4 RAR has had many roles and titles since it was raised at Woodside in 1964 as an Infantry battalion of the Royal Australian Regiment. Each role has been defined in the title and is reflective of the task or the composite makeup of the Battalion in every campaign that it has been asked to serve Australia since 1964.

From its inception in 1964, continuing during its tour of Malaysia and Borneo until 1967, and subsequently within Australia until 1968, the Battalion was designated 4 RAR with the role of a Light (air portable) battalion.

Because of the welcome attachment of Victor and Whiskey Companies of the Royal New Zealand Regiment during its first tour of South Vietnam in 1968 and 1969 and the again welcome attachment of Victor Company of the Royal New Zealand Regiment during its second tour of South Vietnam in 1971 and 1972, the Battalion was designated 4 RAR/NZ ANZAC.

With the reorganisation of the Army during 1973 due to the cessation of National Service, 2 RAR and 4 RAR were linked on 15 August 1973, to form 2nd/4th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (2/4 RAR).

2/4 RAR was charged with the task of preserving the traditions, associations, museums and proprietorship of the two original battalions from which it was formed until such time as the linking was annulled. Because of this, all ranks of 2/4 RAR were aware of the history of both 2 RAR and 4 RAR and jealously preserved these traditions, whilst working hard to establish a distinctive image for their battalion.

Between 1977 and 1979 2/4 RAR concentrated on conventional warfare including night and mounted operations. On 1 July 1980, the unit was re-organised on light scales and trained as part of the Operational Deployment Force (ODF) in close country and conventional warfare operations.

On 1 February 1982, with the official replacement of the title 'Task Force' with 'Brigade', 2/4 RAR became a unit of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Division. The battalion was placed on operational readiness in 1987 and 1990. On each occasion the battalion was prepared to evacuate Australian citizens from Pacific region countries experiencing civil disturbance.

From 1990 to 1993 many individual soldiers from the battalion served with the United Nations in Cambodia. In 1993, 52 soldiers from the battalion were detached to 1RAR for operational service in Somalia as part of Operation Solace. In May 1993, 2/4 RAR was tasked to provide a Rifle Platoon for Operation Gemini in Cambodia. 12 Platoon Delta Company, deployed to Cambodia tasked with providing local security for Australian Army Aviation Assets.

It was during the battalion's deployment to Rwanda on Operation Tamar in 1994, that the government made the decision to unlink the 2nd/4th Battalion. This was a result of the 1994 Defence White Paper that identified the need for an additional infantry battalion to enhance the Army's capability to meet strategic guidance requirements. The 2nd/4th Battalion was unlinked by the Chief of the General Staff, LTGEN J.C. Grey, AO on a parade at Samichon Lines, Lavarack Barracks, Townsville at 1500 hrs on 1 February 1995. During the early 1990s, soldiers unable to complete parachute training at 3 RAR were typically posted to 4 RAR.

From infantry battalion to special forces
In 1996, a decision was made to convert the Battalion to a Special Forces unit and on 1 February 1997 was renamed to 4 RAR (Commando). Regular serving members were given the opportunity to undertake special forces training provided mainly by 1st Commando Regiment or elect a posting to a conventional forces unit. General Reserve positions existed in the new structure and reserve members discharged or posted to GRes units.

The initial years were busy creating a structure and recruiting members suitable for commando training. Bravo Company was raised first followed by Charlie Company in 1999, both taking 2–3 years to reach full maturity. The pace of battalion life during these development years was hectic with capability development, equipment acquisition and training, focussing every member's attention. Today the unit is regarded as a Tier 1 special forces unit and is highly regarded within the special operations communities abroad, the unit has lost members in Afghanistan and has also been awarded citations for bravery and also the meritorious citation.
For more details of the Citation, go to: Page 3

On 19 June 2009 the battalion was renamed the 2nd Commando Regiment.

Regardless, the name 4 RAR remains on the Army's order of battle and its history, colours and traditions have been preserved, ready to be re-raised as a regular light infantry battalion in the future if required.

The term "4 RAR" as used in all state associations titles, correspondence and this website refers to 4 RAR in all its descriptions, roles, service and campaigns.

The NSW Association by resolution of its members, is titled the 4 RAR/4 RAR (Cdo) Association.

No matter the terminology used, we are all immensely proud to be able to state to the world that **"I served in 4RAR"**