



Boss has new found interest in Reserves

THURINGOWA City Council's Deputy CEO, Allan Lee, has a new found respect for the council's Army reservists following a recent trip to the jungles of southern Malaysia.

As a guest of the Defence Department's Directorate of Reserve Support (DRS), Mr Lee got to see reservist soldiers from the Australian Army's 11th Brigade train in the jungles at the southern end of the Malaysian Peninsular.

Bosslift Malaysia '06 was designed to provide employers with the opportunity to see how military experience enhances their workers' skill sets.

Mr Lee joined Thuringowa Waste employee, Phillip Quillam, on the exercise.

The council currently has a total of five Defence Force reservists on staff.

Mr Lee said the soldiers were forced to endure some tough conditions.

"It was impressive to see the reservists in actual jungle battle conditions – you couldn't see more than 15 feet into the jungle. It rained every afternoon and the reservists have to be aware of the usual jungle inhabitants including snakes and leeches which are a constant source of annoyance," Mr Lee said.

He said the reserve forces were an integral part of Australia's defence system and formed nearly 30 per cent of its manpower.

"It is important that employers appreciate the training provided in the reserve and that there are many benefits to them when the reservist returns home," Mr Lee said.

"The value in having additional troops in the event of an incident requiring Defence Force involvement cannot be understated and it is something all employers can assist with.

"It was extremely obvious to me, when talking to some of the younger troops, that they develop a lot of self confidence in themselves and are prepared to take on leadership roles when required.

"The self confidence they develop and leadership skills and team building skills they learn while away can only benefit an employer when they return to work."

Mr Lee said the Defence Force paid compensation to employers who released employees for the long-term block training to enable them to backfill positions while their employees participate in the training.