

## 7<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Division <sup>(1)</sup>

Advanced Headquarters. 6<sup>th</sup> Australian Division, Signals & Employment Platoon  
Rear Headquarters, 6<sup>th</sup> Australian Division & Signals

### 18<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Brigade <sup>(2)</sup>

Headquarters, 18<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Brigade, 'J' Section Signals &  
47<sup>th</sup> Light Aid Detachment

2<sup>nd</sup>/9<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion  
2<sup>nd</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion  
2<sup>nd</sup>/12<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion

### 21<sup>st</sup> Australian Infantry Brigade

Headquarters, 21<sup>st</sup> Australian Infantry Brigade, 'K' Section Signals &  
59<sup>th</sup> Light Aid Detachment

2<sup>nd</sup>/14<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion  
2<sup>nd</sup>/16<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion  
2<sup>nd</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion

### 25<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Brigade

Headquarters, 25<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Brigade, 'L' Section Signals &  
44<sup>th</sup> Light Aid Detachment

2<sup>nd</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion  
2<sup>nd</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion  
2<sup>nd</sup>/33<sup>rd</sup> Australian Infantry Battalion

### Divisional Troops

7<sup>th</sup> Australian Divisional Cavalry Regiment  
(H.Q., 'A', 'B' and 'C' Squadrons, 'G' Section Signals and 50<sup>th</sup> Light Aid Detachment)

Headquarters, Royal Australian Artillery, 7<sup>th</sup> Australian Division (7)

2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery

(H.Q., 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Field Batteries and 51<sup>st</sup> Light Aid Detachment)

2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery

(H.Q., 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> Field Batteries and 52<sup>nd</sup> Light Aid Detachment)

2<sup>nd</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Field Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery

(H.Q., 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> Field Batteries and 53<sup>rd</sup> Light Aid Detachment)

2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Anti-Tank Regiment, Royal Australian Artillery (8)

(H.Q., 5<sup>th</sup>, 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> Anti-Tank Batteries and 54<sup>th</sup> Light Aid Detachment)

Headquarters, Royal Australian Engineers, 6<sup>th</sup> Australian Division

2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Field Company, Royal Australian Engineers

2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Field Company, Royal Australian Engineers

2<sup>nd</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Field Company, Royal Australian Engineers

2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Field Park Company, Royal Australian Engineers

55<sup>th</sup> Light Aid Detachment

7<sup>th</sup> Australian Divisional Signals, Royal Australian Corps of Signals

56<sup>th</sup> Light Aid Detachment

Headquarters, Australian Army Service Corps, 7<sup>th</sup> Australian Division

7<sup>th</sup> Australian Division Ammunition Company, Australian Army Service Corps

7<sup>th</sup> Australian Division Petrol Company, Australian Army Service Corps

7<sup>th</sup> Australian Division Supply Company, Australian Army Service Corps

Headquarters, Assistant Director of Medical Services, 7<sup>th</sup> Australian Division

2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> Australian Field Ambulance, Australian Army Medical Corps

2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> Australian Field Ambulance, Australian Army Medical Corps

2<sup>nd</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Australian Field Ambulance, Australian Army Medical Corps

2<sup>nd</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> Field Hygiene Section, Australian Army Medical Corps

7<sup>th</sup> Australian Divisional Mobile Bath Unit, Australian Army Ordnance Corps

7<sup>th</sup> Australian Divisional Provost Company

7<sup>th</sup> Australian Divisional Postal Unit

7<sup>th</sup> Australian Field Cash Office

7<sup>th</sup> Australian Divisional Salvage Unit

## NOTES:

1. This formation was the second division in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Australian Expeditionary Force to be formed, and came into being in April 1940. It originally consisted of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Australian Infantry Brigades, with the 19<sup>th</sup> Brigade due to be the third brigade in the Division. Both the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Brigades were sent to the Middle East in October 1940. In January 1941, however, the 20<sup>th</sup> Brigade was transferred to the newly formed 9<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Division. In addition, the 19<sup>th</sup> Brigade joined the 6<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Division in November 1940. This allowed the deployment of one complete Australian division following the Italian invasion of Egypt. To complete the division, the 18<sup>th</sup> Brigade and the recently formed 25<sup>th</sup> Brigade were sent out from the United Kingdom to the Middle East in March 1941. Major General John LAVERACK, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., commanded the division until 18 June 1941, when Major General A. S. ALLEN, C.B., C.B.E., D.S.O., V.D. assumed command. The G.O.C. I Australian Corps intended that this division be sent to Greece, but the rapid collapse of British and Greek troops led to the campaign ending before this formation was ready for war. A report in December 1940 showed that the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Infantry Brigades were not ready for war owing to the state of training and the lack of equipment. The artillery and engineer units had arrived, but were deemed to be in the same state, but the third infantry brigade had not yet arrived. In June 1941, elements of the division formed the main part of the initial force for the invasion of Syria and Lebanon (see section on Syria). The Headquarters 25<sup>th</sup> Brigade, plus the 2<sup>nd</sup>/31<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>/33<sup>rd</sup> Battalions of that brigade were augmented by the 2<sup>nd</sup>/14<sup>th</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> 16<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>/27<sup>th</sup> Battalions from the 21<sup>st</sup> Brigade. The invasion force also comprised the Divisional Cavalry Regiment, the 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Field Regiments, two Anti-Tank Batteries, and the 2<sup>nd</sup>/5<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>/6<sup>th</sup> Field Companies. Having provided the majority of the Allied troops used to invade the Vichy French territories of Syria and Lebanon. Then, it was used to garrison Syria and Lebanon until sent back to Australia in early 1942 because of Japan's entry into the war.
2. This brigade was formed in Australia. On arrival in Egypt, it was sent to Tobruk to act as the garrison there. With the German advance into Libya, the brigade was joined by the 9<sup>th</sup> Australian Infantry Division, and came under command during the period of the siege. It returned to the command of this formation after it was evacuated from Tobruk and replaced with units from the 70<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

## SOURCES:

Primary Sources

AWM, Australian War Diaries.

Available at: <https://www.awm.gov.au/collection/digitised-records/>

British Official Histories

- PLAYFAIR, Major General I. S. O. *History of the Second World War United Kingdom Military Series The Mediterranean and Middle East Volume I The Early Successes against Italy [to May 1941]* (London, H.M.S.O., 1954 – Republished by: The Naval & Military Press Ltd., 2004) [ISBN 1-845740-65-3]
- PLAYFAIR, Major General I. S. O. *History of the Second World War United Kingdom Military Series The Mediterranean and Middle East Volume II The Germans come to the help of their Ally [1941]* (London, H.M.S.O., 1954 – Republished by: The Naval & Military Press Ltd., 2004) [ISBN 1-845740-66-1]

PLAYFAIR, Major General I. S. O. *History of the Second World War United Kingdom Military Series The Mediterranean and Middle East Volume III British Fortunes reach their Lowest Ebb [September 1941 to September 1942]* (London, H.M.S.O., 1954 – Republished by: The Naval & Military Press Ltd., 2004) [ISBN 1-845740-67-X]

#### Secondary Sources

BLAXLAND, Gregory *Objective Egypt* (London, Frederick Muller Ltd., 1966)  
LATIMER, Jon *Operation Compass 1940* (Oxford, Osprey Publishing, 2000) [ISBN 1 85532 967 0]  
THOMPSON, Julian (ed.) *Forgotten Voices Desert Victory* (London, Imperial War Museum and Ebury Press, 2011) [ISBN 978-0-0919-3857-4]