

Reviews

Nicholas Floyd and Paul Stevens, *Action! Action! Action! A Short History of the Employment of Australian Artillery, 1871-2021*, Big Sky Publishing, Sydney, 2024.

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Reviewed by Lieutenant General B.A. (Ash) Power AO CSC

Action! Action! Action! outlines the role that gunners of all persuasions have played in supporting Australia both in war and in the interwar periods. Clearly explained are the key roles Artillery plays during conflict, roles in high demand and never questioned – “fires” after all, is a warfighting function. Also explained are the challenges gunners, like other elements of the Army, faced when peace broke out and funding dried up. It’s all there, the highs and lows and it is a great read.

It will become obvious to the reader that over the last a century and a half there have been two constants; the proud history of unbroken continuous service provided by gunners and the constant changes that they have faced. During my service I was questioned on the very need for Artillery, questioning that became more animated the longer we were at peace. Peace unfortunately, is a temporary existence, and once again Artillery is in the ascendancy. The threat of war is clear to all.

Arguably there has never been a more exciting time to be a gunner. After decades of toing and froing we are about to get self-propelled artillery, a long-range fires capability is just around the corner. Undergoing yet another Army restructure – a reinvention of what has worked in previous wars – we are going full circle, with the creation of 10 Brigade, a fires formation. This is now Army’s main effort.

Gunners have always understood the need for the combined arms team and were early proponents of jointery. *Action! Action! Action!* takes us from the creation of our very first gunner organisations, covers off on Artillery’s contribution during our biggest wars and other conflicts, and clearly articulates not only the traditional support gunners have provided but also the myriad of tasks in non-traditional roles that gunners have performed.

It’s important for all gunners to understand this impressive history as we prepare for the future and this publication lays that history out in an easy to read and digestible fashion. Just as important however is the need for all who defend our nation to get a better understanding of the role that all parts of the combined arms team play; I commend *Action! Action! Action!* to all who wear a service uniform.

Ubique, and always there.

Lieutenant General B.A. (Ash) Power AO CSC

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Reviewed by Major General Craig Furini AM CSC, Representative Colonel Commandant of The Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery

I applaud the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company (RAAHC), especially Nick Floyd and Paul Stevens for their commitment to capturing the story of the employment of Australian artillery over the 150 years from 1871 to 2021. *Action! Action! Action!* is a story as much about the artillery as it is about the birth of a nation and the Australian Army.

The authors have done a wonderful job of telling a balanced story that covers all the branches of the Australian artillery — field, coastal and garrison, air defence and searchlight, anti-tank, weapon locating and surveillance and target acquisition, and artillery intelligence — as well as the essential story of the men and women of the artillery who have “stood by their guns” over the last century and a half.

One telling aspect of *Action! Action! Action!* is that no matter how things change, much stays the same. This is where the book leaves the reader in the last chapter (*Change and Constancy*, pp.207-211). The book provides a fascinating insight into the thinking and approach of generations of Gunners. It is clear they have remained unwavering in their commitment to the provision of accurate, responsive and dependable battle winning fires and effects as part of the combined arms and joint teams. Yet at the same time, continually reflected, evolved and adapted tactically, technically and organisationally to ensure what they bring to the battlefield remains battle winning regardless of peacetime bureaucratic challenges and those that have questioned the very need for artillery. *Action! Action! Action!* lays this out in a narrative that is informative and compelling.

As the current Representative Colonel Commandant, I am thrilled to see *Action! Action! Action!* address the service and achievements of contemporary veterans over the last 30 years. It is a story they deserve to see told. Defined by a high operational tempo, this era saw Batteries, Troops, teams and individuals deploy across the globe providing essential warfighting and peacekeeping capabilities in and out of role. Simultaneously the era witnessed major advancements in artillery capability with new guns, UAVs, sensors and digitisation accompanied by organisational and doctrinal changes. For the first time the events and developments of this era have been brought together into a coherent story with the authors doing a wonderful job of capturing the context, challenges, lessons, achievements and successes.

In an increasingly complicated World, the Artillery is again rising in prominence with the RAA taking carriage of more capable air defence systems, longer-range guns and missiles and increasingly sophisticated aerial vehicles, sensors and communications systems. Our Gunners could once again be called upon to use these capabilities in conflict. Consequently, the need

for the Gunner to be a master-craftsman who can balance the art and science of war remains as essential today as it was 140 years ago when the NSW Defence Enquiry Commission noted 'the fully instructed artilleryman is in reality an artisan of high order, and time, habit and systematic teaching are necessary to make him thoroughly competent' (p.14). Today's practitioners can draw a great deal from this book as they look to the future.

Action! Action! Action! is a great read – well done Nick, Paul and the RAAHC – Target Round!

Major General Craig Furini AM CSC, Representative Colonel Commandant RAA

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Reviewed by Brigadier Phil Winter AM CSC ADC, CEO RSL Australia

Many years ago as a subaltern I recall thinking 'if only there was one single source of truth for the story of the Royal Australian Artillery' so we could piece together the history of the Regiment in Australia's many operational conflicts and tasks, and to also understand why some equipment were used, and how those capabilities fitted into the wider Army and joint efforts in Defence. Now we have this outstanding new book to answer those questions. I have been lucky enough to observe the great progress of this vital book and earnestly congratulate all involved for the hard work and diligence to deliver this superb product. The task of simplifying the massive amounts of data and personal stories from over a century and a half of Guner service to the nation is no mean feat. The outcome is a highly readable and well-planned history of The Royal Regiment, and a huge vote of thanks must go to our authors and planning team – no doubt this book will have pride of place on the bookshelves of all Gunners.

Brigadier Philip Winter AM CSC ADC

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Reviewed by Major General Tim Ford AO (Retd)

As the Manager of the Sir Roden Cutler VC Artillery Research Centre, I am delighted that the RAAHC has produced this excellent publication which so aptly describes the creation, evolution and campaigns of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery (RAA) for over 150 years. This is the best summary of the proud history of the Regiment that I have encountered in my more than 50 years as a Gunner. It will be of immense assistance to the Research Assistants at the Cutler Research Centre in initiating their responses to the many requests we receive for information on Australian artillery, and its units, equipment, individuals and heritage since colonial times.

The authors have achieved a good balance throughout the book with a logical and comprehensive progression of the history of the RAA expressed in simple language with all the many technical and tactical terms associated with gunnery clearly explained.

I commend the structure of the book with some 17 chapters describing the various phases and campaigns that have built the Regiments' history. Each chapter has a concise introduction, well supported by relevant maps and photographs from Australian War Memorial collection and other reliable sources. These are supplemented by colourful boxes explaining various aspects of artillery tactics and technology, plus vignettes about Artillery Commanders and gunner personalities. The layout ends with a comprehensive list of appendices tabling data on artillery structures over the years, significant dates and artillery terms.

There is no doubt in my mind that *Action! Action! Action!* (the cry to respond to a call for fire support) has certainly achieved its aim of being a "Gunnery's Friend". This is a book that every Australian Gunner will want to have in their personal library, as well as one well sought by the military enthusiast.

Major General Tim Ford AO (Retd)

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Reviewed by Emeritus Professor David Horner AM, Australian National University

This new book, published under the auspices of the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company, is in the style of the Australian Army History Unit's successful campaign series. It is lavishly illustrated with photographs and maps, has 'breakout' pieces on prominent artillery personalities, and sections on artillery tactics and technology. Substantial appendixes cover artillery organisations over a hundred years. Written by two experienced gunners, Lieutenant Colonel Nicholas Floyd and Major General Paul Stevens, assisted by members of the Artillery Historical Committee, the book seeks to condense the history of Australian artillery over 150 years into just over 200 pages. It keeps its focus firmly on the employment of artillery rather than on the experiences of the gunners, except for the sections on individual gunners. The book is targeted primarily at aspiring professional gunners.

In 1995 (almost 30 years ago) I published my history of Australian artillery called *The Gunners*, and although the regiment had a distinguished record of service in two world wars and Vietnam, I struggled in vain to conclude the book on a high note. At that time, the Army and the artillery were in the doldrums. Following government policy, the Army focused on dealing with the (unrealistic) threat of low-level incursions into northern Australia. Even the Australian infantry battalion on a peace enforcement mission to Somalia in 1993 did not require the support of a gun battery.

This new history brings the story up to 2021, and it reveals that Australian Artillery has been transformed. It is true that gun batteries have still not been deployed on operations. In East Timor in 1999, as in Somalia, artillery provided civil-military teams, as well as deploying field batteries as infantry. However, in Iraq and Afghanistan the artillery deployed staff for Joint Offensive Support Coordination Centres, target acquisition radars, uncrewed aerial vehicles and Joint Offensive Support Teams. Australian gunners directed fire from Allied air forces, artillery and mortars. Some Australian gunners served in British Army batteries.

As the book makes clear, this was just the first step in the revitalisation of Australian artillery in the decade after Australia formally withdrew from Afghanistan in 2014 and China emerged as a threat. The Russia-Ukraine and Armenia-Azerbaijan conflicts showed the key role of drones in modern warfare, and the first conflict continues to demonstrate the critical importance of field artillery and long-range missiles.

Advised by military experts, the Australian government assessed that the Defence Force had to be able to compete in this environment of potential war. As a result, the Royal Australian Artillery has emerged at the forefront of the Army's modernisation program.

With long-range missiles, self-propelled artillery, modern conventional and precision ammunition, improved drones, advanced air defence capabilities, and new digitised artillery command and control systems, the Artillery is returning to a more central position within the Defence Force's joint force capabilities.

In response, the Historical Company believed that a concise history of the regiment, produced as a digestible, easy-to-read book, would provide a valuable foundation for the education of a new era of gunners. The book fills this aim admirably. New gunners will learn that their regiment has had celebrated history and continues to be the king of the battle.

With the need to condense much into a short space, there is little description of what it was like to serve as a gunner in the various conflicts. The book also has several errors. For example, the rank of brigadier general was abolished in the Australian Army in the 1920s, so all the many references to brigadier generals in the Second World War need to be amended. And there are some slight errors in the tactical details of some World War II campaigns. These errors do not detract from a most attractive, imaginative and valuable history of the employment of Australian artillery over its 150-year history.

Emeritus Professor David Horner AM, Australian National University

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Reviewed by Major General Michael Crane DSC & Bar AM (Retd)

Action! Action! Action! is a must for Gunners and anyone else interested in the Royal Australian Artillery or Australia's military history more broadly.

The book describes the development and employment of artillery in Australia over 150 years, from colonial times to the second decade of the 21st Century. The account is set against the background of wider Army and national imperatives, which provide the context for the artillery's changing fortunes – its origins in coastal defence, its contribution to early expeditionary adventures, its rise in the World Wars, its decline in inter- and post-war years, its re-emergence in the Vietnam era, and its subsequent evolution into the modern but relatively modest force it is today. Indeed, at one level, this is the story of judgements by successive governments about the relevance and cost-effectiveness of artillery, with important lessons for those charged with building future capability.

Beyond merely relating history, *Action! Action! Action!* opens a window on what it means to be a Gunner. The book covers technical matters aplenty, since, at its heart, the artillery is a highly technical arm. Yet in highlighting the personal stories of a variety of soldiers and officers, the book also recognises that operating and employing artillery is fundamentally a human endeavour, and so points to the Australian artillery's soul.

Authors Paul Stevens and Nick Floyd were asked to deliver a single, up-to-date, succinct and accessible reference, and they have succeeded admirably on all fronts. The narrative covers all the milestones in the Australian artillery's journey to modern times without delving too deeply into particulars. It strikes a nice balance in the weight given to each part of the tale, with less well-known achievements receiving as much attention as more famous exploits. Crisp introductions prepare the reader for each chapter, and thoughtful conclusions prompt reflection before proceeding to the next section. Technical explanations are simple enough for the novice but contain sufficient detail to satisfy the more advanced reader, while photographs, maps, diagrams and call out boxes support and illuminate the text. The appendices include a wealth of additional detail that will prove a rich resource for those who want to know more.

Action! Action! Action! is cleverly constructed and will appeal to a range of audiences. It is at once a fine primer for the uninitiated, a useful handbook for the Gunner professional, and a sound starting point for the more serious scholar. It is sure to be found on bookshelves wherever right and glory lead.

Major General Michael Crane DSC & Bar AM (Retd)

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Reviewed by Major General Chris Field DSC AM CSC

Australia's national aspirations, reverberate in the history of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery. This work, by Lieutenant Colonel Nick Floyd and Major General Paul Stevens AO (Retd), supported by the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company, forensically creates a shared understating of artillery's role in maturing and enabling Australia's national policies, particularly in the 150 years between 1871 and 2021.

These aspirations include how leaders of Australia's artillery fused, and continue to fuse, the changing application of technology, tactics, command, control, performance, and people to support the most widely-employed and persistently-lethal arm of the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

Today, the role of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery is to maximise the combat power of the ADF through the provision of offensive support coordination and indirect firepower, surveillance and target acquisition and ground-based air defence.

Enabling an understanding of this role, *Action! Action! Action! A Short History of the Employment of Australian Artillery, 1871 – 2021*, delivers a seventeen-chapter masterpiece analysing, defining, and describing the role and employment of Australian Artillery from European settlement in 1788 to the present day.

The 2024 National Defence Strategy makes four references to fires, including: land based long-range fires and deployable strike capability; Precision Strike Missiles to extend the range and variety of targets for land based long-range fires; increasing stockpiles of land based long-range fires munitions; and, Government priorities for hypersonics, directed energy, trusted autonomy, quantum technology, information warfare and long-range fires.

This twenty-first century strategic preference for deployable long-range fires, resilient logistics, and integrated science, is echoed throughout *Action! Action! Action!* Indeed, Floyd and Stevens deftly explain that artillery has always delivered effects more than guns.

From inception, the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery employed an adaptive mindset, excelling at orchestrating a vast array of capabilities and their effects. At various epochs, these capabilities, included Australian artillery leading change, doctrine, and employment of fires, logistics, and science for anti-aircraft, anti-tank, anti-ship, counter battery, close and deep support, missiles, ammunition logistics, meteorology, radar, searchlights, survey, uncrewed air systems, professionalised headquarters, and liaison staffs.

Action! Action! Action! achieves its premise, complementing, through historical analysis, the professional education of serving members of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery. Thanks to the efforts of Lieutenant Colonel Nick Floyd, Major General Paul Stevens, and the Royal Australian Artillery Historical Company, *Action! Action! Action!* now proudly recounts the first 150 years of Australian Artillery.

Major General Chris Field DSC AM CSC

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Reviewed by Dr Albert Palazzo

Whenever I read a book that aspires to be a short history of what is a long complex story I do so with a degree of trepidation. What would the authors leave out, would they achieve the right balance and, most importantly, would they do justice to the account. It is with relief that I can report that Nicholas Floyd and Paul Stevens have pulled off this tough mission. *Action! Action! Action!* is a complete, if select, history of 150 years of Australian artillery and is a story in which all gunners should take pride as it recounts the critical contribution of their arm to the Australia way of war.

Action! Action! Action! is more than a work of institutional reflection, however. It also seeks to educate young gunners on the accomplishments of those who served before them and to explain the place of the artillery in the past, present and future combined arms team. For the past 150 years the artillery has been integral to the performance of Australia's land forces. From paving the way for the infantry to advance at Amiens in the First World War, to suppressing the enemy at the Battle of El Alamein and the landing at Balikpapan in the Second World War, to the point-blank defence of Fire Base Coral in Vietnam, the story of the gunner resonates throughout the history of Australia's wars. The authors' secondary aim is to explain to the other parts of the Army, as well as the public, how fires are employed, organised and targeted, a task they admirably accomplish.

To their credit Floyd and Stevens do not gloss over the tough periods. Budget reduction invariably followed the end of conflicts which saw units wound up, ranks cut, training reduced and the corps striving to sustain technical knowledge. The authors also discuss the failure to deploy guns in the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars when the artillery remained at home. The only gunners who deployed either served British guns or worked in non-artillery roles. If the book has a weakness, it is that the authors are too kind to those who chose not to deploy the guns and the potential complications it had for the combined arms team.

Floyd and Stevens heavily illustrated their work with pictures and maps that add a visual interest that this reviewer appreciated. Enhancing the book's depth and richness are a variety of inserts that outline the technical requirements of placing rounds on target, highlight the contribution of key individuals to the artillery's development and draw attention to the acts of bravery of select gunners. The authors also provide over 20 tables outlining the development of the artillery organisation from Federation to the present, a valuable resource for the scholar as well as the soldier.

Action! Action! Action! is a compelling work that readers will find easy to digest yet professionally fulfilling. The authors have succeeded in their remit to provide gunners with a starting point for understanding the role of their corps in the nation's military history. Well done, Nick Floyd and Paul Stevens.

Dr Albert Palazzo

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Reviewed by Major Darryl Kelly OAM (Retd)

Review 9(a)

'Action! Action! Action!' is a good solid read. It will appeal to a vast cross section of the readers from those interested in history, to those wanting a better understanding of the military experiences of friends and family members past. Most of all, it is suggested compulsory reading for today's members of the professional gunner fraternity, those from the supported combat arms and those from the other services.

The book provides a definitive hindsight to the evolution of all branches of Australian artillery from colonial times to the modern-day battlefield and beyond. We, the Gunners, have always been masters of our trade, whether field or coastal gunnery, air defence, mortars, locating, surveillance and target acquisition. *'Action! Action! Action!'* covers all this and more within its pages.

But it also highlights the sometimes-overlooked facets of professional soldiering, which is the essence of those who proudly wear the white lanyard, these are the instructors, mentors, deployed senior leadership, trainers of foreign forces, peacekeepers, peacemakers and veterans. Gunners all.

In closing, there are hundreds of lessons within this book, both for the novice reader, professional warrior and those who may have a yearning to join the ranks of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery.

Major Darryl Kelly OAM (Retd)

Review 9(b)

Action! Action! Action! is a great encapsulation of all things Australian Artillery. Its contents allow us to know our past and will surely assist those who proudly wear the white lanyard, to strengthen our strategic and tactical future, across all spheres of professional gunnery and beyond. UBIQUE

Major Darryl Kelly OAM (Retd)

Nicholas Floyd and Paul Stevens, ***Action! Action! Action! A Short History of the Employment of Australian Artillery, 1871-2021***, Big Sky Publishing, Sydney, 2024.

Reviewed by Colonel Jason Cooke

The RAA Association of Victoria would like to congratulate the RAAHC Board for the vision and courage to tackle such an important and crucial publication capturing our rich and colourful history in a single publication. This well-crafted and designed chronological journey over 150 years forms the cornerstone of our history capturing our origins in colonial and state jurisdictions, our structural changes due to strategic posturing by the Government of the day, whilst highlighting our versatility and adaptability in delivery capability to our Nation. Albeit brief, this publication starts the knowledge transfer and passion in the development and professionalisation of our workforce and should be essential reading for future generations of our gunner community.

We would encourage those responsible for this brilliant publication to continue capturing our history but in greater detail thus providing further educational analysis into specific aspects of our history in an accredited reference material that is well documented. There are many lessons learnt waiting to be understood and discussed and this publication provides an excellent framework in which to continue this dialogue.

It is our intention to supplement the overall narrative of this book with our own local Victorian focus by capturing the personal stories from our gunner community from their shared and lived experiences whilst serving covering the period from establishment of the Army Reserve until to today. We want to bring to life the chronological journey the Regiment has taken but localise that experience with personal photo, stories and tales.

We see this as a natural progression in capturing our history only now possible due to the pending publication of *Action! Action! Action!*

Again, congratulations to the RAAHC for providing this essential piece to our documented history but also for energising our Association into action.

Colonel Jason Cooke, President RAA Association (Victoria)

Nicholas Floyd and Paul Stevens, ***Action! Action! Action! A Short History of the Employment of Australian Artillery, 1871-2021***, Big Sky Publishing, Sydney, 2024.

Reviewed by Brigadier Chris Roberts AM CSC

This excellent book offers more than the title suggests. *Action! Action! Action!* is a concise story of the evolution and employment of Australian artillery from its colonial beginnings through to the present day, all encapsulated in its history during peace and war. Furthermore, in several breakout boxes the authors explain artillery terminology in relation to guns and howitzers, ammunitions and propellants, as well as discussing tactics, technology, and techniques, together with potted histories of some Australian artillery commanders and Gunners who have distinguished themselves. Campaign level coloured maps and a liberal addition of photographs enhance the text. Finally, four appendices provide organisation tables, an extensive glossary of artillery and military terms, and list the significant dates in colonial and Commonwealth artillery history.

The authors state that the book is “aimed at assisting readers to understand how and why this combat arm has been employed in the past. Equally, it provides a foundation for modern Gunners to build on in designing and planning the future employment of Australian artillery as part of a wider fighting force.” They have achieved both of these admirably. Presented in a highly readable style, liberally supported by illustrations and diagrams, *Action! Action! Action!* will appeal to both former and currently serving soldiers, and the general public. In particular, it delivers a clear explanation of artillery terminology and techniques that the layman will readily understand.

Commencing with an ‘Introduction to Artillery’, it then traces the development of artillery, and the manner in which it has been employed by the colonial and Australian armies, through fifteen historical chapters. Two cover the colonial period and the creation of a national artillery following Federation, two cover the Great War, one is devoted to the inter-war years, four address the campaigns of the Second World War, while the remaining six discuss the peacetime evolution and developments in the context of changing Government defence policies, together with operational commitments from Korea to Afghanistan. A sound ‘Conclusion’ addresses the main points in a way that conclusions should be written. Above all, it highlights that while conflicts may differ, and technology will change dramatically, the principles of employing artillery remain relevant irrespective of the type of campaign, and will do so in future operations, while detailed and thorough training are required to master the intricacies of this often decisive combat arm.

As such, *Action! Action! Action!* should be in every Gunner’s knapsack, and it should grace the bookshelves of all military officers. Highly recommended.

Brigadier Chris Roberts AM CSC

Back Cover Abstract

Over one hundred and fifty years ago, on 1st August 1871, the Colony of New South Wales raised its first permanent Battery, known as the New South Wales Artillery. This battery complemented existing colonial volunteer batteries. The previous year, the last British forces had departed for England, leaving the young, dynamic colonies across Australia to uphold their own defences. This occasion marked the origins of the substantive, permanent presence of professional Australian artillery soldiers – a presence that endures to this day as the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery. In the years that have followed, Australian Gunners have served their country in war and in peace; abroad, and in the defence of their homeland, with honour and dedication, and will continue to do so into the future.

1st August 2021 marked a century and a half of unbroken dedication in the service of our community and the Nation by Australia's Gunners – Volunteer, Militia, Reserve, Permanent and Regular; at home, and in far-off lands; defending assaults from the sea, in the sky, and on land; and advising, defending and supporting our comrades-in-arms through summoning and orchestrating devastating fires and effects that are accurate, responsive, dependable & joint. These are, and will remain, the tenets of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery in all its forms.

This is the story of Australia's Gunners – so far.

Reviews

To mark our first 150 years, it is with great pride that the RAAHC presents this book to Australia's Gunner community, as part of our commitment to preserve and promote the history and heritage of Australian Artillery. Colonel Ian Ahearn, OAM, (retd), Chair RAAHC

This compelling book provides an essential history of the journey of Australian Artillery, and its unparalleled contribution to defending Australia and its interests. All aspects of the Gunners' profession of arms are explained and illustrated – accurately and concisely. Brigadier Damian Hill, AM, Head of Regiment

'Action! Action! Action! provides a comprehensive account of the vital role artillery has played in Australia's strategic posture from colonial times to the ongoing and growing relevance into our future. For over 100 years the essence of the role of artillery has been to establish such fire supremacy in the battle area that the enemy can neither interfere with our operations, nor effectively develop their own. The release of Action! Action! Action! on the eve of the Royal Regiment of Australian Artillery's most significant modernisation efforts since World War 1 provides a timely reminder of the ever changing character of war and the artillery's adaptation and evolution to meet the strategic circumstance of today and into the future.' Major General Richard Vagg, DSC, Head Land Capability

Author Biographies

Lieutenant Colonel Nick Floyd has over 35 years' regular service with the Royal Australian Artillery in gun regiments, instructional institutions, Army and Defence Headquarters. He has served on warlike operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. As a Director of the RAAHC, he convened the *Firepower: Lessons from the Great War* Seminar Series, 2015 to 2018. He was previously the Army Contributing Historian to the *Official History of Australian Operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Australian Peacekeeping Operations in East Timor*.

Major General Paul Stevens AO (Retd). served 33 years in the Australian Army before retirement. He saw active service in South Vietnam with 105 Field Battery. He later served as Commanding Officer/Chief Instructor at the School of Artillery, and Chief of Army Personnel. After the Army, Paul held the statutory appointments of Repatriation Commissioner and Director of the Office of Australian War Graves in the Veterans' Affairs portfolio and was a member of both the Administrative Review Council and the Australian War Memorial Council.