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CAMARADERIE

First Edition 2020

VOL. 51 NO. 1

**WOMEN IN THE ADF
– A REPECHAGE !**

UPDATE ON
BUTTERWORTH
VETERANS

**AUSSIE INNOVATIONS
IN WWI**

DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

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THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

Vol. 51. No. 1 First Edition 2020



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 11 June 2020.

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

Australians are still scarred by the events of the past few months when mother nature unleashed its fury far and wide. The ADF support was pivotal and the Association thanks all those members of the ADF who provided such valuable assistance. No single cover photo can reflect the enormity of the support provided.

Les Bienkiewicz

CONTENTS

FIRST EDITION 2020

Contact Details	4
From the President's Pen	5
National Office Roundup	6
Women in the Australian Defence Force	8
Still Soldiering on in Mufti	10
Meet the New Australian War Memorial Director	11
A New Approach to Supporting the Financial Wellbeing of Australia's Veteran Community	12
Letters to the Editor	13
Veterans to be Counted on 2021 Census	15
Australian Innovations in WWI	16
What about the Reservists?	19
Government Continues to Deceive, Dud and Deny Butterworth	20
Veterans Rightful Recognition of their Service	
Is There a Pattern Here?	21
The DVA White Card for use with Cancer	23
The Bloody Beachheads	24
Appointment of the Independent Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention; and a Families Advocate	25
DFWA Shop Order Form	26
Application to Join or Renew	28
Branch Reports	30
Donation Slip	34

FRONT COVER

The ADF provided extensive support to State and Territory agencies and local communities under Operation Bushfire Assist 19-20. Three Joint Task Forces were established to facilitate ADF support to emergency services in Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia.

In the cover photo, Australian Army Reservists supporting Operation Bushfire Assist 19-20 worked with the Rotary Club of Corryong to remove 31km of bushfire affected fencing in Corryong, Victoria.

Photo courtesy of Defence Media

DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION



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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



Option B – Is it Evolving?

In the November 2019 edition of Camaraderie, I outlined the situation that DFWA (and other ESOs) face regarding the wicked challenges we have in identifying the future of the organisation. Wicked, yes but if DFWA is to survive and thrive the future must be faced.

We have been here before!

The Association was formed in 1959 as the Regular Defence Force Welfare Association (RDFWA) to address the anomalies and deficiencies in the DFRB Act of 1948. This Act was based on the pension scheme of the pre-WW2 members of the permanent forces i.e. the Staff Corps. The scheme quickly proved to be unworkable and, to use the current terminology, was 'not fit for purpose'. The RDFWA quickly gathered membership from across the then embryonic permanent military forces.

From an initial focus on the DFRB Scheme it quickly became evident to the then leadership that the membership wanted to broaden the brief of the Association. With the RSL focussed on the veterans of the world wars, the needs of the permanent service personnel – especially those without war service - were not being addressed. Concerns such as housing and housing loans, employment assistance, life assurance, widows' pensions, pensions for orphans and removal assistance quickly forced a broadening of the RDFWA's remit.

This should sound familiar to anyone with history in the changing roles of any ESO. Issues and attitudes evolve as the roles of the ADF and the nation's military and diplomatic postures change. Such changes have presented us all with the different issues we are now seeing. Among these are veteran suicide, mefloquine and malarial drugs and their effects, transition and the notion of 'veteran hubs' have only recently arrived on the radar of the ESOs. These and so many other issues must be addressed and in doing so should give life to DFWA and other ESOs that are serious in meeting our Mission Statement. This surely should give an impetus to the DFWA as we ever so slowly alter focus and continue to search for greater relevance to our constituency.

In his report to the 2001 RSL National Congress, President Major General Peter Phillips wrote that:

"It is obvious with diminishing numbers in the ADF and the ex-service community that there are too many associations purporting to represent our interests. In regard to the interests of serving members, the RSL has approached the RDFWA, the Armed Forces Federation and the Defence Reserves Association to consider merging with us. While no positive responses have been received, there is recognition of the desirability of

much closer cooperation or some inevitable merger".

So I ask ..Prophetic words or an opportunity that went nowhere?

We are now on the cusp of a seismic shift in the representation of veterans in Australia. The Vietnam war finished 50 years ago. This along with the more recent conflicts and deployments and the shifting understanding of the term 'veteran' have all forced a mind shift in the nature of veteran representation. ESOs such as DFWA are in a trough with declining membership, searching for meaning yet still duty bound to represent the issues of emerging generations.

Duty bound? DFWA is of the view that our founding fathers saw the needs of the then newly created permanent forces and addressed them to government and the bureaucracy. They did not stand back, criticise and let others do the job. They created an organisation and met the needs of the time. Now, social media is rife with the critics of the efforts of DFWA and other ESOs but short of considered input into the effort necessary to place issues before government. Short also with volunteers stepping forward to take the reins of ESOs and mould them into a paradigm for the future. It is actions that count in this game not well meaning words.

Is it time that DFWA revisited that invitation of 2001 and merged with the RSL? Or is it now opportune that DFWA rebadges itself within the Alliance of Defence Services Organisations (ADSO) and become, along with the RSL and Legacy, the triumvirate to force government to listen and act in the interests of the nation's veterans and their families? Or are there other Option Bs?

I am keen to hear your views.

Kel Ryan

Kel Ryan - National President

Email: president.national@dfwa.org.au Ph: 0418 759 120



NATIONAL OFFICE ROUNDUP (November 2019 - February 2020)



There have been many valid criticisms levied at the Department of Veterans' Affairs, not the least of which included that it had been burdened with a range of organisational, cultural and systemic failings over a long period of time. Some may undoubtedly argue to the contrary but many of them have been identified by numerous official reviews and/or inquiries. Resulting recommendations have been either implemented or are on the way to a fix.

One particular criticism not oft levied is that the rate of change with incumbent Ministers holding down the Veterans' Affairs portfolio is excessive. There had been four in four years until the appointment of the Hon Darren Chester MP. Many have conjectured that 'what chance of stability, consistent policy formulation and time to redress issues only possible by legislation under those circumstances?' The state of recent revolving-door politics at the Federal level has added to the frustrations of many within both the serving and the veterans communities. Stalemate and inaction on a broad policy front has been the inevitable result.

While the 'revolving door' of politics and the inevitable shifting of Ministerial deck chairs between one election cycle to the next is unlikely to pause for long, the last Ministerial shuffle on 6 February 2020 was likely welcome news to the veterans' community. Not only did the Hon Darren Chester MP retain his current Ministerial responsibilities (Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel) but he was promoted into Cabinet itself. Surely a rightful place for the holder of two significant Ministerial portfolio charged with administering not only veterans wellbeing programs but also those of the ADF's personnel. DFWA of course congratulates the Minister on his new Cabinet role.

Veterans' Suicides and Mental Health

There have been many inquiries and studies into the suicide among Veterans and their mental health and wellbeing. The 2016 Senate FADT Committee Inquiry "The Constant Battle: Suicide by Veterans" has become the benchmark or trigger for action by the Government. Out of that Inquiry have been positive initiatives such as a new Veteran Mental Health Strategy and a National Action Plan on Veterans' mental health, wellbeing and suicide prevention.

Sadly, the suicide among Veterans who have transitioned from the ADF continues.

After giving lengthy consideration to a Royal Commission into veteran's suicides, the Prime Minister announced on 6 February 2020, two major steps in the fight against the scourge. The first was the intention to appoint an independent National Commissioner for Defence and Suicide Prevention tasked to investigate cases of suicide not only in the veteran community but also among serving ADF members. The second being the appointment of a Veteran Family Advocate tasked with placing families at the heart of policy and decision-making promoting better health outcomes for Veterans, and thus reducing the risk of suicide. The intent being that both appointees work closely if the scourge is to stop.

While acknowledging that calls for a Royal Commission remain strong, DFWA views the Prime Minister's appointments signalling a new chapter in the care of Veterans and their families who served their nation with honour. The initiatives are positive steps and DFWA supports them.

TPI Veterans Disability Issues

The frustrations of the TPI community to their endlessly stalled claim for a structural increase in compensation for the economic loss component of a TPI/SR veteran to be benchmarked to the tax adjusted minimum wage are palpable. The Productivity Commission and KPMG reports aside, the recommendations of both are yet to be endorsed by the Government, the Tune report (finished on 31 August 2019) is yet to see the light of day.

The Prime Minister himself commissioned the Tune report in early 2019 when he acknowledged that the TPI Federation had a 'compelling case'. Given the Government's continued delay in satisfactorily addressing the claim for fairness, the Federation again wrote to the Prime Minister on 26 January 2020 seeking the Government's advice as to when it would 'correct the erosion in TPI/SR compensation once and for all'.

DFRDB Scheme - Ombudsman's Inquiry Outcomes

Most readers will be aware that during the course of 2019 the Commonwealth Ombudsman self-initiated an inquiry into the administration of the DFRDB scheme following complaints that scheme members had been misled by incorrect advice when given the chance to decide on retiring from the ADF to either receive a defined pension for life, or to take a lump sum that would incur a lower pension for life.

The Ombudsman's report was released on 11 December 2019. In essence, it found that DFRDB recipients were indeed misled

and that there was 'historic maladministration'. While apologies soon followed from both the Defence Secretary and the CDF, and also from the CEO of the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation, no actual financial redress was recommended nor thus far offered by the Government.

DFRDB scheme members wait with anticipation that, perhaps at minimum, the Government should cancel the whole-of-life reduction in Superannuation Pay that commutation imposes once notional life expectancy has been reached. Reparation could be in the form of repaying to members any amounts they may have paid in excess of the original lump sum they received as commutation.

There continues to be injustice in using early 1960s life tables, a factor unfortunately not addressed by the Ombudsman in his inquiry. That despite numerous submissions highlighting the gouging effect that the nearly six decades old tables impose on veterans and their families, including the widows and widowers who have been left behind.

Sponsorship

Before closing, I would like to again acknowledge the very generous and valued support that The Bradford Exchange provides to DFWA. If ever in need of high quality collectable memorabilia for personal use or as a gift that marks commemorative occasions, please head to the company's web site to lodge your order. Deliveries are prompt. Their advertisement can be viewed in the pages of this Camaraderie.

Membership

A reminder to readers of Camaraderie – your membership subscriptions coupled with generous donations are virtually the only sources of income to keep our Association functioning on your behalf. Our voice can only remain strong among decision makers if we have a strong membership base. Thus a plea, please if you are able, even a small donation helps our cause. To all 'Virtual Members', please think about becoming a full time member soon. You will be helping us in a meaningful way to continue our work unabated going into the future.

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 Doctor/ 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.





WOMEN IN THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE

GETTING BEYOND THE ASSUMPTIONS

Angeline Lewis

Editor's Note 1: this article was originally published in *The Strategist* on 29 October 2019. It was provided to us by the author, in response to the article *Women in Combat*, in the last edition of *Camaraderie*. Readers are also advised of further correspondence on this matter in *Letters to Editor*.

Editor's Note 2: 'WPS' or 'women, peace and security' is a security doctrine first promulgated by the United Nations Security Council in 2000, through its Resolution 1325 and subsequent resolutions. The doctrine recognises that men's and women's experience of war can be different, whether they are combatants or civilians. It also recognises that an effective and durable peace requires that the different interests of women, men, girls and boys all be addressed. The doctrine is not only about protecting women from gender-specific effects of war, but understanding the importance of their equal participation in conflict prevention, recovery and post-conflict rebuilding.

The relationship between women's participation in the Australian Defence Force and the concept of women, peace and security in the context of ADF operations isn't yet clearly articulated in capability terms. This discredits it in the eyes of those who object to WPS as an agenda and risks undermining the successful implementation of WPS as a security approach. Articulating the connection would be assisted by further research in two areas: empirically assessing the capability and skills needed to implement WPS, and striking a balance between thematic expertise and country-specific knowledge of gender relations.

The first issue is vexed. While we often hear female participation described as an essential input to achieving WPS

effects, three different arguments seem to be put forward in support of it. The first is that female participation offers a new deployable capability because servicewomen can engage with local women in the deployed environment, because they are women and notwithstanding differences in language, culture and probably socioeconomic background. This assumption of gendered capability also seems part of the UN's WPS practice, especially in its targets for female participation in peacekeeping, and the generic assertion that the inclusion of female peacekeepers will increase the willingness of local women to report violence.

Neither part of this argument appears to be supported yet by a body of relevant empirical research. Moreover, it diverts

research attention from the individual skills and training needed to meet WPS operational outcomes in both female and male personnel-which could include cross-cultural awareness, languages other than English, intelligence collection, logistics, and policing and infantry patrol skills - as well as practical considerations such as the availability of both male and female interpreters and community liaisons.

Alternatively, it's suggested that increasing women's participation in the military offers an expanded capability, because diversity of representation necessarily brings diversity of thought to achieve operational goals and plans. This raises a significant difficulty in managing expectations because, statistically, most members of any gender will be average performers.

A third variant is that female participation offers increased scope to produce the same capability because it's no longer possible to meet ADF capability requirements through traditional recruitment pools. That line of thinking puts the spotlight on physical standards and training and attracts emotive debate, which has little connection to the purposes of the WPS agenda. This approach is complicated by the overlay of arguments about gender parity and inclusion, and the need for compliance with the federal Sex Discrimination Act.

The challenge is to define a central and consistent narrative that answers the essential question for women's participation to WPS ends - not participation for its own sake but participation in what and for what. UN Security Council resolution 1325 conceived of women's contribution to peacebuilding as occurring through channels of power and influence, not just woman-to-woman engagement on 'women's issues' separate from that process. Empirical research that defines military capability for gender-specific purposes and identifies its training requirements is essential in focusing the continuing implementation of WPS in the context of deployed operations.

In addition to the lack of clarity in the capability discussion, the balance between thematic gender expertise and country-specific gender knowledge is so far relatively unexplored in the military context. For peacebuilding more broadly, Séverine Autesserre found that, despite differing individual backgrounds, intervenors in international conflicts share similar daily modes of operation; and because they are similar, they often lack an in-depth ability to generate operational plans that are tailored to the specific environment, which limits operational success.¹

Applied in the WPS field, this would mean balancing the input from gender experts, ADF operational planners and country experts. As an example of the new dimensions such a balance

might offer, an Afghan-centric critique of coalition female engagement teams in Afghanistan argued that some of the core assumptions - that teams comprising female coalition soldiers could engage and influence Afghan women, that Afghan women were influential in a way Western forces would recognise, and that Afghan women would provide useful information for counterinsurgency operations - were misplaced in the context of gender relationships in Afghan society.² The analysis concluded that that was why the teams weren't as operationally successful as originally envisaged.

Local expertise is an essential input to operational gender analysis, but it turns on a depth of country-specific institutional and cultural knowledge that isn't likely to exist either in the

“.... Increasing women's participation in the military offers an expanded capability because diversity of representation necessarily brings diversity of thought”

ADF intelligence community if gender is mainstreamed as an operational consideration, or among specialist military gender advisers. Instead, it represents a real opportunity for partnered research at the strategic level in defence, to build standing gender analyses of societies of high strategic importance to Australia, particularly in the Indo-Pacific region.

High-level discussion within the ADF and in the wider community has established the relevance of the WPS agenda to operational capability; the challenge now is to develop the empirical research to support a skills-based capability assessment, and country-specific analyses to support effective operational implementation.

¹ Eg, Séverine Autesserre, *Peaceland* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

² Sippi Azarbaijani-Moghaddam, *Seeking Out Their Afghan Sisters*, CMI Working Paper 2014:1, https://www.nato.int/issues/women_nato/2014/5096-seeking-out-their-afghan-sisters.pdf

Wing Commander Angeline Lewis is the inaugural Minister for Defence's visiting fellow for WPS at UNSW Canberra. Her most recent, and fifth, deployment was as the military gender and protection adviser to the UN Mission in South Sudan. This article represents her personal views and does not necessarily reflect the views of the Association, the Australian Defence Force, the Australian Government or the United Nations.

STILL SOLDIERING ON IN MUFTI

Inspired by Lieutenant Colonel Ted Chitham MC (Retired) who has always led the way

Soldiering is a life experience and for most never to be forgotten. From the very moment that the oath is sworn, you are for the time being, just another unfortunate creature whose was seduced by the military with shirky promises. What the recruiting sergeant conveniently did not mention is that a total and rigid obedience to military regulations was obligatory.

Incredibly as each uncoordinated group experienced the wrath of instructors at varying level of rank, slowly and surely the rabble became a team with instinctive obedience to all commands. Military history records the deeds of units in both peace and war yet often fails to recognize those who made it so and the powerful spirit of unit pride and mateship which old soldiers carry to the grave and perhaps beyond. Such spirit and loyalty to unit did not just happen, but began with the very first shrill bark of command by a non-commissioned officer.

In time, with hard and demanding training, strangers became friends

and then Comrades. Individual views and uncoordinated action were transformed in to a team with clear purpose and action. No one can determine exactly when the precious mateship arrived to embrace both unit and regiment. However, there is no evidence whatsoever it came to be with a wave of a General's baton or a space age politician making promises.

What we do know is that the military family gathered strength with each demanding challenge and recognition of achievements in peace or war. We do know the demands of high standards were met, and with it came even more confidence, battle discipline, individual and collective pride. With all of these assets was the most valuable legacy of the ANZAC spirit.

It is not surprising that as each column converts to mufti, there are many volunteers who continue to shepherd the thinning ranks with sharing and caring and reminding society of who and what they still are.

Old Soldiers Never Die - George Mansford © December 2019

Time has aged those who once wore proud badges including the Roo **
The gaps in the ranks of old warriors are more than a few
Gone the spritely step and strong pulse beat
No more the singing round campfires on readymade seats
Yet still the memories of roll calls for so many brothers
Still young soldiers at heart, so ready to help each other
Beat the drums and sound the bugle call
All for one and one for all

Soldiers grow old yet always a powerful regimental spirit is there
Thanks to volunteers who are seen to be everywhere
They've traded rifle for names and addresses of mates in strife
No need of compass to find the home of an ailing widow, once an army wife
Work parties maintain walls with proud names of fallen to be seen
Reunions, charity, funerals and telling schoolkids what ANZAC means
Beat the drums and sound the bugle call
All for one and one for all

In turn, each generation of the Regiment marches on and on
Until at last it blurs and fades on distant horizons and is gone
In all passing columns, volunteers step forward to seize the flame
Dressed in mufti, armed with pen and phone, are on duty again
Old and new sentries have changed and the relief is complete
With mateship, sharing, caring, and despite weary shuffling feet
Beat the drums and sound the bugle call
All for one and one for all

** Kangaroo which can be seen in the proud badge of The Royal Australian Regiment



MEET THE NEW AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL DIRECTOR

Matthew Anderson PSM has been appointed as the next Director of the Australian War Memorial by the Government following a formal selection process. Mr Anderson, a veteran himself, replaced Dr Brendan Nelson AO, who concluded in the role at the end of last year.

The Prime Minister said Mr Anderson's skills, knowledge and experience will ensure the continued success of the Memorial. "Mr Anderson is well placed to guide the Australian War Memorial through generational change to tell the stories of our more recent conflicts," the Prime Minister said.

"He has demonstrated his passion for military history and ensuring future generations are educated about the service and sacrifice of our personnel, having written three children's books on Australia's involvement in the First and Second World Wars.

"Over the past three years he has further built on his knowledge and passion, serving as the Australian Alternate on the Board of Trustees of the Imperial War Museum and Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

Mr Anderson was a senior career diplomat, having joined the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade as a graduate in 1995. He has held the positions of Deputy High Commissioner in London (involving positions with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Board of Trustees of the Imperial War Museum); Australia's Ambassador to Afghanistan (2015-16); Head of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's MH17

Task Force following the tragic downing of the aircraft in Ukrainian airspace in July 2014; and High Commissioner to Solomon Islands and to Samoa.

Born in Victoria in 1966, Mr Anderson was educated at the Royal Military College, Duntroon (graduated in 1988), spending eight years as an Australian Army Officer, including three years as Troop Commander for the Royal Australian Engineers. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree in Strategic Studies from Deakin University (1994) and a Master of Arts in Foreign Affairs and Trade from Monash University (1998). He is a graduate of the RAAF School of Languages in Khmer and also speaks Tok Pisin and Pijin. Mr Anderson completed the Executive Leadership Program at Said Business School, Oxford University in 2014.

Mr Anderson is married to Lou and has three children. In addition to his family, Mr Anderson's interests include aviation, military history, photography and the Collingwood Football Club. He is author of two books on Australia's involvement in the First World War (A is for ANZACs and Don't Forget Me, Cobber!). His third book, K is for Kokoda, Australia's involvement in the Second World War was published by the ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee in 2010.

Mr Anderson was awarded the Public Service Medal (PSM) in the 2011 Australia Day Honours List for his role leading the Australian humanitarian and consular response to the 2009 earthquake and tsunami in Samoa.

The DFVA congratulates Mr Anderson on his appointment and wish him well in his new role, and offer sincere thanks to Dr Nelson for his distinguished service in the role of the AWM Director.

A new approach to supporting the financial wellbeing of Australia's veteran community



**COMMONWEALTH SUPERANNUATION CORPORATION (CSC)
WILL LAUNCH ITS VETERANS HUB PROGRAM IN 2020**

By David Wilton, Army Veteran and CSC's National Manager of Defence and Veterans Liaison

For our veterans, the transition to everyday life presents new opportunities as they reconnect with loved ones, build new relationships and integrate back into the community, but managing this major change in sometimes challenging circumstance is not without its difficulties.

Financial stress can become a significant issue for veterans during this transition, and some may find it difficult to navigate complex support services and systems, establish new networks, find employment and ensure their family's security. The veteran community as one knows only too well the worst case scenarios of these challenges.

But what is transition for a veteran? At CSC, we think it's much more than simply leaving the Australian Defence Force (ADF). The journey starts when a veteran transitions into the ADF; then there's the experience of transition through service; promotion, postings, supporting a family, buying a home and of course, operational deployment. The third transition for a veteran is leaving the ADF on a new adventure and the fourth is transitioning to retirement. Our lens is wellness focussed for life and considers transition to be a constantly evolving journey for veterans and their families. Our approach is to break down complex matters into simple truths that are easy to understand.

At CSC, our mission is "to be the trusted and valued partner ... (who) gives our members peace of mind that their families and futures are in safe hands." This is why CSC, as the superannuation provider to the ADF and Australia's veteran community, has announced a national program aimed at improving the level of support for Australia's veterans and families.

As an Army Veteran and CSC's National Manager of Defence and Veterans Liaison, I am proud to lead CSC's new Veterans Hub program, which underpins our solid commitment to serving those who have served.

In 2020, we will continually transform our education and information services, particularly at ADF Transition Expo's to ensure a better transition experience and we will collaborate more often with Ex-Service Organisations (ESO) and local veteran communities. CSC will also host Town Halls at selected locations and we will continue and grow our support to Advocates and to other events spotlighting the veteran community, such as our support in 2019 to the Honouring Women (HWUDS) community.

Most importantly, our Veterans Hubs will offer more effective engagement between CSC and veterans, by putting more boots on the ground, allowing us to better understand veteran's needs, to provide support where and when it is needed and with our partners, how we can best support them. I want our programs to be informed by veterans!

I encourage all veterans and all ESO to join CSC and other partners and speak with other ex-service personnel and local representatives about their own experiences in managing their financial wellbeing and how we can together bring a better support service to all veterans.

To get involved and for more details on the events and to register your interest, please email us at vetshub@csc.gov.au

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Dear Sir,

I write in response to the President's comment in the last edition as to why DFWA and other veterans groups 'are failing to attract the attention and support of the veterans of today.'

I picked up Camaraderie in a Defence unit brew-room, and was very disappointed to find a reprint of an American article titled 'Women in Combat.' The article asserted that recruiting women to US combat units reduced physical requirements, and therefore lethality. Moreover, the article strongly suggested that the deployment of women generally reduces combat effectiveness even in non-combat roles, because women cannot help flirting or becoming sexually involved with their comrades and men cannot resist them when they do.

Reprinting this piece conveys that the DFWA supports these views. This fundamentally undermines any sense of 'camaraderie' among veterans, which today include women as well as men who have completed multiple operational tours over many years. It also undermines the very next article in the magazine, which speaks of the 'Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant: A DFWA Inspired Initiative,' in which women veterans will also be included.

I appreciate the work of all DFWA's volunteers for veterans' services. However, I cannot support an organisation that appears to dismiss my operational service, and women's service more generally, while advertising itself as a welfare and advocacy association for the whole Defence Force.

Angeline Lewis

EDITORS NOTE: DFWA greatly welcomes this input. As editor, I remind all that the views expressed in articles do not necessarily reflect the views of the Association, except where expressly stated. This is stated on page 3 of each edition of Camaraderie. The purpose of printing the article in question was to facilitate dialogue, and I am pleased this has happened. In particular, the Association most certainly does not dismiss the author's operational service or women's service more generally..... rather, the opposite and we apologise for this misconception.

THE DFWA NATIONAL PRESIDENT RESPONDS

Dear Angeline,

Thank you for your comments regarding the article, 'Women in Combat' in the last edition of Camaraderie. I appreciate your comments and understand your reasoning in responding to the article.

The article was written for an American readership and reflected a view peculiar to that nation's armed forces. It is not a view I

share nor one that resonates with my experience and understanding of the role of women in the ADF today.

Conversely there is little understanding or indeed appreciation among the veteran community of the role of women in the ADF today. Yes, we get bureaucratic papers on aspects of women in the services yet very little of substance that tells the story for generations of veterans from other eras who want to know why and how their military is changing.

Individuals such as the highly regarded academic, Sam Crompton of ANU, have researched and published extensively on behalf of the ADF and DVA. Then there is the experiences of Wg Cdr Sharon Bown, Retd, who tells a moving story in her, 'One Women's War and Peace. However, these positives are buttressed against 'feel good' media articles and the occasional editorial that is slanted toward a particular agenda.

I believe that Camaraderie is an appropriate platform to tell the story of women in the ADF. It is agreed that our war fighting posture is constantly changing as is the demands the nation places on those we send into harms way. Your recent experience in the South Sudan is a case in point.

Your letter has given us cause to consider the need to be more proactive in encouraging articles that will generate serious discussion on the topics that highlight the many parts of the constantly evolving ADF. Contrary views are always appreciated.

This is as it should be.

Again, my thank you for highlighting our need to be clearer regarding views expressed "do not necessarily reflect the views of the Association".

Take care,
KDR

Dear Sir,

CLOUDS ON THE HORIZON FOR VETERANS?

The recent Report of the Aged Care Royal Commission and the earlier Productivity Commission Report on Compensation and Rehabilitation for Veterans, bring into sharp focus the need for us all to be eternally vigilant; and to defend strongly the compensation and support services rightfully due to our eligible Veterans.

In particular, we must not abandon comrades whose compensable conditions are covered by the Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) White or Gold Cards (especially Totally and Permanently Incapacitated (TPI) Veterans) into the hands of profiteers, instead of them being properly looked after by their government. Existing and long-standing legislative provisions, supported in principle by no less than the recently-endorsed Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant, ought to guarantee these benefits, mostly under the portfolio of the Minister for Veterans' Affairs through DVA. The obligations are life-long.

However, it seems all too easy for the DVA and/or other authorities charged with the responsibility to 'maintain and enhance' eligible Veterans' and their dependents' financial well-being, self-sufficiency, physical wellbeing and quality of life; to abandon to their own devices our older Veterans. The focus of Aged Care (under the auspices of the Department of Health) is a case in point. There are other services subject to various outsourced commercial enterprises; and also whole of government community service obligation programs which are run or overseen by Departments other than DVA.

The fundamental, veteran centric and beneficial aspects of veterans' legislation are not in the lexicon nor budget philosophy of outsourced entities or other agencies and service providers,

especially commercially operated ones. Nor do they necessarily understand the Unique Nature of Military Service, in recognition of which DVA is charged with delivering compensation and services to eligible Veterans and their families. Neither do they take the whole of life and tailored and coordinated support approach that is now so deeply ingrained in the DVA's DNA (or it should be); and which aims to ensure that all clients can access all necessary and reasonable supports, as and when required.

What are the potential factors causing poor or failed provision of services afforded to our eligible people? There is a clear conflict of purposes between shareholder-driven quest for profit and DVA's service commitments, corporate objectives, principles and budget outcomes, even where contractual arrangements exist. They are essentially incompatible!

It is all too easy, as we have seen, to cut corners at the expense of 'clients' - leading in the worst case to the "sad and shocking system" found to exist in aged care, as just one example. In this case, we find that governments and service providers have failed to act to protect vulnerable senior Australian citizens - including Veterans.

We also find this in the Community Service Obligation of the Department of Health's Office of Hearing Services program, where some eligible Veterans are often 'forced' to accept basic hearing aids, or find themselves obliged to pay so-called 'out of pocket' expenses for hearing aids that meet their clinically-determined and service-related compensable needs. It is said that some requests for approval of audiologist-recommended devices are even being denied by DVA itself. This has been a long-standing issue in which it seems that there is, to say the least, a lack of coordination between departments and understanding of Veterans' compensation and care entitlements. Underlying this is the difference between compensation and social welfare.

No doubt there will be other areas in which the veteran centric view over life-long provision of compensation and services to meet Veterans' needs gets lost in areas that do not hold such an approach, most likely due to the extreme financial constraint under which governments hold them. Such areas may include: NDIS (Agency of Department of Social Services); CSC (Statutory body reporting to Minister for Finance); Comcare (Attorney General and Minister for Industrial Relations) and Centrelink (Department of Human Services).

The NDIS is especially vulnerable to systemic failures like those exposed in Aged Care, and it would be a travesty to find Veterans easily and conveniently abandoned to that scheme by DVA, without very closely coordinated control over the proper funding and delivery of services for which a Veteran is entitled, especially those under compensation service arrangements.

So, what does this mean for us in the Defence family? Each and every one of us needs to continue more than ever to be heard and to stand firm in the face of adversity. We all; ESORT, ESOs,

Veterans' advocates and individual Veterans and families, need to be eternally vigilant and act to protect the proper delivery of entitlements and services to innocent 'beneficiaries' of the Nation's 'largesse'. Have we always done so? Are we doing it well enough? Why are there still obvious failures in too many individual cases? What more can or should we do to succeed in the defence of our people?

We need to call out and effectively act upon every instance in which we find one of our own treated with disrespect; or worse; not provided with all necessary and reasonable supports to which their service entitles them and which the Nation expects to be delivered – without question. That surely would be consistent with the Covenant and the Commonwealth's stated commitment to decision makers interpreting provisions of Veteran related legislation in a beneficial way that maintains and enhances the benefits afforded to Veterans, and/or their families and their quality of life.

Bert Hoebee
Life Member, Defence Force Welfare Association



VETERANS TO BE COUNTED ON 2021 CENSUS

The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) will be able to locate and help more veterans under a plan to include a new question in the 2021 Census. The Federal Government expects to have better data to help guide services and support for Australia's veterans, with a specific question asking whether someone has served in the Australian Defence Force (ADF).

Recently tabled in Parliament, the Census and Statistics Amendment (Statistical Information) Regulations 2020 (the Regulations) will allow for the inclusion of the question. The resulting data will have the potential to help the federal, state and territory government agencies, and ex-service organisations better target and improve services and support, particularly for the large proportion of veterans who are currently unknown to the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA).

For many years many ESOs and Veterans' Affairs Ministers from across Australia have recognised the importance of this issue, with the Ministers unanimously agreeing in 2017 that 'a question about veterans should be included in the next Australian Census'. This was reinforced in 2018, where Ministers recognised the need for robust data on veterans' issues and strongly endorsed the need for a veteran indicator in the 2021 Census. An on line petition also lobbied for this initiative, which is strongly supported by the DFVA.

AUSTRALIAN INNOVATIONS IN WWI

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

A Pioneer Society

The Australian continent had been settled by British and European people for barely more than a century when WWI broke out in 1914. Thousands flocked to enlist with many, if not most, of British heritage, although greatly changed over just a few generations by their experiences of the harsh Australian environment. The land the first pioneers (and follow-on settlers encountered) was nothing like the Europe they knew, so it took time to learn how to adapt to this unfamiliar environment, but adapt they did. To do so required innovation and inventiveness as there was nothing from their past nor in the machinery catalogues of farming equipment that suited Australian conditions. Thus the windmill supplying artesian water, the 'stump jump' plough (that would 'jump' rocks and stumps without breaking the blade) and the fertilizer explosive used to clear tree stumps from newly cleared farmland were all created to solve problems that were uniquely Australian.

The soldiers who enlisted in 1914 brought this ingenuity and their practical, problem-solving abilities into the Army. Their skills and inventiveness would soon be tested.

Readiness for War

It has almost become such a standard Australian practice, to the point where one would think Australia prides itself in being unprepared for war, even when it is obviously looming. Although the formal military establishment available in 1914 was too small to be effective in a world war, at the grass roots level Australia was in fact an armed society. Australia had an excellent School Cadet program that taught basic military and bush living skills (including navigation, camping



South Australian Lancelot de Mole's 1912 Model of his Armoured Tractor

and shooting) to all schoolboys. This forged a bond of unity among both old and new Australians. The military also supported 'Rifle Clubs' by providing them with ammunition and training while sponsoring shooting competitions between clubs and regions.

The Australian militia was a sort of widespread 'Men's Social Club' that emphasized the camaraderie and mateship that came with developing their national pride as well as their military skills. Militia membership not only represented the full range of Australian society from the professions to clerks, engineers, tradesmen, station hands and ordinary working men, but regional units were often oversubscribed. Not only were they interested in their 'hobby', but they thought about military issues and the problems powerful modern weaponry brought to the battlefield. This practical inventiveness led to South Australian, Lancelot de Mole designing the forerunner of the tank in 1912!

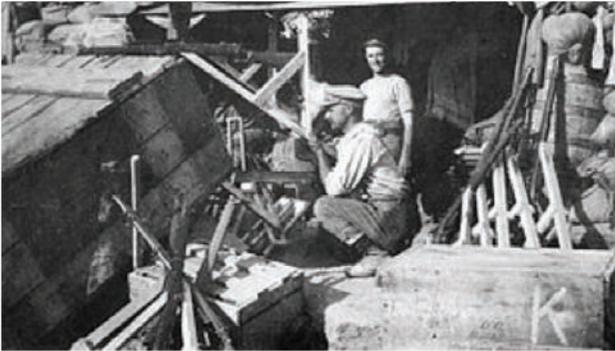
de Mole made several approaches to the British authorities, in 1912, 1914, and 1916, but the use for such an armoured vehicle that protected soldiers from shrapnel and bullets was beyond the imagination of Whitehall Bureaucrats. In 1919, three years after the first military tanks had been used, a Royal Commission acknowledged the potential of de Mole's innovative vehicle and recognised the brilliance of de Mole's design, even declaring it to be superior to the machines actually developed. de Mole received a belated gratuity to cover his expenses.

In 1919 de Mole was made an honorary corporal and in 1920 a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE). Humorously, at the formal investiture of the award, Lord Forster, the seventh Governor-General of Australia, dropped the medal before it could be pinned on de Mole's chest!

The Periscope Rifle

Gallipoli soon tested the Anzac soldiers' ingenuity as many men died of head wounds while looking over the trench parapet to spot the enemy. The Turkish line at Quinn's post was less than 50 metres away - and snipers were everywhere.

Curiously, the Englishman William Youlten had already invented the first periscope sighting rifle attachment in 1901 and patented it in 1903. He produced an improved version



William Beech manufacturing his periscope rifles at Anzac Beach, May 1915

in 1914. Despite its obvious utility no army universally adopted it as part of their standard equipment. After seeing the bodies of his fellow soldiers shot through the head, Lance Corporal William Beech, independently invented his own version of a periscope device while in the trenches at Gallipoli. His periscope device allowed a soldier to aim and fire his rifle from below the trench parapet without exposing himself. Beech achieved this by modifying a standard Lee–Enfield .303 rifle by connecting a board and mirror to it, forming a periscope that was aligned to the sights of the rifle.

Once the worth of the periscope rifles was recognised, they were produced in a makeshift workshop on the beach at Anzac Cove. Though considered to be less accurate than conventional rifles, the periscope rifle proved to be useful at Quinn's Post and other places, where the closeness of the opposing trenches had made it virtually impossible to fire a shot by day.

Sometimes the periscope rifle was used by a sniper and observer working together, though our greatest Anzac sniper,



A Sniper and Spotter working together in a forward trench, 1915

Trooper Billy Singii preferred to use the normal open iron sight, despite the risks.

Field Marshal Sir William Birdwood recognised the importance of Beech's invention during the Gallipoli campaign and had no doubt that it saved dozens of Anzac soldiers' lives. In 1921, the British War Office awarded Beech £100 for the invention (around \$10,000 today when adjusted for inflation).

Jam Tin Grenades

Hand grenades were useful for both attack and defence, plus they could be lobbed into the Turkish trenches and saps when they were sufficiently close. The problem was that they were in short supply, with no improvement in sight. Anzac inventiveness once more rose to the occasion with the creation of the 'Jam Tin' grenades. The British Army did supply a fragmentation grenade, known as either a 'No. 8' or



Example of an Improvised 'Milk Tin' grenade and the official military supplied version

a 'No. 9', based on how much explosive each contained inside. It did not take long for Diggers to note how they differed little from the tin cans in which some of their rations were supplied. When the shortage of real grenades became critical soldiers soon began producing their own from empty jam, condensed milk or 'Bully Beef' tins. The design of the many types of grenades produced was only limited by the maker's imagination and the purpose for which it was intended. One of the more sophisticated jam-tin grenades was a booby-trap version.

The 'jam tin grenade was an inner can of explosive inside an outer can of metal fragments or ball bearings. The fuse was ignited by a friction device or a cigarette – and had to be short enough to ensure that the intended targets did not have time enough to pick it up and throw it back! For a short time they met an urgent need, but after several

incidents that killed or injured the makers they had to be officially withdrawn.

The 'Drip Rifle'

Probably the most successful innovation at Gallipoli was the 'Drip Rifle'. When Field Marshal Kitchener visited Gallipoli and assessed the prospects of success as improbable, the question became one of how to successfully disengage without suffering crippling casualties. The planners set to work and concluded that killed, captured or casualties would involve Anzac losses of 7,000 – 10,000 soldiers! The soldiers themselves soon became aware that an evacuation was likely, despite its planning being classified as 'Top Secret'. No doubt many a dugout conversation was spent rating their chances – and concluding they were not good.

On 8th December the withdrawal began and the ranks in the trenches started to thin out. As part of the deception plan a desultory fire was kept up along the length of the trenches by day and by night, while every day supply columns could be seen wending their way up the ravines and gullies apparently with full loads (though the sacks and boxes were in fact empty). Each night they made their way down again to the beach, but this time encumbered with equipment and followed by hundreds of soldiers being evacuated on each trip.

Over the next 11-nights 35,000 troops were evacuated, leaving just 20,000 manning trenches previously occupied by more than 50,000. This was the critical point as the Turks would undoubtedly soon guess what was happening, especially when the Anzac trenches descended into total silence.

The most obvious scenario to prevent this would be for one Brigade of 2,000 – 3,000 men to be sacrificed as a rearguard so that the rest could escape. This would require these men to accept their fate that they could neither withdraw, nor surrender. They would be expected to fight and hold their positions to the last man and most likely 'dying in place' so that thousands more could be evacuated to fight again.

Enter Lance Corporal William Scurry of 'Pompey' Elliott's 7th Battalionⁱⁱⁱ with an idea for a 'self-firing rifle' that would give the impression that the trenches were still occupied.

The Scurry drip rifle incorporated two tins. The larger one on top was filled with water, while the empty bottom one was attached to the rifle's trigger by a piece of string or wire. To make the 'pop-off' rifle fire the soldier punched a small



hole in the bottom of the upper tin to allow water to slowly trickle into the lower tin, which eventually filled and toppled over, pulling the trigger.

Another method used for the same purpose was to have a candle burn down until it burnt through a string holding a rock that was tied to a rifle's trigger. When the rock fell the rifle would fire.

The Scurry 'Drip Rifle'

Senior Commanders immediately saw the potential of a ruse using these 'self-firing rifles'. The last two nights required more than 20,000 soldiers to silently depart without raising Turkish suspicions. On the final night 1,000 rifles were set up to fire intermittently as 10,000 soldiers were safely evacuated, with only six casualties and no deaths. Scurry's rifles began firing their firing from midnight as the few remaining volunteers scurried around in the dark punching holes in the top tins before making their own escape to the beach and the waiting boats. Being a bolt action weapon, each .303 could fire only once. General Bell, Commander of the General Staff rated the evacuation operation from an open beach as 'one which has no precedent in military history'.

Shortly thereafter L/Cpl Scurry was promoted to sergeant and awarded the Distinguished Conduct Medal (DCM). In the same month he was promoted to Lieutenant. As a member of 58th Battalion in France he was awarded the Military Cross, was Mentioned in Despatches and promoted to Captain. After the war he returned to his orchard in Croydon, Victoria, but enlisted again in 1939 and was posted to Garrison duties for the duration of WW2 as the Major in charge of the Tatura Internment Camp.

Continued on page 27

"What about the Reservists?"

FURTHER ISSUES & CONCERNS OF THE DEFENCE RESERVES ASSOCIATION



by Jim Barry DFWA Past Vice President – Reserves

As I have reported many times since 2008, it is, and now has been, a pleasure attending DFWA AGM's and Executive meetings over those 11 years. I happened to be the National President of the Defence Reserves Association (2005 - 2013) and became the inaugural DFWA 'Vice President Reserves', appointed by then DFWA President, David Jamison, to ensure that Reservist matters were considered at the rebadged DFWA. It has come time for a change and I am delighted to introduce Ian Flawith, Deputy President of the DRA, who has replaced me. Ian among many positions was a former Commander of 2 Division and is well placed to carry on our Reservist advocacy.

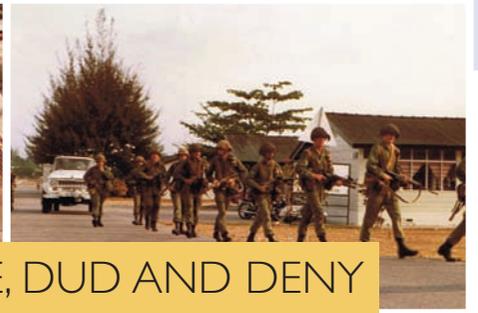
At the DFWA AGM and Executive meetings in Sydney, 18/19 November 2019, we had the dual pleasure of reporting on issues and concerns affecting Reservists and what the DRA was doing to resolve or mitigate them. A summary of the status of those and other issues are as follows.

- **Annual Defence Reserves Association (DRA) Conference:** The annual DRA Conference was held at the United Services Club, Brisbane on Saturday, 17 August 2019 with the theme of "Building on the Success of the Total Force". We were honoured to have the Governor of Queensland, the Hon Paul de Jersey AC, open the conference and for the first time in many years it was the Minister for Defence, Senator the Hon Linda Reynolds who provided the Government's position related to our theme. It was an excellent conference that had participants openly debating how better to use the 'part-time force' within the Total Force concept.
- **Australian Defence Force Covenant:** With the introduction of the Military Covenant, described as the Unique Nature of Military Service (UNMS), which has been advocated for over a long time; it has now been lost to a certain extent by its new support item of a Veteran's Pin and a rebadged DVA Veteran's Card. Once again these support items divide the part-time force from the full-time force. There is no need for a Reserve

Veteran's Pin as Reservists are covered by the legislated definition of a 'Veteran'. This is obviously because of the cost factor that could be easily overcome by not awarding the Reservist a Pin until they were fully qualified to an appropriate level. So the DRA has a new priority amend/fix this!

- **Defence Force Support Council (DRSC) - New Model:** We, the DRA, now know why we were not consulted in KPMG's review of the DRSC in that it is to be restructured as an advisory body within the Department of Defence (DOD) who will now have the responsibility to develop a partnership model with the Defence Industry sector and Employers to access part-time Defence capability and provide policy advice. We will wait to see what is rolled out in 2020, but remain sceptical as the DRA represents this part-time cohort and is prepared to support change so long as it is for the better.
- **Superannuation and the Total Work Force (TWF) Model:** The DRA are lobbying to be involved with the People Group in the Review of the ADF SERCAT 3 – 5 (Reserve) Employment package as what started as Plan SUAKIN for Reservists morphed into the Total Workforce Model (TWM). This major change emasculated SERCAT 5, originally designed for part-time Reserve Service to be under similar conditions to SERCAT 6, namely Permanent part-time service and including pro-rata superannuation. As stated many times before, Reservists are the only part-time workforce cohort in Australia not entitled to pro-rata employer contributed superannuation. Again the obvious answer is the cost factor! This issue remains as a priority for the DRA.
- **ADF Reserve Call Out:** This recently legislated Reserve Call Out process has come into effect much

Continued on page 27



GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO DECEIVE, DUD AND DENY BUTTERWORTH VETERANS RIGHTFUL RECOGNITION OF THEIR SERVICE

Army and RAAF personnel since 1948 will be aware of Air Base Butterworth (ABB) and the role it played supporting Australia's strategic deployments in SE Asia. Both Services still have units based there, including the ongoing rotation of a rifle company known as Rifle Company Butterworth (RCB) since 1 Nov 70. The place of the Malayan Emergency 1948-60, Borneo campaign 1963-6, and Thai border operations 1961-63 in Australia's history of warlike service, is widely known. Less well known, and subject to a bitter struggle between veterans and the Government, is the warlike service rendered at ABB during the Communist Insurgency War/Second Malaysian Emergency (CIW/SME) from 1968-89.

RAAF were deployed strategically at ABB, operating combat aircraft and the Integrated Air Defence System until 1988, and personnel and other intermittent aircraft since. Because of the CIW/SME, the RCB was first deployed to protect the RAAF under a political (not operational) deception presented publicly as 'training'. In reality it was a warlike task that almost a thousand identified primary and secondary documents, including 130 SECRET/TOP SECRET, prove. Interesting training, one might conclude.

The RCB Review Group has advocated the proper level of recognition of veterans since 2006. The cited evidence forms the basis of numerous submissions to have an existing low level of recognition upgraded.

Ample proof demonstrates service at ABB in this time to be 'warlike'. The only problem is that Government, influenced by key staff in the Departments of Veterans' Affairs, and Defence, continue to deny RCB veterans their rightful recognition by a process that is unfair, not transparent and does not allow us independent third party mediation.

Correspondence demonstrates systematic dishonesty, delaying tactics and multiple unethical breaches of both the Prime Minister's Ministerial Standards and the Public Sector Codes of Conduct. Both historical and legal experts have confirmed that the Government fails to apply proper legal rulings by the Federal Court. A problem with taking the government on legally is the cost, and a win is not guaranteed; law is a fickle thing. Government has unlimited access to tax-payers' funds and can drag this out. Every day they obstruct and delay, more veterans die, and the Government liability reduces.

While advocacy efforts continue with Government, specifically Minister Chester who has sensationally deflected all matters to HQ ADF, a major media campaign will soon alert the Australian public to the shabby treatment meted out.

Even the Malaysian government has recognized this service for what it was, awarding their PJM medal – for warlike service - to a select few high ranking Australians a few years ago. None of whom actually served at ABB. The Malaysians are understood to have done so out of embarrassment because of the Australian Government's stance in refusing to recognize its own troops' service.

Today, now the war is over, 'training' remains their official screen, a fabricated construct that flies in the face of the evidence, including Malaysian primary sources.

RCB veterans succeeded in deterring the enemy from a direct attack on a major strategic base that was crucial to the conduct by the Malaysians of major air support operations during the CIW/SME.

ABB was a high value target for the enemy; RAAF were based there and needed protection. RCB provided it. Both RCB and RAAF veterans incurred the danger that is legally required for 'warlike service'. All are ashamed of their own Government which only seeks to save face, and money, by fending off veterans from a (largely) forgotten war who seek their just reward. Little wonder that among the veteran suicide statistics are RCB veterans as heartless Ministers and public service advisors collude to block advocacy and individual efforts to achieve the proper recognition.

Shame on successive responsible Ministers and their public service advisors who insist on perpetuating the 'training' lie. It seems that one's own Government is an enemy to veterans greater than the one deterred from attacking ABB. All veterans deserve what they earned. There is ample data to prove the case, the challenge is getting a recalcitrant Government to 'do the right thing'.

Author: LTCOL Russell Linwood, ASM (Retd)
OC RCB (B Coy 1RAR - 81/82)

For further information on this matter, go to
<https://recognitionofrcbservice.com/>

IS THERE A PATTERN HERE?

John Lewis, the QLD Branch President writes

I was thinking about the PM announcement of a National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention, wondering where it came from and this came to mind - (with apologies to Dickens).

It was the best of solutions, It was the worst of solutions; it was the age of truth, it was the age of spin; it was the epoch of trust, it was the epoch of doubt; it was the window of openness, it was the window of obfuscation, it was a time of personal responsibility, it was a time of sloping shoulders,; it was a climate of denial, it was a climate of fanatics; it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.

INTRODUCTION

The ESO community – including the DFWA – has been routinely called upon by Government (be it a Government Department such as DVA, or a Senate Committee, or a politician) to give advice and input on policy matters affecting ADF members and the veteran community.

I ask though – are we listened to and has a pattern emerged? Are we just there so the government can claim they consulted?

THE MILITARY COVENANT

For years, DFWA lobbied for a Military Covenant to recognize the unique nature of military service (UNMS) and establish a principle that current and former members of the ADF, and their families, should not be disadvantaged compared with other Australians in access to services, treatment under the law etc. The latter was the “no detriment” principle. Some success was achieved in previous years when MSBS came in, and the UNMS became frequently used in associated documentation. However, the Covenant itself was strongly opposed by Defence and DVA.

The 2017 LNP convention passed the following resolution:

That this Convention of the LNP endorses the adoption by Parliament of the Australian Military Covenant that formally recognises

- the unique nature of military service and
- the Nation’s obligation to ensure that serving and former members of the ADF, and their families, **should not be disadvantaged compared with other Australians in provision of services and support.**

The resolution was passed by the Parliamentary Party and the Minister gave directions to proceed. A working party, which included Defence and ESO representation was formed. DVA took the bureaucratic lead in drafting the legislation. Defence and DVA

were anti the concept put forward by the ESO and set about neutralizing it but still giving the appearance of meeting political direction.

The bureaucrats firmly rejected inclusion of the “no detriment” principle. The reason given was there was no need, because we already had beneficial legislation. This is utter tosh. The bureaucrats had a total DVA focus and not a veteran centric focus. While DVA legislation is “beneficial” to veterans and families, no other legislation governing the treatment of all other Australians is “beneficial” to veterans – and there is no reason why it should be. However, some legislation (state and federal) actually disadvantages current and former members of the ADF and their families and it should not. This is due to the unique nature of some military legislation and practices, not fitting in with other laws and practices, e.g., as acknowledged by the Court, Invalidity Benefits provided with military superannuation, differ from those associated with civilian super, and do not fit with definitions and practices in tax law and family law, to the detriment of veterans. For serving members, ADF posting practices cause disadvantage to family members on state medical waiting lists, when the family is transferred interstate and drop to the bottom of lists.

The invited ESO input was rejected by bureaucrats, who managed to divert attention from the principle by introducing marketing badges and discount card fripperies with barely a mention of unique nature of military service. The side-show became the main event.

APPOINTMENT OF ADF NOMINATED DIRECTORS TO THE COMMONWEALTH SUPERANNUATION CORPORATION (CSC) BOARD

CSC Board is the Trustee for public service and military superannuation schemes. Two Board directors are nominated by the ACTU to be the public service employee rep. The Government, as employer, has several appointments. The CDF, in the role of Employer and Employee, nominates two persons.

When CSC was formed in 2011, ESO attempted to have an ESO group to be nominator of one trustee on the same basis that the ACTU has a nominator role.

The ESO request was refused however, it was agreed that the CDF would consult with the ESO on appointment of one of the CDF nominees. This happened on the first appointments.

In spite of a legal requirement to consult with ESO, there has been no consultation on any appointments since the first.

As Trustee, CSC has a fiduciary duty to act solely in the interests of the beneficiaries of the Trust, ie, serving and ex-ADF members. CSC escaped scrutiny by the Haynes Royal Commission into Financial Institutions, in spite of many member complaints and chastisement in Federal Court.

DFRDB COMMUTATION

Many DFRDB members were advised that the commuted lump sum was like a loan and would be paid off by a reduction in their superannuation pension and when they reached their life expectancy from the ABS tables, their full pension would be reinstated. The advice was incorrect. The pension reduction was for life. This only became apparent to veterans when they did not receive the expected increase when they reached their life expectancy age. Several veteran groups lobbied the media, MPs and the Minister for Veteran Affairs and Defence Personnel for this matter to be addressed. Some also wanted other bad aspects of military superannuation to be addressed.

Minister Chester announced that an Inquiry would be held and that the veteran community, ESO would be consulted on the Terms of Reference to look at the Commutation and other issues. Before any formal consultation occurred on the TOR of the Minister's Inquiry, the Defence Ombudsman initiated his own Inquiry, drawing up his own Terms of Reference. The Ombudsman TOR were very narrow and the ESO community were not consulted. As result of the Ombudsman Inquiry, the veterans received an apology from Defence and the ADF and a quasi-apology from the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation.

ESO were not consulted on the Ombudsman own motion initiated Inquiry. ESO were not formally consulted by Minister Chester on the Inquiry promised by the Minister. That Inquiry has sort of just faded away., after all, the Ombudsman conducted a review. Problem solved – for the government and CSC.

VETERAN SUICIDE - IS IT A ROYAL COMMISSION OR IS IT NOT?

There has been a lot of media focus on calls for a Royal Commission. There have been a lot of complaints from some in the veteran community regarding the ESORT and ADSO

opposition to a Royal Commission. In November, DFWA identified several key areas where further investigation was essential but had been neglected in other many other Inquiries. DFWA view was that if a RC was called, the Letters Patent should allow for these other “too hard” areas to be examined. If a RC was not called, they still needed to be addressed by the government.

So what do we have now? Something unexpected. A Commission that the government claims has the powers of a RC for the initial review and report and also ongoing for scrutiny related to any future suicides.

But it is not called a RC. Why?

At least the initial scrutiny of 419 suicides with reporting deadlines, could be a straight Royal Commission? Why this obfuscation? The enduring nature of the commission indicates the prime initiator of future investigations and the Annual Report to parliament will be instances of suicide, with vague statements about monitoring ongoing implementation of recommended changes. What changes? Only those recommended by the Commissioner or those recommended by other Inquiries? The devil will be in the detail.

SoWhat have we learnt from history?

The government invitation to consult with ESO on the Military Covenant was very encouraging.

The government commitment to consult with ESO on nominees for appointment to the CSC Board was also encouraging.

The government statement that ESO would also be consulted on the TOR for the Commutation Inquiry was, also very encouraging. The government statement regarding the National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention is also very encouraging - Consider the statement

“These comprehensive measures have been developed with a very clear focus on finding the most effective and practical ways of better identifying, preventing, understanding and acting on suicide and suicide risks among our vets and service men and women.”

They are very encouraging except for one thing... they were developed by Defence and DVA bureaucrats who:

- Made very encouraging statements in the past. but in the end, acted in their own interests.
- Will develop the initial drafts of the enabling legislation for the (not) Royal Commissioner.

Continued on page 25

THE DVA WHITE CARD

FOR USE WITH CANCER

RICHARD HEALY



Editor's Note: Camaraderie readers have been previously advised, but many are still not aware, that the DVA provides cover for treatment of cancer (malignant neoplasm) and pulmonary tuberculosis, depending on type and length of ADF service. Further information on this valuable entitlement can be found by contacting the DVA and on the following DVA Factsheets:

- HSV109 - Non-Liability Health Care
- HSV61 - DVA Health Card/Veteran Card - Specific Conditions (White).

I thought I would tell this little story so you can see firstly, how good the NSW public health system is in treating cancer patients and, secondly, the benefits of having a DVA White Card.

Christmas 2015 was a difficult time for me as I had managed to catch pneumonia and was feeling very slow. My wife Jenny and I visited Joe, my doctor, just after Christmas. He advised that I had double pneumonia, and that I needed an X-ray, which I had on 28 December, and which resulted in a 'please see me', from Joe. During the visit he fired up the X-ray and showed me the pneumonia in my lungs, along with another shaded area which he said could be cancer.

Joe arranged for me to see a lung specialist on the same day, which led to a CT scan on 5 January 2016, a PET scan on 12 January, a biopsy of a lung on 15 January, and back to my lung specialist on 20 January who advised me that I had Stage 3A lung cancer that had spread beyond my lungs.

On 28 January I had an EBUS (Endobronchial Ultrasound Bronchoscopy) with a biopsy of my lymph nodes, which led to visit to the radiation specialist on 4 February, another CT scan 8 February, a visit to cancer specialist, another biopsy on 15 February with radiation treatment starting on 17 February, and chemotherapy on 22 February.

So, the cancer was detected in late December 2015 with treatment starting on 22 February 2016. Not bad for a public health system.

Almost all of this had been done as a public health patient with no significant costs. In a conversation with Les, an old army buddy, in late January, I was advised that, as I had at least four years of peacetime service, I was entitled to a Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) White Card that would cover the cost in treating the cancer. With a modicum of difficulty I filled in and submitted the

relevant forms, and on 19 February was advised of my DVA number.

All of my pharmacy costs under the Card appear to be subsidised to \$6.60 (the patient contribution charge) including my cancer medication (\$8000 for 30), blood thinners (\$90 for 28), and anti-sickness (\$115 for 1), so the Card offers significant savings.

Where I learned my major lesson with the use of the Card was in April 2019, when I was advised I needed brain surgery. After the usual specialist consultation I was asked to pay for the operation in advance, which I did, but without the Card as I did not have it with me. My understanding was that I could claim from DVA after the operation. Well, this turned out not to be the case. I eventually found out that one needed to show the Card at the time of payment, and perhaps receive pre-approval by DVA. The surgeon can then say whether they will accept the amount that DVA will pay (which I think is based on Medicare), or that I will have to pay the full amount (less Medicare). In this case, as I did not present the Card, I have no knowledge of whether the surgeon would have accepted it, so the operation ended up costing me thousands of dollars. Regardless, in hindsight, I was very happy with the surgeon who was quite excellent.

Perhaps the good experience that has come from having cancer is seeing the quality, politeness and nicety of almost all staff I have had to deal with at the Prince of Wales Hospital: the administrative staff, the ward and chemo nurses, the ultrasound nurses, the CT scan technologists, and the specialists.

LESSONS LEARNED:

- Apply for the DVA White Card as soon as you are advised you have cancer.
- Carry your DVA White Card with you at all times.
- Present the Card before you pay for anything.

...and trying to do the above without the love and support of my wife would have been all but impossible.



The Bloody Beachheads: The Battles of Gona, Buna and Sanananda

One-Day Conference Saturday 4 April 2020
RHSV, 239 A'Beckett St, Melbourne, 3000

Keynote Speaker
Dr Peter Brune – Author of 'A Bastard of a Place'

Register at www.mhhv.org.au



MILITARY HISTORY AND
HERITAGE VICTORIA INC.



As the battle for Guadalcanal dragged on the Japanese advance on the Kokoda Track culminated and they were ordered to 'advance to the rear'. Two delaying defensive positions at Eora Creek and Oivi-Gorari imposed a toll on the Australians' pursuit, but allowed time for the Japanese to complete a labyrinth of bunkers and trenches around the Papuan beach head villages of Gona, Buna and Sanananda.

The Battle for the Beachheads, as it became known, saw an estimated 9,000 Japanese troops in well-prepared positions defend to the death the territory they had occupied for the last six months. MacArthur ordered that the positions be destroyed and over the next two months Australian and US Army troops battled not only the resolute Japanese but swampy terrain, kunai grass, oppressive heat, heavy rain, sickness and disease to complete this difficult and brutal task.

The Battle of the Beachheads was the bloodiest of all the Papuan campaigns. The resolve and tenacity of the Japanese defenders was, to Allied perceptions, unprecedented to the point of being "fanatical", and had not previously been encountered. It was to mark the conduct of further battles throughout the remainder of the war. Securing victory at the Battle for the Beachheads cost Australia 1,261 dead and 2,210 wounded, and the Americans 734 dead and 2,037 wounded.

What was the Japanese plan? Who controlled the sea and the sky? How did the Allies mass forces onto the northern coast of Papua? Was the order to destroy the Japanese positions necessary? How well did the Australian and American forces cooperate in fighting the battle? Were Allied forces pushed beyond their capability? How much did tanks help to break the stalemate? What are the legacies of this little-known chapter of military history?

Please join a group of well-qualified speakers as we examine these and other questions in a one-day conference – *The Bloody Beachheads: The Battles of Gona, Buna and Sanananda* – on **Saturday 4 April 2020**.

The ticket price includes morning and afternoon tea as well as lunch.

Conference Sponsors:



Appointment of the Independent Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention; and a Families Advocate



The Association welcomes the Prime Minister's recent announcements to establish a National Independent Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention, and also a Families Advocate within the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

The National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention will be independent and empowered with 'Royal Commissioner-Like' authorities – ie, to call witnesses, compel evidence and have the remedies available to those who will not cooperate. It will extend to the private sphere, to not-for-profits and charities as well as government departments including Defence and Veterans' Affairs.

The announcement of the appointment of an Independent Commissioner into Veteran Suicide has received mixed responses. Mixed, as some see the announcement as a positive step toward finding answers to the issue of veteran suicide. Others remain adamant that only a Royal Commission is the answer.

As the appointment of the Commissioner for Veteran Suicide is for a statutory authority it will require legislation which has yet to be drafted and placed before Federal Parliament. We are told that government is seeking to appoint a 'temporary

commissioner' pending this legislation. In the meantime, DFWA will call for:

- a. The ADF and DVA to be sensitive to approaches by veterans expressing mental health issues and not maintain a bureaucratic attitude as many have claimed in the recent past.
- b. An assurance that the funding for both the Independent Commissioner statutory Authority and Family Advocate structure is "new money" and not monies diverted from veteran and veteran family support.
- c. The Transition process from the ADF to civilian life and DVA be a matter of high priority particularly for those transitioning for medical reasons.
- d. No further delays responding to recommendations from Senate Inquiry, PC Report and other studies.
- e. No further delays in delivery of Veteran Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy and National Action Plan.
- f. No delays introduced pending delivery of Commissioner's Reports.

The Prime Minister also announced the establishment of the Families Advocate within the Department of Veterans' Affairs. The Families Advocate will assist the families of veterans' dealing with various issues. The Association welcomes this initiative.

Continued from page 22

IS THERE A PATTERN HERE?

- Will be subject of the scrutiny by the (not) Royal Commissioner; (No conflict of interest there then?)
- Were also responsible for design of VEA, MRCA, DRCA legislation and all the subsequent complexities, to the detriment of veterans and the increase in bureaucracy.
- Still have not got agreed, after 30 years of ad hocary, consistent procedures with CSC and the ATO for calculating offsets, tax and lump sums related to DVA payments, CSC Invalidity Benefit payments and Taxation.
- Were rumoured to be consultants to the writers of "Yes Minister".

The establishment of the National Commissioner will require enabling legislation to establish independent governance, selection of a Commissioner, appropriate terms of reference and so on.

The government has a very small majority in the lower house and none in the Senate. This is the time for ESO to speak with one voice, not to praise the government or DVA for doing the job they are paid to do, but to put pressure on the government to do the right thing.

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.
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Zip Front Vest
Navy blue with DFWA embroidered badge. Size range XXL, XL, L, M, S.
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Attractive enamel finish with single pin attachment.
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On a navy blue background.
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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:

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Victoria Barracks Brisbane, Enoggera QLD 4051

Or email your order and payment details to:

qldbranch@dfwa.org.au

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Postcode Phone

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PAYMENT DETAILS:

Internet Banking/Direct Debit:

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Or enclose Cheque/Money Order: \$

Signature:

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

Continued from page 18

AUSTRALIAN INNOVATIONS IN WWI

Innovation in WWI

WWI is often regarded as a 'stagnant war' in which unimaginative Generals sacrificed the lives of their men by pitting their bodies against machine gun bullets. In some ways this is true as the military hierarchy (in almost all armies) was slow to adapt their tactics to match technological advances in weaponry (as their failure to investigate the potential of de Mole's 'tank' illustrates). On the other hand WWI produced a plethora of inventions and innovations that changed the world. The tank, submarine, aircraft, the aircraft carrier, stainless steel, radio

communications, etc and many more products that were developed or spurred on by the titanic struggle fought from 1914-1918.

At the individual level, Australian soldiers demonstrated their ability to adapt to almost any situation by practical innovations to meet every need. Despite modern advances in technology soldiers will continue to require a capability, yet there must be some doubt that Leggo and smartphone skills of the next generation will be sufficient for our survival in the 21st century.

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Photos courtesy of the Australian War Memorial

Continued from page 19

"What about the Reservists?"

sooner than anticipated and for very good reason as Operation Bushfire Assist 2019-2020. However its worthy introduction has highlighted a number of administrative issues and lessons learnt.

The post service review will be very important to cover all the variables of service for national disasters for those in SES or are volunteers anyway and including self employed personnel for payment/reimbursement to be equitable. DRA will maintain a watching brief on this concern.

Finally on a positive note having DRA's National President, Paul Irving, now at the DVA's 'Round Table' (ESORT) has been most worthwhile as we are better informed and appreciated though we still have occasion to ask the entitled question of this article.

On a personal note I leave without any regrets and wish the DFWA continuing success under the guidance of Ian Flawith. I shall always remember the 'camaraderie' afforded me at our DFWA gatherings.

Editor's Note:

Jim Barry wrote this dual article in his capacity as National Immediate Past President of the Defence Reserves Association. Jim's many years of association with the DFWA are much appreciated and the Association thanks him for his considered, pragmatic and sensible contributions to DFWA policy making.

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:			
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ASK RUOK?

or something like this:

"How you travelling?"

No, I'm not OK.

Dig a bit deeper:

"What's been happening?"

"How long has that
been the case?"

"I'm ready to listen
if you want to talk."

Yes, I'm fine.

But your gut says
they're not:

"It's just that you don't seem
your old self lately."

"I'm always here if
you want to chat."

"Is there someone else
you'd rather talk to?"

Listen with an open mind

Encourage action and offer support:

"How can I help?"

"What would help take the pressure off?"

"What do you enjoy doing? Making time for that can really help."

"Have you thought about seeing a professional?"

Make time to check in:

"Let's chat again next week."

Learn the signs and how
to ask at ruok.org.au

RUOK?TM



BRANCH REPORTS Around Australia

NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH

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

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

NEW MEMBERS

Your President and Committee offer a warm welcome to the DFWA family to the following new member who recently joined the NSW Branch:

Mr Riccardo Colucci

VALE

It is with regret that the death of Mr D .A. Roberts is advised.

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)

Branch Members are alerted to a special note from the Branch President to members, included in their copy of Camaraderie.

MEMBERSHIP

The Branch currently has 411 members. A warm welcome to Mrs Enid Morgan and Mrs Christine Sutherland.

THE FUTURE

Members were previously alerted to the decision of your Committee for the Branch to become an ACT Chapter under the NSW Branch, wef 1 July 2020. Members need not be concerned by this course of action. Members will see no change to the support and other activities that the Branch has provided locally for decades.

- Following un-incorporation there will continue to be a DFWA presence in the ACT and surrounding region. The ACT Chapter will continue to provide support to local activities, eg to the DWG, advocacy and welfare etc.
- Current ACT Branch Members will continue to be members of the Association, and be identified as a member of the ACT Chapter of the NSW Branch.

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

Members are asked to read the enclosed flyer and are alerted to a formal vote to be taken by members in late May. Should the vote fail, the Branch will instead wither and die. Your Committee sees the proposed course of action the only realistic option that can be taken.

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

A PLAN OFTEN DOES NOT SURVIVE THE FIRST SHOT!

The DFWAQ Re-organisation Plan for Qld member management and Assets to be transferred to DFWA National when DFWAQ is wound up has fallen over. ACT Branch was planning to do same and was working on some changes to the DFWA National Constitution to allow it to manage individual members. National only manages its own members, ie the office bearers of the National Executive and other appointments. Due diligence revealed that the constitutional changes to allow it to manage individual members were so many and complex that they were impracticable.

ACT and Qld have entered discussions with NSW Branch to take over the management of ACT and Qld. DFWA members. There will still be some “local management” of DFWA operations, probably operating as ACT Chapter and Qld Chapter. These Chapters would have access to separate chapter bank accounts, provision for chapter representatives on the Branch Committee which would have overall management responsibility. As Qld would still in essence continue to operate and provide services, all Qld assets would be transferred to NSW and ringfenced for Qld chapter use.

At the same time as this is going on, there is a major redevelopment of the DFWA National website using proven

software systems widely used in the not-for-profit sector. It features many labour saving capabilities, especially in membership management but also for general office bearer tasks. This can be used by all Branches from anywhere with internet access.

With the change to the original plan, the capabilities of the new system and possibility of losing access to BEST grants, the Qld Committee is reviewing the decision to wind-up and looking at ways of continuing as an incorporated entity. If the latter occurs it will require some changes to the Qld constitution which is currently written around a pencil and paper approach to management and is not flexible enough to allow for some key new IT support.

Funding. We received a grant from the Anzac Trust Fund to recoup the written off loan amount of approx. \$50k related to veteran legal fees. The veteran refused to pay back the loan back as agreed. While the case was lost due to Defence dirty tricks at last minute, the veteran was later given an ex-gratia payment from Defence. Unfortunately, the grant of \$4750 does not replenish the hole in our finances.

SUPPORT TO VETERANS AND VETERAN FAMILIES

Advocacy Support. We continue to provide Advocacy support. Wally Buldo, our Treasurer, provides Level 2/3 support, seeing clients at Victoria Barracks and from home. Advocate Clem Russell double hats with RAR Association with us and operates from Enoggera Barracks.

AAT Cases. At time of writing this report, there has been no decision on the AAT cases concerning Veterans vs the Commissioner of Taxation regarding the taxation of DFRDB and MSBS Invalidation Benefits paid to those medically discharged from the ADF.

Double Taxation of DFRDB Commuted Lump Sum. One of the side cases of the AAT cases mentioned in the previous paragraph concerned a veteran who discharged at own request and received a commuted lump sum. He subsequently obtained a retrospective medical discharge and became entitled to a DFRDB Class A Invalidation Benefit, backdated about 12 years. This involved some lengthy calculations. First the amount of Invalidly Benefits backdated had to be calculated. (It is considerably more than normal DFRDB super payments.) The total DFRDB superannuation payments since discharge date, had to be calculated (and the tax paid) The total amount of commutation lump sum and tax associated with that had to be calculated. Now throw in some DVA Incapacity payments. The veteran claimed he had been overtaxed by about \$4500 due to mistakes in calculations. This was agreed with e ATO. During the hearing, as more discoveries were

made with the ATO and DFRDB, the veteran increased the claim to about \$40000. Agreement between ATO and the veteran was nearly formalised in court, but then CSC managers of DFRDB raised objections and held matters up. The Judge was about to subpoena CSC to explain their stalling. There was a bit of a standoff. In any event, the Australian Government Solicitor then “consulted widely” with other departments and, surprise, surprise, the ATO withdrew their agreement and opposed the \$40000 claim. The AAT decision will also address this issue.

We are still expecting a decision in February and will have it published in eNews.

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:	0412 574 444 or email sapresident@dfwa.org.au

We welcome two new members Professor Ben Wadham from Flinders University and Mark Freer who is a retired Barrister. Both are veterans and with their knowledge will have a positive impact to our increasing talent pot. We hope they accept a position on the committee.

On the 12 Feb we will be attending Sacred Hart College for the presentation of the Michal Herbert Bursary. Michal was the pilot of a Canberra bomber that was shot down during a mission over South Viet Nam. Both he and his Navigator were killed and their bodies were not found for some time. Michal was student from the college. The Bursary was funded by a number of ESOs and they will be represented at this gathering.

Work continues with the group who are attempting to organise a Hub at the old Repatriation Hospital. At this time there is a lot of positive action from the State Government

and other interested parties. We have an involvement with this venture.

We are also involved with the Hub located at the Jamie Lancôme Centre. David Everett has been successful in acquiring long term accommodation for a number of male and female veterans. He is also assisting in a number of other ventures and helping them with raising money. This Hub works directly for veterans.

Over the last 10 months we have been in talks with a number of staff from the Flinders University regarding a host of matters involving veterans health and transition. These talks have been very successful and we now have a working party that is going to enhance these matters and take a lead at helping. At this time we are not in a position to fully explain to you the exact outcomes but this is going to be a game changer. There are more medical and Academic coming on board as they also consider what we trying to achieve is something positive. As a result of this we have been asked by a Psychiatrist who has 15 staff and only take on Military, Police and first responders to attend one of his secessions and explain our thoughts and actions.

David Lyas OAM our Secretary is trying to organise a concert for the Bushfire victims. He has a lot of knowledge in this area and has put together a group who are organising the artists who have offered their services for free. There have been some venues that have also made offers of assistance. He is still talking with the State Government and should we get the assistance this will raise money for not just veterans and their families but for the whole community.

We continue to liaise with the other ESOs and the 3 Services along with Government Departments.

Please follow us on our Facebook page to keep up to date with our activities.

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

MEMBERSHIP

As at the end of last year Branch membership was 424 being 161 Ordinary Members (full annual fee paying); 40 Ordinary Members (half annual fee paying); 4 Associate Members (individual); 4 Associate Members (Organisation); 211 Life Members; 3 Honorary Life Members; and 1 Honorary Member.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Branch's finances continue to remain in a reasonable position.

DIARY DATES

The remaining Branch Executive Committee meetings for 2020 are:

Wednesday 27 May – this will also be the Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 26 August

Wednesday 25 November

Branch Executive Committee meetings are normally held at the Mail Exchange Hotel, corner Burke and Spencer Street, Melbourne commencing at 11.00 am.

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 members with their copy of Camaraderie.

MEMBERSHIP

As at 6 February 2020 the WA Branch had 242 members, of whom 35 are in arrears since July last year. We are aware that two members have paid their subs, but their EFT payment came without a name. Please ensure you identify yourself when making a payment. We have 165 members who pay their subs annually and 77 life members.

PTSD DOG TRAINING

The Branch is still assisting two veterans (one man and one woman) with PTSD assistance dogs. Both owners and dogs have now received their Public Access Test (PAT) certificate which enables the dog to assist their owner in public places. One dog has even been trained to seek help from the nurse's station when his owner is in hospital, and accompanies his owner to many medical appointments, meaning his owner is in a calmer state and consequently more receptive to treatment. We expect expenditure this year to be about \$4,000, money we have obtained via a grant from the ANZAC Day Trust Fund.

ASSISTANCE TO VETERAN IN THAILAND

Last November the Australian Embassy in Bangkok contacted the Branch to provide assistance to a veteran living in northern Thailand to return to Australia for medical treatment. The Branch paid for his airfare and arranged accommodation for him at Beacon House in Perth, which is run by the Salvation Army. We put him in contact with DVA and also arranged urgent medical treatment. The man returned to Thailand after

six days, but he did refund the Branch the majority of the funds we had outlaid.

MARK WAINWRIGHT RETIRES

Over the years Mark Wainwright has helped many hundreds of veterans with their claims with DVA and represented countless more at various appeals tribunals. Despite his own medical difficulties, Mark continued to provide support and encouragement to his clients, often from his hospital bed! Time and ill health finally caught up with Mark, and he retired from advocacy work in December. The Branch presented Mark with a DFWA Certificate of Meritorious Service at the annual Christmas Lunch. Unfortunately, with Mark's retirement the Branch no longer has any qualified advocates. If you require the assistance of an advocate, please contact the office and we will find someone for you.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

A very successful Christmas lunch was held in December under the constrained conditions of the temporary building at RAAFA Bull Creek. Steve Lucks did an excellent job selling raffle tickets (and thanks to everyone who donated prizes). We presented Mark Wainwright with a Meritorious Service Certificate, we held a Christmas quiz, which caused much discussion and laughter and generally had a really good time.

Next December we'll be in the new building.

DIARY DATES

Thursday 7 May: Visit to a private military museum (numbers limited - no guests)

Wednesday 2 September: AGM at RAAFA Bull Creek

Thursday 10 December: Christmas Lunch at RAAFA Bull Creek



WA Branch President Richard Usher presents Mark Wainwright a DFWA Certificate of Meritorious Service



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 !





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or serving member
of the Australian
Defence Force entry
to the Museum
is on us

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Australian Defence Force.

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

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

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



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