



# Red Zone Baghdad: My War In Iraq

*Marcus Fielding*

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## **Red Zone Baghdad: My War In Iraq** Marcus Fielding

When Colonel Marcus Fielding returned home from his tour of duty in Baghdad, a taxi driver asked him what it was like being a soldier there. Marcus, an experienced veteran, found himself speechless - how could he properly explain to a civilian the nature of his work and his life during his tour? He mouthed a few platitudes but felt frustrated: he had not done justice to his experience or to his fellow soldiers still in Iraq. This book is the result of that frustration, and it provides fascinating insights into the conditions on the ground in a theatre of war that more than 20,000 Australian men and women have served. Marcus was deployed as an 'embed' in the final days of the Australian presence. By this time, the violence had subsided somewhat from the carnage of the first few years of Operation Iraqi Freedom, but with several crucial elections being held, sectarian terror nonetheless reared its frightening head on many occasions. From his 'office' in Saddam's former al-Faw Palace, Marcus finds himself more involved with nation-building than killing 'bad guys'. His tour is not so much about combat, guts and glory as it is about dealing with the vital issues associated with the elections and the Coalition troop draw-down. But he also paints a vivid picture of everyday life set against a backdrop of violence: the heat and dust, attending meetings in the Red Zone, the camaraderie of the cigar club, visits to orphanages and the morale- raising visits of US 'personalities'. There are few Australian books written about the contentious war in Iraq. Red Zone Baghdad presents a rare glimpse into the reality of an officer's war in our time.

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