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AUSTRALIA'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE VIETNAM WAR

- The Australia, New Zealand, United States Security Treaty (ANZUS) was concluded on Sept. 1, 1951. ANZUS is the military alliance and defense treaty that binds Australia and the United States to mutual aid and cooperation on defense matters.
- Australia began its involvement in the Vietnam War in July-August 1962, when it sent 30 military advisers, who were dispatched as the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam, also known as “The Team.”
- The Vietnam War was Australia’s longest military commitment to any conflict.
- From the arrival of The Team in 1962 until its departure in 1975, over 60,000 Australian military personnel served in Vietnam. Nearly 42,000 Australian Army soldiers, just under 13,000 Royal Australian Navy (RAN) members and over 4,700 Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) all contributed to the war effort.
- 521 Australian service members died in the war and over 3,000 were wounded.
- In conjunction with the buildup of U.S. forces in 1965, the Australian government dispatched the 1st Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (1RAR) in June 1965 to serve alongside the U.S. 173d Airborne Brigade in Bien Hoa Province.
- Starting with HMAS Hobart during 1967, several destroyers were attached to the U.S. Seventh Fleet for operations on the gun line off the Vietnamese coast.
- The RAN Helicopter Flight was also deployed, attached to the U.S. Army’s 135th Assault Helicopter Company, flying Iroquois helicopters on gunship, battle-area transport and medical evacuation flights.
- A small number of Australian pilots were also attached to U.S. Air Force squadrons, usually as forward air controllers.
- Before the fall of Saigon on April 30, 1975, an RAAF transport aircraft flew humanitarian missions and carried out the evacuation of Vietnamese orphans (Operation Babylift), before taking out embassy staff on April 25.
- One Australian’s name is on the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, D.C.: John L. Molyneaux Jr., a native-born Australian who served in the U.S. Marine Corps in Vietnam.