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# CAMARADERIE

First Edition 2019

VOL. 50 NO. 1

**JIM MOLAN  
SPEAKS**

**ELECTION  
ISSUES**

**WHO DEFENDS  
THE DEFENDERS?**

DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

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# THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

Vol. 50. No. 1 First Edition 2019



PROUDLY SERVING MEMBERS OF THE ADF AND THEIR FAMILIES SINCE 1959

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**Please do not contact the Editor or National Office for membership enquiries etc. Branch contact details are at page 4, and in Branch News at the end of this magazine. If unsure, please then contact the National Office.**

*Camaraderie* is produced with the object of keeping every member abreast of the more important actions taken by the Association on behalf of its members, as well as keeping them informed about matters of interest.

It is published three times a year and distributed free of charge to every member of the Association usually in March, July and December.

Members are particularly encouraged to submit brief articles for consideration for publication in *Camaraderie*.

Articles by members about their own views or experiences often stimulate wide discussions and alert other readers to particular points not previously highlighted or appreciated.

Members are also invited to send letters for publication as "Letters to the Editor".

**Material for inclusion in the next edition should reach the Editor at the above address, ideally as a MSWord document attached to an email, no later than Thursday 13 June 2019.**

**The views expressed in individuals' authored articles are theirs and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Association, except where expressly stated.**

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## A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

With the coming election one can only sigh with a sense of déjà vu .. here we go again. A number of articles in this edition are relevant to the coming circus, and I trust you find this edition informative and interesting. If not... let me know!

Les Bienkiewicz

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## FRONT COVER

*On 01 February Defence responded to a request from the local and State authorities to assist emergency and civil agencies in the response to flooding in the Townsville region. Townsville defence units including those of the 3rd Brigade, 17th Brigade, 16th Brigade, 1st Division and RAAF elements provided support in response to the request of the civil authorities.*

*Photo courtesy of Defence Media*

# DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION



FOUNDED 1959



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WESTERN AUSTRALIA (ph 08 93834055) - [wabbranch@dfwa.org.au](mailto:wabbranch@dfwa.org.au)

Members of the Association are members of a State Branch of their choosing.

Members from Tasmania are normally managed by Victoria Branch, and members in the Northern Territory are normally managed by Queensland Branch.

Members with membership queries including change of address, or seeking advocacy advice, should contact their respective Branch. Full Branch details, including contact details, can be found on our website [www.dfwa.org.au](http://www.dfwa.org.au) and in the Branch Reports at the end of this magazine.

If in any doubt, contact the National Office.

## DFWA WELFARE TRUST FUND

The Association maintains a **Welfare Trust Fund** for the welfare of members of the Association and regular members of the ADF and Reserves on fulltime duty or their widows/widowers and dependants who are in urgent and necessitous circumstances involving real hardship.

The Trustees are: Major General Adrian Clunies-Ross AO, MBE (Retd); Trevor Goodhew and Kerry Mellor.

**Applications** for a loan or grant are made via State Branches.



If you're a veteran  
or serving member  
of the Australian  
Defence Force entry  
to the Museum  
is on us

Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) has a long history of serving members of the **Australian Defence Force**.

We greatly value and appreciate the commitment and loyal service of our veterans, serving members of the Army, Navy and Air Force, and cadets.

As a way of saying thanks, CSC is providing every single Defence Force veteran, serving member and current cadet with a **complimentary pass** to the **Australian National Maritime Museum**.

If you're a Defence Force veteran, a serving member, or a current cadet just show the Museum's front of house team your valid ADF ID card, a DVA-issued card, service medals, or arrive in uniform and you'll receive free entry to the Museum.



# FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN



*"Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much."*

*"The only way to build DFWA into a successful representative organisation is to build a great team."*

## MEMBERSHIP

Organisations that are volunteer based do not survive without members who contribute! DFWA is one such association. We, along with all other veterans' organisations cannot survive, will not survive without the input by members who are passionate about the 'monitoring and fostering the interests of members, former members and families of the ADF'. DFWA is a big 'church', with the opportunity to do much but cannot do it with so few members contributing.

DFWA is a leading partner in the Alliance of Defence Service Organisation (ADSO) which has a membership of 18 nationally focussed ESOs. We punch above our weight in this group because of the intellectual input of members who contribute mightily to the many papers and suggestions DFWA contributes to, prepares and submits to DVA and government. Such contribution is based on the individuals background and enthusiasm. It is not just military background that is important rather the broad experience many have in the private sector, government and personal interests. Such contribution however does not suit all of us.

How then am I able to contribute? This is a valid question we each need to ask ourselves if we wish DFWA to continue as a recognised contributor on behalf of our constituency. "How do I contribute?" "How can I contribute" They are simple enough questions, but they should not daunt us or cause a collapse of enthusiasm for the association. We each should be able to contribute to our ability and skill set.

Some suggestions are:

- a. Raise issues with your state branch. These may result from discussions with current serving personal or something that you have read and think, 'that is not right'. This will be an important contribution and give the leadership an idea of what the membership is concerned about.
- b. Write an article for Camaraderie on a subject that you think needs to be addressed.
- c. Make a regular donation to DFWA. Simple to do but this is vital if we are to continue to punch above our weight in an ever-evolving veteran organisational community (see donations details on page 38).

Membership of DFWA is a state branch responsibility. However, without the considered opinions and issues from the membership your state leadership becomes mute on the issues that swirl around all of us. I encourage all the membership to become active and contribute rather than let others do the thinking and doing.

## PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION

The Government tasked the Productivity Commission to inquire into the Compensation and Rehabilitation for Veterans. The Commission has released its Draft Report titled, "A Better Way to Support Veterans" which has drawn much comment from across the veteran community. Read the Draft Report at <https://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/veterans/draft#media-release>. The final report is due to be handed to government in June 2019.

This inquiry is a once in a life time opportunity for the ESO community to reset the way veterans' issues are addressed and the relationship we have with government and DVA. To do this effectively we need to seek a collective view across the ESO community and project that to the Commissioners. This is referred to as 'speaking with one voice' which ADSO is doing with increasing effectiveness.

Rather than attacking the Draft Report I have adopted the view that we are better served by presenting a constructive and emphatic response to what is generally agreed to be a document of questionable value. Further it is up to the present generation to set the course so let us be constructive and develop our agenda and not simply answer the views and recommendations contained in the draft report.

In analysing the Draft Report, the Ex-Service Roundtable (ESORT) agreed to take a strategic view and address the five 'Themes' used by the Commissioners. Further agreed that each of the ESOs should take responsibility for the specific recommendations and findings as they impacted on their individual memberships. This is the view I as President DFWA have adopted on your behalf.

The reader will appreciate that the response to the Draft Report is a 'moving document' as views are coalesced and firm across the ADSO membership. Being negative about such reports does not assist us as an ESO when we have the opportunity for DFWA to be part of setting the agenda for the future direction for the advocacy of the issue of the broad veteran community. Our membership demands nothing less.

Without intending to be vague but a reading of the 700 plus page Draft Report gives an appreciation of the task we have before us. The large number of "Findings" and "Recommendations" raised has the potential to give the wary among us cause for concern. The following will give a sense of our present thinking.

The Draft Report recommended that DVA cease as a separate department and be absorbed into the Defence Department. This will be strongly opposed and, amongst other point, it is agreed that:

- a. DVA be retained with a dedicated Minister.
- b. The 'transformation' of DVA through Veteran Centric Reform that

the Secretary DVA (Ms Liz Cosson) is continuing.

- c. A review of the National Consultative Framework be undertaken with the aim of ensuring integration and coordination; the proceedings of the various DVA fora be tasked to formally inform ESORT.
- d. ESORT be transitioned into a Strategic Advisory Council.
- e. The Gold Card' be retained 'as is'.
- f. 'Open Arms' be retained as a dedicated veteran and families counselling service.
- g. A review of the benefits for widow(ers) be undertaken.
- h. ESOs be co-funded to ensure their ability to represent and provide services.

Underpinning this is that the primacy of the Unique Nature of Military Service be maintained in consideration of all aspects of veteran services and care. We are a unique component of the Australian community and we must not enable government to equate us and our hard-fought entitlements with those of the civilian community. This suggestion is a thread throughout the Draft Report.

It is important that we respond at the strategic level. Achieving consensus, all will agree, is sometimes a fraught exercise but if we are to advance with the strength of speaking with 'one voice' it is imperative that it occur where possible.

The full DFVA response to the Draft Report will be uploaded on the DFVA website as soon as possible. Elsewhere in this edition is a report of the recent meeting of Ex Service Associations meeting held to discuss the Draft Report. It addresses specific issue that are important to us all. The strategic ADSO submission addresses specific issues that must underpin the future support and care of the nation's veterans and their families. These include:

- a. The Unique Nature of Military Service.
- b. Strategic view. It is accepted that the Draft Report is a snap shot only, but it must be couched in terms of the strategic environment we are in at present, the volunteer base of the ESOs, and the nation's strategic needs.
- c. DVA transformation. This is happening and is supported.

The Draft Report is simply the end of the beginning of the process and its recommendations and findings demand critical analysis by all involved in the veteran space.

Remember that the veteran's' community has a once in a life time opportunity to set the direction for DVA and the care and servicing of the nations' veterans and their families. Let us prosecute that opportunity and not be distracted by those who are content with the status quo or, to put it bluntly, are not up to the fight. It is a fight we are in and one we must win.

## THE FUTURE

This year will be a defining one for DFVA. It will be exciting as we work to define a clear strategic vision, resolve outstanding administrative issues and revitalise the membership by listening to the issues of relevance to their communities and setting our sights on the future. I encourage you all to be active players with your state committees and the national executive.

Take care,  
Kel Ryan

Kel Ryan - National President  
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## WHAT DO YOU DO WITH CAMARADERIE ONCE YOU HAVE READ IT?

If you put it in the recycling (or even worse the rubbish) why not think about taking it to your next Dr/Dentist/Physio/etc appointment and leave it in the waiting room.

It will probably be one of the most current magazines in the pile and may attract the attention of ADF members and ex-service men and women and their families.



# NATIONAL OFFICE ROUNDUP (November 2018 - February 2019)



Yet another election looms and yet another Prime Minister will lead the Government of the day to face the people's choice. Seems this time though, a tortuously long election campaign is thankfully not in the offing. What may be in the offing is a change in Government, albeit based on the rising heat of the political debates, the odds for it have arguably shortened significantly since the beginning of the new year.

I might remind readers that the Association has a deliberate policy of being careful to avoid being party political, confining itself to issues that have a direct impact on not only the welfare of its members but also the interests of still serving and all former members of the Australian Defence Force, including their families.

As a matter of principle, DFWA has also a policy of remaining outside the Defence policy debate, except where it may affect the well-being of serving ADF personnel. A case in point is DFWA's recognized intervener role at the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal, a role it exercises pro-actively in the leading up to and during every pay case before the Tribunal.

In that regard, no one should forget the effectiveness of DFWA's intervention on pay cases removed from the last, when the Government was convinced to re-think its original morale-sapping pay offer of 1.5% on the basis of 'affordability'. It was an offer that was well-below the prevailing annual inflation rate, and degraded further by the imposition of a number of so-to-speak 'productivity initiatives' which removed various previously hard-won leave provisions and other approved arrangements.

A re-think by the Government resulted in revised upwards pay deal increase of 2.0% and removing altogether any offsets to compensate for the rise. The reason for the re-think can be found in the text of the Tribunal's final ruling of the time giving credit for it in large part to the loud voices of protest that serving members raised by way of the DFWA survey conducted in October 2014. And due also to the highly active grass-roots lobbying efforts of many in the wider ex-service community, teaming with a strong ADF spouses network that added the voices of oft-forgotten families to the protest equation.

Yes, the turnaround was over four years ago. But the lesson in stark relief must be that, not only do all ADF members and their families have a voice on issues that affect their conditions of service but so does the veterans community working together as a whole. When those voices are mobilised on issues of concern, decision-makers in Parliament are left with little option but to listen and take notice. And little option but to also extend their public utterances of valuing the service ADF men and women give to the nation, to offering them something as tangible as pay outcomes that keeps pace with cost of living increases.

Perhaps two other equally important lessons must be that, firstly, to

project a loud voice requires membership participation at critical times when important issues are at stake. The National President's Report in the preceding page of this *Camaraderie* discusses this very issue. He invites members to become active and contribute ideas and thoughts at every opportunity.

Participation is of course critical. But so are membership numbers, if only because membership subscriptions coupled with generous donations are virtually the only sources of income to keep an Association such as ours functioning on your behalf. Thus, to give us the ability to keep our voice strong among decision makers in the corridors of Parliament House, I extend another plea to all *Camaraderie* readers. If you are a member, please consider encouraging someone you know to join. If you are not a member, please

consider joining anyway. A membership application form is in this *Camaraderie* for your convenience. And to all 'Virtual Members', please think about becoming a full time member sometime soon. You will be unquestionably helping us in a constructive and meaningful way to continue our work on your behalf, unabated going into the future.

But what of the future? Upon what should DFWA focus going forward into this election year? For some answers and if you haven't done so already, I would encourage readers to turn to the pages in this *Camaraderie* edition that articulates DFWA's Policy Objectives 2018 - 2019. Therein you will find at least a summary of those issues that will dominate our lobbying efforts in this coming while.

Among those issues, the proposed Australian Veterans Covenant is the only one that has hit the floor of the House for consideration and is close being adopted in legislation. It is currently subject to a Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee inquiry which will report back by 22 March 2019. Both sides of politics support the general intent of the legislation and the principle behind it, namely the Unique Nature of Military Service.

Otherwise, the other issues are ones that we have sought redress for a long period of time. Lack of progress to redress them has been frustrating to say the least. The disabled veterans in particular need to be given hope by way of restoring the on-going loss of value in their pensions. And there is an urgent need to fix the known discriminatory provisions of the DFRDB/MSBS military superannuation schemes. How more discriminatory can you get than the continued official use of 50 year-old life tables to reduce DFRDB superannuation payments?

Finally before closing, I would like to again acknowledge the very generous support our Corporate sponsor, the Bradford Exchange, provides DFWA. The company produces and markets high quality collectable memorabilia, particularly ones that are relevant to commemorative occasions. Their advertisement can be viewed in the pages of this *Camaraderie*.

*Alf Jaugietis - Executive Director*

# PRODUCTIVITY COMMISSION REPORT

## INQUIRY INTO COMPENSATION & REHABILITATION FOR VETERANS

### INTRODUCTION

The Productivity Commission's draft report into compensation and rehabilitation for veterans was recently released. DFWA National President Kel Ryan has stated that, while there are many aspects to it that can be supported, the recommendation to eliminate the Department of Veterans Affairs and transferring veterans' support functions to the Department of Defence must be rejected outright.

Veterans also reject implied notions within the draft that veterans' entitlements are 'overly generous'. There is no basis for them to be means-tested and/or needs-based. Entitlements cannot be compared to commercial workers compensation schemes. Rather, in large part they rightfully recognise, as pleasingly does the Productivity Commission within its report, the unique nature of military service. Kel Ryan proffered that the veterans' community as a whole is arguably unanimous in its support for a specific Veterans' Department to provide effective and efficient legislated veterans support programs. Equally, it supports DVA's ongoing Veterans' Centric Transformation and transition initiatives that were being currently implemented to address the recognised major deficiencies in past services delivery.

The DFWA will be making a formal submission to the Productivity Commission on its Draft Report. Our submission will be uploaded onto the DFWA website as soon as it is prepared.

### REPORT OF MEETING OF EX-SERVICE ORGANISATIONS 14/15 JANUARY

By Kel Ryan

The members of the Ex-Service Organisations Round Table (ESORT) met in Canberra to review the Draft Report and seek to develop a 'one voice' response. This notion of 'one voice' to the various issues impacting on the veteran community continues to develop and is being received favourably (suspiciously?) by those in the political and bureaucratic arena.

The ESORT members took the view that despite the tight timeline allowed to provide responses (15 Feb 19, extended to 30 Feb) it would

not waste time in fighting for a further extension. 'Let do it and attack the Draft Report as if our future relies on a constructive and emphatic response to what is agreed to be a document of questionable value'.

The ESORT and the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO) have the view that we have before us a once in a life time opportunity to reset the program for the care and support of the veteran community into the future. It is up to the present generation to set the course so let us be constructive and develop our agenda.

In analysing the Draft Report, it was agreed to take a strategic view and address the five 'Themes' used by the Commissioners. Further agreed

*Continued overpage*

that individual ESOs should take responsibility for the individual recommendations and findings as they impacted on their individual memberships.

The ESORT agreed that:

- a. DVA be retained with a dedicated Minister.
- b. The 'transformation' of DVA through VCR and Secretary's stated objectives continue.
- c. A review of the National Consultative Framework be undertaken with the aim of ensuring integration and coordination; the proceedings of the various fora (YVF, OWP & Female and Veterans \$ Family Forums) inform ESORT.
- d. ESORT be transitioned into a Strategic Advisory Council.
- e. The 'Gold Card' be retained 'as is'.
- f. 'Open Arms' be retained as a dedicated veteran and families counselling service.
- g. A review of the benefits for widow(ers) be undertaken.
- h. ESOs be co-funded to ensure their ability to represent and provide services.
- i. Excision of the 86 proposed 'removals' in the Draft Report.
- j. The abolition of MRCA Table 23.2 (Peacetime PI) and Reasonable Hypothesis Class of SoPs be discussed. This is not a given but warrants further serious discussion.
- k. The primacy of the Unique Nature of Military Service be maintained in consideration of all aspects of veteran services and care. There should be no 'relaxed standard of proof' (Reasonable Hypothesis test).

There are 15 ESO members of ESORT and each are within their brief to submit responses to the Draft Report. That is a given.

ADSO, which comprises 18 ESOs, will submit an ADSO response to the Draft Report with the collaborative support of that membership. This response will be at the strategic level. Achieving consensus, all will

agree, is sometimes a fraught exercise but if we are to advance with the strength of speaking with 'one voice' it is imperative that it occur where possible.

The ADSO submission to the Draft Report will also address specific issues that must underpin the future support and care of the nation's veterans and their families. These include:

- a. The Unique Nature of Military Service.
- b. Strategic view. It is accepted that the Draft Report is a snap shot only, but it must be couched in terms of the strategic environment we are in at present, the volunteer base of the ESOs, and the nation's strategic needs.
- c. DVA transformation. This is happening and is supported by ADSO

Remember that this is a Productivity Commission Report not a Government Report. The Commissioners are yet to conduct the national 'talking tour' after which they will finalise their Report and submit to government by mid-June 2019. The Draft Report is simply the end of the beginning of the process and its recommendations and findings demand critical analysis by all involved in the veteran space.

Many FB Posts have expressed anger with some elements of the Draft Report and even called on the Prime Minister to shut down the Commission. Frankly, being angry does not achieve anything but simply causes one to be distracted from the main game. This is the chance for us in the veteran community to grasp the future agenda, lay out our demands for the care and support of veterans and their families for the benefit of those who will surely come after us.

Remember this is our once in a life time opportunity to set the direction for DVA and the care and servicing of the nations' veterans and their families. Let us prosecute that opportunity and not be distracted by those who are content with the status quo or, to put it bluntly, are not up to the fight.

## A GOOD NEWS STORY

One of our advocates in Western Australia received a phone call from an ex-Timor veteran last year. At that time the man lived in Albany and over the next few months our advocate twice travelled to Albany from Perth (930Km round trip) to assist him (successfully) with several claims on DVA.

Responding to our advocate's initial request, DFWA's Relief Trust Fund played a vital role, reacting speedily within a day of the request being received (on a Sunday afternoon) for an emergency grant of \$2000, approved by the Trustees the very next day and the monies were on their way. These emergency funds were used to get the Timor veteran (and his son) out a critical short-term situation in which he found himself. Beds and a dining room table and chairs were purchased. In addition, the WA ANZAC Day Trust

Fund chipped in to supply essential bedding and other assistance.

The man has since moved to interstate and he phoned our advocate recently to thank us for our help. He has been reunited with his wife, he is off the grog, has a job and life is no longer looking as black as it once had. He told us that had it not been for DFWA, he would not have been alive today.

Information on the DFWA Trust Fund can be found on page 4 of this edition of Camaraderie.

NOW THAT CERTAINLY IS A GOOD NEWS STORY... BEING BUT ONE OF MANY THAT THE DFWA CAN BE PROUD OF AS IT ASSISTS THOSE IN NEED AT THE BRANCH LEVEL

# AUSTRALIA'S DEFENCE & SECURITY

## ARE WE DOING ENOUGH?

By Jim Molan - Originally published in *The Strategist* | February 2-19

One of the proudest boasts of the Coalition government is that it takes national security seriously, and it does. Over the next 10 years, Australia will spend \$200 billion on defence in the nation's largest ever peacetime rearmament program. As the federal election looms, it is fair to ask why we are doing it and what are we getting for it.

In simple terms, we are rearming because the strategic environment has changed dramatically, especially in the maritime domain. Almost half of that \$200 billion is earmarked for the navy, \$90 billion of which will go to building 56 warships in Australia. Unfortunately, the build won't be complete until the mid-2050s.

Geography means that Australia's livelihood is tied to the sea, with our security and prosperity dependent on access to the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Our exports must travel by ship to reach their destinations, and we rely on the sea lanes to import liquid fuel and other vital goods.

Australians tend to pay little attention to this simple fact because we have seldom had reason to. We have always allied with 'great and powerful friends' that could be counted on to keep our sea lanes open. Initially, the Royal Navy was Australia's guarantor. Then the US Navy took its place - and in the 75 years since World War II, it hasn't faced a peer competitor. But the strategic environment has changed. The US Navy, by its own admission, is not the globally dominant force we have long assumed it to be.

Both warship numbers and capabilities are important, especially if you accept global responsibilities. In 1989, the US Navy had 594 combat ships. Now it has 275. The US plans to rebuild to 355 ships, but admits that this can't be achieved within 30 years and that the overall cost will be a third higher than that of today's navy. And recent US defence budget increases are unlikely to last.

The US considers that the West is being challenged by four nations: China, Russia, Iran and North Korea. Both Australia and the US describe our regional geostrategic environment as the Indo-Pacific. Three of those four challengers are in our region. If things go bad, this has major implications for our region, our prosperity and our security.

The biggest challenge for our region and the world is the emergence of China as a great power.

China's military is being restructured into one with a greater balance between its land, sea, air and rocket components, and we all know how good China's cyber forces are.

A major part of the restructure is the priority given to the People's Liberation Army Navy. Recently, Chinese President Xi Jinping declared that 'the task of building a powerful navy has never been as urgent as it is today' and urged the PLAN to 'prepare for war'. Chinese military leaders talk often and openly about the PLAN's ambition 'to gain an ability like the US Navy so that it can conduct different operations globally', and about how to defeat the US in the Pacific by sinking its aircraft carriers. China is investing massive

resources into the PLAN, which is growing rapidly in its size and sophistication.

Analysis from the Center for Strategic and International Studies shows that the PLAN already has more deployable vessels than the US Navy. In the past five years, China launched more new vessels than the entire Royal Navy has. It was able to do that through large-scale investment in dual-use shipbuilding facilities as the world's largest commercial shipbuilder.

China is also developing larger, more advanced vessels capable of longer-range operations. China's second - and its first domestically built - aircraft carrier will enter service soon. It's been suggested that the PLAN could eventually field up to six increasingly sophisticated carriers. China is also commissioning new amphibious assault ships capable of transporting marines and helicopters. A new line of cruisers, similar to the US Navy's Ticonderoga-class Aegis-equipped cruisers, is being launched, as are new models of destroyers, frigates, corvettes and submarines. These are all 'comparable in many respects to most modern Western warships'. We are witnessing the birth of a Chinese 'blue water' navy that will be able to conduct operations far from China's coastline.

This is not about the South China Sea or other territorial waters claimed by the PRC. It is driven by a desire to project power on a global scale.

While he acknowledges that war is not inevitable, Graham Allison cautions that 'war between the US and China in the decades ahead is not just possible but much more likely than currently recognized', and that 'by underestimating the danger... we add to the risk'. Over the last 500 years, there have been 16 occasions when a rising power has overtaken the dominant power. In 12 of them, war was the result.

It is dangerous to think that the US still dominates the world as it once did, given its global responsibilities, its diminished defence capability, its unpredictable national decision-making and the increasing strength of those that challenge it. This has monumental implications for Australian security when the US is still seen as the 'centre pole' of our defence.

The Coalition government's spending on defence is wise, but a root-and-branch analysis resulting in an Australian national security strategy is the only way that Australia can assess whether our spend is enough, whether what we are buying is appropriate, and if we can afford to wait decades to rearm our military to deter conflict. The last thing we need is a new defence white paper. That would merely delay important decisions that are required now.

Given that anything in Australian defence takes decades to mature, an upcoming election is the perfect time to talk about the issue of defence and security.

*Jim Molan is a Liberal senator for New South Wales. He was a major general in the Australian Army and served as chief of operations for the Multinational Force in Iraq from 2004 to 2005.*



# DFWA 2019 POLICY OBJECTIVES

## INTRODUCTION

With the election nearly upon us, it is timely that DFWA identifies those objectives that we will be pursuing with the political parties.

## OUR OBJECTIVES

DFWA Policy Objectives leading up to the next 2019 Federal election and beyond are as follows:

- Promote a Military/Veterans Covenant;
- Seek fair indexation and revision of military superannuation benefits;
- Seek adequate veterans' disability compensation payments for the TPI/Special Rate;
- Support retention of a Department of Veterans Affairs to provide effective and efficient legislated veterans support programs.

The order of the Objectives detailed herein is not meant to signify their relative importance. Each is important and DFWA seeks either redress or a fix of them all in turn at the earliest possible time during the course of the upcoming 46th Parliament of Australia.

### Promote a Military/Veterans Covenant

Our longstanding campaign to introduce a Military Covenant has recently progressed with the introduction of legislation into Parliament of the AUSTRALIAN VETERANS' RECOGNITION (PUTTING VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES FIRST) BILL 2019. This matter is currently progressing and updates will be advised on our website.

Significantly, the draft Covenant recognises the concept of the unique nature of military service.

**OBJECTIVE:** To have Veterans and their families recognised for their vital role and service to Australia by way of a

Military/Veterans Covenant, and to enshrine in legislation the unique nature of military service and the support their families give to veterans.

Once legislated, the DFWA will be holding the Governments of the day to task to ensure the aim of the Covenant is reflected in Government policies and legislation. This will be an ongoing task.

### Fair indexation of all Military Superannuation Benefits Schemes

- Fair Indexation for all Military Superannuation payments

**ISSUE:** CPI is a measure of inflation, not purchasing power. Superannuation schemes indexed to CPI only lose their purchasing power over time.

**OBJECTIVE:** To have all components of military superannuation payments under DFRB, DFRDB and MSBS, including preserved funds and the reversionary pensions for partners of deceased military superannuation pensioners, indexed as provided for under the Defence Force Retirement Benefits Fair Indexation Act. This is to ensure the purchasing power of superannuation is maintained, being the intent of the original enabling legislation.

- MSBS Access to Employer Benefits

**ISSUE:** MSBS 'preserved benefits' (employer contributions) are indexed to CPI. They cannot be accessed until preservation age (55). CPI is already recognised as an unfair index in itself, plus its returns are low compared to other superannuation funds.

**OBJECTIVE:** To have all MSBS members under preservation age and no longer serving but with 'preserved benefits' be given the same opportunity provided to all Australians – i.e., the ability to access employer superannuation payments and to be able to roll over their full benefit into a complying superannuation fund of their choice.

- Defence Force Retirement & Death Benefits Scheme (DFRDB)

Fair Indexation for all DFRDB recipients

**OBJECTIVE:** The provisions of the Defence Force Retirements Benefits Fair Indexation Act to be extended to include all DFRDB superannuants under 55, especially to those in receipt of DFRDB invalidity superannuation pensions. This will ensure the purchasing power of their superannuation is maintained, being the intent of the original enabling legislation.

DFRDB Commutation

**OBJECTIVE:** The immediate application of up-to-date life tables for calculating commutation and fortnightly payments for current and new DFRDB superannuants; and rectification of the financial injustices caused by the application of out-dated life tables to superannuants.

Reversionary Benefits

**OBJECTIVE:** The immediate redress of the reduction of all their benefits, i.e. retirement pay, invalidity pay and reversionary pensions for widows, widowers and dependent children, which has resulted from the manner in which those benefits were indexed before 1 July 2014, and continue to be indexed for those aged under 55.

### **Redress Inadequacies of Veterans' Disability Compensation Payments -TPI/SRDP**

**ISSUE:** The disability compensation for Australia's most disabled Totally & Permanently Incapacitated (TPI/SRDP) veterans has declined significantly in relative terms to that of Average Weekly

Earnings. The 'Economic Loss' component of that eroded payment rests at less than 65% of Australia's gross minimum wage.

This decline in compensation for Australia's most disabled TPI/SRDP Veterans is a poor indictment of the Commonwealth's obligation to the enduring care for its Veterans.

**OBJECTIVE:** That providing an adequate standard of living to Australia's most disabled veterans and their families be recognised as paramount to a Government's obligations to them. Benchmark the Above General Rate component to the tax-adjusted minimum wage as a community standard.

### **Support retention of a Department of Veterans Affairs**

**ISSUE:** The Productivity Commission's inquiry into the system of compensation and rehabilitation for veterans released a draft report on 14 December 2018. Among its many recommendations, one advocated eliminating the Department of Veterans Affairs and transferring veterans' support functions to the Department of Defence.

**OBJECTIVE:** To support the retention of a specific Veterans' Department that provides effective and efficient legislated veterans support programs. To support DVA's ongoing Veterans' Centric Transformation and transition initiatives that are being currently implemented. They address the recognised major deficiencies in past services delivery.

DFWA welcomes the opportunity to work with DVA and the Productivity Commission to jointly identify needs and problems, and to find solutions for them.

## AND ON THE SUBJECT OF LOBBYING ON YOUR BEHALF...

DFWA has been active at both the local and national level in "shirt fronting" politicians on the range of issues we are pursuing. During a recent meeting with the Leader of the Opposition we discussed Labor's promised support to the DFWA as well as the range of issues of concern. Earlier in the day we also met with the Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel, the Hon. Darren Chester MP and his staff to canvass the same issues.

Pictured right are Kel Ryan, National President DFWA; Mrs Meg Green, President of the War Widows Guild; Mr Bill Shorten Leader of the Opposition; Mr Les Bienkiewicz, President ACT Branch DFWA; Ms Amanda Rishworth MP, Shadow Minister for Veterans Affairs; and Mrs Pat McCabe, National President TPI Association.





## DRAFT OF THE PROPOSED AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE VETERANS' COVENANT

*We, the people of Australia, respect and give thanks  
to all who have served in our defence force  
and their families.*

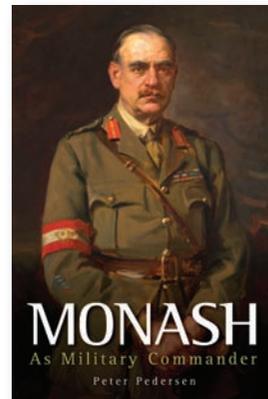
*We acknowledge the unique nature of military service  
and the sacrifice demanded  
of all who commit to defend our nation.*

*We undertake to preserve the memory and  
deeds of all who have served  
and promise to welcome, embrace and support  
all military veterans as respected and  
valued members of our community.*

*For what they have done, this we will do.*

**DID YOU KNOW...  
HOW MANY ADF PERSONNEL HAVE BEEN  
DEPLOYED ON OPERATIONS?**

**Since 1999, there have been 265,475  
deployments on operations by  
85,299 individuals.**



## BOOK REVIEW: MONASH as Military Commander

by Dr Peter Pedersen

Dr Peter Pedersen's scholarly study of Sir John Monash remains the finest analysis of Australia's best known military leader.

In 1918 the Australian Corps under Monash's command played a leading role in the Allied advance to victory on the Western Front. Its successes in the battles of Hamel and Amiens, the taking of Mont St Quentin and Péronne and the breaching of the Hindenburg Line are among the most prominent landmarks in Australia's military history. Monash was central to these pivotal achievements.

This book traces Monash's development as a commander from his prewar militia service to his wartime experience at Gallipoli and on the Western Front. It examines in detail how each stage of his military career influenced his approach to command and the tactical problems he faced as the wartime commander of an infantry brigade and division and, ultimately, the Australian Corps. The influence of his education and civilian training are also examined in this meticulous study.

What emerges from this nuanced and sophisticated assessment of Monash as a soldier is a superb portrayal of how a commander works and what he could achieve under conditions so inimical to the exercise of command as those that prevailed on the Western Front. Along the way, Dr Pedersen establishes Monash's place among his contemporaries, British and Australian, and provides the definitive answer to the question 'Just how good was Monash?'

Published for the centenary of the great victories of 1918, this new and updated edition of Dr Pedersen's classic work is a timely study of Australia's finest general.

# Alarm Bell Words

## 2019 ELECTION UPDATE

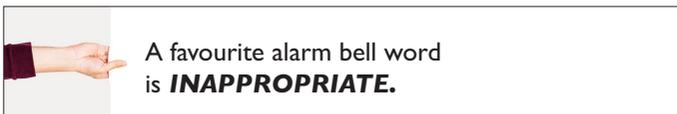


*The original of this now updated article was first published in 'Camaraderie' before the 2016 federal election.*

Australia is in an election year yet again. That means we'll hear millions of words on thousands of topics from hundreds of candidates in search of one vote. Yours.

Words matter to those who want your vote. Here are some words that should set off loud alarm bells when flung at you this year. And flung they will be, although often with more thought than you may want to give the user credit for.

Never underestimate these words. Most are honeyed but are designed to obfuscate, mislead and influence the voter while leaving no nasty political or bureaucratic residue for the user to have to justify at some later date.



"Inappropriate" is a honeyed word designed to shut down any further communication on a given subject without the user having to justify doing so. And if the user is a parliamentarian or a candidate or a person in authority then the average listener usually accepts at face value that the matter is indeed inappropriate.

Here's a common example: "Comparing parliamentary superannuation schemes with military superannuation schemes is inappropriate."

So said certain political figures before the 2007 election and again

before the 2010 and 2013 elections when DFWA's fair indexation campaigns were in full swing.

But in 2016 this alarm bell word was used less often than before.

"Inappropriate" is still occasionally tossed about in 2019 in regard to DFWA's push for fair indexation for MSBS members and for DFRDB members aged less than 55 years, and for other issues of concern to serving and former ADF men and women.

So, why did "inappropriate" become inappropriate, at least in regard to some issues? Because it was challenged. Every time.

If you hear "inappropriate" again this year, which you will, challenge it.

Ask why the subject is inappropriate. What makes it so? Why is discussion not allowed? Does the user have something to hide? Who says the subject is inappropriate? If the user says it's not him/her, ask to talk to their boss or to whoever says the topic is inappropriate so you can find out why.

You will see the user quickly backtrack unless a valid reason exists, which is sometimes but not often the case. And if a valid reason does exist then the user won't mind telling you what it is. But more normally he or she will waffle off into the middle distance in a fit of either embarrassment or pomposity as they try to defend the indefensible.

"Inappropriate" should set off loud alarm bells in your head. Watch for it in 2019.

*Continued overpage*



**PRIVACY** is a more recent entrant to the alarm bell word stakes. How often have you read that a matter cannot be discussed because of privacy?

The intent of the various privacy acts is stretched to the limit by authority figures citing privacy in order to shut down discussion. After all, who could possibly be against privacy in our interconnected world? But don't accept the word at face value; ask for specific reasons why the speaker is playing the privacy card.

If the speaker says it is *inappropriate* to discuss a matter because of *privacy*, the alarm bells in your head should become klaxons.



Beloved by politicians and beancounters is **GENEROUS**.

Generous' makes DFVA members' skin crawl because we know what is coming next. All ADF members should react similarly when somebody declares that ADF conditions of service are generous.

Anything you get that the user does not is "generous". That's a given.

But often the user will get more than you and still say that what you get is generous. Why? Because they expect you are ignorant as to their own largesse. And they hope the general public (read taxpayer) is equally ignorant.

Alternatively, if the user enjoys a loftier position than you, their conditions of service are deservedly more generous than yours. To them, anyway.

The word often gets airtime when a politician or beancounter wants to persuade the public that military conditions of service should be reduced but don't want to say so directly. "Generous" is usually used selectively, without the user admitting any counter elements that do not suit his or her anti-military case.

Military conditions of service attract cries of "generous" as efficiently as cowpats attract flies. And with about as much thought.

Military superannuation is a case in point. The old defined benefits schemes were pronounced generous by cheerleaders for the discredited 2008 Matthews report, released in 2009, because the Global Financial Crisis was then in full swing. Their line was that DFRDB and MSBS were generous because defined retirement benefits were fixed while accumulation fund returns were negative at the time. The Matthews cheerleaders fought fair indexation for ADF people because they claimed it would make ADF benefits even more "generous".

Naturally enough, the generosity brigade conveniently ignored the fact that long term investment returns for accumulation funds are,

conservatively, around 4% above inflation. They only spruiked the short term GFC negativity because it suited their case. They never acknowledged that accumulation fund returns are a rollercoaster with significant highs and lows over the years, nor that superannuation is a long term investment. Meanwhile, defined benefits are fixed and, by comparison (and contrast) with accumulation funds, are poor in good times and good in poor times.

Further, the generosity brigade continues to ignore the fact that DFRDB and MSBS contributors are compulsorily slugged a percentage of their pre-tax pay each fortnight, leaving ADF men and women with 94.5% (DFRDB) or 95% (MSBS) of their salary when other Australians receive 100%. When was the last time you heard a politician or beancounter admit that?

You haven't heard "generous" used quite as often in recent years. That's because accumulation fund returns have been well above the long term average and far above the indexation rate for military superannuation pensions, even though 2018 returns were not as good as the previous few years. 2018 was still positive, however, and the losses of the GFC period are long gone. But the generosity brigade does not want to draw attention to that fact.

Don't be surprised when "generous" makes a comeback in 2019. It may have reared its head again by the time you read this. National and international debt is up and, given the polarised political situation in the US and UK in particular, economic prospects are uncertain worldwide. Is another GFC in the wind? If so, "generous" will be back with a vengeance.

Locally, the Productivity Commission is circling the Department of Veterans' Affairs with a view to seeking, in its words, a "better outcome for veterans". That's code for an outcome that is not necessarily 'best' for veterans so, when "generous" reappears in strength, which it will, let your alarm bells ring.



Here's an alarm bell word you can usefully employ, particularly in an election year. The word is **DISAPPOINTED**.

"Disappointed" is a polite word used often in diplomatic circles when one side wants to convey to the other that it is very, very, very pissed off. Diplomats may say, "My government is disappointed that your government chose to (*insert unacceptably appalling behaviour here*)".

You may not be a diplomat but you can use "disappointed" to great effect.

If you say you are "disappointed" with a political or beancounter decision affecting you or your mates or your loved ones, you are really saying you are furious, angry, frothing at the mouth and beating your head against a wall while contemplating homicide against the incompetent, over promoted, oxygen thief of a dumb decision maker. You are not happy.

But if you say directly that you are furious, angry, frothing etc., even though you are, you will get a frosty reception and be told your language is - wait for it - “inappropriate”.

The decision maker will use your plain words to deflect your complaint. He or she will then expect you to go away, even though you are fuming over a decision that you see as grossly unfair or unjustified.

The value of “disappointed” is that you cannot be accused of overreaction to a decision with which you disagree. You do not leave yourself open to accusations of intemperate or inflammatory language. You reduce your antagonist’s opportunity to fling “inappropriate” back at you. Your chances of success are improved.

“Disappointed” is best used in written communications. The word can sound a bit odd if you use it verbally. But it’s a great word. Use it.



In the same category as “disappointed” is **UNHELPFUL**. Its use is obvious.



Other alarm bell words to watch for this year include **HOARDING WEALTH**. This applies to people in the whole Australian community, not just the military community.

“Hoarding wealth” is today’s term for “savings”. Savings are good but hoarding wealth is not, even though they are the same thing.

Attacks by all sides of politics in recent years on superannuation savings are justified because the savers are not saving but are hoarding wealth. And, of course, the superannuation rules that led to hoarding wealth are too, ahem, generous.

Be worried this year when you hear politicians or special interest groups rail against hoarding wealth. What they really mean is that they want to get their hands on your savings, in whatever form your savings may take. Superannuation is a powerful form of saving and the sharks are circling your super, particularly any accumulation funds you may hold outside of DFRDB or MSBS, including ADF Super.

Don’t let the sharks steal your savings by claiming you are hoarding your wealth. If you hear “hoarding wealth” this year, ask the user why they assert that savings are now a bad thing.



**ADMIT** and **REVEAL** are alarm bell words loved by the media. So is **DISCLOSE**.

These words imply conspiracy. Their value is to sell newspapers. They say to the audience that the exceptionally clever journalist has

unearthed something nobody else has or could. How often have you read a newspaper report “revealing” a real or imagined fault that the paper’s intrepid journo has forced a local MP or businessperson or celebrity to “admit” even though they did not want to “disclose” it?

Expect to hear “admit”, “reveal” and “disclose” more frequently this election year because all sides of politics leak information to the media. The media then gleefully claim the material “reveals” matters that the victim of the leak does not want to “admit” or “disclose” even when, as is usually the case, the matter is trivial or unimportant.

These three words need not ring particularly loud alarm bells with a military audience but, when spotted, should be treated with the scepticism they deserve.



• **EMPLOYEE**

ADF men and women are not employees. They are **members**. Member is legally correct; employee is not. This is not mere pedantry. The law does not recognise ADF people as employees or as enjoying employee benefits. Hence the word “member” reinforces the unique nature of military service while “employee” undermines it. If the distinction is still lost on you, read the many *Camaraderie* articles on the unique nature of military service. It’s important, even vital, to make this distinction.

Given that the unique nature of military service is always under attack from one quarter or another, watch for these two alarm bell words whether or not Australia is in an election year. Don’t let them go under your radar.



• **INJURED**

ADF people are **wounded** by enemy/terrorist action. They are not injured. Their wounds may be physical or mental. “Wounded” is another important distinction, particularly when people with peripheral or no military experience, no matter how well-meaning, are appointed to examine rehabilitation and compensation matters affecting veterans. Additionally, ADF members on operational (active) service may be **killed**. They don’t just die. “Killed” is a harsh but accurate word for these military deaths.

Alarm bell words should always be treated with care. In the hothouse world of an election year, take even greater care. Good luck...

By Win Fowles  
VP (Sunshine Coast)  
DFWA (Qld)

# the fish rot

## FROM THE HEAD

## A REPECHAGE

*Editor's Note: In the First Edition 2018 (Vol 49 No.1) we published an article on Challenges facing the RSL. Some criticism on the article was received, and the article's author, Kel Ryan, has responded to one members comments, as follows:*

Thank you for your note regarding the article, The Fish Rot from the Head, which appeared in the recent issue of Camaraderie. Your frank and honest opinion of the piece is appreciated. It was written some 8 years ago and received wide, positive coverage at that time. The article you refer to was slightly amended from the original though the critical proposition calling for change remained.

As a Life Member of the RSL and senior office holder at all levels from sub-branch to State Deputy President in Queensland I do understand the issues that have brought the organisation to the situation in which it now finds itself. In 2010 when the article was written the RSL was still regarded as the premier ESO across the country. This, despite the growing uneasiness many of us, particularly younger veterans, had about the organisation and the inability and reluctance of the leadership to address the future. Since that time much of what I wrote about has come to pass as evidenced by the situation in RSL NSW, RSL SA and RSL Qld. With the ACNC and the ATO investigating each State branch and, in some cases, individual sub-branches across the country it is evident that the RSL as a brand needs renewal if it is to regain its premier position among the ESO community.

At a recent function in Canberra I caught up with the former president of the RSL Victorian Branch. Maj Gen David McLaughlin (Retd). He is a member of DFWA and complimented me on the article and commented that, 'well done Kel you were correct in your comments'.

Mr James Brown, State President RSL NSW, in his book, ANZACs Long Shadow, devotes a full chapter to the RSL and its failings, particularly in relation to the younger veteran cohort and its obsession with the "ANZAC myth". One critic of the book referred to it as, "The best book yet written --- on war itself and the creator/destroyer myth of ANZAC". Peter Leahy, former Chief of Army commented that, "James Brown sets himself apart as a leader in this new generation of ANZACs by asking the hard questions".

James Brown's criticisms of the RSL are valid and, as he is presently finding, they are deep-rooted. He and his executive are uniquely conscious of the situation RSL NSW has as they seek to reform and refocus the organisation back onto its core purpose. This situation is replicated to varying degrees, across each state branch.

Brian, we should never be fearful of, or reluctant to criticise that

which we value. The RSL, like any long-established organisation must continually look at itself and ask is it still relevant, is it serving the cross generational membership and is it established for the future? All these questions and more were touched on in my article.

I remain an active member of my local sub-branch as I value the place that the organisation has in the Australian Defence Community (ADC). As National President DFWA and National Spokesman for the Alliance of Defence Services Organisations (ADSO) I maintain strong ties with Mr. Robert Dick, National President of the RSL. To me and many others the RSL must renew and survive not only for historical reasons but for the role it plays in the ADC.

The RSL is not unique in the challenges it is presently confronting. Many ESO are in the same position and are addressing their challenges within their ability. DFWA is in that situation. However, none will survive and be able to deal with the issues of the coming generations of veterans if they remain fearful of being challenged through constructive criticism. As I said in the article, "The RSL, as the largest, the oldest and the most recognised ESO must accept a leadership role not by virtue of these characteristic but because of its demonstrated capacity to assume these responsibilities".

I am happy if you share this response with those who you corresponded with about my article.

Take care,

*Kel Ryan*  
National President DFWA

### DID YOU KNOW: STATISTICS

**In a room of just 23 people there's a 50-50 chance of two people having the same birthday. In a room of 75 there's a 99.9% chance of two people matching. Put down the calculator and pitchfork, I don't speak heresy. The birthday paradox is strange, counter-intuitive, and completely true.**



## CSC provides ADF veterans, serving members and cadets with **COMPLIMENTARY ENTRY** to **Australian National Maritime Museum**

CSC has partnered with the Australian National Maritime Museum to provide complimentary access to the museum for all Defence Force veterans, serving members, and current cadets.

As part of the new partnership CSC is fully subsidising the cost of museum entry for all Defence Force veterans, serving members, and current cadets, enabling them to visit the museum, for free, as often as they like.

When visiting the museum they will have the opportunity to explore Australia's rich maritime heritage including the history of the Royal Australian Navy and the experiences of past servicemen and women, and the museum's exciting program of exhibitions and events.

Complimentary entry includes access to the Museum's Action Stations experience, which tells the story of life in the Royal Australian Navy, as well as the opportunity to climb aboard ex-Navy destroyer HMAS Vampire and submarine HMAS Onslow.

Visitors can explore all areas of the unique indoor-outdoor museum, see many historic fleets and exhibitions - including the acclaimed Gapu-Monuk Saltwater exhibition of stunning bark paintings by the Yolnu people of north-east Arnhem Land, and the

immersive James Cameron – Challenging the Deep exhibition.

“There is no doubt that the history of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and the men and women who serve, is an important, fascinating and ongoing chapter in Australia's maritime story. It's an area we have researched, collected and shared with our visitors since opening in 1991. I'm particularly delighted that, with the generous support of CSC, all Australian Defence Force members, cadets and veterans will have even greater access to the museum, our collections and importantly their history,” said museum director Kevin Sumption PSM.

“CSC greatly values and appreciates the commitment and loyal service of our veterans, serving members of the Army, Navy and Air Force, and cadets, and providing free entry to the Museum is one way for us to show our gratitude and thanks,” said CSC's Corporate Affairs Manager, Damon Whittock.

To access the offer, current Australian Defence Force members, current cadets and veterans simply need to show a valid ADF ID card, DVA-issued card or service medals to the museum's front of house team, or arrive in uniform, and they will receive free entry. This offer runs until September 2020.

# OPEN ARMS

## Veterans and Families Counselling

The Veterans and Veterans Families Counselling Service (VVCS) changed its name to Open Arms - Veterans and Families Counselling in October 2018.

Open Arms continues to provide the same professional, confidential service, with 24/7 support available to all current and ex-serving ADF members and their families.

As of October 2018, VVCS is operating as Open Arms, with the tagline veterans and families counselling.

The new branding also acknowledges that VVCS is a service founded by Vietnam Veterans.

Our name is changing but our phone number and professional service are not. We continue to provide free and confidential support to current and former ADF members and their families 24/7 on 1800 011 046.

### Why change the brand?

Our organisation provides counselling support to veterans and their families when they need it most. But unfortunately, other than existing clients, many people who could greatly benefit from our services do not know who we are or how we can help.

Research showed that our previous name, which was regularly shortened to an acronym, was unclear, and the branding was uninviting, and not well recognised.

This new brand is an opportunity to better represent what we are all about with a fresh look that is more meaningful and recognisable, at a time when we are expanding the group of people who are eligible to use our services.

### What does the new Open Arms logo represent?

Open arms are a very powerful symbol of support, safety, and security, particularly for Vietnam veterans, spent long periods in the jungle during the war.

Their lifeline was the Huey helicopter, which they would call to either take them out to safety at the end of an operation, or to provide critical supplies, like food, water, or ammunition.

But to let the pilot know where to land, one soldier had to stand in a field with open arms, completely vulnerable.

Our new logo reminds us of those brave soldiers, while also representing so much more about those who serve - families welcoming soldiers home, land crew directing planes, and, of course, our policy to welcome those who need support with open arms.

Who decided to change the name and brand?

In 2017, the VVCS National Advisory Committee -which includes representatives of our key stakeholders - recognised that to better promote the valuable services we provide, we needed

a more recognisable and memorable brand. Based on their advice the then Minister for Veterans Affairs, tasked the National Advisory Committee with overseeing the development of a new name and brand for the organisation.

### How did you arrive at this new brand?

The new name and brand were developed based on market research and extensive consultation with Vietnam veterans, current personnel, reservists, partners, families, contemporary veterans, and peer network advisers across Australia.

The results of the research were presented to the National Advisory Committee who unanimously agreed that the name Open Arms, and the tagline veterans and families counselling best represented our important work.

Isn't this change going to make it harder for people to find support? How will people know it is the same service?

Targeted promotion will let our main clients and stakeholders know about the change. This will include direct communication, advertising, editorials, videos, and a new website.

As our new brand is more recognisable and clearly represents what we do, we expect that, over time, it will better connect with potential clients, so that increasing numbers of people will contact us to get the support they need.





## ROYAL COMMISSION

## INTO AGED CARE

The Royal Commission commenced Hearings in February and is receiving written submissions until at least the end of June 2019.

Baby-boomers, which includes most Vietnam Veterans, are approaching the age where consideration of Aged Care, at home or in aged care facilities is a sensible thing to do. Many have experienced issues with family members already and some may have experienced issues personally.

The Royal Commission is inviting Written Submissions from the public and organisations. These can be made by completing an on-line form accessed through the Royal Commission website <https://agedcare.royalcommission.gov.au/Pages/default.aspx>

### Particular areas of DFWA concern include:

- Older Veterans (Vietnam) entering Homes and not being aware of DVA support, especially Vietnam/Baby Boomer Veterans who have never been DVA clients;
- DVA supported Veterans and Widows falling off DVA radar and losing DVA entitlements when entering Aged Care Facilities; and
- Younger brain injured Veterans put into Aged Care in the absence of other facilities. The RC Terms of Reference includes younger people residing in aged care facilities.

If you decide to make a submission, it is recommended that you download the form first and complete off-line because if you complete on-line, you have to complete the form in one sitting.

If you are not comfortable using the online form, the Royal Commission would still like to hear from you.

You can:

- write to the Royal Commission at GPO Box 1151 Adelaide SA 5001;
- email [ACRCenquiries@royalcommission.gov.au](mailto:ACRCenquiries@royalcommission.gov.au); or
- telephone 1800 960 711 (between 8:00am-8:00pm AEDT Monday-Friday except on public holidays. Interpreter service available).

Submitters are asked to identify:

- if they are "People who are veterans, including the spouse, widow or widower of a veteran.
- which Terms of Reference/Areas of concern is the submission about. It is suggested Veteran Issue mentioned above come under the following:
  - Challenges and how to best deliver care for younger people (under 65) with disability (Invalidied Veterans)
  - Challenges about understanding what care is available, the assessment process, how to get care, and at the level of care needed (what can/should DVA provide): and
  - Interface between aged care services and (DVA i.e.,) primary health services, acute care and disability services and regulatory systems (including how people transition from other care environments or between aged care settings);
  - Services of any kind to a veteran (including care or help in their own home under the Veterans' Home Care Program)

Whether you are making a submission or not, if you have any experience of difficulties faced by Veterans entering Aged Care arrangements including veterans losing DVA support when entering Aged Care arrangements, eg. DVA no longer paying for services etc they previously provided, please contact your DFWA Branch and give details, so that you can join with others and assist in the DFWA submission to the Royal Commission.

# RECENT CRITICISM OF THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL - A PERSONAL RESPONSE

## OR THE LEFT'S NEXT STOP ON THE LONG MARCH THROUGH THE INSTITUTIONS - THE AUSTRALIA WAR MEMORIAL

by Neil Churches

### BACKGROUND

Dean Ashenden's recent article 'Saving the War Memorial from itself' (*Inside Story*, 15 January 2019 updated) canvassing many aspects of the War Memorial's current direction, from its refusal to recognise the Frontier Wars, to the composition of its Council, and its liking for donations from arms companies. Some highlights of his article included:

- the Memorial's blind spot about the Frontier Wars is a symptom of a national silence about these events;
- yet the Frontier Wars were more formative of Australia than any of our overseas military expeditions;
- commemorating the Frontier Wars elsewhere than the Memorial makes them seem less important than they are, not real wars;
- the Memorial has become brash and not reflective of the people it commemorates;
- the Memorial's current Director has become personally identified with its current direction;
- the Memorial's council is unrepresentative of Australians;
- Labor's present view is much the same as the Coalition's but it needs to be persuaded 'that the AWM should be the focus of a comprehensive review and rethink'.

### A RESPONSE

Dean Ashenden's recent criticism of the Australian War Memorial has demonstrated scant regard for our nation's most important social institution.

His criticism is based on his belief the AWM has neglected to include mention of the so-called "border wars".

He claimed "Given that the matter to be avoided, concealed or denied was, precisely, war, the AWM can be regarded as concealment's epicentre."

Much as I admire much of Dean Ashenden's written work, he fails markedly in this epistle of hate and personal denigration of the current Director of the Australian War Memorial.

Brendan Nelson, given that he was a politician - and to my mind, a pretty effective one - has brought much-needed change to the AWM.

However, he has not thrown the baby out with the bathwater in his long record of innovation.

The fact that neither he nor his Council support commemoration of the so-called 'border wars' can only be applauded.

I fervently hope that even a Labor government would be loath to change this view.

Ashenden's thesis is patently clear in these statements of inclusiveness-seeking:

- "So far as can be told from their official biographies, none of the council's members is drawn from or has any relationship with unions or other employees' organisations, and none is from the "community sector" or from peace, nuclear disarmament or similar movements."
- "There are no young people; none is black, brown, yellow or brindle or, with one exception, from a non-Anglo-Celtic background."
- "None is Indigenous."
- "Again, so far as can be seen in the official biographies, none is associated with or representative of former allies, much less former foes."
- "The council is top-heavy, military-dominated, male-dominated, Anglo-dominated and deeply integrated into the Establishment."
- "It is representative of and sees itself as defending the interests of those who are commemorated."
- "It is entirely unrepresentative of the nominal commemorators, the Australian community."
- "It offers a case study in the workings and consequences of what some economists would call 'provider capture'."

Ashenden needs to rethink his diatribe and apply some of the academic prowess he has shown in other writing.

Some of the council's members are office-holders in philanthropic organisations, some such as former WA Labor politician and Vietnam veteran Graham Edwards clearly contradict Ashenden's narrow views.

Council member Ben Roberts-Smith VC MG is young.

*Continued page 38*



# An Open Letter to Australia's Young Veterans

By Marcus Fielding

When the first groups of wounded members of the Australian Imperial Force returned to Australia in 1916 the Australian Government had to come to terms with how to receive and assist them. Not surprisingly, there was only so much the Government could do and groups of returned servicemen began to work together to assist each other. Many were physically wounded, few had jobs, they had little money and most were destined to be haunted by their experiences for the rest of their lives. As more and more returned the imperative for veterans to assist other veterans grew. That their common bond of service and determination to help each other gave rise to the Returned and Servicemen's League (RSL) across Australia within just a few years is a remarkable story.

Over the next century the RSL, like any member based organisation, has evolved in line with the wishes of its members. The fact that the RSL continues to exist and has grown to span the country and manage an enormous amount of assets - including many hundreds of club houses - is an equally remarkable story.

There have been several instances when a 'younger set' of veterans have felt that an 'old guard' were unwelcoming and resistant to change. This is a natural - if unfortunate cycle - in any long-standing organisation - particularly those with members across different generations.

From its genesis the RSL has been a member based organisation that has embraced the selection of its leaders through voting; this has not changed. Like all good democracies the majority view prevails and talented leaders invariably emerge. This is the only pathway for any organisation to evolve and thrive.

All of you would be aware of the leadership and governance issues that have plagued the RSL in recent months. They have done significant damage to the RSL 'brand'. Together with other negative experiences and perceptions we once again find ourselves in a period when younger veterans feel that the RSL has 'lost touch' and is incapable of change. I do not agree with this oversimplified view.

There are many reasons for Veterans to not be a part of the RSL, but none of them are outweighed - in my opinion - by the fact that being an Australian Veteran is something that we should all be proud of and that we have a duty to maintain and shape 'our organisations' into the image we want.

The RSL is not all about benefits you might receive as an individual member - it is about the benefits that the veterans' community receives as a whole. Generations of veterans have built this iconic organisation and if you are a Veteran you have a responsibility to ensure that it continues to do the enormous amount of good work that it does for veterans and their dependents every single day.

We also need to accept that the negatives associated with the RSL aren't going to change by criticising it from afar. Change can only come from within and by smart and motivated people choosing to be involved. I strongly believe that the RSL is the body best placed in terms of physical 'footprint' (sub-branches) and assets to remain the prime organisation for current and future veterans.

If you do nothing else, for a very modest membership fee (and a few minutes at an AGM) you get a vote in the future of the RSL. Democracy is a very powerful tool. If you choose to give or take nothing else, at least vote for those who you think should lead the RSL into the future. Even if you don't personally want any benefits from the organisation do it for the other veterans who need assistance now and for those who will be veterans needing assistance in the future.

I sometimes imagine having a beer with a returned soldier from the Great War. The RSL of his day had few assets, no club rooms and only their mateship to try and improve the lot of veterans. If I could tell him about what we have available now he would be astonished and regard us being very lucky to inherit such a legacy. I refuse to let some relatively minor issues be an excuse not to be a custodian of such a tremendous century long investment in Australia's veterans. Don't accept the status quo - join and vote for change.

# DEFENCE RESERVES

## Current Issues and Concerns



by Jim Barry -Vice President Reserves

I had the pleasure of attending the DFWA AGM and Executive Meeting at the Ringwood Victoria RSL on 19/20 November 2018. In presenting my reports, I raised some perennial and current issues or concerns affecting Reservists and what the Defence Reserve Association (DRA) is doing about them. A summary of the status of those issues and other issues are as follows:

- **Annual Defence Reserves Association (DRA) Conference:**

The annual DRA Conference was held at the Vibe Hotel, Canberra Airport on Saturday, 25 August 2018, the week following the Federal Government's Cabinet 'shenanigans'. It was the first time to my knowledge that a Defence Minister had not participated in one of our conferences.

The theme of the Conference was 'Challenges for Reservists to Serve'. I must say it was one of the better conferences in terms of getting people to think about how to better use the 'part time force', however, we still have a way to go!

- **DRA Advocacy for Reservists:**

It has not been in the DRA's remit to provide advocates for Reservists that seek advice/assistance re their terms and conditions of Service, except in exceptional circumstances. However with the advent of the new Total Workforce Model (TWM) and the limited introduction of Non Liability Health Care (NLHC) for Reservists, this advocacy role has become necessary. We therefore have started to work with the RSL to refer to them Reservists who need specialist advocacy support. This is very much a 'work in progress' that needs to be formalised with those organisations that provide specialist advocacy services.

- **Defence Reserves Support Council:**

National Chairman, Jane McAloon, spoke at the DRA Conference on the study being undertaken to identify and understand the relationship issues between Reservists (and their families), employers and the ADF requirements for Reservists to serve. Reserve and Youth Division (RYD) provide the staff and support for the Defence Reserves Support Council, as well as for the State the Territory Councils and their support offices. Each Council is made up of interested business/corporate people and like minded DRA representatives with the objective to encourage employers, large and small, to release Reservists for military service when they are required. This includes PR campaigns, through media and personal interrelationship, along with appropriate compensation through the Employer Support Program (ESP).

- **Non Liability Health Care (NLHC) for Reservists:**

This is still a major issue for Reservists not being eligible for NLHC when their permanent counterparts only have to serve one day

to be eligible. It is completely anomalous that a full-time or permanent member of the ADF is entitled for NLHC after one day's service, whereas a Reservist with say 40 years of service, who has had no period of 'Continuous Full Time Service' (CFTS) in that 40 years of service, is not eligible for NLHC. This does not pass the 'pub test' and the DRA has pointed this out to the Minister for Veterans' Affairs. We wait to see whether this anomaly will be fixed in the next federal budget.

- **2nd Division – ARES Transformation Plan:**

The 2 DIV commander's update at the DRA Conference on the Army Reserve Transformation Plan was published in full in the last issue of Camaraderie, Vol 49 # 3. The important changes are that the part time strength has now stabilised and is in fact increasing to the 15,000 target. Further the training separation rate, up to completion of Initial Employment Training (IET) of 45% in FY14/15 is now down to 15% in 2018, meaning there will be a training pipeline choke point for the re-roled 8th Brigade and their University Regiments' 'Centres of Excellence'.

This in turn has led to a training review to provide more flexibility by introducing modules, adding on-line learning where practical, but it is still ignoring the requirement to adhere to permanent ADF trade standards, rather than just 'must knows' and 'should knows' for their Reserve trade/position.

The ARES through Plan BEERSHEBA is required to provide a Battle Group to augment each of the three Regular Brigades on a three year Force Rotation Cycle (FRC). This allows the ARES Brigade Units to up-skill their personnel through the 'Readying' phase of the FRC and thereby lower the earlier training burden. 'Just in time' training makes perfect sense for Reservists and would further assist retention versus that wastage rate.

- **Superannuation and the Total Work Force (TWF) model:**

As reported previously in the development of the TWM, the original SERCAT 5 which was meant to be part time for Reservists to equate with SERCAT 6 (part time for permanent personnel, including superannuation) was completely changed meaning there is now no element of pro rata superannuation for part time Reservists. Reservists are now the only part time workforce cohort in Australia not to have employer-contributed superannuation. There is also the moral question regarding some self-employed and indigenous Reservists that serve for a significant part of the year.

As mentioned elsewhere in this edition of Camaraderie, the Productivity Commission has released its draft report of its inquiry into compensation and rehabilitation for veterans that includes by definition Reservists. The draft report titled "A better way to support veterans", makes a number of quite challenging draft recommendations, including the abolition of the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) and replacing it with a new

*Continued page 38*

## MONEY MATTERS

# UNCLAIMED MONEY



Have you ever lost any money? I don't mean a \$10 bill ... I'm referring to funds that you may not be aware even exist, let alone belong to you.

A few weeks ago, I was discussing dividend payments with an investor, and he told me that some years ago, he was surprised to discover about \$4,000 in a Victorian State Government account tagged as "unclaimed money" belonging to him!! The funds consisted of dividend payments, and Medicare rebates. The investor was able to retrieve all the funds and has now mended his ways, and regularly checks that payments due to him, are actually received by him.

This discussion prompted me to write about "unclaimed money" which may belong to you, the existence of which you obviously aren't aware of, as you are not searching for the funds.

Hopefully this article will awaken the "Sherlock Holmes" within you.

Due to more records being held electronically by financial institutions, fortunately less funds are being lost. However, even though defence personnel and families are well versed in dealing with the issues of moving house, we are not immune from "missing" some particular organization in relation to notifying a change of address, perhaps beginning an "unclaimed money" trail that you are oblivious of.

According to the MONEYSMART site, which is always mentioned at the end of these articles, there are over \$1.1 BILLION of unclaimed funds, in lost shares, dividends, bank accounts and life insurance.

Does some of this belong to you?

If it does, how do you track it down, and claim it?

If you do believe you may have unclaimed money, you should first visit <https://www.moneysmart.gov.au/> and search for "unclaimed money". This link gives you the opportunity to type in your name, and very quickly establish whether there ARE funds that belong to you. The link will guide you through the process you need to go through to retrieve YOUR FUNDS.

The site will also guide you to a link to the Australia Taxation Office, to enable you to search for lost Superannuation.

The various State and Territory Government links will connect you to

deceased estates, lost share dividends, salaries and wages, cheques, over-payments, proceeds of sale and more.

The Fair Work Ombudsman site should also be able to assist you with unpaid wages.

If you do have "unclaimed money", my wish is that you will be reunited with it soon.

In conclusion, I would like to make a further observation. There are many scams that citizens are subjected to. One is in relation to the "unclaimed money" that I have addressed in this article.

Unfortunately, scammers "trawl through" the sites that I have mentioned, note the details, and then send letters to the unsuspecting person, highlighting that they (the scammer), have "found" money that belongs to you. The letters request payment to the writer, who will then complete the search, take a further fee, and you will eventually receive a very small percentage of the original "unclaimed money".

If you are the unfortunate recipient of such a letter ... NEVER reply to it, but immediately do a very diligent search of the sites that I have mentioned.

I wish you successful searching.

### USEFUL WEB SITES

[www.moneysmart.gov.au](http://www.moneysmart.gov.au) – Calculators and tips from ASIC and the Australian Government, to help you make better financial decisions.

### TAURUS

*This article is published purely for information which we believe is accurate and reliable, but no warranty of accuracy or reliability is given. Any advice is general advice, and not personal advice, nor a recommendation to invest.*

Editor's Note: This article was published in full in mid 2018 (Vol 49 #2) however some editorial gremlins in the publishing of the poem itself warrants correction and the republication of the article in full.

# THE LONG HILL HOME:

## A Poem by Sergeant Tom Birnie, 2RAR, 1971

By LtCol Alistair Pope, psc (Retired)

### War Poets & Bush Balladeers

There are many fine war poets and I particularly like reading those writing about WWI. Curiously, in equal measure I enjoy reading both the war jingoists such as Rupert Brooke and Jessie Pope and the dark, stark realism of Siegfried Sassoon, Wilfred Owen, Robert Graves and Rudyard Kipling. Kipling was very much an enthusiastic supporter of the war and the 'greatness of the British Empire', at least until his only son was killed at the Battle of Loos in his very first action.

Rupert Brooke was always an 'Empirist' and enthusiastic warrior probably because he never experienced a battle. However, his poem, 'The Soldier' contains the memorable sentiment:

*'If I should die, think only this of me  
That there's some corner of a foreign field  
That is forever England.'*

Brooke ironically got his 'wish' as he died either of sunstroke, or more likely of septicaemia from an infected mosquito bite on a hospital ship off the Greek Island of Skyros, where he remains buried. His death on 23rd April 1915 came just two days before the bloody Gallipoli landings in which many more staked out their corner of a foreign field for Australia.

Robert Graves (I, Claudius, Goodbye to All That, and much more), Wilfred Owen, (who was killed just seven days before the war ended) and Siegfried Sassoon recorded in their poetry the horrors and ugliness of war. Sassoon went from being a reluctant supporter of the war, but willing to do his duty, to being very anti-war to such an extent he came close to being tried for treason! Yet, somewhat paradoxically Sassoon displayed such outstanding courage in battle it appeared he wanted to be killed. Instead, he was an invincible super hero who survived every suicidal encounter, killed many Germans and was awarded a Military Cross.

Australia has a long history of producing Bush Balladeers and War Poets, with even our most infamous war criminal, Lt. Harry 'Breaker' Morant penning some enjoyable bush poetry. Probably his most poignant poem were the bitter lines he wrote before his own forthcoming execution, a poem that was published in The Bulletin after the event.

Today, retired Brigadier George Mansford, a soldier of 41 years infantry service is probably our leading balladeer. His poems capture the essence of the soldier's lot in the modern world. Two stanzas from his 'Casualties of War' encapsulate the reality of the effect war has not only on soldiers, but also on their families.

### Casualties of War

*'In the bloody arena, the fight at dawn was won  
Alas, in the red stained snow; a fallen husband and son  
Satellites and modern tech spread the word as never before  
Thus in a world far away came a dreaded knock on the door.  
Politicians heard the news and ensured their eyes were wet  
Made appropriate noises and vowed they would never forget  
To a weeping mother and sedated widow as the media looked on  
A final hug, a smile, hurried words of comfort then were gone.'*

### A War Poem by 18161 Sergeant Tom Birnie

I attended a 'Blinds Demolition Course' at Wallangarra on the border of Queensland and New South Wales in the wintry July of 1969. Who knew that anywhere in sunny Queensland could be that bitterly cold? It was a small course of just half a dozen enthusiasts keen to learn about how to blow things up that were supposed to go bang, but had failed to perform as advertised. It would be our job to rectify that failure to perform.

The course involved both classroom theory and the fun side of extensive practice. To speed things along we were paired off to work in teams. My partner was Sergeant Tom Birnie, an Irishman from Belfast with a keen sense of humour and a competent, confident approach that made every task look easy. It was an enjoyable professional course with a lot of satisfyingly loud noises and new experiences. On completing the final tests everyone on the course was certified to destroy malfunctioning ordnance. We celebrated with a few beers and pies and returned to our units. Tom went back to tropical Townsville and I returned to Brisbane. We did not meet again.

Sergeant Birnie had already served one tour with D Company, 2RAR in 1967-68 (during which he was wounded). He was now scheduled for a second tour in 1970-71 as one of the 'old hands' providing operational experience to the battalion.

In the short time that I knew him I was unaware that Tom was a War Poet. It was therefore a surprise when in July 2017 I found the following poem in the book of the history of that second tour. Tom had written it on 13th February 1971, nine months into his one-year of operational service with 2RAR in Phuoc Tuy Province.



Sergeant Tom Birnie,  
D Company, 2RAR  
First Tour of Duty,  
1967 - 1968

His words capture the weariness and strain of infantry operations in a war zone and his longing for the tour to end so that he can be home again with his family and friends. His view of the insincerity of politicians was true in 1971 and probably even more so today:

### *The Long Hill Home*

I think of the long hill home —  
Laid in the jungle's thick brown loam,  
Youthful lips long ceased to moan,  
Shattered and tattered and so alone —  
*Never to walk the long hill home.*

One of many, before and to come,  
His life's blood joined with the others to run  
In a torrent of red to unsated seas  
Empires are built on the bones of these  
*Never to walk the long hill home.*

What care they for their country's fate  
They who neither love nor hate?  
Their bones are white, these posthumous great,  
White as the Empire builder's plate  
*Never to walk the long hill home.*

Their epitaph by quirk of fate  
Stands dumb in country town and state:  
The unknown soldier! His gift was great.  
Unknown they lived, unknown they died  
*Never to walk the long hill home.*

I stand atop the long hill home  
With wife and son, we three alone;  
And far away in the jungle's mould  
The bones of my youth lie stiff and cold  
*Never to walk the long hill home.*

On the morning of 24th March 1971 Sergeant Tom Birnie was shot by a sentry as he re-entered his platoon area. The sentry was not expecting the patrol to return from that direction and mistook Birnie for an approaching enemy. The sentry fired, severely wounded him.

Sergeant Birnie died of his wounds at 1st Australian Field Hospital in the early hours of 25th March 1971.

*He never did walk the long hill home to his wife and son.*

### **Lest We Forget**

#### **Bibliography & References**

The Anzac Battalion: Second Tour; 1970-1971 – The operational history of 2RAR in Viet Nam  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/02/technology/02gameside.html>  
<https://rslvirtualwarmemorial.org.au/explore/people/654215>

18161 Sergeant Thomas Birnie, 2nd Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment, Age 31, from Townsville QLD. Known as Bernie, he did two tours of Vietnam with 2RAR, 1967-68, during which he was wounded, and again in 1970-71. He died on 25th March after being shot on the previous morning by a sentry while re-entering his own platoon area. In the photographs from the first tour, Sergeant Tom Birnie and his partner are patrolling away from their base at Phuoc Tuy and in the vicinity of the border area between Bien Hoa and Long Khanh provinces. They were patrolling as part of Operation Coburg, which sought to protect the Bien Hoa and Long Binh bases from communist Vietcong and North Vietnamese Army attacks that intelligence reports predicted would occur at the time of the Buddhist Lunar New Year, called Tet.

Rupert Brooke -

<http://tlf.dlr.det.nsw.edu.au/learningobjects/Content/RI1167/object/r9420.html>

Rupert Brooke [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rupert\\_Brooke](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rupert_Brooke)

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The\\_Soldier\\_\(poem\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Soldier_(poem))

#### **The Soldier**

*'If I should die, think only this of me*

*That there's some corner of a foreign field*

*That is forever England.'*

This sonnet encompasses the memoirs of a deceased soldier who declares his patriotism to his homeland by declaring that his sacrifice will be the eternal ownership of England of a small portion of land upon which he died.

#### **SIEGFRIED SASSOON, CBE, MC -**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siegfried\\_Sassoon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Siegfried_Sassoon)

Sassoon soon became horrified by the realities of war, and the tone of his writing changed completely: where his early poems exhibit a Romantic, dilettantish sweetness, his war poetry moves to an increasingly discordant music, intended to convey the ugly truths of the trenches to an audience

Sassoon went over alone with bombs in daylight, under covering fire from a couple of rifles, and scared away the occupants. A pointless feat, since instead of signalling for reinforcements, he sat down in the German trench and began reading a book of poems which he had brought with him.

Deepening depression at the horror and misery the soldiers were forced to endure produced in Sassoon a paradoxically manic courage, and he was nicknamed "Mad Jack" by his men for his near-suicidal exploits. On 27 July 1916 he was awarded the Military Cross.

#### **ROBERT GRAVES -** [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert\\_Graves](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Robert_Graves)

#### **RUDYARD KIPLING -**

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudyard\\_Kipling#Death\\_of\\_son](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rudyard_Kipling#Death_of_son)

"Kipling's son John was killed in action at the Battle of Loos in September 1915, at the age of just 18. John had tried twice to enlist but was rejected. His father had been lifelong friends with Lord Roberts, commander-in-chief of the British Army, and colonel of the Irish Guards. At Rudyard's request, John was accepted into the Irish Guards.

John Kipling was sent to Loos two days into the battle in a reinforcement contingent. He was last seen stumbling through the mud blindly, with a possible facial injury.

Kipling was emotionally devastated by the death of his son."

#### **BRIGADIER GEORGE MANSFORD -**

[http://iwwpa.net/mansford\\_g/index.php](http://iwwpa.net/mansford_g/index.php)

#### **CASUALTIES OF WAR** poem.

# WHO DEFENDS THE DEFENDERS?

By Bill O'Chee

Editors Note: This article was published in The Spectator on 10 July 2018.

Last week Defence admitted former Lt Colonel Karel Dubsky was an innocent victim of the Jedi Council witchhunt that terminated his career and left him a shattered man. That makes it hard to miss the irony that another of nation's defenders was led to the scaffold last week in the shape of Australia's most decorated contemporary soldier, Ben Roberts-Smith VC, MG.

In an extraordinarily tasteless article, Fairfax Media alleged Mr Roberts-Smith was being investigated for unspecified "breaches of the laws of armed conflict" in Afghanistan. It was claimed this was part of Major-General Paul Brereton's wide-ranging trawl through 15 years of service by Australia's special forces soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan.

By Fairfax's own admission, this inquiry is supposed to be conducted behind closed doors. There are very good reasons for this, not the least of which is that many of the operations in question were and remain classified. Another is that the evidence of such crimes is notoriously unreliable, especially when it comes from possible enemies.

The greatest difficulty, though, is the nature of war itself. Combat pits men against each other in circumstances where the exigencies of battle, and the need for self-preservation, often take precedence over the rules of war. This has always been so.

Claims of Australian soldiers killing surrendering Germans in the First World War were so prevalent that even Bean refused to dismiss them, and cited the "primitive bloodthirstiness" of battle for soldiers performing unseemly deeds.

In "Storming the Falklands", former paratrooper Tony Banks related the distressing scenes at the Wireless Ridge, where British troops made a night attack with fixed bayonets and were told to take no prisoners. A terrified young Argentine soldier surrendered, pleading for his life, and begging not to be killed. A brief argument occurred among Banks and his comrades as to who was going to kill the man before a tarpaulin was thrown over his head; he was shot and then bayoneted.

If these things happen in war between uniformed combatants, how much more difficult is it to strictly comply with the rules of war when the enemy deliberately does not? Insurgents do not wear uniforms; they stash their weapons to blend into the population and pull them out when it suits them to attack. They use non-combatants as human shields. It is easy in these circumstances for innocent civilians to die.

Add to that the frustration of seeing colleagues killed, dismembered and wounded, and seeing rescue helicopters shot at, or enduring renegade Afghan "allies" murdering Australian soldiers in their compounds. The moral certainty of Punt Road pundits is a luxury often unavailable to the Australian soldiers in combat zones.

“ Combat pits men against each other in circumstances where the exigencies of battle, and the need for self-preservation, often take precedence over the rules of war. This has always been so... ”

None of these things was a deterrent, however, to the almost salacious way in which this most recent story was reported, including the claim Ben Roberts-Smith "declined to answer a series of detailed questions sent to him by Fairfax Media."

Given this is a confidential investigation he should not have to. In fact, details of the investigation should never have been published until they were completed.

What is most disturbing is the frequency with which investigations of allegations against soldiers make their way into the media, when details of military operations do not. Even when investigators illegally seize soldier's psychological records – which are supposed to be confidential – this rarely makes it into the press. It suggests the source of the leaks is not soldiers themselves, but powerful and deeply entrenched interests within Defence.

All of this leads many to suspect that political interests are triumphing over military imperatives. When two cadets at the Australian Defence Force Academy in 2013 streamed images of one of them having sex with a female cadet, the Sex Discrimination Commissioner was sensationally invited to conduct a wide-ranging

investigation into the role of women in the ADF.

Although Broderick herself had no military service and no expertise in military operations, she took it upon herself to make sweeping recommendations about the participation of women in frontline units. Normally, decisions about the structure and composition of military units are determined solely by the nature of the enemy and what is necessary to capture or kill them. Disturbingly, her recommendations were accepted in spite of her total absence of military qualification.

Fears and suspicions of political agendas are now running rife throughout Australia's service personnel. They fear the insidious attacks on their dignity by those who have always found reason to confuse service of one's country with militarism. They fear all they stand for being sullied by cheap shots from moralising television hosts.

Most of all, many fear there is nothing to protect them against civil litigation by supposed Iraqi and Afghan "victims" bringing claims through Australian courts. In the United Kingdom, hundreds of soldiers have suffered years of torment before the courts and the Iraq Historic Abuse Team (IHAT) inquiry, with no end to their nightmares yet in sight.

The same could happen here. Our service men and women are all

too aware that the Brereton Inquiry could be but the start of an avalanche of inquiries and investigations stretching years into the future.

Hanging Australian service personnel out to dry now happens with distressing frequency. It certainly happened in service at home to Karel Dubsky. It has also happened on numerous occasions to Australian soldiers operating in Afghanistan. Consider the soldiers who spent years facing charges regarding the death of civilians in a night attack in Afghanistan, only to have the charges eventually withdrawn. There are other similar cases to which I am privy, each of which has brought untold distress to decent men and women doing their best in a morally vacant world.

Allegations of war crimes by Australian servicemen and women need to be seen through the prism of a war where front lines do not exist, and where it is almost impossible to judge the outcomes of their actions against the moral standards prevailing in leafy suburbs back home. At the very least, the media should abandon the sensationalism and scandal in which a small portion now revel.

Against this backdrop, it is only fair to ask, who defends our defenders?

*Bill O'Chee is a former senator and a former officer in the Australian Army.*



## DEFENCE SUICIDES

The Australian Institute of Health and Welfare recently released two new reports, available via the AIHW website:

- 1. Causes of death among serving and ex-serving Australian Defence Force personnel: 2002-2015**

Rates of death from all causes were generally lower among serving, reserve and ex-serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel than for the Australian population. The leading causes of death among men in the three ADF service status groups were similar, by age, to those for Australian men, while rates of death for the leading causes identified were generally lower, or similar, for men in the ADF service status groups than for Australian men.
- 2. National suicide monitoring of serving & ex-serving Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel: annual update 2018**

From 2001 to 2016, there were 373 suicides in serving, ex-serving and reserve Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel. Compared with all Australian men, the age-adjusted rate of suicide over the period was 51% lower for men serving full time in the ADF, 47% lower for men in the reserves and 18% higher for ex-serving men. In 2014–2016, ex-serving men aged under 30 had a suicide rate 2.2 times that of Australian men the same age. Includes data visualisation.

# Notes on Repatriation in Australia & the Department of Repatriation

By Max Ball

## Introduction

The release of the Productivity Commission's Draft Report "A Better Way to Support Veterans" has prompted some critical comments from some members of the ex-service community. Many of these comments appear to reflect an instantaneous view that significant change is not required to the system of compensation and rehabilitation of veterans, or to the current administrator, the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

The purpose of these notes is to illustrate that the Australian system for rehabilitation and compensation for veterans (of what is now called the Australian Defence Force) has always been subject to change as the circumstances of the Australian community, economic and social, and of the Australian Defence Force, have also changed over time.

## Repatriation in Australia and the Department of Repatriation

Soldiers who fought in the Boer War were not provided for under any colonial or new federal legislation. The Defence Act 1903 made provision for death or incapacity while on active service outside Australia. In 1909 this coverage was extended to injury or illness while on duty, but servicemen were excluded from the provisions of workers' compensation on the grounds of the potential size of any such liability.

In September 1914 the Government announced a limited scheme of war pensions, extended several times to include nurses, non-dependent wives and children, and mothers of dead soldiers. The new system was to encompass healthcare, compensation, soldier settlement, ("one of the great disasters of Australian rural history") and vocational training to help returned men find work.

In September 1917 a Repatriation Department was set up replacing the Australian Soldiers' Repatriation Fund. The Department had a national structure based on State Repatriation Boards and a federal Repatriation Commission designed to oversee the whole. Once the soldiers of the AIF were discharged from the army their rehabilitation and re-establishment into civilian life became the responsibility of the Repatriation Department.

**“Repatriation”**

A Monthly Bulletin Published by the Department of Repatriation for the Information of its Local Committees and all interested in the Return to Civil Life of the Australian Naval and Military Expeditionary Forces

PRICE—THREEPENCE PER COPY. No. 1.] MELBOURNE, MARCH, 1919. [Vol. I.

**HELP THE MAN with the MEDAL**

What the Department of Repatriation has done during the first ten months of its existence, that is, from 8th April, 1918, to 25th January, 1919

TEN MONTHS' OPERATIONS			
Total number of applications through all branches	-	-	60,287
Total number of applicants assisted	-	-	44,188
Total value of assistance granted	-	-	£583,566
Made up as follows:—			
Gift	£413,663	Loan	£154,455
		General	£15,448
EMPLOYMENT SECTION			
Total number of men placed in employment	-	-	29,260
VOCATIONAL TRAINING SECTION			
Total number of men approved for training	-	-	4,365
Total number of men completed training	-	-	1,230
ASSISTED PASSAGES			
Amount paid to date for passages of soldiers' dependents to the Commonwealth (485 passages)	-	-	£5,772

[Issued under the Authority of Senator the Hon. E. D. Millen, Minister for Repatriation.]

In 1920 responsibility for war pensions and hospitals was taken over from the Departments of Treasury and Defence and the Repatriation Commission assumed the Department's administrative functions.

Following the disbandment of the AIF in March 1921 the Repatriation Department also took over the Army general hospitals, which became the Repatriation General Hospitals. However, it needs to be noted

that the post-war functions of the permanent Army were essentially to staff, train and administer the militia. There was no concept of the permanent force having an operational or other capability, including an ongoing responsibility for the rehabilitation and compensation of its members.

Efforts were made to employ former soldiers in most staff positions of the Department, but this contributed to a disorganised administration as these men lacked administrative experience. During the interwar period there was a legitimate cause for dissatisfaction with the repatriation system, including over which conditions did or did not qualify for benefits.

The Repatriation Commission comprised three returned servicemen and determined policy, prescribed by regulation the nature and extent of government assistance to veterans, decided how the Minister should be advised, and heard appeals, (presumably against its own decisions or those of its delegates). It seems that until 1947 the actual administration of the repatriation system was carried out by either the Commission or by other departments of the government.

In 1947 the Commission's staff were transferred to the public service and the Commission's Chairman became the Permanent Head of the Department. Branches were established in each State capital city and returned service personnel were represented by State Boards consisting of three paid members. Later these State Boards were disbanded.

By December 1975 the Department was given additional responsibilities and renamed the Department of Repatriation and Compensation.

On 5 October 1976 the government replaced the Department of Repatriation with an expanded Department of Veterans' Affairs.

## Post World War II and Legislative Change

The repatriation system worked relatively smoothly for veterans of WWII and the post-war regular forces were covered by the Repatriation (Far East Strategic Reserve) Act 1957 for servicemen in Malaya, and the Repatriation (Special Overseas Service) Act 1962 for those engaged in 'warlike operations' and was used for veterans of the Vietnam War.

The provisions of these Acts were modified further by the Veterans Entitlements Act 1986 which, reportedly, streamlined the system and modernised the administration of repatriation.

More recently, the Parliament has introduced the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (SRCA), which was in turn replaced by the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence –related Claims) Act 1988, (DRCA, which commenced operation on 12 October 2017), and then the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004, (MRCA).

This flurry of legislation seems to indicate that successive Parliaments have had difficulty in clarifying their policies towards rehabilitation

and compensation for veterans, compounded, perhaps, by the public service being also either unable to create a clear vision on this issue, or being unable to articulate that vision successfully to the Parliament.

What does seem clear is that the recent acts have reversed the trend towards a simpler system of repatriation and created difficulties for veterans which have, in turn, culminated in a series of reviews including a major Senate Inquiry report (The Constant Battle: Suicide by Veterans). An outcome of that Senate report is the current inquiry by the Productivity Commission into the system of compensation and rehabilitation for veterans (Serving and Ex-serving Australian Defence Force members).

A constant in the changes of the legislation has been the retention of the concept of a Repatriation Commission (see the VEA 1986) and a Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (see MRCA). Statements by Parliamentarians and anecdotal evidence suggest that these appointments were retained as a result of suggestions made by veterans and veterans organisations.

The current department (DVA) has also retained the title of Deputy Commissioner for the senior departmental officer in each state, even though those persons are not "Deputies" to any appointment and there appears to be no legislative basis for the title.

## Observation

Change in the legislative and administrative arrangements for compensation and rehabilitation of veterans has been frequent, albeit with some constant themes. In many respects the veterans of the 1960's and 70's were not that far removed from their predecessors.

It is suggested that the circumstances in which younger, post-1990 generations are educated, socialise and consider their employment, and their expectations have also changed, perhaps to a greater degree than many older veterans comprehend.

It may well be time that the concepts and policies for rehabilitation and compensation, and the administrative structure for veterans benefits, need change to reflect the expectations of the millennials.

Max Ball  
January 2018

## Sources

*The Oxford Companion to Australian Military History 1995*  
*The Australian Centenary History of Defence, Volume 1, "The Australian Army"*  
*Further reading: The Last Shilling: A History of Repatriation in Australia, (Clem Lloyd and Jacqui Rees)*

# DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION



## MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Please complete this application and forward it to your nearest DFWA Branch (see details below)

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Rank ..... Family Name .....

Given Names ..... Post Nominals .....

Address .....

..... State ..... Postcode .....

Contact Telephone ..... Year of Birth .....

Email .....

**I AM:**  Serving  Retired  Navy  Army  Air Force  Allied  
 Spouse of ADF member  Widow/Widower of former ADF Member  N/A

**PAYMENT:**  I have made a direct deposit to the ..... Branch (see bank account details below)  
 I enclose \$..... as my Annual / Life Membership subscription (mail to your Branch address below)

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP	\$40.00	LIFE MEMBERSHIP	\$560.00
SPOUSES, WIDOWS and WIDOWERS of FORMER ADF MEMBERS:			
ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP	\$20.00	LIFE MEMBERSHIP	\$300.00

**DFWA NSW BRANCH**, Bldg 96, Victoria Barracks Paddington. Locked Bag 7005, Liverpool, NSW 1871  
(T) 02 8335 5447 (E) nswbranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 642-170 Acct 100003491

**DFWA QUEENSLAND BRANCH**, Victoria Barracks Brisbane, Enoggera QLD 4051  
(T) 07 3233 4480 (E) qldbranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 124-185 Acct 10480398  
(Queensland Branch also administers NT membership)

**DFWA VICTORIA BRANCH**, Victoria Barracks Melbourne (H Block), 256 - 310 St Kilda Road, Southbank VIC 3006  
(T) 03 9282 4959 (E) vicbranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 833-205 Acct 20700279  
(Victoria Branch also administers TAS membership)

**DFWA WESTERN AUSTRALIAN BRANCH**, Irwin Barracks, Karrakatta Community House, Karrakatta WA 6010  
(T) 08 9383 4055 (E) wabbranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 066-192 Acct 10378174

**DFWA ACT BRANCH**, PO Box 2272, Canberra ACT 2601  
(T) 02 6265 9496 (E) actbranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 032-713 Acct 770220

**DFWA SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH**, PO Box 711, Littlehampton SA 5250  
(T) 0409 577 035 (E) sabranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 833-205 Acct 20374231

In addition to individual membership, **CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS** and **CORPORATE** Subscriptions are available by contacting DFWA NATIONAL at national@dfwa.org.au Phone 02-62659530

# DFWA SHOP

If you wish to place an order for any of the DFWA Shop items, please complete the order form details below and send your order to the address shown.



**Men's Bisley Shirt**  
A high quality collared shirt with embroidered DFWA badge. Light blue colour and available in long or short sleeve. Size range XL, L, M, S.  
**\$45.00** including postage



**Women's Bisley Shirt**  
A high quality collared shirt with embroidered DFWA badge. Light blue colour and available in long or short sleeve. Size range XL, L, M, S.  
**\$55.00** including postage



**DFWA Polo Shirt (JB's Wear)**  
Smart looking polo shirt in Navy blue with gold trim and embroidered DFWA badge. Size range XXL, XL, L, M, S.  
**\$36.00** including postage



**Zip Front Jacket**  
Navy blue with DFWA embroidered badge. Size range XXL, XL, L, M, S.  
**\$75.00** including postage



**Zip Front Vest**  
Navy blue with DFWA embroidered badge. Size range XXL, XL, L, M, S.  
**\$35.00** including postage



**DFWA Metal Lapel Badge**  
Attractive enamel finish with single pin attachment.  
**\$5.00** including postage



**DFWA Cloth Pocket Badge**  
with three attachment pins.  
**\$10.00** including postage



**DFWA Embroidered Cloth Patch**  
On a navy blue background.  
**\$10.00** including postage



**DFWA Cap**  
Navy blue with DFWA embroidered badge.  
**\$15.00** including postage

## DFWA Shop Order Form

ITEM	SIZE	QTY/SIZE	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
1. Bisley Shirt - Men's	XL, L, M, S		\$45.00	
2. Bisley Shirt —Women's	XL, L, M, S		\$55.00	
3. DFWA Cap	xxxxx		\$15.00	
4. DFWA Lapel Badge	xxxxx		\$5.00	
5. DFWA Polo Shirt	XXL, XL, L, M, S		\$36.00	
6. DFWA Cloth Badge	xxxxx		\$10.00	
7. Embroidered Patch	xxxxx		\$10.00	
8. DFWA Zip Front Jacket	XXL, XL, L, M, S		\$75.00	
9. DFWA Zip Front Vest	XXL, XL, L, M, S		\$35.00	

**TOTAL DUE \$**

### Notes:

1. Please note that Bisley shirts are generally one size larger than most other brands.
2. All prices include postage.
3. Please specify the size required (where applicable) in the quantity column

**Please enter your contact and payment details below and send your completed order form to:**

DFWA QLD INC,  
Victoria Barracks Brisbane, Enoggera QLD 4051

**Or email your order and payment details to:**

qldbranch@dfwa.org.au

### YOUR DETAILS:

Title ..... Initial ..... Surname .....

Address .....

..... State .....

Postcode ..... Phone .....

Email .....

### PAYMENT DETAILS:

Internet Banking/Direct Debit:

Bank of QLD BSB 124 076 Account No: 10 480 398

Or enclose Cheque/Money Order: \$ .....

Signature: .....

Date: ...../...../.....



## BRANCH REPORTS Around Australia

### NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH

Patron: His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd)  
 Vice Patrons: Fleet Commander, Forces Commander, Air Commander  
 President: Michael Stuart-Watt  
 Vice President (Navy): Henry Old  
 Vice President (RAAF): Alan Hind  
 Vice President (Army): TBA  
 Treasurer: Ralph Hannaford  
 Secretary: Alan Hind  
 Membership Sec: Henry Old  
 IT Advisor: John Kane  
 Location: Victoria Barracks Building 96 Locked Bag 7005, LIVERPOOL NSW 1871  
 Telephone: (02) 8335 5447 (4 lines) + Voice Mail  
 Email: nswbranch@dfwa.org.au

#### CONTACT GROUPS IN NSW

CENTRAL WEST  
 Anthony (Tony) Horsington  
 45 Dalton Street  
 PARKES NSW 2870  
 Mobile: 0412 299 331

SHOALHAVEN  
 Mr Christopher Clifford  
 6 Platypus Avenue,  
 SANCTUARY POINT NSW 2540  
 Ph: (02) 4443 7725

HUNTER VALLEY  
 David Winkelmann AFC  
 PO Box 467,  
 MAYFIELD NSW 2304  
 Ph: (02) 4968 3811

Mr Kevin C Buchanan  
 12 The Triangle,  
 CULBURRA BEACH NSW 2540  
 Ph: (02) 4447 2461

A report to NSW Branch activities to NSW Branch members is provided in the insert NATTER.

#### NEW MEMBERS

Your President and Committee offer a warm welcome to the DFWA family to the following new member who has joined the NSW Branch since November 2018.

Mrs Hazel Bambrick.

#### VALE

It is with regret that the death of the following members is advised:

Mr P Angus MBE, RVM, CMDR B R Bambrick, RAN (Rtd), Mr L E Date, CMDR A J Gould, RAN (Rtd), Mr R E M Hughes, LTCOL R D Manley, Brigadier R W Morris AO (Rtd), Mrs G M Roberts, Mrs J Savage, Mr T J Sawtell, GPCAPT W Stickle, AFC (Rtd), GPCAPT L J Tindal (Rtd) and Mrs L M Welsh.

### ACT BRANCH

President: Les Bienkiewicz  
 Vice President: Vacant  
 Secretary: Vacant  
 Treasurer: Paul Jones  
 Convener DWG: Christine Lamb  
 Membership Manager: Trevor Goodhew  
 Postal Address: GPO Box 2272 CANBERRA ACT 2601  
 Email: actbranch@dfwa.org.au  
 Telephone: (02) 6265 9496 (answering service only)

The ACT Branch newsletter CAPITAL CHIT CHAT will not be included in this edition of *Camaraderie*.

#### MEMBERSHIP

Our membership is remaining steady on near 500, but we remain very dependent on your continuing support. Please note that membership subscriptions will be due on 30 June and your cooperation in this matter is much appreciated. Why not pay a few years in advance ?

#### ANNUAL RAFFLE

The annual DFWA Raffle is nearly upon us, and members will be receiving their tickets soon. Thank you for your support and generosity in supporting this single fund raising activity for the Association. Should you not wish to participate in the raffle, your donation (tax deductible) is always welcome... see details on page 38 of this edition.

#### COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Dates for Committee meetings for 2019 are published on the ACT Branch page of the DFWA website. Members are always invited to attend... if possible, drop us a line prior to confirm. We always welcome members to attend, and better still, to offer themselves for membership of the Committee. If you are interested please ring the Branch and leave a message on 62659496. Our next meeting is scheduled for 1030hrs Tuesday 13 May at The Burns Club, Kambah.

#### DEFENCE WIDOWS GROUP

The next Southside Informal Lunches are on 10 March and 1 July; and Northside on 18 March and 14 July. The Annual Formal Lunch will be held on Thursday 5 September. The Last Post Ceremony at the AWM will be held on Thursday 31 October.

DWG meetings will be held 10.30-12 noon, at the Raiders Club, Weston on 8 April, 10 June, 12 Aug and 14 Oct. If you would like to attend any of the above events, please leave a message on 6265 9776

#### NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome to Mrs Gail Brown.

#### VALE

With deep sadness we note the passing of BRIG Anthony Roberts.

## QUEENSLAND BRANCH

President:	John Lewis
Exec Vice President:	Robert Shortridge
Vice President SQ:	Pat Jackman
VP – Far North Qld:	Ray Martin
VP – Sunshine Coast:	Win Fowles
Secretary:	Vacant
Treasurer:	Walter Buldo
Membership:	Vacant (Walter Buldo acting)
Postal Address:	Victoria Barracks Brisbane ENOGGERA QLD 4051 (07) 3233 4480
Telephone:	qldbranch@dfwa.org.au
E-mail:	Tue – Wed: 1000 to 1400 hrs
Office Hours:	Fridays: 0900 to 1100 hrs

### WELFARE AND ADVOCACY SUPPORT

Over the December- January period, Welfare Officer Harry Mee, supported by Pearl attended several commemoration services on behalf of DFVAQ and conducted several Poppy Services. Harry is frequently approached by Funeral Directors due to Harry's consistent high quality services. Clem Russell, Wally Buldo and John Lewis continue on with provision of Pension Officer and Advocacy support. John will be ceasing work in this area due to time constraints and difficulties with the new Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP). Wally has had difficulties with ATDP administration and attending the Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) workshops for Advocate Level 2 (Pensions Support), but hopefully that will be sorted shortly.

### MEMBERSHIP NUMBERS

We are continuing to review the membership numbers for accuracy and current financial membership. Previously reported membership numbers included those with up to 2 years outstanding fees. Much of the lateness of fees was due to the change from calendar year to financial year payment. Our confirmed membership is 520, significantly lower than the previously reported 656, however, the next six months may see some improvement in collection of membership fees.

### REPORTS

The Productivity Commission draft Report into Veteran Services (700 Pages) was released prior to Christmas and comments were requested by early February. Rob Shortridge (Executive Vice President) has taken the lead or drafting the DFVAQ response on behalf of National. DFVAQ is expecting to give statements at the PC Hearings in Brisbane during February.

### VISIT TO NATIONAL OFFICE

John Lewis (President) visited Canberra in early February to assess options for transferring common Branch administration to a central entity, in line with the strategic direction of DFVAQ decided in 2012 and plan the organisation restructure outlined in the last Camaraderie in Qld Branch news. We are still developing options. The President was accompanied by Chris Lewis who has been tasked by the National President to review the administrative issues that have monopolised the NATEX meetings over the last few years. The review should result in future NATEX meetings having more time to address the operational and strategic work DFVAQ needs to address. Chris is also co-ordinating a NATEX video link meeting in late March. Costs for the trip are covered by specific donations to

DFVAQ for this purpose.

### TOWNSVILLE FLOODS

During February, the Committee members will be phoning DFVAQ members in the Townsville area to check on well-being and if assistance is required.

### PRIORITIES

In review of plans and resources, we have had to drop previously planned work concerning incarcerated prisoners. Apart from working on the organisational change, priorities for the Committee in 2019 are

- Addressing the Veteran Liaison Officer issue in State and DVA contracted hospitals.
- Improving DFVAQ Transition Seminar presence.
- Assisting RSL (Qld) in presenting Veteran Issues to the Royal Commission into Aged Care. Particular areas of concern include:
  - Older Veterans (Vietnam) entering Homes and not being aware of DVA support (esp Vietnam/Baby Boomer Vets who have never been DVA clients);
  - DVA supported Veterans, Widows falling off DVA radar and losing Gold Card entitlements when entering Aged Care Facilities; &
  - Younger brain injured Veterans put into Aged Care in the absence of other facilities.

### DFRDB COMMUTATION CAMPAIGN

DFVAQ was approached by "Australian" reporter (Sam Buckingham-Jones) doing an article of the DFRDB campaign being run by Jim Hislop and Herb Ellercott. Rob Shortridge and John Lewis spent about an hour on phone discussing many DFRDB, MSBS issues in some detail. The Australian article was supportive and Rob Shortridge gets a honourable mention on another DFRDB issue where the facts he presents are correct. We were also approached by the ABC Sunshine Coast Journalist Bruce Atkinson for comment on the same issue as the local LNP MP was making representations to Minister Chester on the matter. The reporter was referred to the National President, Kel Ryan who spoke at length with the reporter, resulting in as long article published by the ABC. Kel has also featured in the Queensland Times (Ipswich/Amberley area) supporting Fair Indexation of DFRDB, MSBS and application of correct Life Expectancy Tables to DFRDB commutation calculations.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH

Patron	His Excellency Hieu Van Le AC, Governor of South Australia
President	Lee Bowes
Deputy President	Vacant
Immediate Past President	John Wilson
Senior Vice-President	Laurie Lewis
Secretary	David Lyas
Treasurer	Ian Smith
Vice President (Navy)	Alexander Ward
Vice President (Army)	Paul (Tich) Tyson
Vice President (Air Force)	Vacant
Vice President Welfare	David Everett
Honorary Auditor	John D Thornton FAICD FAIM FCPA
Convenor Women Veterans	Trish Matthews
Membership Officer	Peter Jackman
Contact:	0432 379 278 or email sapresident@dfwa.org.au

Your Branch Committee has been busy recently, attending the Productivity Commission Overview as well as attending the DVA Deputy Commissioner's Conference. At a recent meeting with the Hon Darren Chester MP, Minister for DVA we discussed why the CSC was not referred to the Royal Commission. Emails on the matter sent to various MPs with no replies.

We now have a new Women's Convenor Veterans, CMDR (Retd) Trish Matthews, an 18 year RAN Nursing Officer, with 15 years RANR service as both NHQ-SA Parade & Ceremonial Guard Commander and joint Aid de Camp to the Governor. Trish brings a wealth of RAN service to our Branch and we look forward to her involvement with the Branch. We have also approached a number of other serving members to fill positions.

Membership remains steady but we do ask that you spread the work with your peers ..... new members are always welcome and indeed vital for our continuing existence.

*Lee Bowes - President*

## VICTORIA BRANCH

Patron:	The Honourable Linda Dessau, AC, Governor of Victoria.
President:	Stephen Turner
Vice President Navy:	Shaun Rodenburg
Vice President Army:	John James
Vice President Air Force:	Darryl Topp
Secretary/Treasurer:	Greg Powell
Location:	Victoria Barracks Melbourne (H Block) 256-310 St Kilda Road SOUTHBANK VIC 3006
Telephone:	(03) 9282 4959 (+Answering Service)
Facsimile:	(03) 9282 7089
Email:	vicbranch@dfwa.org.au
Office Hours:	Tue and Thur 0900 to 1500 hrs

All Branch Committee positions remained filled and Executive Committee meetings have occurred on 15 November 2018 and 13 February 2019. The Branch Constitution mandates a minimum of four Executive Committee meeting per year.

### MEMBERSHIP

As at 11 February 2019 there were 430 financial members in the Victorian Branch with an additional 21 members yet pay their annual subscription fees.

As agreed at the November 2018 Executive Committee meeting the Branch has once again provided membership prizes consisting of Coles / Myer gift vouchers to the value of \$100 to two members. The recipients of the vouchers were decided by electronic random draw with one prize winner drawn from the group of annual fee paying members who were paid up at the time of the draw and the other member drawn from the group of life members who had donated to the Branch during the preceding year. The lucky recipients were Mr William Smith (annual member No. 402) of Wodonga and Mr Mark Mocicka (life member No. 295) of St Kilda East.

### VALE

The following Victorian Branch members have passed away or become known to have passed away since Camaraderie was last published:

Lieutenant Colonel Peter Newman OAM, JP, FRAVAHJ, ED, Lieutenant Colonel Alan Pilkington, Mr Robert Potts, Mr Robert Palmer, Mrs Barbara Moore and Mrs Joan Dent

The passing of Peter Newman is particularly felt by the Branch Executive Committee as Peter had previously served in the role of committee Secretary and Treasurer for extended periods.

On behalf of the membership of the Victorian Branch the Executive Committee offer their sincere condolences to the families and friends of the members above.

### FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Branch's financial position remains sound and capitation fees for the first 3 quarters of the 2018 year have been remitted to National Office. The final quarter's capitation fees will be paid to National Office in March following completion of the annual audit review of the Branch's full 2018 finances.

The Branch was successful in its grant application to the Anzac Day Proceeds Fund. These funds, which go to support the Branch's Camaraderie costs and the production and distribution of the Branch information supplement, were received from the Victorian Government in late December 2018.

### DFWA NATIONAL AGM AND NATEX NOVEMBER 2018

As previously advised in the last Camaraderie the Victorian Branch had submitted a motion to the NATEX / DFWA National AGM of November 2018 proposing that a 10 percent discount on future Annual and Life membership subscriptions be offered to any DFWA member who can evidence that they are in receipt of a TPI pension.

Following discussion of the motion at NATEX, an amendment was proposed that the discount be increased to 50 percent to bring it into line with the widows rate. This was subsequently agreed at the AGM as it is the annual DFWA AGM which has the fee setting power for the Association.

### DFWA VIC ACTIVITIES

The Victoria Branch participated in the following activities since the last edition of Camaraderie was published:

- DVA Deputy Commissioner Consultative Forums in October 2018 and February 2019
- Victorian Branch Executive Committee meetings in November 2018 and February 2019
- DFWA National Executive Meeting and DFWA National Annual General Meeting in November 2018
- ESO Forum at Ringwood RSL in November
- Story Writing and Art Competition (SWAC) prize presentation ceremony in November 2018

### DIARY DATES

The next Branch Executive Committee meeting scheduled for

Wednesday 15 May 2019 will also be the Branch Annual General Meeting. The Executive Committee strongly encourage all Victorian Branch members to attend the AGM. Those wishing to attend are requested to contact the Branch Secretary (Greg Powell) at least five business days prior to the meeting in order to ensure sufficient copies of the relevant AGM documents are available for all attendees.

Stephen Turner  
Commander RAN (Rtd)  
President

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA BRANCH

Patron:	The Honourable Kim C Beazley AC
President:	Richard Usher OAM
Vice President:	Max Ball
Secretary:	Allan Austin
Treasurer:	Lou Halvorson
Postal Address:	Irwin Barracks KARRAKATTA WA 6010
Telephone:	(08) 9383 4055 (Answering Machine A/H)
Office Hours:	Mon, Wed and Thur 1000 to 1400 hrs
Email:	wabbranch@dfwa.org.au
Location:	Karrakatta Community House Matapau Road Irwin Barracks KARRAKATTA WA 6010

A more detailed report will be provided to WA Members in the Branch newsletter 'The Western Front', which will be posted to members with their copy of Camaraderie.

### NEW MEMBERS

The President and Committee offer a warm welcome to Mr Alan Cook (transfer from NSW Branch), Mr John Green (transfer from QLD Branch) and FLGOFF Jason Milowski (see article below and picture).

### VALE

With deep sadness we note the passing of Mrs Mary Issell and WGCDR (Rtd) Roland (Roley) Brazier.

### No 253 RAAF ADVANCED PILOTS' COURSE GRADUATION

The President attended No 253 RAAF Advanced Pilots' Course Graduation on 7th December and presented the DFWA Award for Navigation to FLGOFF Jason Milowski. Jason won many other Awards including Dux of the course. He has been posted to 79 Sqn to commence conversion training with the Hawk aircraft. He is pictured here receiving his "wings" from AVM Steve Robertson.



**BRANCH CHRISTMAS PARTY**  
The Branch Christmas Party was again very well attended and many members won raffle prizes which was great to see. Our guests included CDRE Brett Dowsing RANR, Senior ADF Officer in WA, and Mr Peter King Deputy Commissioner from DVA. Pictured left: Steve Lucks selling raffle tickets at the Christmas Lunch. \$500 was raised.

### ASSISTANCE DOGS

As many members will know, last year the Branch used ANZAC Day Trust Fund money to sponsor the eight Whiskeys Wish Assistance Dogs and their owners in WA. The Committee decided to give each of the eight a gift at Christmas time by way of a \$250 voucher from City Farmers to enable them to 'spoil' their dogs. We invited two special ladies, Lynda Zappelli and Sandy Waters, both recipients of Whiskeys Wish Assistance Dogs to our Christmas lunch and were able to personally present them with their vouchers. Lynda was accompanied by her assistance dog 'Khan' and many attendees were able to meet Lynda and Khan personally.



President Richard Usher presenting vouchers to Lynda Zappelli and Sandy Waters.

### ANNUAL RAFFLE

Unless you have told us that you do not wish to participate in the annual raffle, you will find two books of tickets included with your magazine. If you do not wish to receive raffle tickets next year, please advise us so we can take action accordingly. Thank you. There are excellent prizes in the raffle and last year one of our members won, which was great for him.

### THANK YOU

Last year several members sent us a donation for which the Branch is really very grateful and we thank you very much. Donations do go a long way towards our welfare work and the work of our advocates (read the "Good News" story elsewhere in this magazine). Instead of buying raffle tickets some sent us a small donation – thank you. If you need a receipt for tax purposes, please let us know and we'll willingly supply one to you.

### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 4th September - Annual General Meeting (and guest speaker)

Thursday 12th December - Annual Christmas lunch

Both functions will take place at the RAAFA Bull Creek, in the newly refurbished (temporary) function area.

Continued from page 22 RECENT CRITICISM OF THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL

All of us born here should be able to regard ourselves as indigenous.

cent, unspecified 5.4 per cent.

The Australian War Memorial Council is by its nature, male-dominated, military-dominated since males have traditionally formed the vast part of Australia's overseas operational deployments.

The role of the AWM is to represent and defend the interests of those commemorated.

Australians should expect no less.

If it is Anglo-dominated then that reflects Australia's largely European-centric population, English 25.9 per cent, Australian 25.4 per cent, Irish 7.5 per cent, Scottish 6.4 per cent, Italian 3.3 per cent, German 3.2 per cent, Chinese 3.1 per cent, Indian 1.4 per cent, Greek 1.4 per cent, Dutch 1.2 per cent, other 15.8 per cent, includes Aboriginal Australians .5 per

Ashenden should rethink his position. Otherwise his writing should be consigned to the rubbish-heap of failed history.

Neil Churches served 51 years in the Australian Army

Continued from page 24 DEFENCE RESERVES

independent Commonwealth statutory authority, the Veterans' Services Commission.

Whilst there are a number of draft recommendations that the DRA disagrees with, the Productivity Commission report is an excellent opportunity for the DRA along with other Ex-service Organisations (ESOs) to have a positive influence on the veteran support system that should apply to both current and future veterans.

The DRA supports in principle one of the key draft recommendations that the overarching objective of the veteran support system should be to improve the wellbeing of veterans and their families taking a whole of life approach.

The DRA is working closely with other ESOs to develop a detailed response to the draft report. Watch this space!

This article was written in Jim Barry's capacity as National Immediate Past President of the Defence Reserves Association.



# Defence Force Welfare Association

The Association does much work on your behalf - from lobbying Government to improve conditions to assistance to individuals. We cannot do it without financial and human resources. Your tax deductible donation will help us continue our good work: if you are able to help us financially, please detach the form below and send it along with your tax deductible donation. A receipt will be issued to you.



## DONATION

To The National Office, DFWA PO Box 4166, KINGSTON, ACT 2604

Please accept my donation of \$ ..... to the Defence Force Welfare Association

Your donation will go towards the daily operating costs of the Association.

Tick here  if you wish your donation to be allocated to the DFWA Relief Trust Fund

Rank/Title ..... Name .....

Address .....

State ..... Postcode ..... Phone .....

Alternatively, make an electronic deposit as follows:

Account Name: Defence Force Welfare Association

BSB: 833 205

Account Number: 20656807

A receipt will be sent to you on request.

You can also make a credit card donation:

Go to [dfwa.org.au/donate-or-sponsor](http://dfwa.org.au/donate-or-sponsor) and follow the link. A receipt will of course be issued !



# NATIONAL GOLDEN CROWN ANNOUNCEMENT

Layered in Pure Gold



**SAVE \$50.00**

**Yours for just \$29.99+ P&H**

## Centenary of the End of World War I

Limitation: 19,999 worldwide | Finish: Layered in Pure Gold | Quality: Proof | Edition: Uniquely numbered | Diameter: 38.6mm

**WE WILL REMEMBER THEM:** 2018 marked the centenary of the conclusion of the First World War, the "war to end all wars." There are generations alive who have no direct knowledge of this conflict or of the sacrifice made by all who fought for their country. Our debt to them is immeasurable making it more important than ever that we remember their courage with a lasting commemoration. Approved by Her Majesty, Queen Elizabeth II, this new crown coin honours the fallen with a moving, raised-relief portrait of a digger remembering his mate. In the foreground, a field of poppies, the symbol of remembrance, are created in hand-applied enamel, providing a vibrant contrast to the pure, 24-carat gold. Struck to a high specification, only 19,999 numbered issues will ever be minted.

**The earliest applications will receive the lowest edition numbers.** For this reason, applications will be processed on a strictly first-come, first-served basis and are limited to one per Australian household. Successful applicants also qualify to view the next coin in *The First World War Centenary Crown Collection* for only \$79.99 (plus \$9.99 postage and handling) sent entirely without obligation on our 14-day home approval service. Applicants may cancel at any time and all purchases are covered by The Bradford Exchange 14-Day Money-Back Guarantee.

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