

Appendix 2: The militia strategy

Conflict at whatever level is never a one-sided activity. s33(a)(iii)

The opposition to Australian forces conducting operations in East Timor in 1999 and 2000 were, of course, those agents and organisations seeking to thwart their mission s33(a)(iii). In the case of Operation Faber this invariably equated to unduly influencing the outcome of the 'popular consultation'. For INTERFET, it was represented by the s33(a)(iii) forces and factors that hindered its mission – primarily to create and maintain a secure environment in East Timor in preparation for the establishment of a traditional UN peacekeeping operation.

The complicating factor for ADF operations in East Timor in 1999-2000 was that such opposing forces were varied, s33(a)(iii) in terms of their objectives and command arrangements, and transformed in their nature and purpose as the year progressed. More complicated still is the fact that the documentary and oral sources that would usually be available with which to analyse this opposition are not available to the Official History project. Even if such a record still exists, which is doubtful given the nature of that opposition and its activities, it is not accessible. What follows, therefore, is neither definitive nor comprehensive. It cannot be an evidence-based 'history' of the 'militia strategy' in any truly scholarly sense. What is possible, however, with the benefit of hindsight and a wide range of indirect sources, is to build an indicative landscape. Such a methodology, inevitably bereft of tactical detail in certain aspects, makes it no less accurate in generalisation and conclusion. The militia strategy is clear and comprehensible in all respects that matter. Australian operations in response to the East Timor crisis on 1999-2000 are caused, framed and shaped by it.

Introduction

In mid-May 1999, DFAT officer s47(f)(1) sent a cable from his post in Lisbon to Canberra, containing his report of a conversation he had had with s33(a)(iii) who had fled Timor for Macau and then Lisbon after s33(a)(iii) militia ransacked his house and murdered his son in mid-April, had plenty to say. s33(a)(iii) believes' s47(f) wrote to Canberra, s33(a)(iii) He explained that Jakarta's

s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii) admitted he had little direct evidence to support these accusations, but nonetheless proceeded to bombard s47(f) with a list of s33(a)(iii)

¹ [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] s22 'East Timor – Views of s33(a)(iii) 19 May 1999,

DFAT: s33(a)(iii)

² Ibid.

§33(a)(iii) . An incredulous §47(1)(1) could only express his scepticism that §33(a)(iii) couldn't possibly hope that such a strategy would work, indeed the international community would easily see through such a strategy and international sentiment would §33(a)(iii).³ §33(a)(iii) had no counter-argument, but stuck to his guns.

In the event, §33(a)(iii) version of events was more accurate than §47(1)(1) and Australian agencies more broadly, believed. Well before Indonesia formally signed the Tripartite Agreements on 5 May 1999, §33(a)(iii)

This was to be accomplished not by forcing the abandonment of the UNAMET ballot, as §33(a)(iii) suggested, but instead ensuring a vote for autonomy. §7

Yet §47(1)(1) scepticism about the efficacy of this 'militia strategy' was not misplaced. In the final equation the militia strategy failed to deliver a result for autonomy, and then failed again to provide the §33(a)(iii)

Where §47(1)(1) was wrong, however, was in the degree to which the strategy was transparent to the international community. While by mid-June reporting and analysis from DFAT and §7 that the TNI was implementing a strategy to prevent independence, it remained unclear if the aim of this strategy was to force the abandonment of the ballot or fix the vote; §33(a)(iii)

As one cable from the Australian Embassy in Jakarta in mid-June that laid out many of the key elements of the militia strategy noted, 'although we are not able to provide direct corroboration or evidence for most of what follows, we note that there has been a fair measure of consistency in claims made by our contacts'.⁷ Yet without firm evidence, analysts and policymakers were reluctant to come to firm conclusions; and faced with such uncertainty, foreign governments struggled to shape adequate responses to the militia strategy.

Objective and method

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Interview, §47(1) 7 June 2018

§7
§33(a)(iii)
⁷ [DFAT – SECRET] §33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: Indonesia's strategy', 21 June 1999, DFAT: §33(a)(iii)

S7
[REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

Fears of 'Balkanisation' were deeply held within the military and the wider Indonesian elite, and the internal upheavals of 1997 and 1998 appeared to justify them.¹⁰ As 1999 began, the TNI faced civil disturbances not only in the traditional trouble spots of Irian Jaya, East Timor and Aceh, but also Ambon and Kalimantan, while the intense urban unrest in the lead-up to Suharto's resignation was still fresh in their memory.¹¹ [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

[REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

On top of this deeply held belief in the need to preserve the Republic no matter the cost, many senior TNI officers had a deep personal investment in East Timor. Despite it traditionally being grouped with Irian Jaya and Aceh as 'trouble spots', in practice since 1975 East Timor had absorbed vastly greater numbers of troops, and cost the TNI much heavier casualties, than the other two provinces. Most of the TNI's senior leadership in late 1998 and early 1999 had seen service in East Timor, many multiple times. [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

[REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

Having devoted so much of their careers to securing the province, these men were, as one Australian diplomatic cable put it, [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

[REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

Yet while the TNI had decided that the prospect of an independent East Timor was unacceptable, [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

[REDACTED] the course of action that was chosen demonstrated they understood certain political realities that existed in early 1999. The TNI had publicly committed to the *reformasi* process [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

⁸ Interview, [REDACTED] s47(f), 21 December 2016; [REDACTED] S7

[REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

⁹ Interview, [REDACTED] S7, 8 December 2017.

¹⁰ Ibid.; interview, [REDACTED] s47(f), 21 December 2016.

¹¹ Ibid. [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

¹² [DFAT - SECRET] [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: Indonesian Policy', 2 June 1999, DFAT: [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

¹³ [DFAT - SECRET] [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: Indonesian evacuation plans', 26 August 1999, DFAT: [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

¹⁴ [DFAT - SECRET] [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: Indonesian evacuation plans', 26 August 1999, DFAT: [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

¹⁵ [DFAT - SECRET] [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: Indonesian Policy', 2 June 1999, DFAT: [REDACTED] s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii)

¹⁶ Indonesia's military leadership must also have been aware to some degree of the extent to which attempts to keep East Timor overtly by force would attract international sanction, both for the TNI and Indonesia. s33(a)(iii)

That the TNI settled on such a strategy reflected both the organisation's long history

s33(a)(iii)

During the 1965-66 campaign to destroy the Indonesian Communist Party, s33(a)(iii)

the *petrus* killings of criminals in the early 1980s and operations against opposition political parties and democracy activists in the 1990s, the military used proxies to disguise or obscure its involvement, manipulate political processes, or both.¹⁸ As historian John Roosa has written, 'the standard practice of Suharto's state from its inception in the 1965-66 massacres until its collapse in 1998 was to disperse violence and blur the lines between the state and the society ... Army generals repeatedly made violence appear ubiquitous, uncontrollable, and inscrutable.'¹⁹ s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii)

Such militia were known as Wanra (Perlawanan Rakyat, People's Resistance Force,) and were run by the intelligence apparatuses within Regional and District Military Commands.²¹ Mobilising, supporting and leading such groups in s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii)

¹⁶ 'Current Data on the Indonesian Military Elite: January 1, 1999-January 31, 2001', *Indonesia*, No. 71, p. 141.

¹⁷ Interview, s47(i) 7 June 2018,

¹⁸ For the use of proxies by the Indonesian military in 1965-66, and the way it successfully clouded the roots of this violence, see John Roosa, 'The State of Knowledge about an Open Secret: Indonesia's Mass Disappearances of 1965-66', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 75, No. 2, pp. 281-297. See also Geoffrey Robinson, *The Killing Season: A History of the Indonesian Massacres, 1965-66*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2018, and Jess Melvin, *The Army and the Indonesian Genocide: Mechanics of Mass Murder*, New York, Routledge, 2018. For a perspective on the events of 1969 and 1974-75 based primarily on Indonesian sources see Ken Conboy, *Kopassus: Inside Indonesia's Special Forces*, Jakarta, Equinox Publishing, 2003. For an account of *petrus* see Joshua Barker, 'State of Fear: Controlling the Criminal Contagion in Suharto's New Order', *Indonesia*, No. 66, pp. 6-43. For a wider account of these episodes see Benedict Anderson (ed.), *Violence and the State in Suharto's Indonesia*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2001.

¹⁹ J. Roosa, 'Violence and the Suharto Regime's Wonderland', *Critical Asian Studies*, Vol. 35, No. 2, p. 317.

²⁰ [DEFENCE - SECRET] s33(a)(iii) 24 September 1999, s33(a)(iii)

²¹ [AFP - RESTRICTED] 'Indonesia: Civilian Security Forces', 1 March 1999, s33(a)(iii) *Chega! Volume I Part 4*, pp. 369-70.

s33(a)(iii)

Yet while such a strategy would seem to Western eyes to be aimed at defending Indonesia from an external threat, in practice it was used extensively against internal enemies, and nowhere more so than East Timor. s33(a)(iii)

KOPASSUS had raised a succession of East Timorese military-auxiliary groups. Early efforts included Tonsus (Special Platoon), Tim Nuklir (Nuclear Team), Tim Morok (Wild Team), and Asahan Team.²³ These groups were raised on an ad hoc basis by individual KOPASSUS teams with the intention of gaining access to Timorese language skills, local knowledge of terrain, s33(a)(iii)

Beginning in the early 1980s, however, groups such as Tim Alfa, Tim Saka and Tim Sera were placed on a more permanent footing. By 1998, each district in East Timor had its own Wanra group, all of which were integrated with KOPASSUS paracommando companies and military intelligence (SGI) personnel as part of Task Force Tribuana.²⁵ Although some of these groups remained largely composed of civilian auxiliaries, others such as Tim Saka were essentially full-time professionals. s33(a)(iii)

Beyond these Wanra groups, the TNI had also shown a long willingness to recruit civilians into even less formal arrangements. Dating back to the 1965-66 campaign against the PKI, and most prominently associated with the *petrus* killings, s33(a)(iii)

The *petrus* killings (*penembakan misterius*, 'mysterious' shootings) had seen thousands of petty criminals murdered in Java and Sumatra in the mid-1980s. Although as the name *petrus* suggests these murders had notionally been committed by a mysterious unknown force, in practice they were widely understood at the time to have been committed by the security forces – a fact later freely admitted by Suharto.²⁷ Those responsible for the murders were themselves usually criminals, s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii)

²² [DEFENCE – SECRET] s33(a)(iii), 24 September 1999, s33(a)(iii).

²³ *Chega!* p. 368.

²⁴ Conboy, *Kopassus*, pp. 266-74.

²⁵ 'Resistance Forces in the Province of East Timor for 1997/1998', SLNSW: MLMSS 7714, Box 13, Folder 155 [2].

²⁶ [DFAT – SECRET] s33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: A Kopassus view of the militia', 14 July 1999, DFAT:

s33(a)(iii)
²⁷ D. Kingsbury, *Power Politics and the Indonesian Military*, London, RoutledgeCurzon, 2003, p. 28 and p. 249 n12; J. Barker, 'State of Fear: Controlling the Criminal Contagion in Suharto's New Order', *Indonesia*, No. 66, pp. 6-43.

²⁸ D. Killcullen, 'The Political Consequences of Military Operations in Indonesia 1945-99', p. 108.

s33(a)(iii)

By the time it folded, however, the TNI within East Timor and the Udayana/IX command were already pushing for the creation of new militia groups to counteract the rising tide of pro-independence activity in East Timor. s33(a)(iii)

The earliest of these new militia groups – Besa Merah Putih (Red and White Iron, BMP) in Liquica and Mahidi in Ainaro – emerged in December 1998 and began operations in earnest in January 1999.

s33(a)(iii)

²⁹ [DFAT – RESTRICTED] s33(a)(iii), 'Indonesia: New Military Commander East Timor', 4 June 1997, s33(a)(iii); C. Fernandes, *The Independence of East Timor*, p. 141.

³⁰ s47(f) 'Penggunaan Dana Unit-Unit Usaha', 27 Mar 96; s22; S. Moore, 'The Indonesian Military's Last Years in East Timor: An Analysis of its Secret Documents', *Indonesia*, 72 (October 2001), p. 29; Fernandes, *The Independence of East Timor*, pp. 141-43.

³¹ [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] s7 'Indonesia: East Timor: s33(a)(iii) views on politics and security', 2 May 1997, s33(a)(iii)

³² [OPEN SOURCE – UNCLAS] Defendant's Statement in Judgement of Eurico Guterres, Indonesian Ad Hoc Tribunal for East Timor, s22; S. Moore, 'The Indonesian Military's Last Years in East Timor: An Analysis of its Secret Documents', *Indonesia*, 72 (October 2001), p. 29.

³³ [DFAT – RESTRICTED] s7, 'Indonesia: New Military Commander East Timor', 4 June 1997, DFAT: s33(a)(iii)

³⁴ [OPEN SOURCE – UNCLAS] Indictment of Wiranto *et al.*, UNTAET General Prosecutor, 24 February 2003, p. 5; s22

§33(a)(iii) [REDACTED]
 §33(a)(iii) [REDACTED] This is possible, but it seems more likely that raising of 'new' militia groups in East Timor in late 1998 reflected the Indonesian military defaulting to what it was most comfortable with. §33(a)(iii) [REDACTED]

§33(a)(iii) [REDACTED] 'With the exception at [sic] some localised and temporary attempts at developing a dialogue with the locals and building trust, its main political response so far has been to try to create informer networks and front organisations to counter the broad anti-Indonesian trends among youth.'³⁷

What is clear is that, after Habibie's announcement, the militia strategy began to take on a much more defined shape. While the modalities of the consultation were not agreed until May, Habibie's words made it clear that there would be some kind of democratic political process – §33(a)(iii) [REDACTED] Subsequent UNTAET war crime indictments map out the way in which the message coming from TNI commanders to would-be militia leaders in February 1999 became more urgent and more specific, evolving from broad calls to protect integration to instructions that began to map out chains of command, forms of support and strategies to use.³⁸

Mobilising the militia

Having committed to a strategy designed to manipulate the ballot and produce a pro-autonomy outcome, the TNI then had to set about implementing it. The first step was putting in place appropriate command arrangements. §33(a)(iii) [REDACTED]

§33(a)(iii) [REDACTED]

§33(a)(iii) [REDACTED]
³⁰ [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] 'East Timor: Possible Solutions: Some Initial Ideas', 17 July 1997, DFAT: §33(a)(iii) [REDACTED]

³⁷ Ibid.
³⁸ [OPEN SOURCE – UNCLAS] Indictment of Wiranto *et al.*, UNTAET General Prosecutor, 24 February 2003, p. 5; §22 [OPEN SOURCE – UNCLAS] Indictment of Martins *et al.*, UNTAET General Prosecutor, 16 November 2001, p. 10; §22 [OPEN SOURCE – UNCLAS] Indictment against Burhanuddin Siagian *et al.*, UNTAET General Prosecutor, 15 July 2004, p. 15; §22 [REDACTED]

³⁹ 'Current Data on the Indonesian Military Elite: January 1, 1998-January 31, 1999', *Indonesia*, No. 67, p. 140; 'Current Data on the Indonesian Military Elite: January 1, 1999-January 31, 2001', *Indonesia*, No. 71, p. 141; Kingsbury, *Power Politics and the Indonesian Military*, p. 120.

s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii)

Yet, as already noted, Damiri was heavily involved personally in the beginnings of the militia strategy in the second half of 1998; and while his direct involvement faded in 1999 s33(a)(iii) that of his headquarters did not. The chief of staff of KODAM IX/Udayana was Brigadier Mahidin Simbolon, a KOPASSUS officer with a long history in East Timor that included command of KOPASSUS SGI in the province (where he was involved in the capture of Xanana Gusmao in 1992) and command of KOREM 164. s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii) Suratman began meeting with pro-integration leaders from November 1998, urging them to form militia groups. Below him, the existing territorial structure was used to turn these instructions into a reality. KODIM commanders met with district leaders (*bupati*) and local s33(a)(iii)

likely reported directly to Major General Makarim rather than his direct superior, Colonel Suratman.⁴⁵ Sudrajat probably played a key role in

⁴⁰ [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] s22 s33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: Military situation', 8 March 1999, DFAT: s33(a)(iii) [DFAT – SECRET] Minute, 'Assessment of East Timorese militias in February 1999', 31 August 1999, s33(a)(iii)

⁴¹ [DFAT – SECRET] s22 s33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: Army Attaché visit to East Timor', 21 July 1999, s33(a)(iii)

⁴² Kingsbury, *Power Politics and the Indonesian Military*, p. 120; Hamish McDonald, 'Spy Intercepts Confirm Australia's Bloody East Timor Secret', *Sydney Morning Herald*, 14 March 2002.

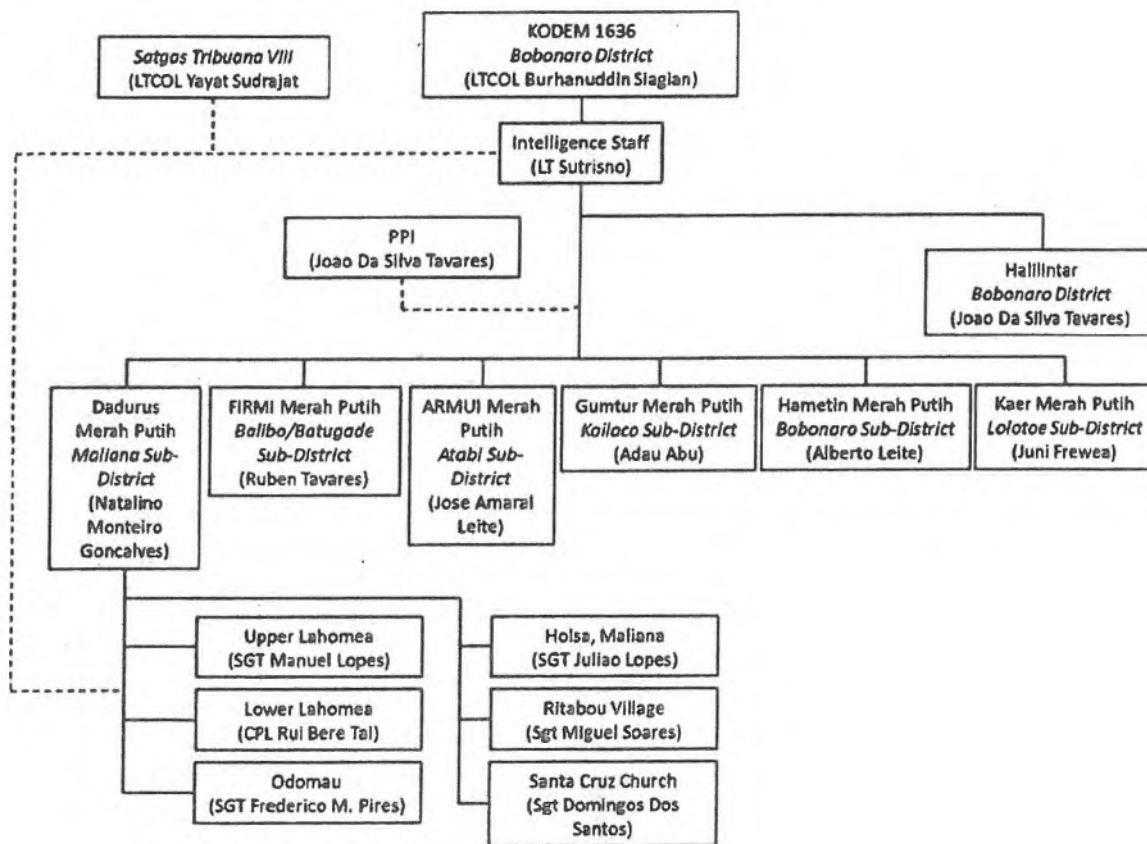
⁴³ 'Current Data on the Indonesian Military Elite: January 1, 1998-January 31, 1999', *Indonesia*, No. 67, p. 140.

⁴⁴ s47(f) s22 *Masters of Terror*, s22

⁴⁵ [DEFENCE – SECRET] s33(a)(iii) 24 September 1999, s33(a)(iii) [DEFENCE – SECRET] s33(a)(iii)

proceedings, and is alleged to have been responsible for the delivery of arms and specific instructions to militia leaders throughout the province.⁴⁶

An example of this structure in practice was the militia group Dadurus Merah Putih (Red and White Tornado, DMP), which was active in Bobonaro district. UNTAET indictments allege that the decision to form the group was made at a meeting at Joao Tavares' house in Maliana on 17 April 1999. Those present included Tavares, his son Jorge, the local district military commander, Lieutenant Colonel Burhanuddin Siagian, the district intelligence officer Lieutenant Sutrisno, and a member of Tribuana VIII known only as Rizal. While the group would be commanded by local pro-integrationist Natalino Monterio, and Jorge Tavares would have a prominent leadership role, branches at village levels would be commanded by TNI non-commissioned officers, all East Timorese, drawn



The use of local pro-integration notables to form militia groups was a small but important component of the militia strategy.

Joao Tavares was a useful example of this phenomenon: he had led the KOPASSUS-backed

⁴⁵ [OPEN SOURCE – UNCLAS] 15 September 1999, [redacted]; [OPEN SOURCE – UNCLAS] 'Judgement of Yayat Sudrajat', Documents from the Indonesian Ad Hoc Tribunal for East Timor.

⁴⁶ [OPEN SOURCE – UNCLAS] Indictment of Wiranto *et al.*, UNTAET General Prosecutor, 24 February 2003, p. 7; [redacted]

⁴⁷ [OPEN SOURCE – UNCLAS] Indictment against Burhanuddin Siagian *et al.*, UNTAET General Prosecutor, 15 July 2004, pp. 19-20; [redacted]

partisan group, Halilintar (lightning), § 33(a)(7) served as the *bupati* of Bobonaro district, and grown wealthy as a consequence of the Indonesian occupation.⁴⁸ Tavares protégées and family members subsequently led militia groups throughout Bobonaro. While part of the family fortune helped resurrect Halilintar and fund other groups in this district, others who were recruited included former Gada Paksi members, partisans and minor civil servants. The presence of such men buttressed the Indonesian narrative that there was a genuine contest in East Timor between pro-integration and pro-independence forces, § 33(a)(iii)

Yet while such men were an important part of insulating the TNI from international criticism, their own personal power and influence should not be overstated. Most participated in the militia strategy because they faced losing everything if independence triumphed, and as local East Timorese they knew full-well that in the context of a freely-held ballot it would.⁴⁹ Yet as violence increased, many found themselves trapped. The activities in which they were participating meant they would never be accepted in an independent East Timor, yet it also became clear over time that they were still on track to lose – meaning more violence was needed to win the ballot, an increase that in turn further decreased their chances of reconciliation with the independence movement. § 33(a)(iii)

§ 33(a)(iii)

§ 33(a)(iii)

⁴⁸ Interview, § 47(f) 12 April 2018; interview, § 47(f) 11 January 2017, Perth and Canberra; *Chega!* p. 366.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*; interview, § 47(f) 8 February 2017.

⁵⁰ Interview, § 47(f) 11 January 2017.

⁵¹ [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] § 33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: Situation in Ermera Regency', 14 August 1999, DFAT § 33(a)(iii); interview, § 47(f) 8 February 2017.

⁵² Interview, § 47(f) 24 May 2018.

⁵³ P. Bartu, 'The Militia, The Military, and the People of Bobonaro District', pp. 4-5; § 22 interview, § 47(f) 12 April 2018

s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(ii), s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii)

to spot.

Compared with the Timorese militiamen surrounding them s33(a)(iii)

The role of s33(a)(iii)

groups.⁶³ In some instances

non-commissioned officers and enlisted personnel from within the territorial structure were also used as low-level militia leaders. s33(a)(iii)

⁵⁴ P. Bartu, 'The Militia, The Military, and the People of Bobonaro District.', pp. 4-5 ; s22

⁵⁵ Indictment against Burhanuddin Siagian *et al.*, UNTAET General Prosecutor, 15 July 2004, pp. 19-20;

⁵⁶ Indictment of Martins *et al.*, UNTAET General Prosecutor, 16 November 2001, pp. 2-4 and pp. 10-11; s22 Indictment against Richard Hutadjulu *et al.*, UNTAET General Prosecutor, 7 October 2003, p. 9; s22

⁵⁷ Indictment against Joni Marques *et al.*, UNTAET General Prosecutor, 6 March 2001, pp. 6-9.

⁵⁸ Indictment of Sutrisno *et al.*, UNTAET General Prosecutor, 24 June 2002.

⁵⁹ Interview, s47(f) 11 January 2017.

⁶⁰ Interview, s47(f) 24 May 2018.

⁶¹ Interview, s47(f) 5 April 2018.

⁶² [DEFENCE - SECRET] s33(a)(iii) , 24 September 1999, s33(a)(iii)

⁶³ [DFAT - CONFIDENTIAL] s33(a)(ii) 'East Timor: Situation in Ermera Regency', 14 August 1999, DFAT s33(a)(iii) Interview, s47(f) 11 January 2017.

⁶⁴ [DEFENCE - SECRET] s33(a)(iii) , 24 September 1999, s33(a)(iii) [DEFENCE - SECRET] s33(a)(iii)

15 September 1999, s33(a)(iii)

⁶⁵ Interview, s47(f) 24 May 2018.

Having put in place the structure needed to coordinate the militia strategy and raise, train, sustain and control militia groups at a local level, the TNI set about recruiting. Those who participated in militia activities in 1999 could generally be divided into three categories.⁶⁵ The first was those who were deeply committed, for a variety of reasons, to the pro-integration cause. Most had previously served with militia groups, some dating back to 1975, or within the TNI. The former had long-term relationships with the notables mobilised to lead the new groups while the while the latter were, by dint of their service, committed to the unitary Republic.⁶⁶ These men were often entrusted with modern weapons, used as leaders or cadres in 'new' militia groups, and reserved for important military or political tasks. During their brief entanglements with militia in September and October 1999 Australian soldiers learned to recognise such men from their bearing, their lack of fear when captured, and the mementos they had picked up during their service.⁶⁷

The second category consisted of those who did not have a deep commitment to integration but were willingly recruited into militia groups. §33(a)(iii)

§33(a)(iii)

§33(a)(iii) Observing this type of militiaman in Dili in late August, the Australian consulate noted that their 'level of political sophistication is poor and a §33(a)(iii) appears to predominate'.⁶⁹ §33(a)(iii)

§33(a)(iii)

§33(a)(iii)

⁶⁵ Bartu and Killcullen both describe three tiers of militia recruit. Bartu, 'The Militia, The Military, and the People of Bobonaro District.', pp. 13-14; §22 D. Killcullen, 'The Political Consequences of Military Operations in Indonesia 1945-99', pp. 133-34.

⁶⁶ Interview, §47(f) 11 January 2017; interview, §47(f) 24 May 2018.

⁶⁷ D. Killcullen, 'The Political Consequences of Military Operations in Indonesia 1945-99', p. 139.

⁶⁸ Interview, §47(f) 23 February 2018; interview, §47(f) 12 April 2018.

⁶⁹ [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] §33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: Latest Developments', 28 August 1999, DFAT

§33(a)(iii) §47(f) 24 May 2018.

⁷¹ [CONFIDENTIAL – DEFENCE] MLO: Forces Info Brief, §33(a)(iii); [DEFENCE – CONFIDENTIAL] 'Debrief Report – Dili 03', 7 September 1999, §33(a)(iii) interview, §47(f) 8 February 2017; interview, §47(f) 23 February 2018; interview, §47(f) 23 November 2017.

⁷² Interview, §47(f) 15 January 2018.

⁷³ Interview, §47(f) 24 May 2018; interview, §47(f) 12 April 2018,

s33(a)(iii)

The first of the 'new' militia groups, Mahidi and BMP, were formed in late 1998 in Ainaro and Liquica district respectively, and both served as something of a template for the groups that followed. Mahidi was led by Cancio Lopes De Carvalho, with his older brother Nemesto serving as his deputy and 'intelligence officer'. The brothers were in many ways typical of the kind of men s33(a)(iii) to lead militia groups. Their father had been *liurai* (chieftain) of Cassa village, and Cancio had deep ties with the military that stretched back to serving as an auxiliary during his childhood. In the aftermath of the 1991 Santa Cruz massacre he had led a gang in Ainaro that intimidated independence supporters, and as a minor bureaucrat had spent time in Kupang, and married a West Timorese woman.⁷⁵ Headquartered in Cassa (of which Nemesto was now the village chief), Mahidi was divided into 'companies' across Ainaro and the Zumalai sub-district of Covalima. Commanders for these companies were former TNI soldiers or serving POLRI officers, while key subordinates were villages chiefs, civil servants and in one case a former Gada Paksi member.⁷⁶

After Mahidi and BMP a wave of groups formally came into existence throughout the province in April, although most had begun operations earlier than that. Key amongst these was Laksunar in Covalima, Aitarak in Dili, Darah Integrasi in Ermera, Mahadomi in Manatuto, AHI in Aileu, ABLAI in Manufahi, Sakunar in Oecussi, and 59/75 Junior in Viqueque. The story of these groups largely mirrored that of Mahidi and BMP. s33(a)(iii)

in Manatuto and Manufahi, serving and former members of the 'old' militia groups, Morok and Makitit, respectively were tapped to form the core of new groups.⁷⁷

Although additional militia group names would emerge as the countdown to the ballot continued, these groups were either sub-branches of those established in this December 1998-

⁷⁴ See for example the judgement of Joseph Leki by the UNTAET Special Panel for Serious Crimes in 2001.

s33(a)(iii)

UNTAET Special Panel for Serious Crimes, 'Judgement of Joseph Leki', 11 June 2001, s33(a)(iii)

⁷⁵ *Chega!* p. 1635; 'Cancio Lopes de Carvalho', *Masters of Terror*, s22

⁷⁶ [DEFENCE - SECRET INTERFET] 'East Timorese militia structure & alliances', 25 November 1999, s33(a)(iii); UNTAET Special Panel for Serious Crimes 06-2003, 'Indictment of Cancio Lopes de Carvalho *et al.*', 10 December 2004, s33(a)(iii); UNTAET Special Panel for Serious Crimes 11-2004, 'Indictment of Cesario Tilman and Lieutenant Julius Adu', 15 December 2004, s33(a)(iii); and UNTAET Special Panel for Serious Crimes 04-2004, 'Indictment of Vasco Da Cruz *et al.*', 29 November 2004, s33(a)(iii)

⁷⁷ 'Indictment for Vidal D. Sarmiento *et al.*', UNTAET General Prosecutor, 6 November 2002, s33(a)(iii); 'Indictment for Nazario Vital Dos Santos Corte Real *et al.*', UNTAET General Prosecutor, 17 December 2004.

April 1999 period or were very small. The groups listed above, alongside some of the 'old' Wanra militia groups (Halilintar, Morok, Makikit, Sera, Saka, Alfa and Railakan), were those that executed the militia strategy in 1999. Their exact numerical strength remains open to question. A document provided to General Cosgrove by General Syhanakri on 19 September that provided a rough TNI order of battle in the province estimated total membership of the 'new' militia groups to be 4700, while the overall strength of the Wanra groups was seven companies. The reliability of these estimates is open to question; there are no groups listed for Bobonaro, despite this being a hub of militia activity; there is at least one case of repetition (Jati Merah Putih was generally recognised as a pseudonym for Tim Alfa); and the extent to which the TNI hoped to deceive INTERFET at this point as to the strength of the militia is unclear.⁷⁸ It also remains open to question how many members of a militia group were actually prepared to participate in violence and how many were simply marking time, or indeed had already deserted but were still on the rolls. Australian CIVPOL officers in Ermera estimated that only ten per cent of Darah Integrasi members were genuinely committed to the cause of integration, and UNTAET war crime indictments make clear that a great deal of violence was committed by comparatively small groups of militia members in each district.⁷⁹

The militia strategy

§33(a)(iii)

Subsequent militia violence took a number of forms that were also mutually reinforcing. Between January and May 1999 militia groups actively targeted known supporters of independence for detention, assault, sexual violence, torture and murder. Their houses were often destroyed and family members faced sustained violence themselves, including sexual assault. In the western districts population control measures were enacted including the conscription of males and the forcible relocation of outlying villages into areas more closely controlled by the TNI.⁸⁰ The worst acts of violence, however, were reserved for those who dared to resist. At the outset of the militia campaign, a peaceful protest at a Mahidi checkpoint in early January was greeted with a volley of gunfire that left several protesters

⁷⁸ [DEFENCE – UNCLASSIFIED] Indonesian Military Armed Forces Martial Law Authority East Timor, 'Basic Information About East Timor', 19 September 1999, §33(a)(iii)

⁷⁹ [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] §33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: Situation in Ermera Regency', 14 August 1999, §33(a)(iii)

⁸⁰ The final report of the Timor-Leste Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation (CAVR), *Chega!*, provides exhaustive details of the various types of violence. §33(a)(iii)

dead and caused many to flee. The Liquica church massacre in April was also clearly retaliation for nearby villagers having forcefully resisted militia incursions over the previous days.⁸¹

This violence had a number of outcomes. The first was the almost complete suppression of the independence movement in the western districts and its severe degradation elsewhere in the province. After visiting East Timor in early May, Australian diplomats noted that: 'Pro-integration militias are targeting individuals from the political side of CNRT ... this reflects an obvious intention to cripple CNRT's ability to campaign before the ballot rather than a desire to protect themselves from FALINTIL.'⁸² Throughout the province, CNRT offices had begun to close and key figures had gone into hiding or fled the country altogether.⁸³ The impact on those who remained was considerable. 'The deputy head of CNRT, David Ximenes, seemed personally exhausted and pessimistic', the Australians noted.⁸⁴ 'His own office, which was previously occupied by tens of staff and supporters, is now abandoned. He changes his sleeping location every night.'⁸⁵ After a tour of Ainaro and Covalima in late June, a dejected Peter Bartu noted that it seemed inconceivable the pro-independence movement would be able to mount of any kind of campaign in the west in the lead-up to the ballot.⁸⁶

The second outcome was a clear message to the population of the consequences of voting for independence. Militia and government leadership at all levels were explicit in their message to the population: a vote for independence would result in mass destruction and death, of the kind already demonstrated by the militia.⁸⁷ 'Those who don't follow autonomy will be finished', thundered the Bobonaro DANDIM, Lieutenant Colonel Siagian, during an April rally in Bobonaro. 'I will be the last person to leave, but before we leave we will destroy this place.'⁸⁸ Patrick Lnu, UNAMET's senior humanitarian affairs officer, noted in June that the level of daily violence to that point had convinced the ordinary East Timorese that they would face serious consequences after the ballot.⁸⁹ While this clearly did not ultimately deter a pro-independence result, it did have second-order effects. Thousands of Timorese had fled their homes and were living in the hills or other towns by the time UNAMET arrived, making the task of voter registration all the more difficult.⁹⁰

⁸¹ [UNCLASSIFIED] Testimony of Witness 21, Pastor Rafael dos Santos, in Judgement of Major General Adam Damiri, Indonesian Ad Hoc Tribunal for East Timor, s33(a)(iii)

⁸² [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] s33(a)(iii), 'East Timor: Embassy Visit 6-13 May', 16 May 1999, s33(a)(iii)

⁸³ s33(a)(iii) [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] s22

'East Timor: Recent Developments, 12 May', 12 May 1999, s33(a)(iii)
⁸⁴ [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] s33(a)(iii), 'East Timor: Embassy Visit 6-13 May', 16 May 1999, s33(a)(iii)

⁸⁵ [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] s33(a)(iii), 'East Timor: Embassy Visit 6-13 May', 16 May 1999, s33(a)(iii)

⁸⁶ [DFAT – SECRET] s47(f) Minute, 'East Timor: Conversation with s47(f) 28 June 1999, s33(a)(iii)

⁸⁷ [UN – UNCLASSIFIED] s47(f) 'Situation Report – Humanitarian Affairs', 20 July 1999, s33(a)(iii)

⁸⁸ Indictment against Burhanuddin Siagian *et al.*, UNTAET General Prosecutor, 15 July 2004, p. 20; AWM390 1/10/14.

⁸⁹ [DFAT – SECRET] s33(a)(iii), 'East Timor: Conversation with s47(f) head of UNAMET', 12 June 1999, s33(a)(iii)

⁹⁰ Interview s47(f) 24 May 2018.

Killings and disappearances of civilians by militia and the TNI in 1999, as reported to the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor (CAVR)

Location	Jan-May		Jun-Aug		Sept-Oct		Total reported fatal violation
	Killed	Missing	Killed	Missing	Killed	Missing	
Lautem	4		1		41		46
Viqueque	4		3		4		11
Baucau	3	3			13		19
Manatuto	5	1			19		25
Manufahi	8	1			13		22
Ainaro	5				29		34
Aileu					15		15
Ermera	30		2	1	12		45
Covalima	22	10	1		98		131
Bobonaro	52		9		81		142
Liquica	50		3		6		61
Dili	24		6		52		82
Oecussi	1		4	1	118		125
West Timor					27		27
Sub Totals	223		34		528		785

Source: *Chega! The report of the commission for reception, truth, and reconciliation Timor-Leste summary*, Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation Timor-Leste, 2005, p. 1062.

The arrival of UNAMET served to temporarily lower militia violence (see Table 1) but not extinguish it. §33(a)(iii)

§33(a)(iii) Faced this with this new paradigm, the militia adjusted their tactics. Violence continued to be deployed, but at a lower level than in previous months. Intimidation, non-lethal violence and the disruption of pro-independence activities were routine. §33(a)(iii)

The second component of the post-UNAMET militia strategy was an increasing emphasis on the 'socialisation' process designed to convince the East Timorese of the merits of autonomy. Socialisation was defined in one Indonesian government document as 'a campaign to educate the public ... as to details of the wide-ranging autonomy package being offered to the people of East Timor'.⁹² This program of community education in Manufahi District aimed 'to provide the community with an opportunity to gain a correct and comprehensive understanding of the details of the broad-ranging autonomy package in anticipation of the popular consultation scheduled for August 1999'.⁹³ These 'opportunities' consisted of programs of public meetings §33(a)(iii)

⁹¹ [DFAT - SECRET] §33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: Conversation with §47(f) head of UNAMET', 12 June 1999, §33(a)(iii)

⁹² Nazario Jose Tilman de Andrade, 'Proposal for the Socialisation of the Special Autonomy Package in the Manufahi Regency', 6 May 1999, MLMSS 7714, Box 3, Folder 4.

⁹³ Ibid.

§33(a)(iii) In addition to bankrolling militia groups and providing ample opportunities for graft, the socialisation funds were also used to purchase food and humanitarian supplies for locals and to repair housing that had, as one document put it, 'as a result of disturbances in the Manufahi regency ... been burnt down and either severely or slightly damaged'.⁹⁴

That the East Timorese population was unlikely to be particularly grateful to the Indonesian government for the provision of aid designed to ameliorate a crisis that even Indonesian government documents tacitly acknowledged had been deliberately manufactured does not appear to have occurred to those funding socialisation programs. §33(a)(iii)

In a letter to Alexander Downer in February, militia leaders Cancio de Carvalho and Eurico Guterres wrote: 'We fight for nothing, but peace and prosperity for our beloved ones who are politically immature and vulnerable for [sic] political manipulation.'⁹⁶ The architects of the militia strategy believed that a concerted §33(a)(iii) effort, backed by a wave of material aid, would convince East Timorese of the benefits of autonomy. Given their desperate circumstances many East Timorese were only too happy to play along, accepting the offered aid, while keeping their real political aspirations to themselves.⁹⁷

The third component, enacted only after May, was the effort to hinder UNAMET in its task. This in itself consisted of a number of elements. The most extreme of these were the attacks against UN staff in early July in Liquica, Maliana and Viqueque. Given the existence of an internal order within the TNI for external UN personnel not to be hurt, it seems likely that these attacks §33(a)(iii) - were designed to intimidate UN workers, dissuade East Timorese from signing up as locally engaged staff, and simply to disrupt the extremely tight ballot schedule. Once it became clear that this level of violence generated too much interest from international observers and the UN itself, different approaches were used. Low-level intimidation of UNAMET personnel by militia throwing stones, making threatening gestures or brandishing weapons, was constant thereafter.⁹⁸ Although in retrospect directions to avoid harming UN personnel was largely obeyed up until the ballot, this was hardly known by those personnel at the time. Even at the lowest level UN staff were frustrated as a matter of policy. UNAMET personnel were often told, for example, that their movements required POLRI or BRIMOB escort for their own safety. Escorts, however, were frequently denied in an effort to prevent movement, and when they were allowed they were not always helpful. While UNAMET personnel had relationships with their POLRI counterparts that ranged from difficult to friendly, the presence of heavily-armed Indonesian police was rarely conducive to open discussions with the local population. Some Australian CIVPOL officers resorted to deliberate efforts to distract their POLRI escorts so that other members of their party were able to sneak away and talk to Timorese unhindered.⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Samuel Moore, 'The Indonesian Military's Last Years in East Timor: An Analysis of its Secret Documents', *Indonesia*, 72 (October 2001), pp. 34-35.

⁹⁶ [DFAT - UNCLASSIFIED] Letter from §47(i) and §47(i) 25 February 1999, §33(a)(iii)

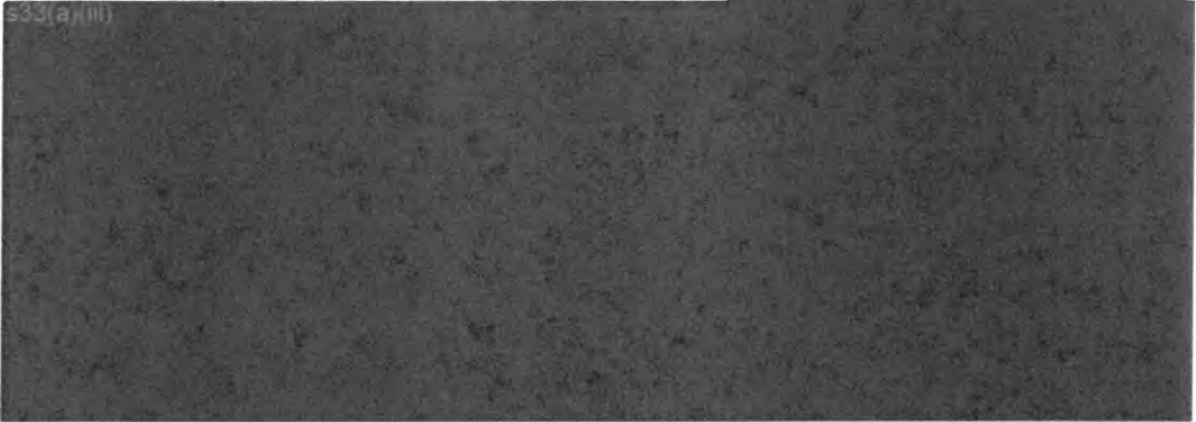
⁹⁷ Interview, §47(i) 23 February 2018.

⁹⁸ Interview, §47(i) 23 February 2018; interview, §47(i) 7 March 2018; interview, §47(i) 31 January 2018.

⁹⁹ Interview, §47(i) 7 March 2018; interview, §47(i) 31 January 2018; Interview, §47(i) 24 May 2018.

The final element of the effort to hinder UNAMET was a massive s33(a)(iii) campaign designed to discredit the organisation, and by extension the ballot, as biased and unreliable. A deluge of reports from the Indonesian government and P3TT in particular highlighted incidents as evidence of the bias of the UN, and the ballot as part of a broader conspiracy to prise East Timor away from Indonesia. s33(a)(iii)

s33(a)(iii)



S7



S7



¹⁰⁰ [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] UNAMET, 'Situation Report – Humanitarian Affairs', 20 July 1999, in Fax, 'Humanitarian issues in East Timor', 21 July 1999, s33(a)(iii)

¹⁰¹ [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] UNAMET, 'Situation Report – Humanitarian Affairs', 20 July 1999, in Fax, 'Humanitarian issues in East Timor', 21 July 1999, s33(a)(iii)

S7



S7 [redacted] Yet uncertainty persisted as to whether the strategy was the product of a particular faction within the TNI, the extent to which it had wider support within the organisation, and the role of senior figures in Jakarta. On the one hand, many Australian observers found the idea of a 'rogue faction' not credible.

s33(a)(iii) [redacted]

S7 [redacted]
s33(a)(iii) [redacted]

Into this swirling debate was injected a stream of TNI misinformation that, in hindsight, seemed designed to project (perhaps even reinforce) the idea that any TNI support for the militia was the product of 'rogue factions'. The reaction to Air Vice Marshal Doug Riding's visit in June was particularly instructive. Rear Admiral Yoost Mengko spoke with Brigadier Molan several days after the visit, and read out a transcript of Riding's presentation that characterised the Australian accusations of TNI elements supporting the militia as a

S7 [redacted]

¹⁰⁶ [DFAT - CONFIDENTIAL] s33(a)(iii) [redacted] 'East Timor: Military situation', 8 March 1999, s33(a)(iii) [redacted]

¹⁰⁷ [DFAT - SECRET] s33(a)(iii) [redacted] 'East Timor: Army Attaché visit to East Timor', 21 July 1999, s33(a)(iii) [redacted]

s33(a)(iii) [redacted]
S7 [redacted]

¹¹¹ [DFAT - SECRET] s33(a)(iii) [redacted] 'TNI intentions in Timor', 10 September 1999, s33(a)(iii) [redacted]

'misunderstanding'.¹¹²

§33(a)(iii)

Conclusion

On 30 August, 91 per cent of registered East Timorese voters cast their ballots. On 4 September it was revealed that 78.5 per cent had voted for independence while 21.5 per cent wanted to stay within the Republic of Indonesia. It was an emphatic victory that left no room for doubt as to the will of the population. By any objective measure, the militia strategy had failed. This failure was fundamentally the product of the determination of the East Timorese people to express their right to independence, and the willingness of those within UNAMET and the wider UN hierarchy to proceed, despite the intense violence that surrounded them. Most East Timorese understood the enormous risks that they were taking, and the consequences that would befall them should they vote for independence. 'The Timorese constantly told me 'I know I might die for this, but I can't let my children grow up the way I did', DFAT officer Nore Hoogstad recalled. 'I think they knew that independence would win and that they'd pay a price, but regardless, most were not intimidated.'¹¹⁴ UNAMET staff withstood intimidation, threats and violence on a daily basis. Equally, the leadership of the UN mission in the province and the UN hierarchy in New York had the courage to continue with the ballot process, despite the lack of security and threats to UN lives and the East Timorese population.

That the militia strategy failed thanks to the bravery of the East Timorese and UNAMET emphasises, however, the extent to which the international community failed to devise a countermeasure to it. By the time UNAMET had finished its deployment and begun the electoral process in July, there was little doubt anywhere that mattered – in the districts, in Dili, in Canberra, in New York, in Jakarta and in Washington – that the TNI was orchestrating a strategy designed to somehow corrupt the ballot process in order to keep East Timor within the Republic of Indonesia. Yet the militia strategy introduced just enough uncertainty about who exactly was directing the violence, the extent to which it was controlled, §33(a)(iii) to stay the hand of the international community. The tools used to coerce Indonesia into allowing the INTERFET force into the province in September – the threats to cut economic assistance, of sanctions, and indeed of war crimes charges – stayed on the shelf, and as a result the violence continued. In this respect, at least and unfortunately, the militia strategy was successful.

¹¹² [DFAT – SECRET AUSTEO] §33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: TNI attitude to Australian representations', 24 June 1999, §33(a)(iii)

¹¹³ [DFAT – SECRET AUSTEO] §33(a)(iii) 'East Timor: TNI attitude to Australian representations', 24 June 1999, §33(a)(iii) [DFAT – CONFIDENTIAL] §33(a)(iii) 'East Timor. Follow up to the VCDF's representation', 30 June 1999, §33(a)(iii)

¹¹⁴ Interview, §47(f) 5 April 2018.