

# Research & Research Training Office

## Faculty Seminar

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### **Abstract:-**

#### **Australian Combat Effectiveness in the Vietnam War: The 'Understanding Low Intensity Conflict' Project.**

The 'Understanding Low Intensity Conflict' project is a research project funded by the ARC over five years beginning in 2006. This seminar is a 'progress report' on the project.

The project uses a database containing 4500 'contacts' between the 1<sup>st</sup> Australian Task Force and the enemy during the Vietnam War – Australia's longest Low-Intensity Conflict to date - to analyse patterns in Australian combat performance. A 'contact' is any action involving the exchange of direct fire between the Australians and their enemy. For each contact, the database holds about 30 bits of information such as the date, time and place of the contact, the number of friendlies and enemy involved, what weapons were used, the number of shots fired, the casualties inflicted on both sides, and other information. Using this database, the project is able to build an accurate profile of the combat performance of the Australian Army in the Vietnam War. The analysis of this database has produced some exciting results. Some of the key findings to date will be discussed together with their implications for the way the close battle is likely to unfold in future wars.