

Thesis: Peacekeeping has and will continue to mature the methods in which Australia and other countries communicate with unstable nations, through the reconciliation with all parties involved. Soldiers that participate in these courageous operations deserve to be recognized for their unique contribution to the overall Australian Defence Landscape.

Remembering the Peacekeepers

An effort to preserve peace between hostile groups especially by a sanctioned military force.
-Wiktionary, the Open Dictionary¹

...a way to help countries torn by conflict create conditions for sustainable peace.
-United Nations²

A non-coercive instrument of diplomacy, [which attempts to] implement conflict prevention and/or resolution arrangements or assist humanitarian aid operations.
-Australian Defence Force³

The peacekeeper is a unique part of any defence force which attempts to bring peace upon a community using *peaceful* methods. This is a relatively new method for the transit of military diplomacy, with its introduction during the Cold War by the United Nations. It is also known as a comparatively small operation when compared to other organizations such as the Army, Navy and Air Force, even though Peacekeeping can be considered a hybrid of these three groups.



An Australian Peacekeeping Police Officer communicating with local East Timorese, co-ordinating elections in 2007.

If the public could see into 'a day in the life' of the average Australian peacekeeper, they would be extremely surprised by the contrast between that view, and the media/government sensationalisation of war. Even though the name would seem to be a dead giveaway, the perception of the average Australian, is big tall men with big guns fighting off rebelling foreigners. The truth however, is that these peacekeepers are performing *peaceful* operations in order to create or retain peace in troubled areas. Examples of these operations include the reconstruction of valuable community resources such as Essential Services (Water, Electricity, Hospitals), local Security Forces,

¹ <http://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/peacekeeping>

² <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/dpko/fag/q1.htm>

³ <http://www.defence.gov.au/adfwc/peacekeeping/>

and Education facilities. Major groups in the ADF do partake in these duties, however Peacekeepers operate in an environment where the 'rules of engagement' are aligned to ensure a base for peaceful operations for these men and women to work in.

The ANZAC tradition is seen by many historians as the culture of Australian Military Relations with the rest of the world. It was epitomized in Turkey, on the beaches of Gallipoli, and is used continually to describe the qualities and spirit of average Australians and New Zealanders.

*Anzac stood, and still stands, for reckless valor
in a good cause, for enterprise, resourcefulness,
fidelity, comradeship, and endurance that will never own defeat
-Charles Bean, Journalist and Historian*

Charles Bean coined this meaning of the ANZAC in 1946 in his book, *Anzac to Amiens*. Peacekeepers in the ADF do exhibit these qualities, such as *valor* in the situations in which peacekeepers operate, for example, unstable regions such as East Timor. Peacekeepers also exhibit *enterprise and resourcefulness* in their ability to rebuild communities, and heighten the quality of life for its residents. Finally, they also display true comradeship and fidelity towards each other, and to the people around them. News reports often tell of stories of amazing reconciliation towards locals in unstable regions such as Afghanistan, Bougainville and East Timor.



A female peacekeeper in East Timor, surrounded by civilians. This shows the immense courage, fidelity and compassion to civilians of unstable countries.

One conclusion that can be reached is that Peacekeepers are a valuable and high-quality member of the Australian Defence Force, and should be congratulated and respected in and outside of service. Most Australian civilians do realize this, but there is a lack of objective memorialization and remembrance when it comes to Peacekeepers. There are constant displays of respect towards other specific sections of the Australian Defence Force, such as the Light Horse, and the War Dogs, but there is no memorial within Australia that reminds us of their contribution to the Global Community. Therefore it is strange to think that while one of the Australian Defence Force's major priorities is Peacekeeping, other large nations, such as Canada, have large memorials specifically for Peacekeepers.

The *Peacekeeping Monument* is in the capital of Canada, Ottawa, and glorifies those who have served, and those who have died on Peacekeeping operations. The entire memorial is sculpted around one key word; Reconciliation. This memorial uses this word to show that the use of peace, or reconciling with every party involved in a conflict, can lead to a more positive outcome than if violence is used.

*We need action not only
to end the fighting but to make the peace...
My own government would be glad
to recommend Canadian participation
in such a United Nations force,
a truly international peace and police force.*
-Lester Pearson, Prime Minister of Canada 1963-1968

The memorial also uses a quote from a Former Prime Minister of Canada to outline the government, if not the countries support for Peacekeeping in practice and in ideology.



The Canadian Peacekeeping Monument is made of sandstone and bronze to mark the strength of the countries commitment to peacemaking, and reconciliation with all parties in a conflict.

However, there is progress towards recognition. An Australian organisation is co-ordinating the funding and construction of a future Peacekeeping Memorial in Canberra, ACT. This effort has been underway since 2006, and is planned so that the memorial will be opened on Australian Peacekeepers Day (14th September) in 2010. It's design is similar to that of the Canadian Peacekeeping Monument, as it is an large outdoor courtyard, made of bronze and sandstone. However, the design will be modernized with lighting throughout the memorial to highlight its presence in a major area of Canberra, Anzac Parade. This new memorial will provide enduring remembrance for past, current and future peacekeepers.



An artist's impression of the planned Australian Peacekeeping Memorial on Anzac Parade, Canberra.

Peacekeepers from all over the globe have ensured that we have a safe international environment, encouraged by Peace, rather than Weapons. The men and women on the ground who have ensured this, are the pinnacle of our society when it comes to citizenship. As global citizens representing Australia, they have safeguarded the freedoms and livelihoods of civilians of other countries by putting their own lives at risk.

These men and women who are classified as Peacekeepers, have deserved a memorial commemorating their sacrifice and their deliverance of outstanding citizenship ever since the first Peacekeeping mission within the Pacific in 1947.

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