



Royal Australian Armoured Corps
School of Armour
Hopkins Barracks, Puckapunyal VIC 3662

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To the Soldiers and Officers of the RAAC, past and present,

I am writing to introduce myself to you as the new Head of Corps and to outline what I see are the key challenges and priorities for the Corps to seek your support in moving forward. It is a privilege to be taking over from Brigadier Mark Brewer as Head of Corps and I would like to extend my thanks to Mark and all members of the Corps for their outstanding achievements over recent years.

Our Corps proudly draws its lineage from the Light Horse units that predate federation. Our soldiers and officers have fought as either formed bodies or individual detachments in all major conflicts, from the Sudan to modern day. Their achievements are the basis of legends. As a Corps, we must embrace our history to ensure it both inspires and unites us as a family! It is more than a Regiment or unit, but a professional body of ALL like-minded and experienced souls.

To the current serving members of the Corps, our history challenges us to walk in the footsteps of giants, to build on the successes of those that have gone before, and to leave an inheritance to those that will follow. Importantly, over the next two years, we will commemorate the 100th anniversaries of the battles of Beersheba and Hamel. This will provide us an opportunity to both commemorate and celebrate the Corps' achievements and I expect the Warrant Officers of our Corps will take a leading role in the success of these activities.

The Chief of Army has four key priorities: support to operations; support to our wounded, injured and ill; modernisation; and cultural reform and diversity. For our Corps, support to operations is about ensuring that at all levels we are acknowledged across Army as being brilliant at the basics; masters of mounted combat and better than those who would choose to be our enemies. We will know we are successful when our capabilities and advice are fought for, both here and abroad. I will be keen to hear from our Corps Command Teams at next years Corps Conference as to what steps we are taking to realise this outcome.

In terms of support to our wounded, injured and ill, I expect all leaders, from trooper up, to take an active role in supporting those currently recovering while helping to protect those unaffected. We have come along way in recent years in terms of the support provided, preventative training being conducted, and our mindset. But, I am sure all would agree, there is more we could and should do.

This year the Chief of Army formally declared to the rest of Defence what we have known for some time, the ASLAV and M113, despite many decades of exemplary service, are now no longer capable of deploying to medium and high threat environments. At the same time, we have seen the two L400 Phase 2 Cavalry Reconnaissance Vehicle (CRV) contenders deliver vehicles to Australia and soldiers from the School of Armour are now putting these vehicles thought their paces. In time, we will have one of the worlds best CRVs. Over the same time we will be upgrading our M1 tank fleet to ensure our tanks remain the vanguard of Army's mounted close combat capability and will be seeking more from our Part Time force. As such, I would like our Reserve Unit Command Teams to develop options on how we can bring the full and part time elements of the Corps closer together. These are exciting times, but to

ensure we maximise the opportunities on offer we need to approach our future with a mindset of being open to change, the way we have done things in the past will not necessarily be the best way to do things in the future.

Finally, cultural change and diversity, I expect all members of the Corps will continue to hold themselves and those around them to account for living up to Army's values. At the same time, we all need to continue to work toward increasing the diversity in our Corps, whether that is gender, race, creed or other beliefs. Doing so will make us a stronger more agile force for the future.

To those of you on operations, thank you for what you are doing. For those closer to home, I hope you get to take a well-earned break over the festive season. And to all, stay safe and good soldiering.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Mills', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Chris Mills
Brigadier
Head of Corps

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