

Opening the window on a RailCorp Reservist

For Sydenham-based XPT Fleet Manager Peter Anderson, a recent invitation to see how Australian Defence Force (ADF) Reservists operate overseas gave him the chance to catch up with one of his team members, Fitter Machinist Boyd Barnes.

Boyd was attached to Combined Task Force 635 Rotation 19 — part of the Australian Defence Force contribution to the Regional Assistance Mission in the Solomon Islands (RAMSI).

Peter and 16 other employers travelled as part of 'Exercise Boss Lift' to the Solomon Islands for a four-day visit to the Combined Task Force. This unit comprises personnel from Australia, New Zealand and Tonga.

During the four-day visit to the Pacific nation, Peter underwent a range of experiences, including school visits, battlefield and military museum tours and even getting to fire a Steyr F88 assault rifle under Boyd's watchful eyes.

Exercise Boss Lift enables employers to experience first-hand their employees' role in the Reserves and duties while deployed overseas.

"I have been in the Reserves for around two years and I was in the Solomon Islands for four months," says Boyd. "I have undertaken several courses over the past two years and RailCorp has always been supportive. During my deployment, I have learnt a lot of people skills and the technical side of my job comes out a lot more on operations — experience I don't get while training or undertaking Reserve duties at the weekend."

Peter, Boyd's manager, said it was good to see him again after the lengthy absence from work. "Exercise Boss Lift is a great thing to do and is a fantastic way to help people truly understand what is happening with their Reservists," he says.

"If any employer ever has the chance to do this, I'd strongly recommend it. As a result of the trip, I will brief some of the senior management on my return in relation to the management of our Reserves."

For further information on Exercise Boss Lift visit www.defence.gov.au/reserves.



Boyd (left) shows Peter around a shooting range