



(U//FOUO) What's It Like to Work as an Integree in Canberra?

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Run Date: 12/15/2006

(U//FOUO) SIDtoday asked intern [REDACTED] to describe her experience working with our SIGINT peers in Australia...

(U) G'day mates! Ever considered heading "down unda"? Well, then, read on because this is the article for you!

(U//FOUO) I returned to NSA in March 2006 after four months as an integree at the Defence Signals Directorate (DSD) in Canberra, Australia. For those of you who don't know (I know I didn't) Canberra is the capital of Australia, and is situated about 3 hours drive south of Sydney and 2 hours west of the coast. It is a town of about 300,000 people so there is all the excitement of a big city--theater, fine dining, sporting events--with a small-town feel where the bus network makes it easy to get around and the bus drivers greet you "G'day."



(U) View of Canberra from the Telstra Tower, a local landmark

(TS//SI//REL) At the end of my second year in the Intelligence Analysis Development Program (IADP), I was selected to travel to Australia to work side-by-side with Counterterrorism (CT) analysts at DSD. From November 2005 to March 2006, I was one of three SigDev* analysts on the Jemaah Islamiyah Philippines team. We worked with three linguists to track the movement of several tier 1 CT targets by targeting their GSM communications. I saw how our second party partner relies on NSA's analytic tools, but I also became familiar with some DSD-specific tools and analytic skills.

(TS//SI//REL) One of the tasks the Aussies are required to complete is to constantly update a database that documents:

- new selectors for targets,
- all reporting on the target, and
- links to other individuals who are connected to the key players within the specific terrorist organization.

This made it easy for me, as someone new to the target, to quickly get up to speed by having access to all known information pertaining to specific individuals at my fingertips.

(S//SI//REL) DSD is different from NSA in many ways, the most obvious of which is their size. DSD only has around 1,200 people, with about 60 people authorized to work CT, compared to the hundreds working CT at NSA. The Aussies also consider socializing an important part of their day; they have morning tea (commonly referred to as "mornos") on a regular basis, as well as "DSD Happy Hour" every other Thursday when payday rolls around. Their large atrium gets converted into a bar with fellow analysts serving beer, wine, and soft drinks to their co-workers who chatted freely in the classified environment.



(U) The Australian War Memorial

(C) Since I was lucky enough to be in Australia during their summer (seasons are opposite from those here) AND lucky enough to be allowed to observe both U.S. and Australian holidays, I was able to do quite a bit of traveling. DSD almost completely shuts down during the week of

Christmas to New Years, so during that time I traveled north to Cairns where I snorkeled at the Great Barrier Reef. I also explored the rainforest and visited a crocodile farm before traveling south to Sydney on New Year's Eve to see the fireworks go off over their famous Opera House.

[REDACTED]

(S//SI//REL) Over "Australia Day weekend" in January I headed to New Zealand's southern island where I went white-water rafting and took a boat cruise, where I saw dolphins, seals, and penguins. I also visited Melbourne during a long weekend, and was invited by a DSD manager to visit one of Australia's collection sites in Darwin (on the northern coast of Australia).

[REDACTED]

(U) The author with a koala.

(U) The best part of my Australian experience was definitely the people I met. From my co-workers with their superb hospitality to the locals who were always quick to help me find my way around, the Aussies made me feel at home even when I was a 25-hour flight away.

(S//REL) [REDACTED] will be graduating from the IADP in early 2007. She has completed tours in International Crime and Narcotics, Counterterrorism, and Regional Targets (Pakistan Internal Security team). Feel free to email her at [REDACTED]@nsa with any questions about DSD and/or life in Australia.

*(U) Note:

(U//FOUO) SigDev is short for "Sigint Development," one of the three required tours IADP participants must complete during their three years in the program. Other required tours are reporting and research.

(U) For another view of life in Canberra, see the "SID Around the World" article [Letter from Oz](#).

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