

Defence 2020

Operation **SLIPPER**

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Operation SLIPPER

Introduction

What is Operation SLIPPER?

In October, 2001 a month after the terrorist attacks on the world trade centres, Prime Minister John Howard announced that the Australian Defence force will contribute to the war on terror. This operation is known as Operation SLIPPER. Under this operation our Australian soldiers contribute to the efforts of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) led by the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan to prevent Afghanistan becoming a safe haven for international terrorism. Australia's contribution to the international coalition against terrorism is an important component of the Australian Government's commitment to working together with the international community to help prevent acts of terrorism around the world.

This Operation is very important for Afghanistan and countries who are trying to put a halt to terrorism and to prevent another attack similar to September 11.

Australia has about 1550 soldiers serving and representing our country in Afghanistan in different roles from medics, to engineers to the Special Forces and are mainly based in the Oruzgan province and Kandahar. There are another 830 troop's spread around the Middle East to support Operation SLIPPER.

Australian soldiers are doing a range of different things to support Afghanistan along with a lot of other countries like -

- Training the Afghan army
- Supporting the Government
- Building schools, roads and bridges, etc
- Supplying basic medic support like vaccines
- Humanitarian Aid
- They provide security against the Taliban – (which is a group of local insurgents who cause trouble to the people of Afghanistan and they are also a terrorist group) and against Al – Qaeda (an international terrorism group.)

But most important they are making Afghanistan feel like a country.

Good Citizenship in a democratic country like Australia requires that the individual:

- Believes in democratic security.
- Has a sense of civic duty at home at home and abroad
- Will take risks to support their beliefs
- Make sacrifices for their country

Currently 11 Australian soldiers have died serving Australia and fighting for peace in Afghanistan. This proves how dangerous peacekeeping is putting your life on the line to restore peace in Afghanistan. I believe they are doing a wonderful job and as John Howard said while saying goodbye to the Special Forces “They will represent all Australians”. I think that line sums it up because how the Australian soldiers act

reflects the Australian public as a whole. It is important that the Australian soldier demonstrates the qualities and characteristics that are valued by our public and inform the choices we make as a country for our citizenry.

I believe that Australian soldiers are responsible citizens because:

- they give people security like they are in Afghanistan.
 - they give hope to people who have none.
 - they support countries like Timor and the Solomon islands where civil wars has torn the country apart.
 - they put their own lives on the line to in restore peace.
 - they sacrifice their own families to go away and help countries who need peacekeeping.
 - they rebuild villages, roads etc which have been destroyed.
- They should be role models to everyone.

Values of an Australian Soldier:

Courage is more than facing the physical dangers of battle; it is doing what is right and fair with a sense of duty and compassion. It is built on an ethos of protecting the nation and service before self.

Initiative is the ability to achieve the mission by exploiting opportunity, often in the absence of orders and improvising to make the most of the equipment and resources.

Teamwork is based on equality, trust, tolerance and friendship, which is essential to achieving the mission. Teamwork is the product of sound leadership at all levels, individual competence, trust and training.

Why are these important?

These values correspond to good citizenship. Soldiers when demonstrate these values will demonstrate good citizenship.

Australian Defence Medal

This medal is given to each soldier after 4 year serving the Australian defence force. The Australian Defence Medal (ADM) has been established to recognise Australian Defence Force Regular and Reserve personnel who have demonstrated their commitment and contribution to the nation by serving for an initial enlistment period or four years service whichever is the lesser. This Medal brings all the ADF together and connects the values to each other.

I am an Australian soldier medallion

This medallion acknowledges their services while reminding of what that services means also this medallion also reminds them of the army values and traditions and their responsibilities.



ASM

Citizenship, service and sacrifice are acknowledged with the ASM. ASM medal is awarded to every soldier for their service; The ASM is a nickel-silver medal with a modified Shield of the Australian Coat of Arms surmounted by the Defence Force Joint Service Emblem super-imposed on a background of the meridians of longitude on the obverse. The reverse has clusters of mimosa blossoms surrounding a Federation Star bearing the inscription 'FOR SERVICE'. Green and gold on the ribbon symbolise the Australian bush and the small bit of brown symbolise the earth of Australia. This medal is given to everyone who has served Australia in deployments of three months or longer.

Profile of a Peacekeeper who served on Operation Slipper 2008:

Interview with: CPL John Edward Croydon (8484793).

CPL John Edward Croydon served in a peacekeeping role in Afghanistan for 8 months in 2008. He is a father of two children Sam (6) and Olivia (4). He has been in the Australian Army since 2004 as a Operator Command Support Systems (Geek). His previous service overseas includes a deployment to East Timor in 2006. Cpl Croydon will be discharging from the Australian Army later this year to pursue other career options.

Q1 – How do you cope being overseas, where there is a different religion and different rules, etc?

Answer: “no problems coping segregated from general population and respected their religion.”

Q2 – What was your job in Operation Slipper and where were you based and why where you there?

Answer: “we were based in Tarin Kowt and my job was with the network administrator (computers) but the main idea was reconstructing.”

Q3 - How do the afghan people treat the Australian soldiers overseas and how do we the Australian soldiers treat them?

Answer: Afghan people respected soldiers really well because of the way we treated them, such as

- Medical help
 - Job
 - Reconstructing the community
- As a result they we were very welcome.”

Q4 - How does your family cope and how do you cope being away from them when you were severing in Afghanistan?

Answer: “my family was all fine, i kept in contact with them surprising really well, keeping in contact every couple of days helped everybody.”

Q5 - Did you enjoy severing representing Australia in Afghanistan and WHY did you and WHY didn't you?

Answer: “I did enjoy Afghanistan, total opposite to experience in Timor. I was mentally prepared and trade prepare. The Army better prepare me for Afghanistan then Timor. We trained for 2 months that helped me cope but I did totally enjoy serving Australia in Afghanistan.”

Q6 - What where your responsibilities in Afghanistan and what were they?

Answer: “To make sure that my network servers were operational 24 a day and to give everyone internet access.”

Q7 - Do you feel proud representing the Australian public overseas because the way you and fellow soldiers acted reflects how the Australian citizen is perceived?

Answer: “Very proud of what we did and how we acted. I think I'm overall we were typical of the Australian in the public eyes.”

Q8 - Was being part of operation slipper a once in a lifetime opportunity?

Answer: Yes it is. If I'd stayed in the army (I'm discharging shortly) it would have been a twice in a life time opportunity but you wouldn't want to do it too often.”

Q9 - How are you and fellow soldiers showing peacekeeping in Afghanistan?

Answer: “we showed peacekeeping by

- Removing bombs
- Making it safe for everybody
- Building the Afghan army
- Reconstruction the country
- Building a hospital.”

Q10) How is the ADF supporting Afghanistan?

Answer: “In my experience, Reconstruction”

Q11) Are Australian soldiers severing in Afghanistan making sacrifices?

Answer: “Yean I do, it is a pretty big thing. You train for this and to put it inter practice is a part of that. To do it properly is something you have to do, but it doesn't make leaving your family and putting your life on the line any easier.”

Cpl John Croydon displayed the characteristics of a good citizen in Afghanistan. He believes in security for everyone and was willing to sacrifice time with his family and risk his life in order to help rebuild a country in trouble. I also think he demonstrated all the values of an Australian soldier whilst deployed which closely align to good citizenship. In the end I believe that the Australian Defence Force serving in Afghanistan are responsible citizens **and they should be role models for everyone.**