas of the WMTA that lie at lower altitude.

16. I have included usage figures for the WMTA for the period 2011-2017. The averages range from 61.64% for Zone 7 to 99.45% for Zone 15. The wide variation reflects the restrictive covenants placed on Zone 7 because of the presence of 16 of New Zealand's more endangered plants as opposed to Zone 15, which is very close to camp and easily accessed.
17. The permitted use of each Zone is laid down in Range Standing Orders to consider proximity to SH1, the Safe Air Corridor or proximity to facilities. An example of this would be the restricted access around Waiu Pa to protect the cultural and historic nature of the site. To reinforce the importance of the site we recently replaced the improvised fence with a purpose-built five strand fence.
18. Live firing has and is permitted in the majority of zones however there are restrictions on the types of weapon systems and ammunition that may be fired in order to mitigate the danger posed by unexploded ammunition if the area is subsequently to be traversed by troops.
19. Zone 1, the Desert, and Zone 20 (previously Zone 11) are two zones where nearly all ammunition types, including aerial delivered munitions are permitted. Zone 1 is very sparsely covered and provides relatively good observation which in turn allows the maximum opportunity to locate unexploded ammunition. Zone 20, the extension of the old Zone 11 is designated a Closed Impact Area. Entry to this area is restricted to daylight movement on the tracks and generally only Ammunition Technicians and Range Control enter the Zone. Our concentrating of much of the high explosive and incendiary munitions into this area has meant that it is routinely subject to small fires which are allowed to burn out and so keep available fuel to a minimum.

20. Our use of the WMTA over the 50 years in which I have served has changed dramatically with the extension of the roading system, the methodical recording and destruction of unexploded ammunition and the introduction of land management practices. Purpose Built Ranges have been relocated, and others have been built to allow training on new capabilities, a prime example being the LAV. This vehicle features a stabilised cannon that allows it to fire on the move and in order to practise this Russell Range was built in Paradise Valley. If you were to compare this with the static firing points mostly employed with the Centurion, Walker Bulldog and Scorpion the increase in the size and scale becomes obvious. The LAV is extremely agile and can travel at 110 kph covering much of the WMTA in very quick order.

Importance of the WMTA

21. As one who has spent approximately 20 years of his life in Waiouru being trained and training others, this place is like no other I am aware of. Other armies have access to larger areas, colder areas, hotter areas and desert however none have all these conditions in the same area. I have had the honour and good fortune to experience all these conditions and often in the same day. The range of terrain and climatic conditions experienced in Waiouru can make a very simple task of moving between locations a major leadership task and at times a survival exercise.
22. Our ability to train all corps and branches in the same location often at the same time provides us with a training area second to none. We are able to use the more benign areas for introductory training, eg driving over the land adjacent to SH1, and then with very little delay face the driver with extreme conditions. Training that once involved digging and occupying ground now is more likely to involve manoeuvre to avoid contact with a superior force until the conditions suit. Waiouru is able to provide all this for us.
23. When our troops were training for their deployment to Afghanistan, Waiouru was able to provide similar scale and conditions as that experienced on the deployment. Helwan satellite camp was their home base, one unit was deployed to the base of Mount Ruapehu, the second to Three Kings whilst the third unit was based at Roy's Hill near Napier. The distance between the units provided them with the opportunity to come to grips with the problems of

supporting one another and helped prepare them for the isolation of their bases in Afghanistan.

24. The fact that the WMTA enjoys a Defence designation allows us the freedom to exploit to the fullest extent the training opportunities offered by this amazing location. We, the trainers, in conjunction with the land managers exploit to the fullest the training opportunities offered by Waiouru. To quote an old motto, "It is the land that teaches".
25. At a higher level WMTA provides training opportunities for New Zealand's allies. Since 1997 the Singapore Armed Forces (SAF) has been coming to Waiouru to fire their 155 mm artillery. The WMTA is only slightly smaller than Singapore itself, and it provides the SAF with an opportunity to exercise their conscripts in a confirmatory exercise. In conversation with the SAF I have been informed that this is the best training area they have access to. They currently exercise and fire in India, Thailand, Australia and Taiwan. Waiouru is the only area that allows manoeuvre and provides such a variety of terrain in a relatively compact area.
26. Their deployment to New Zealand is during our down period when we try and reduce activity to celebrate Christmas and New Year and has ensured there is really no period when the training area is not used. The SAF are the only forces that use Waiouru as a stand-alone exercise. Other nation's soldiers come but only as part of a New Zealand conducted exercise.

Live firing safety

27. As part of the planned and progressive training of soldiers we routinely use live ammunition and explosives. There are two prime areas where this occurs. The first is on a purpose-built range and generally follows set formats and practices. The safety rules are prescriptive and contained in a Range Specific Standing Order. The danger areas associated with these ranges have in recent years been overlaid on the attached map, marked **Exhibit PH2**.
28. On other occasions live ammunition and explosives are used in a field environment. This may or may not involve manoeuvre by personnel or vehicles. In order that this training is carried out safely by the troops directly involved and other users of the training area and adjoining landowners all live

firing training is planned using weapon specific templates. A map showing firing templates is attached and marked **Exhibit PH3**.

29. The templates have allowances built-in to accommodate ricochet, explosive content and if the participants in the training are moving or stationary. Additional restrictions are also applied if the templates approach boundaries be they internal between zones or external with our neighbours. As we have adopted tactics and procedures appropriate to new equipment and contemporary operations we have increasingly used manoeuvre in live firing exercises.

Blinds

30. The progressive and ongoing recording and destruction of blinds (unexploded ammunition) is vital to the conduct of safe training. Accurate record keeping of the type and location of blinds and their collation into an accessible data base has only become possible with the use of computing. Despite knowing where many of the more modern blinds are, in general terms, we remain very aware of the legacy issues involved with training and firing since approximately 1913. In particular, the period from the gazetting of the Artillery Range in 1936, through the years of the Second World War 1939-45, the post war years when we still had a much larger inventory of armoured vehicles and Artillery. Bottom line, one must be prepared for the presence and location of historical blinds.
31. As blinds are located, they are destroyed. They can be unearthed as a result of weather action or found by troops exercising. Under current regulations troops must record all live firing and report all blinds. The exercising unit is expected to attempt to locate and mark all blinds for destruction. Most units have Blinds Trained personnel or they will access the technical expertise of the Ammunition Technicians to destroy blinds. If the blind cannot be located then a formal report is lodged with Range Control and the location and type of blind entered into our data base. Areas of high concentration of blinds, such as the Anti Armoured Range, are cleared annually as part of the training cycle of the Ammunition Technicians.

32. A current record of known blinds and their general location is attached and marked as **Exhibit PH4**.

NZDF relationship with tangata whenua

33. In Waiouru, the Commander Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) is the senior military person and holds the appointment as Commander Waiouru Defence Area. As such they are responsible for all activities that may involve NZDF. This is in addition to being responsible for the delivery of individual training for the New Zealand Army. In December 2011, my appointment was established and I was delegated the responsibility of day to day contact with all local external groups. It is in this capacity that I have developed my relationships with respective Iwi. It is fair to say this has been an ongoing process of learning for all of us.
34. Files from the 1980's and '90's show NZ Army efforts to identify Iwi. A memo from that era describes the Waiouru lands as being under the mana of Ngāti Tuwharetoa and is attached and marked as **Exhibit PH5**. That understanding has changed in the decades since with Ngāti Tamakopiri and Ngāti Whitikaupeka recovering earlier knowledge and through working with Ngāti Rangi.
35. In my early days in this role the contact would involve ceremonial activities on our Marae or granting access to the WMTA. The depth and frequency of these contacts has tended to reflect where the respective Iwi are with their internal structures and within the Waitangi Claims and settlement process.
36. Ngāti Tuwharetoa by virtue of their size and location have done much of their dealings at a high level directly with Wellington and much of my contact has been with specific liaison people, however I was honoured to be invited to the signing of their Deed of Settlement in early 2018. I also facilitated a meeting between Colonel Karyn Thompson and Sir Tumu Te Heuheu on Colonel Thompson assuming command. These changes of command occur every two years and have been a major reason why the Commanders have been unable to develop in-depth and enduring relationships and served as a major catalyst in the establishment of my role.

37. Approximately five years ago we were invited by Ngāti Rangi to take part in discussions to come up with a meaningful structure to facilitate the betterment of our local people. As a result the Ruapehu Whanau Transformation (RWT) Plan was launched. The focus is on the economic, social, health, education and spirit of the communities of Waiouru, Ohakune and Raetihi. The horse power for this has been provided by Ngāti Rangi and this has led to marked improvement in communication and contact between the three communities. During the recent negotiations for the Ngāti Rangi settlement the fact we knew and understood one another made for rapid progress and practical protection for their wishes in relation to wāhi tapu. It also was an excellent starting point to increase my understanding of the cultural importance of the WMTA to mana whenua (and therefore what I'm able to entrench into the Army knowledge base for the land). As a result, I believe during these discussions we moved very quickly to reach solutions and processes to ensure access and protection for mana whenua to wāhi tapu.
38. Contact with Ngāti Rangi has become a way of doing business and is two way. As neighbours we provide support to one another for community activities etc. My/our relationship with Ngāti Tuwharetoa has been a little less intimate as they tend to work directly to Wellington and are just that little further away to the north.
39. I have tried to foster better communication with the people of Ngāti Tamakōpiri and Ngāti Whitikaupeka however I don't believe we have had the same success yet, possibly due to having different points of contact depending on context and due to the groups themselves developing. In some cases this has been via ex-servicemen or the offices of Mokai Patea. I hope that as our understanding of Iwi concerns at a local level has developed we have become more open to approaches for access to mana whenua and that we'll continue to do so.
40. As the local contact for Defence I have become aware of a degree of frustration with local people who are critical of the apparent lack of support from within Defence for the needs of Waiouru. The downsizing of the permanent uniformed population on the base and the gradual decline in the standard of facilities being some of their concerns.

41. Defence is developing a new plan for Waiouru which will see infrastructure being replaced and training facilities improved and expanded. Where once there was a Colonel as the Commander of Waiouru there is now an old Major as their point of contact. I have attempted to explain these changes as the Colonel's role is for the provision of Individual Training across Army. As the senior officer on base they are responsible all Defence activities however the domestic running of the base and training area is my responsibility. This has no doubt caused some angst as it might appear that we are forgetting Waiouru. The opposite is the case.
42. I have been allowed to stay in my current role for seven years and in associated roles in Waiouru for approximately a further eight. This has provided a degree of continuity in the development of relationships and the protection of facilities vital for community support. Ownership of the base and its facilities rests with Defence Estate and Infrastructure, headquartered in Wellington whilst operational command is from the Land Component Commander also in Wellington. If people need decisions relating to Waiouru then there was and is a need to defer the decision to the appropriate authority in Wellington. This can and has caused frustration as delays will invariably occur whilst intradepartmental consultation occurs.
43. To provide a recent example, the last Commander, Colonel Karyn Thompson, on assuming command made a number of liaison visits to Iwi and local bodies. The questions raised in these visits went through the respective command chains and ended with Defence Estate and Infrastructure who are the organisation in Defence primarily responsible for Treaty Claims and negotiations. Colonel Karyn Thompson has since been posted, we have a new Commander, Colonel James Kaio, and discussions with Taihape Māori are only in their early stages. Local contact is unfortunately restricted to those matters where command and responsibility rest in Waiouru.
44. Many of the activities which occur on the National Army Marae, Rongomaraeroa-o-Nga-Hau e Wha, whilst they are of a ceremonial nature to us, they are now used to acknowledge mana whenua. As this understanding deepens I am hopeful that it will help form a base for tangible developments. Regular and ongoing contact with Iwi has increased in recent times most

probably because of an increase in our local understanding as a result of being part of the Treaty Negotiations and settlement with Ngāti Rangi and to a lesser extent Ngāti Tuwharetoa and the Mokai Patea Iwi.

45. The relatively recent celebration by Army of the 20th Anniversary of the establishment of Ngāti Tumatauenga in 2015 provided an opportunity to see if the dreams and aspirations of those responsible for its birth were accomplished. It was during these celebrations, whilst in conversation with those present at the time of the Marae establishment, that we were reminded of the support received from Ngāti Rangi, Ngāti Tuwharetoa, and from Mokai Patea. It became very obvious that whilst tremendous progress had been made we still have a long way to go in understanding the nuances and responsibility of our status and our responsibilities to mana whenua.
46. A practical demonstration of the progress made is the discussions that the Army had with Ngāti Rangi in relation to wāhi tapu. Once sites are identified it is a relatively simple task to have them identified in the WMTA Standing Orders. Acknowledgement of their significance and restrictions on access, if appropriate, are included and are read by all who use the relevant zones.
47. My contact with respective Iwi has not been as good as we may have respectively wanted. For my part, I have attempted to foster relationships in an open and transparent manner, however I have been hampered by a lack of knowledge on who may or may not be representative of the Iwi concerned. I would like to think that despite that I have treated all requests for access as legitimate and cannot recall ever refusing a request for access or at the least proposing an alternative date if the zone was booked for live firing.
48. Having been involved in the negotiation of the settlement with Ngāti Rangi, I have become far more aware of the need to consult and advise each other so that misunderstandings are avoided. We now acknowledge mana whenua on every occasion and where appropriate invite attendance on the paepae. I acknowledge there's plenty more room to develop a more deeply integrated relationship. The good thing is that we're all in this for the long haul.

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Further uses of the training ground

49. As above, I have attempted to be as transparent and favourably reactive to Iwi requests for access to the WMTA. I'll now discuss further uses of the training ground (including some that touch on Iwi recreational access issues).
50. In my time in Waiouru I have inherited a number of third party access agreements and I have sought to rationalise them. Possibly the most contentious would be the granting of landing rights to helicopter companies along the Rangitikei River. This had initially been extended to two companies however we became aware of quite extensive illegal activity by a number of companies who over flew Army land and dropped both hunters and fishermen onto our boundary. These activities, especially that of dropping hunters, posed a significant safety risk. Concurrently we were being lobbied by Fish and Game to allow fishermen access to the Rangitikei as the previous arrangement had left two helicopter companies with a monopoly. Iwi were also concerned about trespassing and the appearance of prioritised access. Finally, we decided to adopt a controlled approach to limit the guides and companies to people who underwent blinds training, advised us of their wish to fish and who agreed not to drop in hunters. From our perspective we now know who is in the area, we know that they are not dropping in hunters and the guides ensure their clients do not leave the river banks. There is no licencing fee, nor financial gain to Defence.
51. The use of the WMTA for recreational uses has expanded in recent years. This has largely been as a result of the creation of the Off-Limits Trust. The Trust describes itself as: "a charitable trust which raises funds for present and past members of the New Zealand Defence Force. The Trust assists members of the defence community, individually and in groups to participate in sport, further education, health and welfare. We are not a commercial organisation."
52. The Trust has been permitted to operate during periods of lower activity, with the exception of Tussock Buster, which is held each year shortly before Easter. The arrangement with them was initially quite fluid however there is now a clear legal agreement in place. They are limited to six weekends a year and conduct a variety of activities mostly focussed on traversing the WMTA by a variety of means: motorcycles, quads, four-wheel drives, mountain bikes and

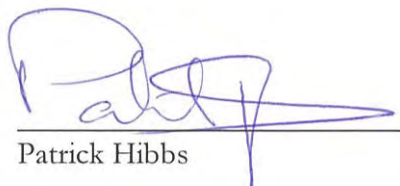
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horses. The funds accumulated from these activities have been used for community support, kindergarten, school, youth group and School Cadets. Some of the funding for the New Zealand veteran's involvement in the Invictus Games came from Off Limits.

53. Many of the people who act as guides on these activities are either currently serving or ex-service people. They see it as a way of supporting their communities.
54. Access to areas within the WMTA for recreational activities continues to be restricted in the main to personnel who work for Defence. This includes our contractors. They receive training in the recognition of unexploded ammunition and in the procedures related to control of entry. They must sign in and out and are responsible for all members of their party. Access to Lake Moawhango is at the lowest level whilst hunting access requires attendance at a Mountain Safety Council course and to be in possession of a First Aid Certificate. They are only granted access if it does not clash with training. Formal training has been provided for nominated members of Ngāti Rangī in order for them to escort rangitahi groups on educational hīkoi.
55. Recreational hunting is sufficient to control the deer with results being recorded and included in environmental control figures. With respect to other pests, the land managers have in recent years provided advice and overseen the contracts that control the pests, both plant and animal. We have a program in place to control *Pinus contorta* (wilding pine), gorse, legumes, hares, rabbits, opossums and pigs.
56. In trying to maintain the integrity of the WMTA it has been important to know exactly who is in the area and when they have left. It is imperative that all personnel in the area are aware of the dangers that exist or are under the active control of someone who does. All the tracks that are used by the motorcycles for example are swept by trained personnel. Whilst the events are being conducted constant checks are made by Range Control Staff, Military Police and Duty staff to ensure compliance.
57. Unrestricted access to Lake Moawhango unfortunately provides access to a very large portion of the training area and this is a risk that we have not been

able to ignore. The Moawhango lakebed itself is unfortunately home to a variety of unexploded shells and grenade cases. As the lake level rises and falls we routinely discover these and once identified are either destroyed *in situ* or removed if deemed safe. I was provided a photograph of the planned destruction of a quantity of grenades back in the late 1950's early '60's that unfortunately resulted in a number of them being spread around what is now the lake floor/shore. Whilst many were recovered and subsequently destroyed many still remain. During a recent period of very low lake levels I discovered what I believe to be the demolition site which is only 150 metres from the slipway into the lake.

58. Some three or four years ago I granted access for a trial of bee hives in the area of the Argo Valley. There was no licence issued nor was Defence paid for access. I was subsequently instructed to have the hives removed and have done so.
59. A very small area of the WMTA remains under grazing licences. These areas are, in the main, adjacent to the camp, satellite camps or airfield. The farming (grazing) of these areas ensures that growth is controlled, providing a reduced fire risk and allows for safe areas to introduce soldiers to night navigation, practise drills and generally operate in a very benign environment. The area adjacent the Desert Road is known locally as the "kiddy paddocks" and provides for the introduction to off road driving by day and by night. This area is used by both armoured and non-armoured vehicles and provides an area with few obstacles, slopes which provide progressively more challenging angles yet allow for effective control and supervision by the instructors. It is also the go to area, close to camp to practise deployment drills by logistical units whilst using the satellite camps.



Patrick Hibbs