



# Vietnam: The Complete Story of the Australian War

*Bruce Davies, Gary McKay*

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Vietnam remains one of most controversial and difficult wars that has been fought. On the 50th anniversary of Australia's first involvement comes *Vietnam: The Complete Story of the Australian War*, for anyone who wishes to understand why Australia went to war, and wants to make sense of the intensely unrelenting warfare. For Bruce Davies and Gary McKay, the history of Vietnam—its wars, colonial domination, its search for freedom, and its subsequent loss—speaks to an Australian anxiety of a very small population far away from the center of an empire to which it was firmly committed. The rise of Japan, the War in the Pacific, and the postcolonial independence of the peoples of Southeast Asia, coupled with the mercurial influence of Ho Chi Minh and the rise of communism, form the background to the commitment of Australian forces. *Vietnam* takes the reader to the front line, describing the experiences of soldier, politician, villager, enemy; and into the war room to unpick the military and political strategies. We see the challenges the Australians faced against not only a dogged enemy, but also those by the allies in their quest to defeat a powerful counterinsurgency. The authors' new archival research in Australia and America raises questions about the operational performance of both sides, and recently discovered documents shed new light on the enemy's tactical thinking. Meticulously researched and marked with acute critical analysis and a deep understanding of the place and the war, *Vietnam* shows the experience of Australian soldiers as never before.

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