

Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War

In August 1962, Australia's initial military commitment to South Vietnam consisted of a team of 30 military advisers (Australian Army Training Team Vietnam or AATTV). Following the withdrawal of Australian combat forces by December 1971 and the eventual recall of the AATTV in December 1972, more than 50,000 Australian personnel had served in Vietnam. Of these, 2398 were wounded and 521 killed.

There is a wide selection of records registered with the National Archives which deal with Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War. Issues covered include the initial decision to send troops overseas, their eventual recall, the escalation in the numbers, conscription, objectors to the war etc.

Listed below are record series from select Australian government departments and agencies concerning the Vietnam War. Unless otherwise indicated records listed are held at the National Archives in Canberra.

Records of Australia's involvement in the Vietnam War

Department of Defence (CA 46)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Correspondence files</u>	1948–78	A1945
<u>Files relating to medical matters during the Vietnam conflict</u>	1964–72	A9647
<u>Army office operations branch files on Vietnam operations [1]</u>	1966–71	AWM109
<u>Correspondence files</u>	1967–73	A1946
<u>Commanders' war diaries of Special Air Service (SAS) Squadrons on service in South Vietnam</u>	1966–71	A6931
<u>Correspondence files – RAAF HQ, Saigon</u>	1965–72	A2049
<u>Miscellaneous Army Headquarters/Army Office record sets</u>	1973	A6923
<u>History record sets of the Army Historical/Research Staff</u>	1973–ongoing	A6932

Headquarters, Australian Force Vietnam (CA 5969)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Standard operating procedures (SOP) for various units [2]</u>	1964–72	C2635
<u>HQ Australian Force Vietnam (Saigon) records [1]</u>	1965–72	AWM98
<u>Vietnam soldier's personnel files [3]</u>	1965–72	B2371
<u>Standing orders/instructions for various units in Vietnam [2]</u>	1966–72	C2636
<u>After-action reports [2]</u>	1966–72	C2637

Headquarters, RAAF contingent (Vung Tau) (CA 1399)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Nominal rolls, briefings, details of operations and activity reports of RAAF squadrons in Vietnam</u>	1962–71	A10779
<u>Summaries of operational activities in Vietnam – statistical bulletins</u>	1967–71	A10780

Department of the Navy, Navy Office (CA 38)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Naval historical collection [1]</u>	1872–1974	AWM124
<u>Reports of proceedings, HMA ships and establishments [1]</u>	1939–ongoing	AWM78

Department of External Affairs (CA 18)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Bound volumes of despatches from overseas posts</u>	1940–ongoing	A4231
<u>Correspondence files</u>	1948–89	A1838
<u>Correspondence files – Australian Embassy, Saigon</u>	1952–ongoing	A4531

Cabinet Office (CA 3)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Cabinet files 'C' single number series</u>	1958–67	A4940
<u>Cabinet submissions and associated decisions</u>	1963–66	A5827
<u>Cabinet submissions and associated decisions</u>	1966	A5828
<u>Cabinet submissions and associated decisions</u>	1966–67	A5842
<u>Folders of Cabinet submissions, first Gorton Ministry</u>	1968	A5867
<u>Folders of Cabinet submissions, second Gorton Ministry</u>	1968–69	A5868
<u>Third Gorton Ministry – folders of Cabinet submissions</u>	1969–71	A5869
<u>Cabinet files, 'CO' single number series</u>	1968–72	A5882

Attorney-General's Department (CA 5)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Correspondence files</u>	1901–ongoing	A432
<u>Personal [surveillance] files – Australian Security Intelligence Organisation</u>	1949–ongoing	A6119
<u>Subject [surveillance] files – Australian Security Intelligence Organisation files</u>	1949–ongoing	A6122

Personal papers of Harold Holt (CP 27)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Subject files maintained by the Rt Hon. HE Holt</u>	1952–67	M2606
<u>Folders of papers maintained by Holt while Prime Minister</u>	1966–67	M2684
<u>Personal papers</u>	1967	AA1985/247
<u>Correspondence files of Mr Harold Holt</u>	1966–67	A7854

Personal Papers of Sir John Grey Gorton (CP 136)

Title or description of record	Date range	Series number
<u>Folders maintained by the Rt Hon. John Gorton as Prime Minister and Minister for Defence</u>	1968–71	M3787

- [1] series held by Australian War Memorial, Canberra
[2] series held in Sydney
[3] series held in Melbourne

Other selected records held in Canberra

The following table lists samples of individual items relating to issues concerning the Vietnam War.

Collection references

Title or description of record	Date range	Series, item number
<u>Australian Army Training Team, Vietnam</u>	1962–66	A4531, 215/4/1 Part 3
<u>Treatment of prisoners and release of North Vietnamese and Viet Cong</u>	1965–71	A4531, 201/2/7/11 part 1
<u>South Vietnam – political – general</u>	1971–81	A1838, TS3014/2/1 part 15A

Further information about Australia and the Vietnam War

Vietnam War service

If you served with Australian forces in the Vietnam War you can obtain access to your service record by contacting the Department of Defence.

See relevant fact sheets for contact details as follows:

- *Fact sheet 136 - Army service records*
- *Fact sheet 30 - Navy service records*
- *Fact sheet 32 - RAAF service records*

An online [nominal roll](#) lists all who served with the Australian forces in the Vietnam War.

The fall of Saigon

- *Fact sheet 243 - Fall of Saigon, 1975*