

Lt Col Mike DENNIS, MBE (Retd)

Mike joined the Regular Army in 1967 after 2 years in the Papua New Guinea Volunteer Rifles (CMF).

After serving as a Section Commander in 9 RAR he attended OCS Portsea, graduating to Infantry Corps in 1969.

He served as a Platoon Commander in 1PIR, PNG and Pioneer Platoon Commander in 2RAR. On promotion to Captain he served as Adjutant, Monash University Regiment, Company 2ic in 3RAR, serving in South-East Asia and as an Instructor, Battle Wing Canungra.

In 1982, Mike was promoted to Major and Operations Officer 1PIR PNG and was awarded a Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE) primarily for the planning and conduct of border operations on the PNG/Indonesian border. This was followed by a posting as Officer Commanding 3 Brigade Headquarters ODF.

Mike undertook extensive Special Forces Training and was a Navy Diving Instructor, Demolition Instructor, Foreign Weapons Instructor, Small Craft Instructor, Unconventional Warfare Instructor, Linguist and Marksman.

A major change of direction occurred when he was posted to the Defence Intelligence Organisation as the Senior Desk Officer PNG/SWP. Following involvement in the 1987 Fiji Coup and Operation Morrisdance he was promoted LtCol and posted as a Defence Advisor PNG and Solomon Is. in 1988.

This position was primarily an intelligence collection role and he served on Bougainville in 1989 to 1990 in the early stages of the Bougainville War in a plain clothes role. He was awarded a Chief of Army Commendation and Australia Day Award for actions on Bougainville.

Posted back to DIO in 1990 in the PNG/SWP section he was then selected to be the Defence Attaché South Pacific accredited to Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Nauru, Tuvalu and Kiribati.

In 1995, Mike resigned from the ADF on completion of his posting in Fiji and took up a position of General Manager Suncorp Stadium in Brisbane. This was followed by a senior position in sports management in the planning and conduct of the Sydney Olympics, Salt Lake City Winter Olympics, Manchester Commonwealth Games and Athens Olympics. During this period as Vice President of Cleanevent International he undertook the restructuring of the US based arm of the company.

Mike's other sporting interests included being the Manager of the Australian Rugby League Kangaroos, Manager and Coach of the Papua New Guinea and Fiji National Rugby League Teams.

He retired to Adelaide and became the Honorary Consul to Fiji in South Australia. His leisure activities included golf and being active in veteran welfare issues and organisations such as the RARA. He was also the Chairman SA&NT of DVA Training and Information Program (TIP), President of the RARA SA, RSL Sub Branch, RSL State Councilor and President of the Lower Murray and Hills Veteran Golfers Association.