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CAMARADERIE

Second Edition 2019

VOL. 50 NO. 2

**VETERANS'
SUICIDES**

**ANOTHER DEFENCE
HOUSING REVIEW!**

**ADF PAY REVIEW
- IT'S NEARLY TIME AGAIN!**

**DEFENCE
RESERVES
UPDATE**



DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

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THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

Vol. 50. No. 2 Second 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 7 November 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

I continue to be most grateful to the regular contributors to *Camaraderie*, and again make a call to anyone who may have an article for consideration to be published to drop me a line at anytime at editor@dfwa.org.au. For this edition I especially recommend the National President's note on page 5 and also his article on veterans' suicide on page 7.

Les Bienkiewicz

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FRONT COVER

Air Force Balloon taking off on an early morning flight over Lake Burley Griffin as the 2019 ADF King's Cup Team rows past during a training session.

Photo courtesy of Defence Media

DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION



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VICTORIA (ph 03 92824959) - vicbranch@dfwa.org.au

WESTERN AUSTRALIA (ph 08 93834055) - 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 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.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN



THE TYRANNY OF DISTANCE AND RELEVANCE

I have recently been reminded of that Australian classic, *The Tyranny of Distance* by Professor Geoffrey Blainey. It was and still is essential reading if we are to grasp how distance and isolation define Australia's identity and their continuing impact on our present and our future. Both factors have defined us as a nation and a people.

Both these factors define DFWA also. Why is that you ask?

The background to that question lies in the reasons that prompted three regular Army officers (or Permanent Military Force officers) to establish the DFWA in 1959. The major issue was the Defence Force Retirement Benefit Scheme (DFRB) which had been legislated in 1948 for the benefit of the post-war permanent military forces. In very quick time however the Scheme proved to be ill considered and unsuited for the needs of the personnel who comprised the emerging Australian Defence Force. The scheme became more of a problem as the ADF grew through the period of the Korean, Malayan, Borneo and Vietnam campaigns.

The DFWA in many ways continues to be defined by the events and the issues that prompted its establishment. DFRB, superannuation, housing and pay and remuneration are issues that continue to occupy our ageing membership. Do they resonate however in the more complex environment we are currently faced with? Are they priority issues for the veterans of today?

We are increasingly being defined and isolated by our past! We i.e. DFWA is not alone in this isolation as the traditional ESOs formed in another time are failing to attract the attention and support of the veterans of today. Why is that?

DFWA PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES - BACKGROUND

It is appropriate to remind ourselves that the chief foci of DFWA are:

- a. To monitor and foster the interests of members of the Australian Defence Force in any matter likely to affect them during their service or in retirement; and
- b. To advise or assist any serving or retired member of the Australian Defence Force, or their dependants, as required, in matters affecting their welfare.

The stated mission of DFWA is, 'the promotion and protection of the interests of current and former members of the ADF and their families'. This mission is our Fire Support Base (FSB), our base from which we can either project our strength, our future or seek its comfort and remain isolated. Isolated from all that is around us.

It is not a matter of choice whether we accomplish that mission but

a duty to pursue it in the interests of all in the Australian Defence Community. What is your choice?

POLICY ISSUES

The policy issues we as a veteran community are being asked to deal with, to write about and reflect upon are markedly different from those our founding fathers sought to address in 1959. The more complex policy and operational environment of the 21st century demands that we either respond proactively and with passion or seek comfort in the DFWA of the past. What do you believe we should do?

Our resources are shrinking while the distance between DFWA (our FSB) and the present generation of veterans and their families appears to be growing. Why is that?

DFWA AND THE ADSO

The question of the connection between DFWA and the Alliance of Defence Services Organisation (ADSO)¹ is a valid one to ask. DFWA is a central player in the conduct of advocacy on behalf of the 18 members ESOs of ADSO. I ask that we all reflect of the advantages and the kudos that our association has gained from across the ADC, the parliament and DVA due to our active promotion of the 'speaking with one voice' advocacy.

Since the 11th October 2016 the DFWA/ADSO Partnership has researched, drafted and presented in excess of 30 Activities/Submissions/Media Releases to government, various commissions, the media and to DVA. The contribution to these documents has come from across the country, various ESOs (including non-ADSO members) and individuals who express confidence that the veteran community is at last striving to speak with one voice. The days of single issue ESOs are gone as many veterans belong to several and contribute their enthusiasm, experience and intellectual capacity without fear or favour.

The ESO closed shop of the past is fading as new challenges are being addressed by ESO groupings, such as ADSO. Inward looking ESOs, and there are many, are a constraint on the ability of individual veterans and those ESOs to project their valid issues into the political and bureaucratic framework.

ADSO is presently moving toward incorporation as a national body. It is intent on broadening its membership to include additional traditional ESOs plus those that operate across the various social media platforms. With the demographers focus on 20-year spans for the various generations of Gen X: Gen Y, or Millennials ESOs must become more agile in both adapting to the ever-changing veteran population, the evolution of their purpose and questioning their relevance. Gen Z which starts in 1997 are already in the ADF. DFWA is right to question its relevance in the 21st century.

In my role as National President I have adopted the broadest interpretation of these two activities in the pursuit of the best

interests of the members of the DFWA and all those in the broad Australian Defence Community (ADC). As I said in November 2018 'glass half full' is my mantra and it will continue to be.

WHERE DO WE GO?

Geoffrey Blainey acknowledges that the world he wrote about is shrinking. We see it ever more clearly each day with the advances in technology and travel, but they have failed to eliminate the effects of isolation. Do we continue to bitterly defend our fire support base, our traditional role or do we move out and pursue the future? A future that may well be different from our past.

WHAT SAY YOU?

I have left you with some serious questions and would appreciate your views as to the future of DFWA in the 21st century.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Take care,
Kel Ryan

Kel Ryan - National President
Email: president.national@dfwa.org.au
Ph: 0418 759 120

(1) ADSO - <https://adso.org.au/>

BUTTONS for POPPIES



Editors Note: In the November 2018 edition of Camaraderie, Lulia Wishart made a call for "Buttons for Poppies". Lulia has sent this update:

I'd like my opening line to be a very heartfelt Thank You, to the amazing people behind the nearly 60 packages my mother has received so far in our appeal for unwanted Australian Defence Force buttons for my group to use, in the centre of crocheted or knitted poppies, on banners as a continuation of the 5000 Poppy display.

With the folding of the 5000 Poppy appeal in Victoria, I managed to get 2 huge boxes of unused poppies sent to me, so we are currently "Full Steam Ahead" with attaching poppies to shadecloth backing to donate banners to RSL clubs, and other appropriate institutions. In the past few weeks, Mum has received 3 packages, with the message inside, hoping they are not too late in forwarding their buttons to us. Please rest assured, I intend to keep going for quite a while yet-and certainly until all your buttons are shining brightly from the centre of a poppy.

Once again, sincere thank you, Lulia Wishart

CAN YOU HELP WITH UNUSED ADF BUTTONS ?

If you have any unwanted ADF buttons, they would be gratefully accepted in order to continuing carry on this work. Please send them to:



Buttons
Unit 22 / 26 Archibald Street
Lyneham ACT 2602

NATIONAL OFFICE ROUNDUP (February 2019 - June 2019)



The period since the last edition of Camaraderie has to be memorable in a number of respects, not the least of which includes the stunning result of the Federal election held on 18 May 2019. In the lead up to it, both the Coalition and the Opposition issued veterans' policies but, somewhat unlike prior to the 2013 and 2016 elections, none of the minor parties seemed at all interested in adding a 'veterans' element to their policy pronouncements.

That despite active campaigns by DFVA and its ADSO partners for all sides of politics to begin addressing their key Policy Objectives for which they have long sought redress. As for the two major parties, neither could claim that they were not aware of the substance of those Objectives, each having been widely published and the subject of heavy continual campaigning over the last three years. For clarity, the key ones were as follows:

1. Promote a Military/Veterans Covenant;
2. Seek fair indexation and redress of all issues surrounding military superannuation, including DFRDB, MSBS and reversionary benefits;
3. Seek redress of the inadequacies in veterans' disability compensation payments for the TPI/Special Rate;
4. Support retention of a Department of Veterans Affairs to provide effective and efficient legislated veterans support programs.

Labor published its veterans' policies over two tranches, announcing one set on 20 April 2019 and another on 9 May 2019. Almost as a catch up, the Coalition followed by publishing their veterans' policies soon after. While both sets of policies addressed key veterans-related concerns, neither gave mention of redressing the inadequacies in TPI disability compensation payments, MSBS, and the core issues surrounding DFRDB. As if these issues were in the too hard basket. Fair indexation should have been tackled as a minimum, including the preserved funds of MSBS retirees.

That said, it must be recognised that both major Parties support a Military/Veterans Covenant, promising to continue the legislative process into the 46th Parliament that was started before Parliament rose before the election. Both favour the retention of DVA, albeit only Labor had it in their veterans' election manifesto.

Each also addressed the value of ESOs, albeit Labor was pro-active about it by re-affirming its previous promise to support DFVA with a grant of \$100,000 per annum. The grant was in recognition that DFVA served a valued representative role in safeguarding the conditions of service of ADF members and representing their interests at DFRT hearings. The Government has been silent about a similar grant. And of course, both Parties support an inquiry into DFRDB commutation with the Ombudsman having already launched an investigation into its administration, particularly the accuracy of information given to members.

Collaboration Among ESOs

If there was any doubt among the ESOs that make up ADSO about the effectiveness of the 'collaboration' process to have an impact on policy outcomes, that doubt was quelled when they rose in unity to the challenge by the then Minister for Veterans Affairs to speak with one voice. He acknowledged the coming together by the core elements of the ESO community by stating as follows:

"I am please to see that my challenge has resonated with the defence community and I applaud the steps taken by the various ex-service organisations (ESOs) across Australia who are now forming the ESO collaborative initiative as described in your response"

Importantly at the time, that voice included RSL National. It dimmed a little over the last 12 months due to its varying travails. Thankfully, with the recent election of a new RSL National President, the on-going collaboration efforts will undoubtedly be strengthen.

The ADSO Alliance

Despite the disappointment that VVAA withdrew its participation in ADSO, it remains an alliance that is 18-member strong. The number has every possibility to grow in the future. Each member organisation reserve the right of independence on particular issues; each also wish to continue to connect with their constituencies still serving in uniform, acknowledges that the aims and objectives of ADSO are appropriately veterans centric and immutable. These are as follows:

1. Improve communication, cooperation and collaboration between member ESOs;
2. Gain mutual advantage from differing levels of expertise of each organisation;
3. Ensure for each issue to be collectively tackled, that the most appropriate organisation is identified as the 'lead ESO' for coordinating actions; and
4. Help spread the workload and ensure the resources of the Alliance members are used to produce the most effective result.

There is general agreement that the days of ESOs with their falling memberships and limited resources could alone seek redress on particular issues. The need for collaboration to achieve results will continue to grow.

Ombudsman's Inquiry into DFRDB Commutation

The Ombudsman's Inquiry represents a frustrating quandary for many sections of the ESO community, including numerous individuals who have long campaigned to redress wide-ranging DFRDB issues. While those issues should be investigated, the Government appears reluctant, notwithstanding the DVA Minister's comments that submissions on other than commutation issues would be invited.

One suggested approach is to aim for a separate inquiry that puts at arms length the argument that amending the 1973 DFRDB Act is fundamental to any outcome that should be sought. Political will to

amend a 50-year Act is non-existent.

The Terms of Reference would focus on the concept that the DFRDB Scheme is simply an entitlement, the amount of which is determined by a retiree's years of effective service and final rate of pay - that lump sum constituting 'retirement pay'. Section 24 of the Act allows him/her to commute a portion of that pay but at the expense of having it reduced by an amount calculated by dividing that pay by an expected life factor.

A problem immediately manifests itself because the legislation, by design or accident, did not include a clause to limit the total amount of the 'reduced retired pay to the quantum the member received as a lump sum.

The upshot over many years has been that the legislation had unintended and detrimental financial consequences on members electing to commute. Those consequence have been exacerbated by the DFRDB Authority choosing to use the literal interpretation of the legislation to claim that there is no discretion to pay a full entitlement

of retired pay after the commuted advance pay has been fully acquitted.

The problem seemed to compound because some evidence indicates that those who commuted never had it properly explained, if at all, that commuting would mean that they would forever be on a reduced retirement pay well after they had repaid the full commuted amount. Common sense suggests that an ordinary person would expect full restoration of the entitlement after the full amount of advanced lump sum had been repaid. After all, the DFRDB Scheme is simply an entitlement set by a retiree's years of effective service and final rate of pay.

Sponsorship

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.

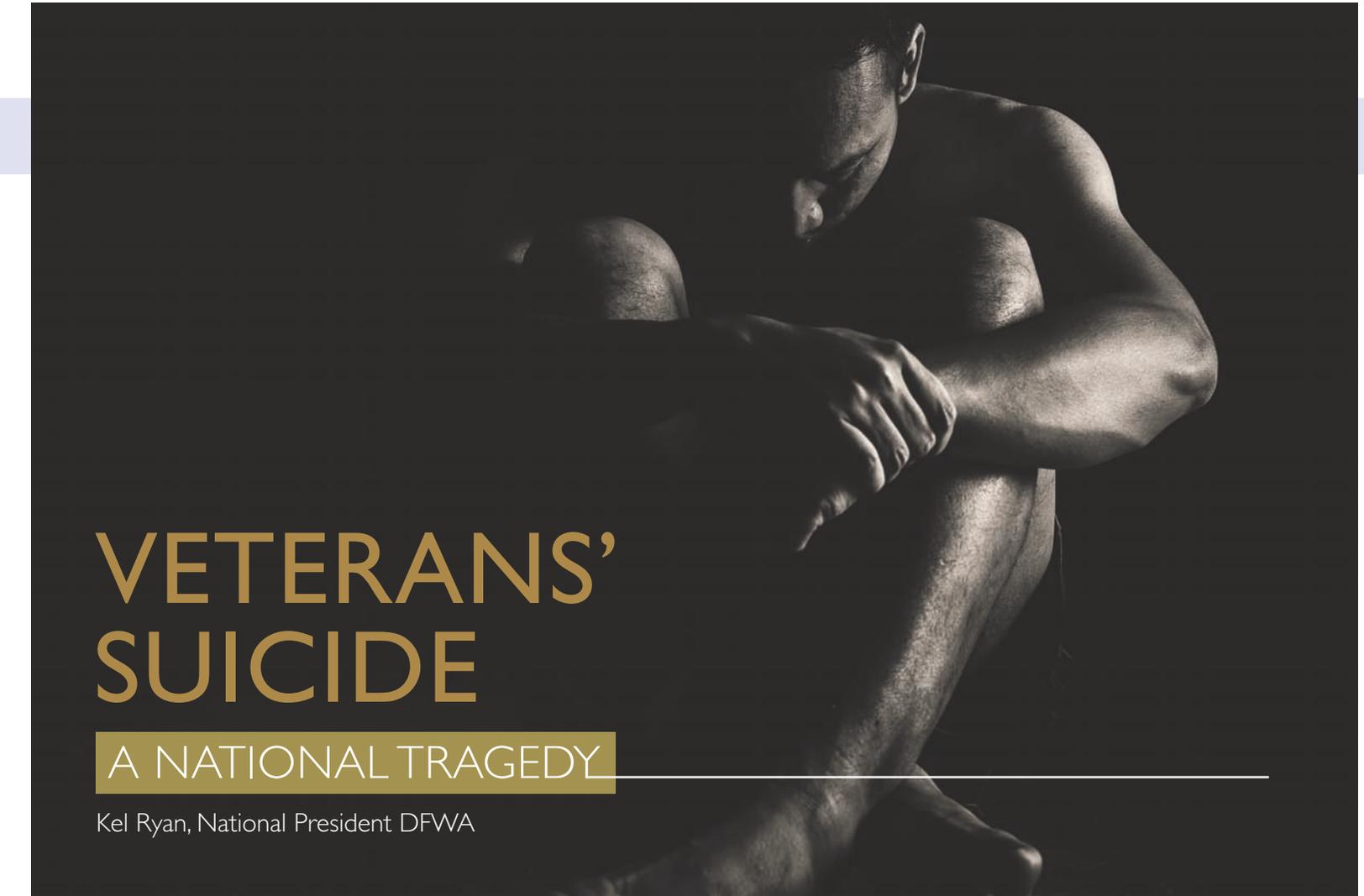
Alf Jaugietis - Executive Director

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.





VETERANS' SUICIDE

A NATIONAL TRAGEDY

Kel Ryan, National President DFWA

In my role of National President DFWA I recently had several radio/TV/print media interviews on the issue of veteran suicide. Why me? Why DFWA? Why was the DFWA approached for comment of this problematic issue which has become a national tragedy?

The answer is that DFWA is increasingly seen as the 'go to' ESO, prepared to address major issues in a considered manner.

In the interviews, I made the following points:

- a.** That the issue of suicide is a national issue and therefore a whole of government issue. It is across all sections of our society.
 - b.** The initial focus of the various interviewers was the recent Media Release by the RANZ College of Psychiatrists reference to the "hostile" and "derogatory attitudes" of DVA staff to veterans seeking psychiatric assistance. Such is not my experience nor that of the great majority of members in the veteran community. Sometimes it is hard to acknowledge this, particularly when family and those nearest and dearest have been challenged by the bureaucracy. When able I sought to deny that such was the case. Such antagonistic comments may grab the attention of some, but they are unhelpful if we are to have a constructive discussion on the issue.
 - c.** The call for a Royal Commission is a distraction from the very real issue we have now. We surely have the answers to at least address the immediacy of the challenge without resort to a Royal Commission. Our recent experience with Royal Commissions indicates that the time they take is on the side of the government and the Commissioners and is time away from addressing and resolving the issue we need fixed.
 - d.** DVA is increasingly responsive to the challenges of the veteran community regarding the suicide issue. Yes, there are serious challenges at times to meeting the needs of all in the veteran community but overall DVA is addressing this and the many others issues we seek to have resolved.
 - e.** The Productivity Commission Report is due to be handed to government at the end of June 2019 and it along with the Cornell 'Scoping Study' should give us a lead into the future.
 - f.** DFWA does not support the notion proffered earlier on by the Productivity Commissioners in their initial draft report, of moving DVA into Defence.
 - g.** Calling individuals' names and disparaging their efforts on our behalf is unhelpful. It simply makes the task of those in ESO leadership that much more difficult as we seek to negotiate ways forward in a collaborative manner. ESO leadership must work with government and DVA but fighting through abusive and derogatory comments directed at those we negotiate with makes the task more difficult.
 - h.** DVA and its relationship with the veteran community was a constant question from the media. I advised that while DVA has problems it is becoming more responsive to veterans and their issues. It is not perfect, and it will never be, but it has the support of the broad veteran community.
- For many, suicides are personal issues. Talk of it by a family member, a mate and friend, a partner must spur us all to action. Above all it is a national issue and demands a national focus by governments at all levels.

The Defence Asbestos and Hazardous Chemicals Exposure Scheme (DAHCES)

The Defence Asbestos and Hazardous Chemicals Exposure Scheme (DAHCES) combines what was previously known as the Defence Asbestos Exposure Evaluation Scheme (DAEES) and the Defence Exposure Evaluation Scheme (DEES).

The DAHCES is open to current and former employees of the Department of Defence and Australian Defence Force members (including Cadets) who suspect that they have been exposed to asbestos or a hazardous chemical as a result of their employment with Defence.

It provides a service which allows its workers access to health-based advice and support (health assessments, compensation information and travel allowance) where they believe they have been exposed to asbestos and other hazardous chemicals.

Apart from asbestos, it covers diesel fumes, range fuel, lead etc, all stuff we were exposed to in workshops.

Many of us may have been registered in earlier schemes during and after service however there have been cases where, on checking, the black hole has eaten previous registrations or notifications during service.

It is recommended all should register.

See <http://www.defence.gov.au/whs/programs/asbestos-exposure-evaluation-scheme.asp> or call 1800 333 362 and follow the prompts.

A Note from the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation

Financial support and education

When we meet with our customers, financial stress is in the top three issues people want to talk about. We know that it can impact your whole life. Veteran financial stress and associated social concerns are real issues for the community, and we need to find a better solution.

A number of organisations have come together to provide support and resources to help Veterans and their families take control of their financial future. We realised that one of the barriers to getting financial help is the ability to actually have a meaningful conversation with a professional over the phone. So, we've piloted a program that brings ESOs, superannuation experts, and financial planners to one central location. Giving people the chance to put down the phone and have a genuine face-to-face chat.

The pilot program began on Saturday 13 April, when RSL Queensland held an event focusing on financial wellbeing for Veterans and families—called The Veterans' Hub.

The Veterans' Hub, hosted by Maroochy RSL, brought partner organisations together on the glorious banks of the Maroochy River, and gave attendees the chance to speak with RSL staff, superannuation experts and financial planners one-on-one in a comfortable environment. The idea behind the event was for Veterans and their families to get together over two days and talk about finances, access financial support, learn some things about health and wellbeing, and get an update on the RSL Qld Veterans' support programs.

Those who attended thought the event was well worth their time, with one participant saying, "I found it very beneficial and can see it becoming hugely successful as it grows. A great initiative."

Following the success of the Veterans' Hub in Maroochy, we'll be taking up the baton and meeting with the Townsville Veteran community and The Oasis Townsville in June to plan another financial support and education event for Veterans and their families.

If you'd like to be kept informed about upcoming events in your area, let us know that you're interested by emailing at events@csc.gov.au or follow us on Facebook to keep up-to-date with our news

www.facebook.com/CommonwealthSuperannuationCorporation



THE ADF WAGE CASE

IT'S NEARLY THAT TIME AGAIN !!

On 16 August 2017 the Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal (DFRT) sat to consider the Offer made by the Commonwealth and ADF for the ADF Workplace Remuneration Arrangement (WRA) 2017-2020. Basically, the Offer called for an annual increase in ADF Remuneration of 2% per annum in each of the three years.

That revised Offer followed extensive national lobbying by the DFWA which argued against the initial Offer that included "offsets" including loss of leave entitlements for ADF members. The DFWA was vermently opposed to the concept of offsets and as a direct result of our lobbying and the national outcry that resulted, the Commonwealth and ADF submitted a new Offer for the Tribunal to consider, which deleted any reference to Offsets.

The DFWA then advised the Tribunal that:

- a. The proposed new 2/2/2% offer was at best marginally acceptable, as on the (then) current projections it would in all probably result in a diminution of spending power for most ADF families, and particularly for those on lower pay grades.
- b. We were disappointed to see that the Government had pursued a strategy of providing less than the (then) current Treasury forecast for CPI and WPI movement. We believed that, in time, such an approach would only make it more difficult for Defence to recruit and more particularly, to retain the high-quality people it needed in a technological age.
- c. Because this matter had been brought pursuant to s58KD of the Defence Act (see explanation below), the Tribunal's authority in considering the matter was significantly reduced – that is, it could only give effect to the WRA, or could reject it entirely. We made the point that we did not believe rejection would be in the best interests of ADF members, and we therefore offered our reluctant support for the Offer.

Accordingly, the three year (2017-2020) WRA for the ADF gave ADF members a 2% pa wage increase for each of those three years, but without any offset or reductions of ADF member conditions of service or entitlements. Read more at www.dfw.org.au/current-issues/wra

SO WHATS GOING TO HAPPEN IN 2020 ?

Defence will start development of a new Arrangement during 2020, with a view to having it in place by the time the current 2020 WRA expires. The DFWA will again monitor the development of what the Commonwealth and ADF may offer, and represent the interests of members of the ADF at the DFRT.

EXPLAINING s35B, s58H s58KD of the Defence Act

The Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal is an independent statutory body established pursuant to the Defence Act 1903. Matters referred to the Tribunal are typically considered in one of two ways: pursuant to Section 58H of the Act, or pursuant to Section 58KD of the Act.

Section 58H allows the Tribunal to inquire into and determine the salaries and relevant allowances to be paid to members, or in respect of other matters brought before it. A matter referred under Section 58H therefore allows the Tribunal to either accept, reject, or change it according to their own consideration. In this way the Tribunal's powers are not limited: it may agree to the proposal brought before it, or dismiss it, or determine changes to it.

By contrast, Section 58KD of the Act states the Tribunal may, in making a determination, only give effect to any agreement reached between the Parties (that is, the Minister (acting on behalf of the Commonwealth) and the CDF (acting on behalf of all ADF members), or reject it. The Tribunal has no authority to change the proposal or make other Determination in its consideration.. This significantly limits the Tribunal's authority.

Historically, Workplace Remuneration Arrangements are always brought to the Tribunal as matters agreed between the Parties, and so are typically the only occasions where Section 58KD is used.

Finally, Section 58B refers to those matters that the Minister can directly control, and are outside the jurisdiction of the Tribunal. In this case it refers to matters relating to changes that the Department of Defence can levy on members – such as GRS, rations and quarters, etc.

DEFENCE HOUSING AUSTRALIA - Have Your Say!

Camaraderie readers may remember that we have in the past provided updates on Defence housing issues.

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) is undertaking an audit to assess whether Defence Housing Australia (DHA) administers its functions efficiently and effectively, and in accordance with the Government Business Enterprise guidelines.

The ANAO proposes to examine whether DHA:

- has established a fit-for-purpose services agreement with Defence;
- has entered into value-for-money purchasing arrangements;
- provides services to Defence personnel effectively;
- provides services to Defence personnel efficiently; and
- complies with governance, reporting and government business enterprise requirements.

The ANAO welcomes members of the public contributing information for consideration when conducting performance audits. Performance audits involve the independent and objective

assessment of the administration of an entity or body's programs, policies, projects or activities. They also examine how well administrative support systems operate.

The ANAO does not have a role in commenting on the merits of government policy but focuses on assessing the efficient and effective implementation of government programs, including the achievement of their intended benefits.

The audit is currently collecting audit evidence and is seeking input from members of the public. The ANAO particularly value information that deals with significant matters or insights into the administration of the subject of this audit. Information can be submitted either by uploading a file, or by entering your information into the comments box below.

While your contribution will be considered, and handled with care, you will not automatically receive feedback about your contribution. However, if you provide your contact details, you may be contacted regarding your contribution.

ANAO will be accepting contributions to their audit until Sunday 28 July 2019. Go to:
<https://www.anao.gov.au/work/performance-audit/management-defence-housing-australia>



D-DAY & AUSTRALIA'S CONTRIBUTION



Wikipedia

Shortly after midnight on 6 June 1944, Allied forces commenced landing airborne troops in Normandy, France. At dawn, naval vessels would begin landing troops on beaches codenamed Utah and Omaha for the American forces, and Gold, Juno and Sword for the British and Canadians. The landings would be preceded by an immense bombardment by Allied air forces, supported by thousands of fighter aircraft. The naval operation, involving more than 6,000 vessels, was the largest armada ever assembled. It was the first day in the liberation of Western Europe from Nazi occupation.

D-Day is one of the defining events not only of World War II but also of the 20th century. In the West, commemorations marking the anniversary of D-Day have become the most internationally significant events remembering the war. Although the bulk of the forces in the landings were British, American and Canadian, more than a dozen Allied nations participated in the operation.

Few people today likely realise that Australians, predominantly members of the Royal Australian Air Force and Royal Australian Navy, were among those who actively contributed to the operation. Australia had entered the war as a partner in the British Empire in 1939. By 1944 Australian forces and personnel were fighting the war on multiple fronts. Australia remained committed to standing strongly by Britain and continuing the fight against Nazi Germany

in Europe, while simultaneously dealing with the immense challenge of facing down the Japanese advance across the Asia-Pacific region, which was turned back from Australia's own doorstep in 1942.

The stories of the Australian men and women who participated in the battle of Normandy aren't well known, yet more than 3,300 Australians were active in the D-Day landings (2,800 airmen, 500

“ Although the bulk of the forces in the landings were British, American and Canadian, more than a dozen Allied nations participated in the operation. ”

sailors, and small numbers of men and women serving with the British Army), while thousands more served during the subsequent Normandy campaign. Thirteen Australians were killed on 6 June, but the campaign lasted beyond that one day. On 7 June, 20 Australian airmen were killed; on 8 June another 22 died, and the losses continued until August. In fact, more than 1,100 Australians were killed in Europe in the build-up to and during the Normandy battle (April–August 1944). To this day, June 1944 remains the costliest

Continued overpage

month in terms of casualties in the history of the RAAF.

One of the difficulties facing historians in telling the Australian D-Day story is identifying the contributions of thousands of individuals who served attached to British squadrons and naval vessels. No RAN vessel was involved in the landings, but Australian sailors were spread across the British fleet. A small number of Australian officers commanded British destroyers, corvettes, minesweepers, landing craft and torpedo boats. Others served in ships' companies, some commanding gun turrets aboard heavy cruisers. In the air, 10 RAAF squadrons were involved, and No. 453 Squadron, RAAF, flying the Supermarine Spitfire, operated from the ground in Normandy in the weeks after the landing. But the majority of Australian airmen were spread across more than 200 Royal Air Force squadrons.

All of the Australians who served were volunteers. The airmen who served on D-Day had trained as part of the Empire Air Training Scheme, which saw 16,000 RAAF pilots, navigators, wireless operators, bomb aimers, gunners and flight engineers join RAF squadrons during the course of the war. Another 11,541 men joined RAAF squadrons formed in Britain. On D-Day, 1,000 Australians served in the 10 RAAF squadrons that participated in the Allied invasion. A further 1,800 Australians who participated on D-Day were serving attached to RAF squadrons.

In addition to those in operational squadrons on D-Day, there were 10,000 Australian airmen in training and reserve. Many of them would join operational squadrons as the battle in Normandy raged in the days and weeks after the landing and as casualties to aircrews mounted. To place the RAAF's contribution—and Australia's commitment—to the air war in Europe into some perspective, the number of Australian airmen in Britain in July 1944 was equal to the size of an Australian army division in the Pacific at that time.

At sea, RAN sailors served in diverse roles and were involved in all the major naval operations of the war. At least 1,100 members of the RAN served at different times, on attachment to the Royal Navy. Of the 500 serving in June 1944, more than 400 were officers of the Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve. Many had enlisted in Australia under the 'Yachtsmen Scheme', which targeted recruits with small-ship experience. These men were ideal for training with Combined Operations and for commanding landing craft and ships.

The stories of these Australians who served in Normandy remain little known, but it is important to remember their contribution to the great Allied effort in 1944. Their service is also a reminder that from the outbreak of war in September 1939 to the final day of victory in 1945, Australia was committed to the defence of Britain and the free world. This included defeating Nazism and fascism in Europe, as well as defending Australia from Japanese militarism in Asia and the Pacific.



Pictured showing the drawing of tickets: L to R : NSW Branch Committee members John Kane, Ralph Derbidge, Michael Stuart-Watt and Ralph Hannaford. The Draw took place at Victoria Barracks, Paddington on Thursday 23 May 2019.

RESULT OF THE DFWA 2019 RAFFLE

(NSW, VIC, ACT, SA, QLD & WA BRANCHES)

FIRST PRIZE: Travel to the value of \$5,000.00 plus \$500 spending money
Mrs Joan Garley
CRANBOURNE VIC 3977
(Ticket No: 17880)

SECOND PRIZE: \$1,000.00
Ms D Gaudry
BLAXLAND NSW 2774
(Ticket No: 46619)

THIRD PRIZE: \$500.00
Mr R Jacobsen
CAMPBELL ACT 2612
(Ticket No: 5615)

CONSOLATION PRIZES: \$150.00
Mr Neville Clark
BALGA WA 6061
(Ticket No: 38047)
Mr M Fielding
MELBOURNE VIC 3000
(Ticket No: 12410)
A & S Jermey
MEDOWIE NSW 2318
(Ticket No 1498)
Mr B Florence
STRATHDALE VIC 3550
(Ticket No. 18497)



“WHAT ABOUT THE RESERVISTS?”

by Jim Barry
DFWA
Vice President
- Reserves



Further issues and concerns of the Defence Reserves Association

I had the pleasure of attending the recent DFWA Executive meeting in Canberra on 3, 4 June 2019, where I had the opportunity of reporting on some of the Defence Reserve Association's (DRA) continuing issues and concerns and where there was 'some movement at the station' on others.

However, the heading is accurate. DRA representatives in most forums, (or is it fora), find themselves having to ask the question as Reservists are, or often or not, overlooked in initial policy announcements. Sometimes it is a cost factor, which is understandable, but this can be managed if there was prior consultation with an organisation like DRA. Other times Reservists have been simply overlooked within the Defence bureaucracy until the bureaucracy is reminded of their existence. It is a 'culture' thing that must be change managed. Let me cite a few examples, especially where there have been improvements.

There has been a noticeable improvement in advocacy of issues since the DRA received representation on ESORT in its own right according to our National President, Paul Irving. It is interesting that the Army Reserve with a personnel strength equivalent to both our Navy and our Air Force has taken so long to be directly represented in ESORT by the DRA.

There has also been an improvement with 'People Group' now recognising Reservists as such and even further; the current Department of Defence policy has been changed to allow Reservists' details to be provided direct to the Department of Veterans Affairs both on enlistment and discharge. This is a major change in both DoD and Government policy! Before it can be implemented however, there are some IT issues to be resolved between Defence and DVA.

However now for the 'titled' question. There is the need for the DRA with People Group to be directly involved in the Review of the ADF SERCAT 3-5 (Reserve) Employment package. After all it is about Reservists! This is also linked to DRA's major issue that Reservists are not entitled to superannuation! Reservists are the only part-time workforce in Australia that does not receive pro rata employer-contributed superannuation. Now let me return to the Review. SERCAT's were initiated under Plan SUAKIN; designed to better integrate and utilise Reserve personnel within the ADF. Then it morphed into the Total Workforce Model. The original intention was to provide a seamless transition process between 'service categories' or SERCAT's, including to allow permanent personnel to transition into part-time employment under SERCAT 6. Now for the 'kicker'! SERCAT 5 was designed for Reservists to also serve part-time and receive pro rata superannuation instead of 'continuous full time service. Unfortunately 'they' emasculated SERCAT 5 by omitting Reservists part-time service and worst of all pro rata superannuation. Maybe the aforementioned Review will re-introduce both elements. Watch this space.

Similarly with KPMG's recent Review of the Defence Reserves Support Council (DRSC) to improve Reservists relationships with employers, the DRA was again not initially consulted and it would be reasonable to ask the question why not as entitled above. An additional question when the DRSC is liaising with employers, why not involve representatives of Permanents/Regulars who transition out into civilian life? Surely they should be included in this engagement with employers.

Following on from the superannuation question, Reservists are still not included as part of the 'one day in the ADF' eligibility for Non Liability Health Care (NLHC), although an exception recently won, was for those Reservists who had had CFTS or were involved in a service or related training accident were now included. Running counter to this eligibility is the new initiative of the Veterans' card and pin, which could have overcome the two class status within the Total Force. Why were Reservists again segregated?

By current definition a veteran is a veteran, so why differentiate between full time and part time Defence personnel? The DRA does, however, acknowledge that Reservists have to 'earn their stripes' say in terms of recruit training and Initial Employment Training, or its equivalent, at least before being compared to, or seen as equal with, their full time counterparts. One interesting development is that the RAN recently deleted the use of RANR as a post-nominal for the Naval Reserve, so there are small steps towards a true Total Force.

There are still other issues such as the Defence Housing Assistance Scheme which DRA will continue to advocate for on behalf of Reservists, but we must acknowledge the openness for fairness on Reservists' issues, both by DoD and the Government.

The DRA's annual Conference is to be held this year at the United Service Club in Brisbane on Saturday, 17 August 2019. Followed by a tri-service, all ranks, formal Dinner that evening. The theme is 'Reserve Forces – Building on the Success of the Total Force'. Anyone interested in attending either event or both, should check out the DRA website at dra.org.au, and/or contact their State/Territory DRA Branch.

Finally we are looking for ideas for rebranding 'Reservists', as they were no longer in 'Reserve' but are 'part-timers' in the ADF workforce. Irrespective of rebranding, Reservists are now a required and vital part of the Australian Defence Force.

(Jim Barry wrote this article in his capacity as National Immediate Past President of the Defence Reserves Association)

fit for purpose?

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS' AFFAIRS CLAIMS PROCESSES AND MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS AMONGST VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES

Readers of this magazine will recall that Recommendation 2 of the Senate FADT Committee Report titled "The Constant Battle: Suicide by Veterans" was that;

The Committee recommends that the Australian Government commission an independent study into the mental health impacts of compensation claim assessments processes on veterans engaging with the department of Veterans' Affairs and the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation. The results of this research should be utilised to improve compensation claim processes.

Camaraderie readers may not be aware that the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) commissioned Phoenix Australia to conduct the recommended review and in late 2018 Phoenix Australia delivered its report to the department. It is understood that the report is titled "Mental health impacts of compensation claims assessment processes on claimants and their families".

Based on information gained by Sean Parnell, Health and FOI Editor of The Australian newspaper, we understand that the Phoenix report told DVA that factors such as the complexity of the department's claims process, delays in claims processing, interpersonal interactions between veterans and claims staff, were some of the aspects of the claims process that could have an adverse impact on veterans and their families. However, DVA has not seen fit to make the Phoenix report available to the public, a decision confirmed to the author by the department as recently as 30 May 2019. Why is this so?

Formerly the Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health (ACPMH), in 2015 the organisation changed its name to Phoenix Australia – Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health. A not for profit organisation, one of its goals is to improve outcomes for members of the Defence Community. Phoenix Australia is affiliated with the Department of Psychiatry, University of Melbourne, and its Board of Directors include Maj Gen (Rtd) Mark Kelly, a Repatriation Commissioner and member of the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

Whatever the reason for this report being currently unavailable to the public, (and veterans and their families), it is fortunate that Sean Parnell also reported in the Australian, on 29 April 2019, that following on from the receipt of the Phoenix report DVA then commissioned

Professor Alex Collie, (of the Monash (University) Insurance Work and Health Group), to review the Phoenix Australia report and provide broader advice on the issue.

Thanks to Sean Parnell, I have now read a copy of Professor Collie's report, which is compelling reading for those persons who wish to see improvements in the performance of the Department of Veterans' Affairs, especially in its claims processes.

Amongst other matters the Collie report concludes that "there appear to be multiple opportunities for the DVA to introduce further reforms to its compensation claims processing model in order to mitigate any potential impact on veteran mental health."

Further, the report illustrates by way of a flow chart the way that a claims process can be designed so as to be more responsive to the needs of claimants. While some aspects of improvements in claims processing may require legislative change it seems that there are still many possible improvements within the remit of the department.

DVA operates in a dynamic environment with a role that includes providing services and support to a wide age group of clients. These include our young veterans and their families who may have expectations of timing for service delivery and decision making based upon the demands placed upon themselves as members of the Australian Defence Force.

Given that the Senate FADT report, "The Constant Battle: Suicide by Veterans", was released in August 2017, two questions are asked, firstly, how much more time is needed for the department to respond to these challenges and, secondly, is a departmental organisation the best structure that can be designed to provide the most effective delivery of services and support to veterans and their families?

Is DVA "Fit for purpose?"

Max Ball

Author's notes.

1. Readers now have access to the report by Professor Alex Collie at www.dva.gov.au/health-and-wellbeing/research-and-development/health-studies/mental-health-impacts-compensation.
2. It is intended to pursue the matter of public access to the report to DVA by Phoenix Australia.

The Life & Death of
**Major General
 ‘Pompey’ Elliott**
 DSO, DCM



by LtCol Alistair Pope, psc, CM, (Retired)

Death Steals a Legend in the Night

At 4.25am on the morning of 23rd March 1931, Major General Harold Edward ‘Pompey’ Elliott was found dead in his bed at a private hospital in Malvern, Melbourne. For brave man who had survived the Boer War and the frontlines of Gallipoli and France in WWI it was an incongruous end as he had taken his own life by cutting the veins of his left arm with a razor blade.

These days the symptoms of post-traumatic stress signaling his mental deterioration would be more readily recognized, but preventing his decision to commit suicide would prove just as difficult now and was probably near impossible to prevent nearly 90-years ago.

Boer War Experience

Like most of his generation Harold Elliott was born and grew up in rural Australia where hard farm life and straitened economic conditions toughened and developed his self-reliance and personal capabilities. This would probably have been his lot in life had his father not twice gambled everything on prospecting for gold. On his first venture he ran out of money and had abandon his claim. The prospector who took over continued digging and soon made a lucrative strike. Undeterred, Elliott’s father returned to the WA goldfields and this time struck it rich. The family’s money worries were over, but the investors who bought their claim lost their investment as there was no more gold.¹

For Harold the change in economic circumstances meant his family could enroll him in a private school. He excelled and was dux of the college in 1897. He now enrolled in Ormond College at Melbourne University to study Law. Like many others from a rural background, Harold could shoot and was resilient, so it is no surprise that he joined the University Officer Corps.

Before completing his degree, war broke out in South Africa pitting the colonial aspirations of the British Empire against the freedom of the independently minded Boer farmers. In 1900, Great Britain appealed for assistance from the colonies. Victoria agreed to send a contingent of 626 officers and men selected from the 4,000 applicants. Elliott was among those chosen and, after initial training, he was soon promoted to Corporal. Corporal Elliott was brave, skilled and resolute when taking part in the relentless pursuit of a Boer guerilla band known as the ‘Great de Wet Hunt’. He was awarded a Distinguished Conduct Medal’ (DCM) for the particularly daring

capture of a section of the Boers that outnumbered their attackers 2:1. Harold was thrilled by his first experience in the limelight. He was soon promoted to officer rank and offered a commission in the British Army, but remained with the Australian contingent. He was soon involved in another battle that could have resulted in another award as he was mentioned in the report of the action. A month later the Victorians tour of duty was complete and the contingent sailed home. Elliott was now a keen and committed veteran soldier.

Two months after his return from South Africa he was on his way back for a second tour. Although personally congratulated by Lord Kitchener for his defence of an outpost, the war was winding down and he saw little more action.

Readying for War

In 1904, Lieutenant Elliott completed his law degree and signed up to join one of the new militia infantry regiments being raised. By 1911 he had progressed to the rank of Major. On the downside he was already exhibiting some disturbing personal characteristics. As a Corporal he had been outspoken to such an extent he was charged with insubordination, yet now that he had rank, any dissension to his will was seen by Elliott as insubordination that must be crushed! This domineering behaviour lead to conflicts in which he ‘pulled rank’ with others as a first resort. He would not have been able to work for an officer such as himself as one minor incident is reported to have resulted in Elliott being ‘almost apoplectic’. This is not true leadership, but the characteristics of a bullying, tyrannical personality. Thanks to a famous footballer known as ‘Pompey’ Elliott he acquired his lifelong nickname of ‘Pompey’.

When war was announced in August 1914, and that Australia would be part of it, Elliott was promoted to LtCol and appointed to command the 7th Battalion. On 18th October they sailed from Port Melbourne on their ‘great adventure’.

World War I Service - Gallipoli

This is not the place to describe the deficiencies in the concept of the

Continued overpage

catastrophic amphibious landing on the Gallipoli Peninsula, but the outcome of the landings is well-known. Even for the well-trained 7th Battalion soldiers the landing was a disaster as they were put ashore in the wrong places, intermixed with other units and landed without clear objectives. Command was impossible and control non-existent. Individuals, small sections and remnants of companies clambered their way up unfamiliar hills to secure the first ridgelines. Elliott began the climb but received a bullet in the ankle that disabled him. His contribution to the landing was over on the first day.

During the first week of the campaign, McCay's 2nd Brigade (including the remnants of the 7th Battalion) were shipped south to attempt an assault on Krithia at Cape Helles. The murderously incompetent General Hunter-Weston sent them charging forward into artillery and machinegun fire, decimating their ranks. After a week on Gallipoli, Pompey could lament that there are 'hardly any left of the poor 7th Battalion'.

Pompey returned to Gallipoli on 4th June and was involved in two exceptionally courageous actions. For all his bullying and bluster, he was a true warrior and this gained him the respect of his troops. Further close quarter fighting at Lone Pine culminated in four of his men receiving VC's. On 28th August, Elliott was again evacuated, this time with pleurisy, returning on 7th December, in time for the evacuation. On the 18th December, the day before the final evacuation (in which Elliott would have had a major role) he badly sprained his ankle and had to leave immediately. The Gallipoli nightmare was over.

Commander of an AIF Brigade

On 15th February LtCol Pompey Elliott was promoted to Brigadier as Commander of the 1st AIF Brigade, but some politics intervened and he was moved to take over the 15th Brigade instead. His Brigade was new and he immediately expressed dissatisfaction with three of his four Battalion Commanders. He was plain in stating that he was uncomfortable because he did not know them and therefore he felt that they would not meet his standards. Elliott preferred to bring in his own 'traveling circus' of officers from the 7th Battalion. In this he fitted the mold of MacArthur, Montgomery and Patton to the detriment of 'strangers' never given a chance to perform. General White diplomatically rejected his request to remove the officers, but the damage had been done both in the trust between Pompey and his senior officers and his rage at his request being refused. The mild note from White elicited a furious reply out of all proportion to the issue. In June 1916, 5th Division finally left Egypt for the carnage of the Western Front.

Massacre at Fromelles

As part of a two division attack by the British 61st Division and the Australian 5th Division on a salient occupied by 6th Bavarian Reserve Division (which included Adolf Hitler as one of its soldiers), Elliott's 15th Brigade moved up to the frontline and immediately began preparations for the attack. Everything about this battle was wrong. Reconnaissance was minimal, the objectives were over-optimistic and too far away, planning was 'flexible' and vague, preparations were rushed and haphazard (so that those taking part were weary before

the battle began) and coordination between the divisions was poor.

After seven hours of artillery bombardment, the 58th, 59th and 60th infantry battalions 'went over the top' in broad daylight at 5.45pm on the 19th July. Within four hours the 59th & 60th battalions had ceased to exist with 70% casualties for no gain. In all, the 5th Division suffered more than 5,500 casualties with almost 2,000 killed and another 400 captured. Australia's first action on the Western Front remains the worst single action disaster ever suffered by the Australian Army. The British Corps Commander who had ordered the assault became known to the soldiers as 'Butcher' Haking.

Rebuilding the Brigade (and 5th Division) took months and it was not until October that they were able to once again take their place in the rotation cycle of frontline duties. Morale plummeted as casualties mounted on each frontline rotation for no change in the situation. During this time Pompey was given two more awards to add to his growing list.

The Battle of Polygon Wood – September to November 1917

Pompey opposed this assault for several good reasons, but 15th Brigade was ordered to carry it out as part of a two division attack. Casualties were heavy, their right flank was exposed and German shelling and counter-attacks were the heaviest experienced to date. Yet, despite all the difficulties the quality and initiative of the Australian soldiers carried them forward to their objectives – and beyond (something almost unheard of on the Western Front). The Germans to their front were caught unawares when the Australians were not halted, but continued to advance.

The Australian victory was exceptional and much of the credit is due to Pompey and the men of his Brigade. As one Welch Fusilier noted with astonishment *"It was the only time in the whole war that I saw a brigadier with the first line of attacking troops"*.¹¹

The victory was tempered by the news of the death of his brother, George, the 58th Battalion RMO and the 1,200 casualties 15th Brigade incurred. Shortly thereafter he heard that his brother-in-law had also been killed, followed by the unwelcome news that his business partner had lost a lot of money, for which he was liable.

Elliott wrote a long, detailed and critical report of the organization and execution of the battle that was to have far-reaching consequences. He catalogued the mistakes and the confusion that reigned. He believed he was being candid, but his superiors were so enraged that General Brudenell-White ordered all copies destroyed.

1918 - The Final Year: Hamel & Villers Bretonneux

After all he had been through, Elliott's physical and mental health had deteriorated. Over 3,000 soldiers under his command had been killed and this was weighing heavily on him. General Birdwood offered him a home leave of six months. He desperately wanted to see his family, but after considerable deliberation, Elliott declined as he might permanently lose his command. He told his soldiers he could not take home leave when they could not. Once more the Brigade was

rebuilt in anticipation of an onslaught by German divisions recently released from the Russian Front. On 21st March the German assault began to the south of the Australian Corps position.¹¹¹

The situation was chaotic. The AIF divisions and Brigades exhausted themselves moving to meet each new threat but without meeting the advancing enemy. Finally, they dug in in front of Hamel and near Villers-Bretonneux.

Hamel

When the Germans attacked on 4th April over open ground and without their usual artillery support, a single machine-gun is reputed to have enfiladed an advancing line and killed over 200 infantry. Another attack the next day suffered the same fate. 15th Brigade had taken few casualties, but had broken the spearhead of the German advance.

Villers-Bretonneux

The AIF counter-attack at Villers-Bretonneux by 13th & 15th Brigades was the crowning glory of Pompey's tactical genius. Yet his original plan was rejected, then delayed, amended to the new circumstances, then finally implemented with devastating results against the advanced elements of the German divisions. They were thrown back in disorder and never again tried to attack in this sector. The High Command was full of praise but, as is often the case, success has many fathers and everyone wanted to claim the successful plan was theirs. As usual, the irascible Pompey was incensed that he had been robbed of the full credit. Worse was to follow.

Anzac Corps Reorganisation & Promotions

What happened next virtually defined the rest of Pompey Elliott's life. When General Birdwood was promoted to command 5th Army, General Monash was promoted to command the Anzac Corps, creating a vacancy for a divisional commander. Elliott felt his successes as a Brigade Commander made him not only the best choice, but the only choice. When the promotion went to General Gellibrand, Elliott wrote a diatribe letter of protest to Brudenell-White. White met the challenge head-on and rejected Elliott's 'right' to the promotion. He cited the many incidents and intemperate outbursts as evidence that Pompey had too many flaws, despite his brilliance in the field. Pompey countered by drafting a comprehensive account and explanation for every incident and eccentric behaviour – for the record. In fact, by doing so he was confirming the obsessive behaviour of which he had been accused and had resulted in his not being promoted. As usual, his scathing retort spared nobody he felt had failed, slighted, or not supported him.

From this point on Pompey saw Gellibrand and Glasgow as usurpers who had deprived him of his rightful promotion. He was not slow to denigrate them, which his detractors saw as further evidence that he was indeed unfit for a divisional command.

The Final Battles

On 8th August 1918, General Monash's AIF heralded 'The Blackest Day of the German Army' by breaking the German line and advancing more than seven miles, with 15th Brigade at the fore. Asked to help

in a further operation, Pompey agreed. He went so far forward he was struck by a spent German bullet in his buttock!

Much hard fighting continued with no rest or time for recuperation as the advance continued. Although casualties were lighter than 'normal' the battalions were still being whittled down as new tasks and objectives were added. The result of the additional strain and pressure were several 'minor' and temporary mutinies. The advance and attrition continued until the AIF divisions were withdrawn from the line for the last time on 5th October 1918.

Aftermath

Like many soldiers before and since, Pompey found the transition to peace and the certainty of surviving the day hard to accept. What added to his rancor was that he was again not given command of the 5th Division command when it became available. His mental state became ever more precarious now that he no longer had to focus on purely military matters. Finally, in May 1919 he sailed for home.

No Ordinary Life

Pompey Elliott was a famous war hero, but this was not going to pay his debts. Fortunately, he soon found work as a lawyer, to be followed by his election to the Federal Parliament as a Victorian Senator. His future appeared settled, but when the post-war Army raised seven divisions Pompey again was not one of the divisional commanders. His protests were both strong and widespread, but were roundly rejected. Nobody doubted his ability, but his obsession with his 'entitlement' to be promoted alienated everyone, including those he would have to work with. His new war over his lack of promotion dominated the rest of his life. In 1927 he was finally promoted to command 3rd Division, but it was too late. His obsession over his 'supersession' throughout the war continued to dominate his life to the extent he was now almost certainly mentally ill.

Pompey Elliott could be a bully, tyrannical, unpredictable, irascible and irrational; flaws and faults that mitigated his greatness as a brave soldier, a fine tactician and a leader who genuinely cared for his soldiers. Let these latter qualities be the epitaph by which he is remembered, rather than his obsessions, flaws and tragic suicide.

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<http://www.awmlondon.gov.au/battles/fromelles>

¹ <http://www.digitalhistoryproject.com/2011/08/londonberry-gold-mine-john-mills-golden.html> Whether or not this was a deliberately 'salted' claim, the fact remains that the purchasers received absolutely no return from their 'investment' and lost their money.

¹¹ Pompey Elliott Page 327-328

¹¹¹ The Grand Old Duke of York nursery rhyme comes to mind in which 'he marched them all to the top of the hill, then [counter-]marched them down again'

“COMSUPER - MILITARY ENTITLEMENTS”

on Facebook



Editor's Note: The Facebook Group is open to those interested in current matters relating to Defence Superannuation and related matters. The following recent post attracted the interest of the editor and is reproduced below

LUMP SUM INVALIDITY BENEFITS

On a pleasing note we have a member who has been in talks with the ATO in relation to the lumpsum backpay from CSC Invalidation benefits and the fact that we are entitled to the taxation that has been paid on Incapacity Payments...

Basically the way this works is that when DVA recover money from a CSC backpay lumpsum.....This is recovered using GROSS figures.....But here's the glitch.....

This money is legislated as Offsetting which is a requirement by law.....As such the amount is NOT income to the individual.....Rather it is actually income to DVA because the person does not receive it DVA receives it.....

So what this does is it basically means that the money recovered becomes Incap payments NOT RECIEVED.....because of this it

means that any tax that has been paid on the incap payments which were subject of the recovery MUST be refunded back to the payer....

We have just received confirmation that one of our members has taken this up to the tax office and they have refunded this person the entire amount.....He has also been refunded an amount because of the 48% tax that CSC take out which is clearly incorrect

Therefore I urge anyone who has had this recovery to contact the ATO and request this money to be returned...

This is a great result for all Veterans and well done to Guy Vasey Toni Turpin and Nicole King who have been tirelessly advocating on our behalf over this very matter.....

THE DFWA RELIEF TRUST FUND

The DFWA Relief Trust Fund exists to provide “last resort” assistance to members, former members and families of the ADF experiencing temporary financial distress. It can provide loans or grants in urgent cases where other means of temporary relief are not accessible.

The Fund has in the past provided assistance that has overcome family break-up, homelessness, near-penury, or other disastrous situations facing individuals and families.

Applications are initially managed by a DFWA Branch, and then thoroughly assessed by the Trustees, both to satisfy themselves of facts of the applicants’ circumstances, and to conserve the available funds.

The Fund is legally prevented from earning income from sources other than interest-bearing deposits or donations. In this era of low interest

rates, there is a danger that the interest paid on the fund's deposits may become insufficient to prevent a slow decline in the available capital. Therefore without replenishment, the Fund faces the possibility of going out of business.

Anyone who supports the very real contribution the Fund has made to the welfare of some of our most unfortunate comrades are asked to consider donating to the Fund. This can be by either making a direct donation (see page 38) and/or making some provision for it in their Will.

The Fund has legal status as a charity, and donations to it are tax deductible. The Funds ABN is 71 100360056.

MENTAL HEALTH COVER FOR RESERVISTS



From 1 July 2018, as part of the 2018–2019 Budget, eligibility for mental health care has been extended to some Reservists without continuous full-time service.

Non-Liability Health Care (NLHC) allows current and former Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel, depending on their eligibility, to receive treatment for all of the following conditions:

- any mental health condition
- Cancer (Malignant Neoplasm)
- Pulmonary Tuberculosis

There is no need for the condition to be accepted as service related. However, the eligibility for treatment of each condition depends on the period in which service was rendered, or in some cases, the nature of service (for example, service on operational deployments).

Mental health conditions

NLHC covers treatment for any mental health condition, including but not limited to:

- Posttraumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)
- Depressive Disorder
- Anxiety Disorder
- Alcohol Use Disorder
- Substance Use Disorder
- Phobias
- Adjustment Disorders
- Bipolar Disorder

Eligibility - Permanent full-time service

Anyone with any period of permanent or continuous full-time service with the ADF is eligible for the treatment of mental health conditions. This means that if you have had permanent full-time service in the ADF, even for as little as one day, you are eligible to receive treatment for any mental health condition. It

doesn't matter when you served, how long you served, or the nature of your service.

Eligibility - Reservists

If you are a Reservist with any period of full-time service, you may also be eligible for NLHC. This may be through prior service in the permanent forces of the ADF, or if you have been deployed on continuous full-time service, or if you have undertaken a continuous full-time service contract.

From 1 July 2018, if you are a Reservist without continuous full-time service you may still be eligible for mental health treatment under NLHC, provided you rendered Reserve Service Days with one of the following:

- Disaster Relief Service (for example, Operation Vic Fire Assist)
- Border Protection Service (for example, Operation RESOLUTE)
- involvement in a serious service-related training accident

In the case of a serious accident, this means an accident which occurred during a training exercise undertaken by Defence in which a member of the ADF died or sustained a serious injury. The person would have needed immediate treatment as an inpatient in a hospital. Examples of serious injuries are as follows:

- an injury that results in, or is likely to result in the loss of an eye, or total or partial loss of vision
- a burn requiring intensive care or critical care
- a spinal injury
- deep or extensive cuts that cause muscle damage, tendon damage, or permanent impairment
- an injury that requires the amputation of a body part

How to Apply

Contact DVA (see www.dva.gov.au/contact for contact details).

Corporal Cosmo

WELCOME TO THE NEW FINANCIAL YEAR!

In this edition of Camaraderie, I would like to update you regarding a significant and timely change to an important condition of service for ADF members; Long Service Leave (LSL).

With effect 11 July 2019, the minimum number of paid days leave an ADF member must take when applying for LSL will be seven (7) days.

Currently, as many of you will be aware, when applying for LSL, members of the ADF must use a minimum of 15 days paid leave. Additionally, it is also a condition that you cannot commence or finish your period of LSL on a weekend or public holiday. (This condition will not change).

Defence Australian Public Service and other Commonwealth APS employees have been eligible to take a minimum of seven days when applying for LSL for many years. Although LSL benefits for the ADF are similar to benefits under the Long Service Leave (Commonwealth Employees) Act 1976, they are not identical. ADF members are not covered under that legislation.

In my opinion this is a great reform and will increase flexibility for ADF members when it comes to deciding how they choose which type of leave to use to meet family and recreational commitments.

You may have noticed that I used the term, "when applying for LSL...". It is important to note the difference between an entitlement and an eligibility. Accrual of LSL is an entitlement under the conditions of service for ADF personnel. Members become eligible to apply for LSL after 10 years of service. This may include service with other recognised employers.

Granting of LSL is discretionary and will only normally be approved if your absence will not impact on the work of your unit.

Vice-President Conditions of Service (VP-CoS)

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to a service of the DFWA that is probably not that well known.

DFWA has many volunteers, serving and ex-serving, that make a considerable contribution to the welfare of serving and former members of the ADF. One of the positions is that of VP-CoS, whom regularly reviews decisions and determinations that directly affect the conditions of service of serving members and legislative changes that effect ex-serving members.

If you read or hear of any changes concerning issues such as leave, pay, superannuation, etc. that you believe may impact adversely on yourself or a collective of personnel, I encourage you to contact the VP-CoS via email (vp-cos@dfwa.org.au).

Earlier this year for example, a serving member contacted VP-CoS and described how they believed a pay reform had financially penalised them and a small cohort of members.

Through listening to their reasoned arguments DFWA was able to provide guidance on how best the situation could be appealed. We are hoping for a positive outcome for their grievance, which is ongoing.

Until next time!
Corporal Cosmo.

vp-cos@dfwa.org.au



Remember: Corporal Cosmo's comments are their own, reflecting their opinions only.

MONEY MATTERS

MARATHONS & MORTGAGES



If you have been following one of the recommendations that I made in a previous article, namely, to save a minimum of 10% of your gross income on a regular basis, and then invest the savings, you have probably realised that saving money was a long-term proposition. Life sometimes gets in the way. There are bills to pay, and unexpected family and work situations, which get in the way of the best laid plans.

If you are diverted in your savings program, due to various personal issues, then to assist you to remain on track with your savings program, you should organise an automatic direct debit to your special “savings account”, e.g. if your gross income is \$70,000 per annum then every fortnight, \$270 should be automatically swept by the bank into your savings account. As your salary increases, so should your fortnightly savings amount.

For many people, an automatic direct debit assists them, as they never “see” the money, and are therefore not tempted to spend it.

Success in life comes from repetition. You should become competent at what you are attempting (saving), so that it becomes second nature to you. Expertise belongs to a few. The successful people don’t have superpowers, they have endurance, patience and a long-term view. They also enjoy what they do. If you have this characteristic, don’t let it go.

If you invest say \$270 every fortnight, in one year you will have \$7,020, in five years \$35,100, and in ten years \$70,200. These are “raw” numbers, which don’t take into account the variable of an increase in your income, (hence an increase in the dollars you save), plus the fact that you would have invested your funds in either Term Deposits, the Share Market or property. Therefore the three figures noted above should be much greater.

If you DON’T invest, you are actually losing money due to inflation. You probably won’t realise that until you are in your “senior” years, at which point it will be too late to begin investing, as you no longer have TIME on your side.

As a concluding comment, I would like to make an observation in relation to Mortgage payments, further to the decrease in interest rates that have just been announced.

If you have a mortgage of \$400,000, with an interest rate of 5%, and are paying \$2,400 per month, your mortgage will be paid in 24 years and the total amount that you will pay is \$689,856 (combination of interest and capital).

With the interest rate decrease, the bank may offer to decrease your interest payments to 4.5% DO NOT ACCEPT THAT OFFER !!

Continue to pay the same dollar amount as now ... I assure you, if you do this, your Mortgage will be paid off in a shorter period of time, and the whole dollar amount that you have paid off (see \$689,856 above), will actually be less than that figure of \$689,856 above.

To confirm this for yourself, either check via the calculators on the MONEY SMART site (that is always mentioned at the end of this article), or when the Bank sends you a letter offering you the lower interest payments, ask them to provide you with the savings and duration of mortgage period figures, if you continue to pay back the SAME AMOUNT.

USEFUL WEB SITES

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.

VETERANS ON INVALIDITY BENEFITS AND THE TAX OFFICE, THE ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS TRIBUNAL AND RETROSPECTIVE LEGISLATION!

what's it all about?

John Lewis, Qld Branch DFWA

There are 3 Veterans challenging the ATO on the tax treatment of the Invalidity Benefits they receive from either the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefit (DFRDB) scheme or the Military Superannuation Benefits Scheme (MSBS). Any final decision of these cases will also probably apply to similar benefits of more recent ADF members now covered by ADF Cover and ADF Super which replaced MSBS.

All schemes provide similar Invalidity Benefits. These benefits are paid to Veterans who have been discharged from the ADF on medical grounds, including all those with mental health wounds and most at risk from self-harm. These benefits are separate from payments received from DVA which only cover incapacities which are recognised as "service caused". If a Veteran qualifies for both, there are "offsetting rules" which prevent a veteran from allegedly "double dipping", i.e., paid twice for the same condition.

There are 3 Classes of Invalidity Benefit.

- Class A (60% or more Invalidity). About 70% of salary depending on various factors.
- Class B (30-60% Invalidity). 50% of Class A Invalidity Benefit.
- Class C (below 30% Invalidity). 0% - No Invalidity Benefit.

The invalidity status of veterans are subject to regular medical review up to at least age 55 years, and can go up or down and even to zero. It is not a lifetime pension.¹

Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) which administers military superannuation, reports the payments to the ATO as a "Superannuation Income Stream" and the ATO taxes Invalidity Benefit payments at the Veteran's marginal rate. A "Superannuation Income Stream" is defined by Superannuation Industry (Supervision) Regulations (SISR) 1994 Reg 1.06 Meaning of pension (Act, s 10)².

This is complex area of law made more so by the peculiarities of military superannuation trying to fit in with SISR which were formulated with civilian schemes in mind. Examples of differences include:

- Civilian schemes can offer payment as one large lump sum in lieu of regular payments. This is not an option with military schemes.
- With civilian schemes, medical reviews generally are not conducted

after about 2 years.

The Veteran community has been arguing with CSC and ATO for several years, that under SISR 1.06, the Invalidity Benefit payments do not meet the criteria of a "Superannuation Income Stream" and should not be taxed as such. At different times, both CSC and the ATO have tried to pass responsibility to the other for defining these payments as Income Streams. The theoretical position is that CSC is supposed to report the nature of these payments to the ATO which then taxes them according to the information CSC provides.

What Is the Veteran Case?

To be an "Income Stream" as the ATO claims, all the standards of SIS Reg 1.06 (9A) below must be met. The veteran case is that the Invalidity Benefit payments do not meet any of the standards below. (Veteran argument is in italics):

1. Does DFRDB permit capital supporting the pension to be contributed to?

NO. Veterans cannot add capital to a fund to support the pension. There is no fund supporting the payment. (The DFRDB fund ceased many years ago and was transferred to Consolidated Revenue. Payments come from Consolidated Revenue.) There is no mechanism for contributions for this. Even if the veteran made a "donation" to Consolidated Revenue, it would make no difference to the payments received..

2. Does DFRDB ensure payments in a year are fixed, allowing only for specific variation including CPI?

NO. DFRDB conducts medical reviews of recipients and, as result, the Veteran can be reclassified to a different CLASS. As a result payments can go up and down and stop altogether. Several hundred reviews are conducted each year often resulting in changes to the class of benefit awarded to veterans.

3. Can the payment be commuted?

NO. There is no provision for this. Veterans cannot commute Invalidity Benefit payments (as they are not lifetime and can change and cease.)

4. Can anyone other than a spouse or child receive the benefit of the payment?

NO. There is nothing for anyone else. Nothing is available to go to an estate on death.

5. Can the payment be used as security for borrowing?

NO. CSC notify banks that it is not a lifetime pension. Veterans cannot borrow from DFRD.

If the answer to ANY of the above is NO, then it does not meet the legal definition of a Superannuation Income Stream Benefit (SISB) and is subject to more generous tax treatment.

So, where does Retrospective Legislation come in?

By 29 May 2018, the two MSBS cases had been heard, arguments by Veterans and the ATO were completed and no further submissions were required. A date for resumption to hear the AAT decision was to be decided after the DFRDB case had been heard on 1 June 2018. DFRDB veteran Wayne Douglas was represented by Senior Counsel and solicitor Daniel Paratore from Cleary Hoare (DFWAQ Honorary Legal Advisors.)

The ATO Senior Counsel was countering the Veteran argument that on medical review, the Veteran can be reclassified to a different CLASS. As a result payments can go up and down and stop altogether. Therefore the payments did not meet the SISR 1.06 standard that the payments were fixed in a year only varying by the CPI. The ATO argument was that the Veteran medically discharged was entitled for a lifetime to an Invalidation Benefit which were unchanged year on year except for CPI increases which was allowed for in the Regulation. While payments received could change after medical review, the Benefits themselves were fixed and so satisfied the SISR standard. This argument required a closer look at the legal definition of Superannuation Income Stream and Superannuation Income Stream Benefit.

Reader, you may appreciate, this entered into a complex legal definition argument, beyond the ken of most mortals. However the legal brains dug and delved, and during this process, it was discovered that the key definitions of Superannuation Income Stream and Superannuation Income Stream Benefit were missing in action in a different set of regulations. These were the Income Tax Assessment Regulations (ITAR) 1997 and these regulations underpinned other related regulations, including the SISR.

The Judge's Concern About Retrospective Law Changes

The absence of these definitions meant that the total ATO argument (obscure as it was) was, as Justice Logan stated, "fatally flawed". It not only adversely affected the ATO counter arguments with DFRDB, but also MSBS. ATO Senior Counsel agreed it was a fatal flaw. At this stage Justice Logan decided to advise the other two Veterans of the situation and how it would affect their cases. Peter Burns was present in the Hearing and was officially informed and decided to seek legal advice from Wayne Douglas' solicitors. (Peter had previously been representing himself). The ATO Senior Counsel requested a lengthy adjournment in order to consult with the ATO. It was here that Justice Logan expressed reluctance to grant a lengthy adjournment as he was concerned the ATO might attempt to change the law retrospectively to "fix" the "fatal flaw" in the ATO case to adversely affect the Veterans.

The hearings were adjourned to Wednesday 12 December 2018 by which time the ATO was to advise the results of ATO consultation on how they intended to proceed.

Retrospective Law Changes Introduced

On Friday 7 December, the Australian Government Solicitor advised the veterans that changes to the ITAR (1997) backdated (i.e. made retrospective) to 2007 had been published by the Assistant Treasurer (Stuart Robert) earlier that day and would apply to the veterans' cases. The AGS suggested the Hearings scheduled for 12 December by vacated to a later date.

Changes to Regulations, such as these, are made by Executive Order. The Regulations are presented by the minister to the Governor General for signature. They are then tabled in both Houses of Parliament and become law from the date of tabling unless a Disallowance Motion is raised in either house, is debated, and is passed by either House. There are a defined number of sitting days in which a Disallowance Motion must be passed for the Regulation to be disallowed.

- The Regulations were tabled as parliament was rising for the Christmas recess on Friday 7 December, so drew no attention.
- They were tabled at the last possible time for them to apply to the Veteran cases scheduled to resume on the following Wednesday 12 December.

On 12 December, the Hearings resumed under Justice Logan. At the hearing, Senior Counsel for the ATO denied all knowledge of retrospective law changes. The Australian Government Solicitor (AGS) also indicated to the court that they had no prior knowledge of the changes. The ATO was directed to provide a full briefing to the Veterans on the implications of the change.

Final submissions are now in. A decision on the Veteran cases is now expected September/October 2019.

Lobbying for the Regulation to be Withdrawn

The DFWA Honorary Legal Advisors met with Assistant Treasurer Stuart Robert early in February to apprise him of the Veteran situation and urge him to withdraw the legislation which he acknowledged was in his power. Several aspects were raised with him:

- Justice Logan had expressed concern that the ATO might try to introduce retrospective changes to the law to fix the ATO case in the middle of an unfinished Hearing. Mr Robert was obviously unaware of this fact and requested a transcript.
- The Explanatory Statement to the Regulation Changes, tabled by Mr Robert to inform parliament about the changes claims, "The Regulations were released for public consultation from 22 October 2018 to 2 November 2018", however:
 - The public record indicates release for public consultation was made for all the other Regulations tabled in the same bundle, but there is no record of public consultation of the Regulations affecting the Veteran cases before the courts.
 - The Counsel for the ATO in court advised the Court that they had no prior knowledge of the changes affecting the case until 7

Continued overpage

- December,
- The AGS who notified the Court of the changes advised the Court that they had no prior knowledge of the changes affecting the case until just before tabling.
 - Given the absence of public record and the statements of ATO counsel and the AGS, the the claim of public consultation is open to question.
 - The merit or otherwise of the particular changes is an issue which can be argued separately and is not the point of this representation.
 - We considered introducing retrospective changes to the law applying to cases currently before the courts, with no public consultation, does not pass any test of fairness. It is reprehensible, more so in that it deliberately targets disabled veterans.
 - Withdrawal of the unfair retrospective aspects of this legislation affecting the current cases is the simple and honourable solution. It avoids the matters becoming party political, being raised as a Disallowance Motions in Parliament before Parliament rises, and distracting from important policy debates in the next few months.(Election).

Mr Robert stated he would review the situation and reply in about 2 weeks. DFWA National President also wrote to Mr Robert raising similar questions and urging withdrawal of the legislation.

After prompting, Mr Robert replied two months later stating changes were “normal” and “the assertion the amendment was made for the purpose specifically disadvantaging any ex-Servicemen is simply not true.”

There was no mention of lack of claimed public consultation, the concern expressed by the Judge, or any acknowledgement the changes were introduced in response to the Veterans’ cases.

Media Campaign

Apart from the points made to Mr Robert, it is worthy of note that:

- the Explanatory Statement accompanying the Media Release hides the relevant change amongst innocuous changes to four other different Regulations and refers to the Miscellaneous changes as a tidy up exercise, which in the main they were, however;
- For retrospective changes to other regulations, it makes statement that the commencement “does not affect a relevant person’s rights so as to disadvantage the person, or impose a relevant liability on that person.”
- No such statement is made (nor could it be) regarding retrospective changes affecting the veterans. Instead “The retrospective nature of the application ensures that the meaning of superannuation income stream benefits operates as intended from 2007, when significant reforms to simplify the superannuation system commenced. The intention of the existing provisions is clear and taxpayers have been applying the provisions as intended.” This is pure spin.
- Documents obtained under Freedom of Information legislation reveal dozens of interactions between the ATO and Treasury addressing the problem that arose from the veteran AAT case and culminated in the ATO and Treasury congratulating themselves on a job well done.
- The tabling of the changes on the last sitting day of Parliament

precluded the likelihood of debate than if it had occurred earlier when it could be debated. The day was also the last sitting date that it could be tabled so that it had to apply to the Veterans’ hearings on 12 December.

- And yet Mr Robert claims,” the assertion the amendment was made for the purpose specifically disadvantaging any ex-Servicemen is simply not true.”

As result of this, DFWA consulted with each of the Veterans concerned regarding a media campaign against the introduction of retrospective legislation. All agreed and a Media Campaign was launched in early May. As result of this, the issue was picked up by the ABC and featured in the 7-30 Report in early June. Further action is likely with the new Parliament as there may still be time for a Disallowance to be moved and debated.

Any veteran currently receiving Invalidity Benefits from DFRDB, MSBS or ADF Cover is probably being taxed the same way as the Veterans whose cases are before the AAT. As the AAT cases will set a precedent, in event of as Veteran win, you will be able to appeal and have your past tax treated the same way. However, it is possible that the government may introduce further legislation to restrict this to those veterans who already had an appeal against the ATO current assessment when the decision was made. It is strongly recommended that you consult your Accountant and register an appeal asap.

DFWA Qld was initially involved and introduced one of the veterans covered by DFRDB, Wayne Douglas, to our Honorary Solicitors who are taxation specialists. The other veterans were covered by MSBS.

¹ CSC Factsheet

² SISR 1.06. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2019C00094>

¹ CSC Factsheet

² SISR 1.06. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/Details/F2019C00094>

HIGHER DFRDB SUPERANNUATION PENSION INCREASE !

The latest DFRDB superannuation pension increase that took effect on 4 July 2019, for those aged over 55, was 1.0%.

This compares to the CPI rate of just 0.5% and which will be applied to other Government superannuation schemes such as PSS etc, and also to DFRDB recipients under the age of 55.

This is a direct result of the campaign waged by DFWA over many years and which in 2014 saw the Government agree to applying the higher of CPI or wages growth, to those DFRDB recipients aged over 55.

Despite this limited victory, the battle continues to extend this arrangement to ALL military superannuation schemes and without the age restriction.



SENATE INQUIRY

INTO THE USE OF QUINOLINE ANTI-MALARIAL DRUGS MEFLOQUINE AND TAFENOQUINE IN THE ADF

The Senate Committee Inquiry was tabled in Parliament in March 2019 together with the Government Response to the recommendations. The following is a summary of the findings.

A common theme of those who made submissions was that on presenting to a GP with various symptoms and being referred to multiple specialists they were diagnosed with PTSD. However individuals and advocates claim it was their exposure, in most cases, over 18 years ago to the antimalarial drugs mefloquine and tafenoquine which had resulted to their current symptoms and some of them are being misdiagnosed with PTSD.

The first issue from the evidence is whether the symptoms being experienced now by individuals can be causally related to prior antimalarial drug use and that this resulted in “mefloquine poisoning” or an acquired brain injury.

The committee pointed out that it was not comprised of medical experts but took into account prevailing medical evidence. This shows that the incidence of long term or persistent neuropsychiatric adverse reactions to mefloquine are very rare. The committee took confidence that Australia’s independent medical bodies have looked at the claim of acquired brain injury from the use of mefloquine and

was informed that this is not backed by definitive evidence.

The committee noted that tafenoquine, which was not an approved drug at the time of the ADF trials was approved in 2018 by the US Food and Drug Administration and the Australian Therapeutic Goods Administration.

However the committee did not doubt that the symptoms being experienced by individuals are real and regardless of the cause or causes, these veterans are unwell and should receive the assistance to which they are entitled.

The committee noted that this is not a different view to that stressed by Defence and DVA, that is that regardless of the cause of the symptoms help is available.

The committee therefore focussed to review processes to ensure that any current and past ADF members receive appropriate treatment and support they need. Some individuals in their submissions called for more treatment available for neurocognitive issues and the committee was pleased to hear that a neurocognitive

Continued overpage

program was being developed by DVA .

It noted with concern that for some individuals having their symptoms recognised as resulting from mefloquine or tafenoquine appeared to be of overriding importance and that this may keep some of them from seeking available treatment.

Conduct of the studies

The second area considered was the conduct of the drug trials undertaken by Defence in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Individuals who blame mefloquine or tafenoquine for their current symptoms believe that the trials should not have taken place and were unethical. The committee noted that these allegations have been investigated independently outside the military chain of command. The committee acknowledged that the findings by the Inspector-General of the ADF have not been accepted by some veterans but determined that it was not the role of the committee to repeat or reopen the IGADF investigation.

However the committee shared the IGADF and witnesses' concerns about how to ensure ADF members are able to provide informed consent when agreeing to participate in such trials in the military environment.

The committee did not believe that all medical research using members of the ADF should be prohibited. This is because research is essential for advancing medical care and force protection measures and the ADF has a duty of care to protect and maintain the health of its personnel.

The committee commended the work of the ADF Malaria and Infectious Disease Institute (formerly the AMI) and recognised the importance of its research in protecting ADF members and the international community more broadly.

Moving Forward

The committee believed that the focus of the recommendations for this inquiry should be on the common ground of making sure that individuals are able to access the assistance and support they need and are entitled to receive. It was of concern to the committee that despite the efforts made to date, the message that assistance is available is not being received by many veterans. It viewed as being positive that DVA is actively taking steps to address concerns and that DVA has acknowledged that individuals need tailored, wrap around assistance and that this needs to include support from a wide range of specialists to address their complex needs.

The committee was pleased to note that DVA and Defence had jointly commissioned a study by the University of Queensland looking at the self-reported health of ADF personnel using antimalarials on deployment and that this study was due to be completed in late 2018. The committee also commended the recent consultation forums undertaken by DVA and other initiatives to enhance collaboration between DVA and the veteran community.

Recommendations

The Committee made 14 recommendations resulting from the Inquiry and all of those have been accepted by Government.

They included:

1. That the terms of reference of Defence and DVA Human Research Ethics committees be updated to explicitly include considerations that prospective research participants may be vulnerable to perceived coercion to participate.
2. That all members of the ADF who are invited to participate in medical research have access to a confidential conversation with an independent participant advocate prior to consenting to participate.
3. That DVA expedite their investigation on antimalarial claims lodged since September 2016 and continue to offer individuals assistance to lodge their claims and facilitate access to an advocate if required.
4. That DVA continue to provide ongoing training, information and support for officers working in the Complex Case team
5. That DVA in addition to the existing program of consultation forums ensure matters raised by attendees and families are followed up.
6. That DVA make the material provided at the consultation sessions available online.
7. That Defence attend the DVA consultation forums to maintain their knowledge of the issues raised.
8. That DVA undertake a targeted awareness raising campaign in conjunction with the ESOs and veterans advocates to increase veterans' awareness of the non-liability pathway.
9. That DVA and Defence in collaboration with the RACGP and other health professionals review and update the clinical guidelines developed in 2016 to recognize the complex conditions with which some veterans may present.
10. That DVA consult with the RACGP to assess whether General Practitioner briefings like the one that occurred in Townsville in 2016 would be beneficial in other areas.
11. That DVA review the University of Queensland research findings due in late 2018.
12. That DVA prioritise the development of the Neurocognitive Health Program.
13. That the pilot program undertaken as part of the Neurocognitive Health Program be formally evaluated and that the report made publicly available.
14. That following the evaluation of the Program a collaborative working group be established to consider the outcomes of the pilot and if supported how best to roll out and promote the program.



HMAS ANZAC III

NAVAL GUN SUPPORT HMAS ANZAC 2002-2003

By Dennis J Weatherall JP TM AFAITT(L) LSM
Volunteer Researcher, Naval Historical Society of Australia

It took 31 years for the RAN to go to war and use a destroyer as a gun platform. HMAS BRISBANE was the last DDG to serve on the Vietnam Gun Line and its last NGS mission occurred in September 1971.

HMAS ANZAC departed Fleet Base West for her deployment to the Gulf on 28th October 2002. She was to be the first RAN destroyer since the Vietnam conflict to be used for the duty she was designed, Naval Gun Support (NGS).

ANZAC was under the command of Captain Peter G. Lockwood, RAN, later to become Commodore P.G. Lockwood DSC, CSC, RAN now retired. Commodore Lockwood has been good enough to share his unclassified paperwork with the author.

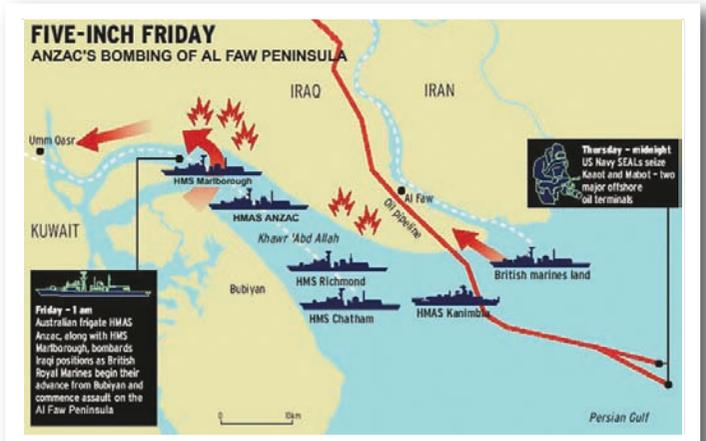
His Supply officer, CMDR Stuart Wheeler RAN, wrote a paper titled "Five Inch Friday". This paper was the only article other than the Captain's post operation report which is still classified. In future this report may become general reading material so there is little information on which to base this paper in open source.

ANZAC was fitted with the following armament:

- Single 5 inch 54 calibre (127mm)
- Two Raphael Typhoon 12.7mm

- Phalanx 20mm close-in-weapons system
- Eight Harpoon Surface-to-surface missiles
- Mk. 41 vertical launch system – Sea Sparrow and evolved Sea Sparrow
- Two triple Mk 32 torpedo launchers
- Various 12.7mm Browning and small arms

ANZAC third deployment to the Persian Gulf took her through to May 2003, as part of Operation Falconer. On 21st March, ANZAC was



called on to support a Royal Marine assault on the “Al Faw” Peninsula. The Royal Marine’s mission was to capture the peninsula before the Iraq forces could sabotage the oil terminals.

On 19th March, US Navy Seals and Polish GROM forces commenced a sea and air assault under the command of Naval Special Warfare Task Group (CTG 561). ANZAC stood by to extract forces if required. The US Navy Seals secured both oil terminals. This action was followed by a wave of “Tomahawk” land attack missiles. Over 800 missiles were delivered in the first 24 hours from 35 allied warships and submarines stationed in the Gulf.

On 20th March, Royal Navy ships Marlborough (Type 23), Chatham (Type 22) and Richmond (Type 23) were detached for bombardment duties.

The Royal Marines were faced by resistance from the Iraq Forces and called for immediate NGS to engage Iraq Command Posts. ANZAC received the first call-for-fire at 05:58. ANZAC fired six ranging salvos followed by a five-round fire-for-effect with the salvos hitting bunkers and artillery positions. ANZAC answered another call-for-fire destroying a T59 artillery piece in a fire mission of just three rounds. It was extremely accurate fire and at near maximum range.

“Naval Gunfire Support was used to encourage capitulation with success on a number of occasions. It was employed to suppress enemy activity at short notice, to shatter confidence and neutralise fixed protective gun positions. The Battery Commander reported “success on the Al Faw was due to the aggressive use of indirect fire support, especially the swift response to NGS ships which had a huge impact on the ground and shattered the enemy’s will to fight.” A total of 17 fire missions were executed with just 155 rounds of 5 inch and 4.5 inch ammunition being expended”. Vice Admiral Peter Jones: *“The Maritime Campaign in Iraq”.*

ANZAC completed seven fire missions over a period of three days. The ship received a Meritorious Unit Citation on 27th November for her service during this deployment. In March 2010, ANZAC was awarded the battle honours “Persian Gulf 2001-03” and “Iraq 2003”.

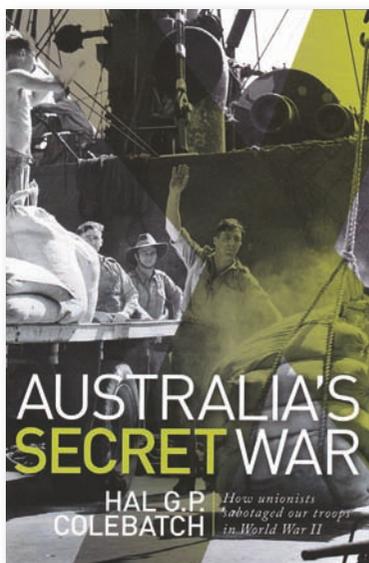
References:

- Semaphore newsletter of the Sea Power Centre Australia Issue # 6, August 2003
- Maritime Campaign in Iraq, Vice Admiral Peter Jones AO DSC RAN Rtd.
- Battle of Al Faw (2003) – 3 Commando Brigade, Royal Marines
- The War in Iraq – ADF Operations in the Middle East 2003, Australian Ministry of Defence – paper
- Five Inch Friday – paper by CMDR Stuart Wheeler RAN, HMAS ANZAC Supply Officer
- HMAS ANZAC – Ship’s general details RAN ships web page



HMS Marlborough, Duke class, Type 23 Guided Missile Frigate

BOOK REVIEW: Australia’s Secret War



Hal Colebatch’s book, Australia’s Secret War, tells the shocking, true, but until now largely suppressed and hidden story of the war waged from 1939 to 1945 by a number of key Australian trade unions against their own society and against the men and women of their own country’s fighting forces at the time of its gravest peril. His conclusions are based on a broad range of sources, from letters and first-person interviews between the author and ex-servicemen to official and unofficial documents from the archives of World War II.

Between 1939 and 1945 virtually every major Australian warship, including at different times its entire force of cruisers, was targeted by strikes, go-slows and sabotage. Australian soldiers operating in New Guinea and the Pacific Islands went without food, radio equipment and munitions, and Australian warships sailed to and from combat zones without ammunition, because of strikes at home. Planned rescue missions for Australian prisoners-of-war in Borneo were abandoned because wharf strikes left rescuers without heavy weapons. Officers had to restrain Australian and American troops from killing striking trade unionists

A must read !



Cockatoo Rise Retreat Memorial

Cockatoo Rise War Veterans Retreat inc

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Cockatoo Rise Retreat is a not for profit facility run by Ex Vietnam Veteran Greg and Ann Carter, for serving & ex serving defence personal to enjoy an environment that is safe, secure and peaceful. A place where vets and their partners can share time with each other and their mates. The use of the facility is by donation.

NAME PARTNER

ORGANISATION OR BUSINESS NAME

POSTAL ADDRESS

EMAIL ADDRESS

PHONE SERVED YES NO

IF SERVED NO THEATRE

FEE PER PERSON \$10 YEARLY \$100 LIFETIME

BUSINESS OR ORGANISATION \$50 YEARLY \$500 LIFETIME

Contact Greg: Phone - 0409 418 332 Cockatoo Rise War Retreat inc, PO Box 1775 Bairnsdale 3875

www.cockatooriseretreat.com.au Email: cockatoorise@wideband.net.au

Banking details, Bendigo Bank BSB: 633 000 Acc No: 158212878

Name: Cockatoo Rise War Veterans Retreat inc

ANYBODY CAN JOIN DEFENCE OR PUBLIC

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 573, Stirling SA 5152
(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 124 185 Account No: 10 480 398

Or enclose Cheque/Money Order: \$

Signature:

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



BRANCH REPORTS Around Australia

NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH

Patron: TBA
 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: nsbranch@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	CULBURRA BEACH NSW 2540 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 members who have recently joined the NSW Branch:

Mr E C Easterbrook, Mr D Harding, Mrs J Leonard, Mr G Maxwell.

VALE

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

WGCDR C J Casey, Mrs EV Gorman, Mrs A Lance, GPCAPT D Melvin, Mrs PA Smythe.

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*.

AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE TO ACT BRANCH MEMBERS FROM THE BRANCH PRESIDENT REGARDING THE FUTURE OF THE BRANCH

The ACT Branch Committee recently, but reluctantly, agreed to consider un-incorporating the ACT Branch due to falling membership and lack of Committee membership. This would involve the un-incorporation of the Branch as a registered Association in the ACT, and free the Branch from formal reporting and governance requirements.

Members ought not be concerned by this proposed course of action.

- Following un-incorporation there will continue to be an ACT DFWA presence that will continue to provide support to local activities eg to the Defence Widows Group, welfare activities, our advocates, etc.
- Current ACT Branch Members will continue their membership of the Association, and be identified on the membership roll as being a member of an (unincorporated) ACT Branch. They will be formally registered as a member of an incorporated body, be it another Branch (NSW?) or National.

The Committee and DFWA National are currently considering the mechanics of how un-incorporation of a Branch will affect the Association as a whole. One option being considered is for DFWA National to take over the membership responsibilities of current ACT Branch members, or having members transferred (for administrative purposes only) to another Branch.

The ACT Branch Constitution provides guidance on closure arrangements, and these will need to be followed. The Constitution states that action to dissolve the Branch shall only be taken on a poll of members. The proposal shall be confirmed if two-thirds of those voting approve of it, and two months' notice has to be given of the intention to hold such a poll.

This matter is continuing to be given close consideration and Branch members will be updated at the next AGM and in the next *Camaraderie*. Members wishing further information are invited to contact the Branch President for further information, and to attend the AGM for further updates. The AGM will be held at 7.30pm on Monday 11 November at The Burns Club, Kambah.

Finally, members are also advised that similar actions are being considered by some other Branches. Ultimately the Association as a whole must move to being a national body and be managed as such. That would not preclude local activities being supported, be it on a State or regional basis.

MEMBERSHIP

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 was recently held (see details in this magazine) ... thank you for your support and generosity in supporting this single fund raising activity for the Association.

AGM

The next AGM will be held at 7.30pm on 11 November 2019 at The Burns Club, Kambah

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 also welcome members 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 August at The Burns Club, Kambah.

DEFENCE WIDOWS GROUP

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 12 August and 14 October. If you would like to attend any of the above events, please leave a message on 6265 9776.

QUEENSLAND BRANCH

President:	John Lewis
Exec Vice President:	Robert Shortridge
VP – South Queensland:	Pat Jackman
VP – Sunshine Coast:	Win Fowles
VP – Townsville:	Ray Martin
VP- Cairns:	John Wilson
Secretary:	Vacant
Treasurer:	Walter Buldo
Membership:	Vacant (Walter Buldo acting)
Communications Officer:	Deb Keir
Administration Officer:	Sharyn Hughes
IT/Project Officer:	Chris Lewis
Advocates:	Wally Buldo, Clem Russell
Welfare/Funerals:	Harry Mee, Pearl Mee
Hon Solicitors:	Cleary Hoare
Office Address:	RUSI Building, Victoria Barracks, Petrie Terrace, BRISBANE.
Postal Address:	Victoria Barracks Brisbane ENOGGERA QLD 4051
Telephone:	(07) 3233 4480
E-mail:	qldbranch@dfwa.org.au
Office Hours:	Tue – Wed: 1000 to 1400 hrs Fridays: 0900 to 1100 hrs

WELFARE AND ADVOCACY SUPPORT

Well done to Wally Buldo for completing his “Recognition of Prior Learning” (RPL) Advocate Level 2 module with the Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP). Advocates, Wal and Clem Russell, continue to provide Compensation Level 2 (Pension Claim) support and Compensation Level 3 (Veteran Review Board) support. Wal provides support from the DFWA office in Victoria Barracks (free city parking) or in some cases, at locations convenient to claimants. Clem provides support from Gallipoli Barracks at Enoggera and other places of mutual convenience. Harry and Pearl continue to provide welfare visits at home, hospitals and aged care facilities and conduct Poppy Services.

COMMITTEE AND ADMINISTRATION

We welcome John Wilson to a newly created position of Vice President – Cairns. John recently moved to God’s Own Country from South Australia where he was instrumental in the re-establishment of the DFWA South Australia Branch. This means DFWA representation in North Queensland is now shared with Ray Martin as Vice President – Townsville. While the number of financial members up north is not large at present, there is a significant ADF presence, about 20% of whom are “virtual members”, i.e., on our “National Office books” for communication purposes. The object of DFWA is to foster the best interests and welfare of members of the ADF and their families in any matter likely to affect them during or after their period of service. The VPs have a vital role in representing the DFWA object to the public, media and politicians in our regions.

We continue to appeal to members available to assist with committee positions. The Secretary and Membership positions are still vacant meaning the work is shared around, administration takes longer and sometimes things fall between the tracks. Qld membership is approx. 519 of whom 209 are Life Members.

Telephone. We are in the process of changing the Office Answering Machine to cloud based message service. This auto-forwards recording of the voice message received by DFWAQ telephone when office not manned, via email to a committee member. This should provide a faster response to telephone calls.

DFWAQ ACTIVITIES

Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation Visit. In February, DFWAQ hosted an ESO meeting with the CEO of the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation, Peter Carrigy-Ryan and David Wilton the Senior Manager Defence Liaison at our office at Victoria Barracks. The meeting was attended by Kel Ryan, DFWA National President and ADSO Spokesman as well as several representatives from other Qld ADSO members and the RSL. Several thorny issues were discussed and accepted for further investigation. The meeting was part of a regular programme of bi-annual meetings between DFWA and CSC.

Retrospective Law Change Targetted at Invalided Veterans in Middle of AAT Hearing. DFWAQ was responsible for the DFWA National media campaign against the retrospective legislation introduced into parliament and impacted on the appeal “the Veterans Vs the Commissioner of Taxation” concerning the taxation of DFRDB and MSBS Invalidity Benefits. This legislation was backdated to 2007 and was introduced in the middle of the AAT Hearing to overcome a flaw in the ATO defence

against the veterans' appeal. While the campaign did not attract much political attention in the lead up to the election, it did result in the story on the ABC's 7-30 Report on 7 May. We expect further attention when Parliament resumes.

Townsville. Ray Martin, VP Townsville, attended launch of Labor Veteran policy in Townsville along with other ESO representatives and LTGEN (rtd) John Caligari. Launch included viewing of the The Oasis – the Townsville Veterans Hub. Ray is the project manager of OPERATION COMPASS, one of the federally-funded suicide prevention trials. With OP COMPASS, the focus is on veterans. Ray visited Brisbane in April and updated the Qld Committee on both projects and his activities.

Cairns and Sunshine Coast. Win Fowles, VP Sunshine Coast lobbied candidates of all parties on veteran issues in the lead up to the election. John Wilson also engaged candidates in the Cairns areas regarding ADSO objectives and DFWA activities.

Qld Government. Rob Shortridge (Exec VP) continues involvement with Qld state government issues through the Qld Veterans' Advisory Council and has been involved in the Qld Government's Veteran Portal, pursuing adoption of a State Veterans' Charter (to complement the Australian covenant), and achievement of permanent staffing of a veteran "cell" to support the Assistant Minister who attends the Veterans Council along with other federal and state veteran ministers.

SE Qld. Pat Jackman (SQ – VP), continues to pursue the establishment of Veteran Liaison Officers in public hospitals, the same as exists in private hospitals with DVA contracts and has been responsible for organising our return to attending the Defence Transition Seminars. This lapsed after we needed replanning to adapt to the new one-day format. Along with Rob Shortridge, Pat also represented DFWAQ at the annual Anzac Day Commemoration Committee meeting. This committee runs the Brisbane Anzac Day Dawn Service, the youth service in the previous week and provides a school education service and grants.

Commemorations. DFWAQ was represented at the Brisbane Dawn Service by Pat Jackman, the Nerang service by Harry and Pearl Mee and the RSL Indigenous Veterans' Ceremony by Wally Buldo.

Productivity Commission into Veteran Issues. As result of DFWAQ evidence at the Brisbane Hearings and the DFWA response (produced by John Lewis and Rob Shortridge) to the Productivity Commission (PC) Draft report into veteran issues, DFWAQ were asked to attend a PC workshop to explore further the points we raised concerning advocacy in the future, the future organisation of a "DVA" and better integration between DVA and DVA concerning management of DFRDB, MSBS and ADF Cover Invalidity Benefits by CSC and the Incapacity benefits provided under VEA, DRCA and MRCA legislation administered by DVA. Other attendees were Kel Ryan and ADSO representative for advocacy Noel Mc Laughlin, plus about 5 from the PC.

Royal Commission (RC) into Aged Care. DFWAQ requested RSLQ to fund/resource a combined Qld ESO input into the RC, based on gathering data from ESO welfare Officers and Members. DFWAQ did not have the resources for this task. RSLQ advised that they have no expertise in this area and passed the request to Bolton-Clarke

(previously RSL Care), ie Service Providers. We discussed the issue with Bolton Clarke and also gave a joint presentation at the RSL/Legacy ESO Information Forum on 28 May 2019. We are awaiting advice from Bolton-Clarke regarding a outcome of a proposed survey of ESO welfare officers and members concerning aged care, possibly conducted by the Bolton-Clarke Research Institute.

QLD BRANCH RESTRUCTURE

We are continuing to work towards a Branch restructuring. Due to other workloads, PC and AAT cases, progress in Qld has been delayed, however we are attempting to co-ordinate with ACT Branch in resolving issues on National Database requirements and central membership management and governance.

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
Secretary	David Lyas OAM
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	Vacant
Contact:	0432 379 278 or email sapresident@dfwa.org.au

FROM THE BRANCH PRESIDENT

I have just returned from Canberra after attending our NATEX conference where all the State Presidents attended. Matters discussed were :

- Military Superannuation {DFRDB/ MSBS/Life Tables}
- Veterans Disability Payments;
- Military Covenant, and
- DVA Culture Change.

The Ombudsman will be investigating the DRFDB matters as announced by the Minister of Veterans Affairs. From his first investigation which appears to skip over the main points e.g. Commutation and life tables, there will be a follow up that will cover these areas. National along with ADSO and other interested parties will prosecute the matter.

The Military Covenant appears to have passed all the hurdles and should be here this year.

Regarding the DVA issue we have decided that DVA should remain as the organisation that looks after veterans and their families, and we will suggest some cultural changes. There were a number of other issues discussed regarding how to improve our overall performance and our standing within the ESO community.

On the 19 March our Secretary attended a meeting at the Plympton Glenelg RSL Sub-Branch with other interested representatives from a consortium of 11 ESOs. They have had a very encouraging conversation

with the State Government regarding the future of the Daw Park Repatriation Hospital. A number of initiatives were discussed and considered for further dialogue with the State Government.

The group met again in early May at the Member for Boothby, Nicole Flint's office where further discussions were held. The State Government is very keen to utilise the Repatriation Hospital for the establishment of a Repat Veterans Hub amongst other objectives and appear to be happy with the suggestions being made by the consortium. Further discussions are planned in the near future

Laurie Lewis announced his resignation from our committee to take on another roll. Laurie is well known in the ESO community and our loss is their gain, but should I want to know something important he will be on hand. Thanks Laurie for your support and knowledge over the years.

Our branch is still in need of a few more younger members as our older ones are ready to hand over their responsibilities. We will be looking for a Treasurer come AGM. Most of the other branches are also finding it hard to recruit young members either serving, veterans, their wives or partners.

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

DFWA (VIC) ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On 15 May 2019 the Branch Annual General Meeting (AGM) occurred in conjunction with the quarterly Executive Committee Meeting. Nine members attended the meeting and 54 proxies were received. The business of the AGM was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Branch Constitution. Minutes of the AGM are included in the Victorian Branch Information Supplement accompanying this edition of Camaraderie.

At the AGM the previous Executive Committee was re-elected unopposed. Two additional members - John Scully and Jeff Swain - were also elected to the Executive Committee. This was very welcome as it guarantees that a quorum will be available for all Executive Committee meetings in 2019/2020.

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 February and

May 2019

- Victorian Branch Executive Committee meetings in February and May 2019
- Victorian Branch Annual General Meeting in May 2019
- DFWA National Executive Meeting in March 2019 (Note: this was conducted as a virtual meeting using ZOOM meeting software. The meeting was organised and co-ordinated by DFWA Queensland and was assessed by participants as a success in both progressing the business of the national association and keeping meeting costs to a minimum. Well done Queensland)
- DFWA National Executive Meeting in Canberra on 3 & 4 June 2019
- Joint DVA /Victorian Government Veterans welfare information session on 13 June 2019

MEMBERSHIP

As at the Branch AGM there were 424 financial members in the Victorian Branch with an additional 12 members yet to pay their annual subscription fees. In the twelve months since the 2018 AGM membership has declined by eleven percent for annual members and seven percent for Life members.

VALE

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

Mr B.J. Nicholls; Mrs A. Kane; LEUT B. Terry; Mr R. Howes; Mrs A. Munro; Mrs M. Purcell; Mr D. Martini.

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 finances continue to remain in a reasonable position. The end of year account balance showed a slight income reduction against the previous year's achievements. This reduction was not unexpected as the Branch receives the majority of its income from annual membership fees and donations and any decline in membership numbers (as noted earlier in this report) has a direct impact on Branch revenue.

DFWA RAFFLE

The Branch rejoices in the achievement of Victorian members in this year's DFWA raffle with one member gaining the First Prize of travel to the value of \$5000 and two Victorian members gaining consolation prizes to the value of \$150.

DIARY DATES

The remaining Branch Executive Committee meetings for 2019 are scheduled for Wednesday 14 August and Wednesday 27 November 2019 at the Mail Exchange Hotel, corner Bourke and Spencer Streets, Melbourne.

DFWA (Vic) members are most welcome to attend Executive Committee meetings. 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 meeting documents are available for all attendees.

Stephen Turner - Commander RAN (Rtd)
President, DFWA (Vic)

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: wabranch@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 their members with their copy of Camaraderie.

VALE

It is with deep sadness we note the passing of Edward Moore, Robert Winzar and John O'Shea.

AGM

The AGM will take place at RAAFA Bull Creek at 1400 on Wednesday 4th September. Despite the new building work at RAAFA, there is still plenty of parking, and the underground car park is still open. There will be a guest speaker and free refreshment will be provided after the AGM. There is a notice about all this inside your copy of Camaraderie.

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 on request.

You can also make a credit card donation:

Go to dfwa.org.au/donate-or-sponsor and follow the link. A receipt will of course be issued !



MEETING WITH THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL

At the end of May, the Governor-General, Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC visited Perth on a farewell tour and invited three DFWA members to morning tea. Pictured are: L-R: Mark Wainwright, Richard Usher, Sir Peter and Shirly Mooney

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Please take a note of the date - Thursday 12th December at RAAFA Bull Creek. (Note the comment about parking above). An invitation will be posted to all members closer to the event.

ANNUAL RAFFLE

Congratulations to Neville Clark for winning one of the consolation prizes in this year's raffle. Thank you to every member who purchased a ticket, and in doing so financially supported the Branch. Without your assistance we could not continue to do the work we do.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

Invoices were recently posted to those members who pay their membership fees annually. Many thanks to those who have already renewed their membership and a big thank you to everyone who has added a small donation towards the Branch funds.

EMAIL

If you have recently got or updated your email address, don't forget to let our office know to keep our records correct. We occasionally send out notices via email. WA Branch email address is: wabranch@dfwa.org.au



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