



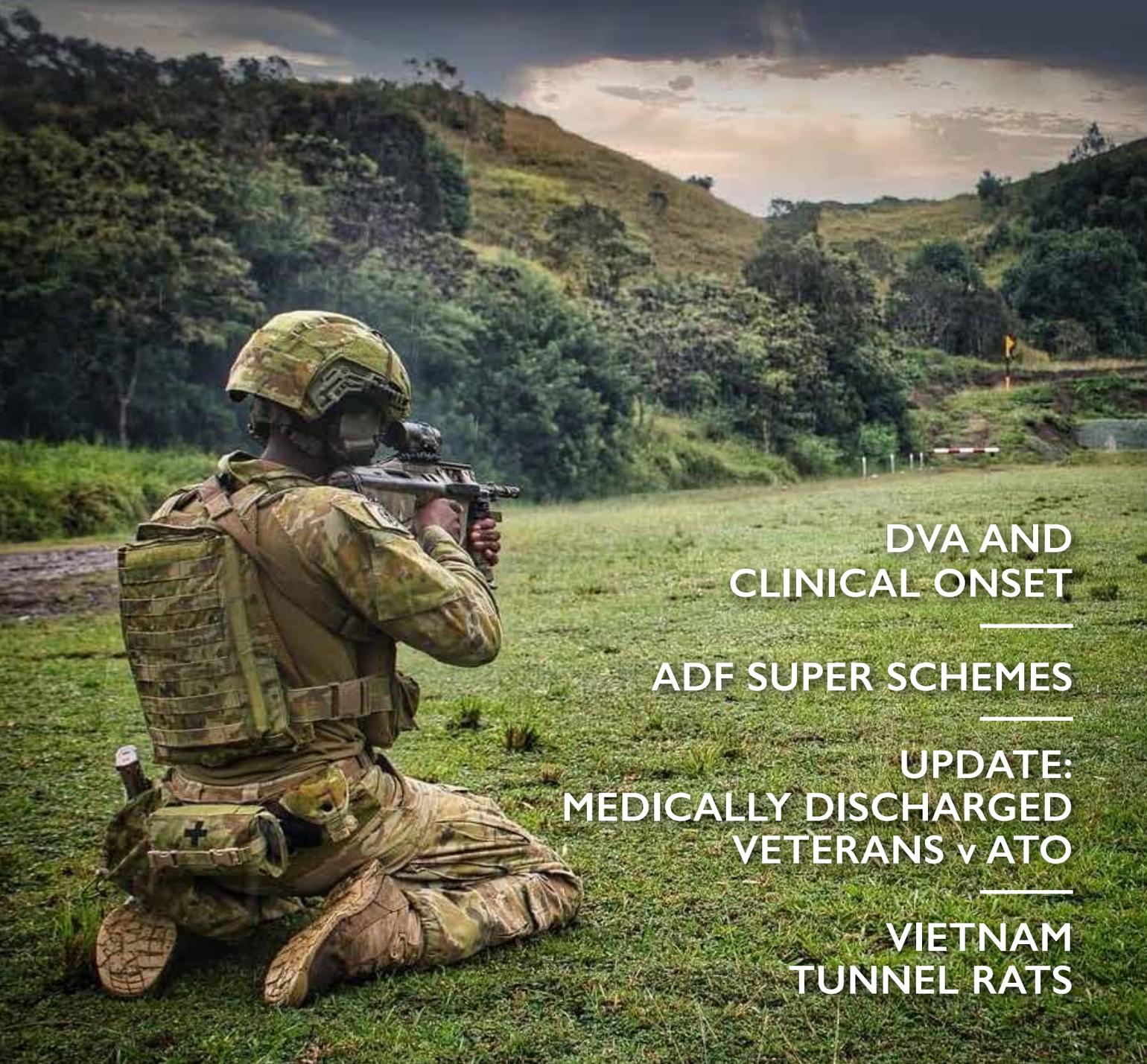
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CAMARADERIE

Second Edition 2022

VOL. 53 NO. 2



DVA AND
CLINICAL ONSET

ADF SUPER SCHEMES

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THE OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION



Vol. 53. No. 2 Second Edition 2022

PROUDLY SERVING MEMBERS OF THE ADF AND THEIR FAMILIES SINCE 1959

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Please do not contact the Editor for membership enquiries. Membership enquiries should be directed to your State Branch – see page 4.

Camaraderie is produced with the object of keeping members, their families and the broader ADF and veteran community informed of the issues being addressed by DFVA on their behalf.

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

Readers 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.

Readers 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 3 November 2022.

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

Sourcing articles for *Camaraderie* can be difficult and I am grateful for the regular contributors who provide articles. Should any reader have any suggestions I am all ears! Drop me a line anytime at editor@dfwa.org.au

Les Bienkiewicz

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FRONT COVER

Australian Army soldiers from 6th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment (6 RAR), joined New Zealand Army and the French Armed Forces personnel for Exercise Tagato Toa 2022 in New Caledonia from 20 April to 10 May 2022.

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. Residents in the ACT are invited to join the ACT Chapter of the NSW 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.

PLEASE DONATE TO DFWA

The DFWA needs your (tax deductible) financial support to enable it to continue its good works in supporting ADF members, veterans and their families. Donations can be made simply by going online to **dfwa.org.au/donate**

Our thanks to recent donations received from George Salmon, Brian Allen, Cameron Leschke, Barry Tinkler, Lee Greville, Paul Asbury, David Wallis and Don Limn

NATIONAL OFFICE ROUNDUP (February - June 2022)



THE PERIOD SINCE the first edition this year of Camaraderie has to be memorable in a number of respects, not the least of which includes the somewhat expected Federal election result held on 21 May 2022. An immense task awaits Australia's Labor's national leadership, including that of the Defence Minister and the two Ministers appointed to the Veteran Affairs portfolios. Expectations

are high not only in the general community but equally in the veterans' community.

After nine years in opposition during which there were regular claims to be able to do better than the incumbents, now is the new Government's time to prove their mettle to deliver. Yes of course on such key Labor campaign issues as more action on climate change and on an effective Integrity Commission. But a big 'YES' also on the promise to 'deliver a package of practical support measures to improve the welfare of veterans and their families'.

As a reminder to all, that so-to-speak 'PACKAGE' included the following key elements:

- Cutting waiting times and the backlog of compensation claims by funding an extra 500 staff at DVA, and abolishing staffing caps which stopped more hirings.
- Delivering a network of 10 one-stop-shop veteran hubs in areas with significant defence and veteran communities, the hubs offering health and mental health services, wellbeing support, advocacy, and employment and housing advice.
- Boosting home ownership for service men and women, and for veterans, by expanding the eligibility criteria for the Defence Home Ownership Assistance Scheme.
- Increasing by \$1,000 the annual rate of the TPI Payment for eligible disabled veterans.
- Delivering a comprehensive veteran employment program to provide greater support to defence members as they transition to civilian life.
- Delivering a defence and veteran family engagement and support strategy to provide greater support to military families.
- Delivering more emergency housing for veterans experiencing homelessness through Labor's Housing Australia Future Fund.

Labor's 'PACKAGE' offers initiatives that are worthy of praise, particularly the one where steps are to be taken to improving claims processing times. But many veterans would nonetheless opine that enough is missing to make them wonder whether in opposition Labor listened to the litany of grievances almost all ESOs have for years sought redress. The 'PACKAGE' as it stands does not redress the following:

- Fair indexation and redress of all issues surrounding military superannuation, including DFRDB commutation, MSBS and reversionary benefits for widows/widowers.
- Redress of the inadequacies in veterans' disability compensation payments for the TPI/Special Rate - the 'economic loss' component of the payment should be benchmarked to the tax adjusted minimum wage.
- The Veteran White Card should be provided to all Reservists.
- There should be Government financial support to accredited not-for-profit ESOs in assisting veterans and their families – all are volunteer-based entities.
- DVA should administer hearing services to gold and white card holders with accepted hearing condition, including development and application of guidelines.
- Inclusion of a 'No-Disadvantage' Provision in the Act that legislated the Defence Veterans Covenant.

The new Labor Government is also encouraged to re-affirm its previous promises to support and adequately resource DFWA so it could better represent and be able to support the men and women of the ADF in a highly professional manner.

That undertaking was first publicly announced by the then Shadow Defence Minister, Senator Stephen Conroy, during a Press Club debate on 16 June 2016. Labor's offer of tangible support involved a \$100,000 per annum grant to DFWA. The grant was in recognition that DFWA served a valued representative role in safeguarding the conditions of service of ADF members and represented their interests at Defence Force Remuneration Tribunal hearings.

Labor's recognition and support of the representative work of DFWA on behalf of the serving men and women of the ADF has been re-enforced on a regular basis by successive Chiefs of the Defence Force. The current CDF has stated inter alia:

"...DFWA provides consistent, high quality advice on issues ranging across remuneration, superannuation, compensation and conditions of service issues. It also provides a strong voice for current and previous serving ADF personnel..."

Before closing, I extend thanks to those members and friends of DFWA who made donations during the period which were gratefully received. The work the Association requires resources beyond what membership dues alone can bring in.

A big thanks also to the Bradford Exchange whose generous and welcome sponsorship helps immeasurably to ease the financial pressures on DFWA to operate. Their advertisement is in the pages of this Camaraderie. Please support them if in need of high quality collectable memorabilia for personal use or as a gift that marks commemorative occasions.

Finally, if you are not a member of DFWA, or if you are currently a 'Virtual Member', please consider joining as an 'Ordinary Member'. Please know that DFWA is there for you. Your feedback on any issue of concern is always welcome.

Alf Jaugietis

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S PEN



WHAT CHANCE OF ANY STABILITY and consistent veterans' policy formulation when the average tenure over the last six years of any Minister holding the Veterans Affairs portfolio has been not much more than 12 months. In that period, one short-tenured Minister lasted just 68 days in the portfolio.

With the recent change in Government from the Coalition to Labor, inevitable Ministerial churn

is set to continue. No wonder the paucity and meagre policy substance that was released by both major parties leading into the recent Federal election. Possibly taking a lead from them, none of the minor parties seemed at all interested in adding a 'veterans' element to their policy pronouncements.

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

And so, we welcome and acknowledge the new Labor Government Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel, Mr Matt Keogh MP. Mr Keogh was first elected to the House of Representatives as the Member for Burt, Western Australia in 2016, and previously held several Shadow Minister positions, including as the Shadow Minister for Defence Industry. He has also served in a wide range of Parliamentary Committees.

Mr Keogh has a strong legal background specialising in corporate crime, and before entering Federal politics, worked in both the public and private sector, including as a Prosecutor at the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions. He was also awarded the Australian Young Lawyer of the Year by the Law Council of Australia in 2009.

The Prime Minister has also announced that the Hon Matt Thistlethwaite MP will be appointed Assistant Minister for Veterans' Affairs as well as Assistant Minister for Defence and Assistant Minister for the Republic. We also welcome Barnaby Joyce as the new shadow Minister for Veterans' Affairs.

DFWA looks forward to working in a collaborative and positive manner with the new Minister, and indeed with all

members of the new Parliament, to represent and provide a national voice for serving and ex-serving members of the ADF, their families, civilian employees and businesses and industries that support the ADF.

DFWA strongly suggests that one of the first issues the Minister should address is to extend non-liability health care (NLHC) to all Defence Reservists. Under existing NLHC arrangements current and former full-time members of the ADF are eligible to receive free mental health treatment. This includes reservists who have at least one day of continuous full-time service (CFTS). Reservists who do not meet this criterion, regardless of their length of service in the ADF, are excluded from applying for NLHC.

Many of these Reservists have lengthy periods of service in the ADF, sometimes over 40 years, but have not been required, or given an opportunity, to undertake a period of CFTS. Extending NLHC to all Reservists would remove administrative and financial barriers to accessing mental health care for past and present Defence Force members and will allow them to seek appropriate and immediate treatment.

Access to DVA funded mental health care under the provision of NLHC, would be a significant measure toward ensuring the mental health and well-being of all Defence Reservists, as has been argued during the evidence given to the current Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide. This would demonstrate the Government's commitment to the mental health and well-being of all current and former ADF personnel.

When you are ready Minister, DFWA is standing by to brief you on this significant and topical issue. We ask that you not delay in approaching DFWA, to seek our views on this critical matter and other veteran-related issues.

Late in 2021, the then government announced its intention to introduce retrospective legislation in February 2022, to overcome problems with the "Douglas Decision". This Federal Court decision concerned the tax treatment of Invalidity Benefits provided by the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) scheme and Military Superannuation and Benefits Scheme (MSBS) to veterans compulsorily discharged from the ADF on medical grounds.

DFWA raised concerns with the government regarding the legislation and was then invited to comment on the exposure draft legislation provided by Treasury (December-January). Subsequently, the government failed to introduce the intended legislation as planned. DFWA sought and gained assurances from both the then minister for Veterans' Affairs and shadow minister Shayne Neumann MP, that there would be further

consultation with DFWA and the veteran community generally, before any move to reintroduce the legislation, or form of it, post-election. There are certainly issues to be worked through and DFWA is keen to assist.

In early April 2022, DFWA became aware of a Federal Court case – *Boys v Repatriation Commission* – that raised a red flag for us. The case was in relation to a Veterans Entitlement Act claim to have a degenerative neck condition accepted as service related.

The Repatriation Commission had successfully argued that the onset of the veteran's condition was the date he had had an x-ray, used to confirm the diagnosis, rather than when his medical file (and expert opinion) indicated he had the condition.

The argument successfully put forward by the Repatriation Commission misinterprets the Statement of Principles (which outline the factors required for a condition to be accepted as service related) by confusing the date of "diagnosis" and

"clinical onset". This interpretation goes against established law and internal DVA policies.

This is obviously a bad outcome for an individual veteran but is also concerning for the wider veteran community. Many Statements of Principle have similar wording. Does this case represent a wider issue within DVA and the Repatriation Commission, for both delegates and court litigation?

With Mr Boys' permission, I recently wrote to the Secretary of DVA seeking remedial action in this case. I also requested action be taken to ensure that delegate decisions related to clinical onset and diagnosis conform to established policy. A reply is awaited.

I encourage you to read the full article in this edition and to follow updates on the DFWA website.

Ian Flawith
Acting National President, DFWA

BOOK REVIEW:

How to Research and Honour our Returned War Heroes - Ian D. Burrett

Ian Burrett's tribute to his father, Lt Col Athol Frederick (Joe) Burrett, is a work of love. Love not only for his father but for the generations of men and women who have served Australia so surely and proudly for over 140 years.

Ian, as the son of an original ANZAC provides the reader with graphic history lessons. Lessons in the courage and the tragedy that symbolises the nation's involvement in both war and military service generally. He is honest in highlighting detail that is not often spoken of, such as the occurrence of VD and its debilitating impact on the availability of men for 'the front'. Unlike many he tells us that Gallipoli was not a 'defeat'. Instead, he emphasises the number of Turkish troops killed and maimed which affected that country's ability to continue to prosecute the war. A thought well worth consideration.

The book's central theme is the recognition of service. It proffers that recognition should be accorded to all those who have served. That recognition should be affected in public memorials across the country. There are guidelines that inform communities on how to research and recognise service. This is a topical issue today.



Lt Col Athol Frederick (Joe) Burrett DSO MID would be gratified that his son, "a proud Aussie" has written so frankly and at times emotionally about the recognition of (military) service.

The book is obtainable through Booktopia at - www.booktopia.com.au/search



EDITOR'S NOTE: what follows has been "doing the rounds" and of course its accuracy cannot be verified. However, it's worth a read and a smile....

THE BRITS HAVE a certain style... and meticulous to a tee!! Can't say UK Civil Servants have entirely lost their sense of humour:

Lt. Colonel Robert Maclaren retired from the British Army in 2001 after a long fulfilling career. On the day that he retired he received a letter from the Personnel Department of the Ministry of Defence setting out details of his pension and, in particular, the tax-free 'lump sum' award, (based upon completed years of service), that he would receive in addition to his monthly pension.

The letter read...

Dear Lt. Colonel Maclaren,

We write to confirm that you retired from the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards on 1st March 2001 at the rank of Lt Colonel, having been commissioned into the British Army at Edinburgh Castle as a 2nd Lieutenant on 1st February 1366. Accordingly your lump sum payment, based on years served, has been calculated as £68,500. You will receive a cheque for this amount in due course. Yours sincerely, Army Paymaster".

Col Maclaren replied;

"Dear Paymaster,

Thank you for your recent letter confirming that I served as an officer in the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards between 1st February 1366 and 1st March 2001 – a total period of 635 years and 1 month. I note however that you have calculated my lump sum to be £68,500, which seems to be considerably less than it should be bearing in mind my length of service since I received my commission from King Edward III. By my calculation, allowing for interest payments and currency fluctuations, my lump sum should actually be £6,427,586,619.47p. I look forward to receiving a cheque for this amount in due course.

Yours sincerely, Robert Maclaren (Lt Col Retd)".

A month passed by and then in early April, a stout manilla envelope from the Ministry of Defence in Edinburgh dropped through Col Maclaren's letter box, it read...

"Dear Lt Colonel Maclaren,

We have reviewed the circumstances of your case as outlined in your recent letter to us dated 8th March inst. We do indeed confirm that you were commissioned into the Royal Scots Dragoon Guards by King Edward III at Edinburgh Castle on 1st February 1366, and that you served continuously for the following 635 years and 1 month. We have re-calculated your pension and have pleasure in confirming that the lump sum payment due to you is indeed £6,427,586,619.47p. However, We also note that according to our records you are the only surviving officer who had command responsibility during the following campaigns and battles;

The Wars of the Roses 1455 -1485 (Including the battles of Bosworth Field, Barnet and Towton) The Civil War 1642 -1651 (Including the battles Edge Hill, Naseby and the conquest of Ireland) The Napoleonic War 1803 – 1815 (including the battle of Waterloo and the Peninsular War) The Crimean War (1853 – 1856) (including the battle of Sevastopol and the Charge of the Light Brigade) The Boer War (1899 -1902).

We would therefore wish to know what happened to the following, which do not appear to have been returned to Stores by you on completion of operations:.

9765 Cannon

26,785 Swords

12,889 Pikes

127,345 Rifles (with bayonets)

8,987 horses (fully kitted).

Plus three complete marching bands with instruments and banners.

We have calculated the total cost of these items and they amount to £6,427,518.119.47p. We have therefore subtracted this sum from your lump sum, leaving a residual amount of £68,500, for which you will receive a cheque in due course..

Yours sincerely . . ."

Becoming a LEGATEE

THE SCOTT BIDDELL STORY



“For me, I saw becoming a Legatee as an extension of my ADF service...”

Warrant Officer Scott Biddell had been looking for a volunteer opportunity that aligned with his RAAF values, so it was timely when a military mate introduced him to Legacy.

As a second-generation serviceman with over three decades of dedication to the ADF, Scott strongly identified with the military service values, culture and commitment of Legacy in serving our veterans' families.

“We as defence members become almost like a family unit, and it's the concept of leaving no man behind. You're there to support those people no matter what,” he said.

Because Scott knew this to be the founding philosophy of Legacy – ‘look after the missus and kids for me’ – he felt becoming a Legatee would fulfil his personal intent to assist the families of those who gave their life, or health, in service to our country.

“There is a certain level of fulfilment that comes from going above and beyond, and I see it as an extension of my ADF service,” he said.

“Legacy keeps people together and supports those who have, in their own way, also made sacrifices for the Defence Force.”

Scott was inducted as a Legatee at Sydney Legacy's Hawkesbury Sub-Division and gives what time he can to supporting widows and families in his local community. Besides his routine of checking in with widows and making sure they aren't feeling isolated or experiencing any difficulties living independently, one of Scott's most rewarding efforts has been in supporting a young 13-yr-old whose father (a veteran) tragically passed away from a heart attack.

“This boy was at a juncture in his education where reassurance and confidence to go forward was hugely important'. With his Dad gone, Scott could see the teenager was looking for another senior male he could talk to about how to navigate his way through high school.

“I spoke to him on the phone a week before he started high school, and he had a lot of trepidation. Then I contacted him a week later, and he made a couple of friends, and things were looking pretty good,” Scott said.

‘Sometimes just being a good listener can make a difference to families who are missing a partner or parent, and as a Legatee it's so gratifying to be that sounding board’.

While Scott has a service background, it's not a pre-requisite to becoming a Legatee.

Legacy welcomes mature volunteers from all walks of life who can bring broad-based life skills and empathy in caring for Legacy families.

If you're interested in knowing more about becoming a Legatee, simply contact Legacy Australia at legacy.com.au/legatee.

THE BOYS CASE

- Date of Clinical Onset Gone Wrong!

by
CHRIS LOWIS

A MARCH 2022 DECISION of the Federal Court – Boys v Repatriation Commission – found that the date of clinical onset of a degenerative neck condition was the date the veteran had the x-ray that was used to diagnose the illness.

This is contrary to DVA policy and existing law regarding clinical onset and diagnosis. How did it go wrong?

BACKGROUND

During Mr Boys' ADF service he was involved in three (service related) vehicle accidents between 1981-83.

Mr Boys was diagnosed with cervical spondylosis in 2014, following x-rays that showed degenerative change. Mr Boys' medical expert evidence was that he had well established symptomatic cervical spondylosis, probably before but certainly by, his medical board examination of 25 October 1985.

Mr Boys submitted Veteran Entitlement Act claims though DVA, to have cervical spondylosis accepted as a service-related condition. His claim was initially rejected, and Mr Boys has navigated the appeals process to the Federal Court.

FEDERAL COURT DECISION

In the Federal Court, the Repatriation Commission argued that according to the statement of principles, the clinical onset of Mr Boys' cervical spondylosis was the date in 2014 when he had x-rays showing degenerative change.

The relevant statement of principles says:

- (b) *For the purposes of this Statement of Principles, "cervical spondylosis" means a degenerative joint disorder affecting the cervical vertebrae or intervertebral discs with:*
 - (i) *clinical manifestations of local pain and stiffness, or symptoms and signs of cervical cord or cervical nerve root compression; and*
 - (ii) *imaging evidence of degenerative change, including disc space narrowing or osteophytes.*

Based on the Repatriation Commission's argument, the Federal Court found that the date of onset of Mr Boys' cervical spondylosis was in 2014, which meant that it was not service related.

WHY IS THIS WRONG?

This is an absurd and dangerous interpretation of the statement of principles. It confuses clinical onset and diagnosis.

A Legal Precedent Already Exists

In 2011, the Full Federal Court – which sets precedents for the court and lower courts – found in *Kaluza v Repatriation Commission*, that the distinction between clinical onset and diagnosis is clear:

...a person might say 'I noticed [symptoms] in March last year but I didn't see a doctor until July'. If a doctor can say from the onset of those symptoms in March that that indicates the presence of disease at that time, that is the date of clinical onset.

[Kaluza v Repatriation Commission](#)

DVA POLICY

The DVA Policy Manual – the “Consolidated Library of Information and Knowledge (CLIK)” covers this issue and makes it clear that clinical onset and diagnosis are two different concepts. Usefully, the CLIK provides a case study, stating:

A diagnosis for a specified condition is confirmed by a test result. However, symptoms consistent with the diagnosis have been present in the claimant in the three months prior to the test. Based on this information, the date of clinical onset would be three months prior to the test.

[CLIK Policy Manual 3.4.4—Establishing Clinical Onset and/or Worsening](#)

In 2018, the Chief Health Officer and Principal Medical Advisor of DVA, Professor Ian Gardner, highlighted that DVA delegates sometimes mistake date of confirmation of diagnosis, with clinical onset. He specifically highlights cervical spondylosis as a condition that delegates frequently make this mistake:

The bottom line: DVA delegates should not be using the date of imaging evidence as the [clinical onset]. They

should be getting medical advice from our Contracted Medical Advisers or the veteran's own Treating Doctor as to when the clinical onset occurred. In most cases this will be some time before the date when the confirmatory imaging evidence was first obtained.

[VetAffairs Vol 34 \(4\) Summer Edition p7—Clarifying 'Clinical Onset'; More on Prostate Cancer](#)

Professor Gardner also said

There have been some cases within DVA where decisions by delegates have been inconsistent in this arena, and our policy people have run a workshop and issued informal guidance to delegates to help overcome this issue.

It is not just common sense that says in most cases clinical onset and diagnosis are different things; it is established law and DVA policy.

WHAT NOW?

Aside from the serious and unnecessary impact on—and expense to—a veteran, this case raises some serious questions:

- Why has DVA/the Repatriation Commission run a litigation that is both counter to its own policy and to existing precedential case law?
- Has the Repatriation Commission acted as a model litigant in the Boys case?
- How is this not a failure of governance, and quality assurance and control, within DVA and the Repatriation Commission?

DFWA has contacted the Secretary of DVA, Liz Cosson, seeking remedial action in this case. DFWA also requested action be taken to ensure that delegate decisions related to clinical onset and diagnosis conform to established policy. A reply is awaited.

At the time of writing, Mr Boys legal team has filed an appeal in the Federal Court. DFWA will watch with keen interest as this case progresses, particularly the approach taken by the Repatriation Commission.

CSC PENSION INCREASE!

The Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) has advised that in line with the CPI increase, the June CPI pension increase will be 3.5%. This covers the inflation figures the six months till end of March 2022. This especially affects DFRDB pension recipients.

The increase is more than most wage earners are getting per year... and the way things are headed, the January increase might be similar!



CALL FOR INFORMATION

INDIGENOUS SAILORS KIA

A researcher for the Indigenous History Section of the Australian War Memorial has contacted us to ask whether we are aware of any indigenous sailors who were ever killed in action.

If you have any information in this regard please contact:

Robert Muscat

President – Military History Society of New South Wales

Mobile: 0419 698 783; PO Box 929, Rozelle NSW 2039; www.militaryhistorynsw.com.au



- Congratulations -

MARK WAINWRIGHT

Congratulations again to WA Branch stalwart Mark Wainwright who was awarded an OAM in the Australia Day Honours list for his service to service to veterans. He received his medal from the WA Governor, Kim Beazley AC, and was accompanied at the investiture by his wife Cathy and daughter Miriam.



PRODUCTIVITY REPORT

COMPENSATION AND REHABILITATION FOR VETERANS

In March 2018, the Prime Minister announced that the Productivity Commission was to inquire into whether the system of compensation and rehabilitation for veterans (Serving and Ex-serving Australian Defence Force members) is fit for purpose, now and into the future.

THE REPORT

The report of the inquiry – *A Better Way to Support Veterans* – was sent to Government on 27 June 2019 and released publicly on 04 July 2019. The report sets out the Commission's findings and recommendations on a better way to support veterans.

The key message of this report is that despite recent improvements to the system, the current veterans' compensation and rehabilitation system requires fundamental reform.

TRACKING REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION

There are 69 recommendations in the report. DFWA is tracking the Government's progress at implementing (or otherwise) each of the recommendations of report.

There have only been a few changes in recent months as the current Royal Commission has put things on hold. We have been advised that:

The Government will finalise any outstanding matters from the Productivity Commission report at the completion of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

Our update can be found on the DFWA website.

VALE

Group Captain Robert John Shortridge (Rtd)

12 February 1951 – 15 February 2022

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT – DFWA QUEENSLAND



DFWA recently farewelled it's long serving and stalwart Rob Shortridge. Rob was Melbourne born and was always bent on a Service career. He joined the RAAF on 8 January 1970 and served in and around Melbourne, RAAF Glenbrook near Sydney, Canberra, Darwin and ended his regular service at Amberley on 5 February 2006. His operational service included Timor, two consecutive tours from Melbourne as a UN Observer in the Sinai and in 2003, Baghdad.

When Rob left the RAAF, he became very involved in DFWA Qld. Rob was Vice President until 2010, when he was elected Qld President. He thrived in that role for six years. He then continued to serve as Executive Vice President until his death.

Rob was appointed to the Qld Veterans Advisory Council (QVAC) established to provide veteran advice to the Queensland Government Office for Veterans, which is part of the Department of Premier and Cabinet. He was also the DFWA representative on the Qld ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee (the oldest in Australia) responsible for the annual Dawn Service in Brisbane.

Rob was a forthright and strong advocate on veteran matters in many forums, the DVA Qld Consultative Forum, the Qld Forum of Ex-service Organisations, the Combat Support

Association and his local Greenbank RSL Sub-Branch meetings where he vocally persevered on many issues in face of disinterest.

DFWA National President, Kel Ryan wrote:

"Browsing through the extensive correspondence generated by Rob Shortridge has highlighted for me the extent of the loss his death means for the veteran community. Considered, incisive

and to the point. The point was all too often to correct a bureaucratic or legislative shortcoming. Never afraid to call out incompetence yet also ready to acknowledge the positives in an opposing argument. Rob's contribution was premised on a deep understanding of the issues we face, a flair for the use of the English language and a no nonsense turn of phrase.

Rob was a good man, a caring individual who contributed willingly where others are mute on issues. Were there more of Rob's ilk we would all be the better."

Rest in Peace Rob. You will be sadly missed. Lest We Forget.

A more detailed obituary is available on the Qld DFWA Branch insert Hotline.

Help DFWA Help Veterans

CONSIDER DONATING!

Online at : dfwa.org.au/donate



FREE SUPPORT TO ENGAGE WITH THE ROYAL COMMISSION INTO DEFENCE AND VETERAN SUICIDE



THE ROYAL COMMISSION into Defence and Veteran Suicide ('the Royal Commission') has been holding hearings since November 2021 and has now been extended to produce their final report in June 2024. Submissions can be accepted up to October 2023 and a private session with a Commissioner can be requested until June 2023, though these sessions will be held up to December 2023. The success of this inquiry relies on hearing from people with lived experience in the Defence and veteran community.

The Commissioners have received over 1,500 submissions so far and held hearings in Brisbane, Sydney and Canberra. Further hearings this year are scheduled for Townsville, Hobart and Darwin and hearings in other locations will be scheduled for next year.

The Commissioners are set to produce an interim report by August this year, with their urgent and immediate recommendations. A final report is due in June 2024, with the Commissioners' final recommendations. These recommendations are informed by the evidence provided by members of the community and experts, and their questioning of senior members of ADF and the Department of Veterans Affairs.

We encourage defence members, veterans, and their families to engage with the Royal Commission, as your experience can help fix the problems in the Australian Defence Force. The Commissioners have repeatedly talked about the importance of hearing from people with experience of the stresses and poor mental health outcomes from their ADF service and transition to civilian life. It is these experiences that focus the

Royal Commissioners attention on where the problems are and give them the questions to put to ADF, DVA and other Government witnesses.

To assist those who wish to engage with the Royal Commission, the Defence and Veterans Legal Service (DAVLS) has been set up to provide trauma-informed and culturally sensitive support. The DAVLS service is provided by National Legal Aid, and is independent of Defence, the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Royal Commission.

DAVLS provides independent, free legal advice and support to anybody considering sharing their experiences with the Royal Commission. DAVLS assists current and ex-serving members of the ADF, their families, carers and supporters to share their experiences safely. DAVLS can advise on Commission processes and your rights and protections, including options for how you share your story and recommendations, while keeping them confidential or anonymous. DAVLS also provides assistance with preparing submissions or in booking a private session.

To contact the Defence and Veterans Legal Service call: 1800 33 1800

www.defenceveteranslegalservice.org.au

EMAIL: DAVLS@legalaid.qld.gov.au

OR

To contact the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide call: 1800 329 095

www.defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au/support

EMAIL: dvsrsrc.enquiries@royalcommission.gov.au

JOY JOBBINS HAS FINISHED THE JOB!



Joy, at the tender age of 94 years, has reluctantly decided to put her computer and organisational skills to rest and experience a graduated retirement from NSW DFWA, although she will continue to put her journalistic skills to work with NATTER.

Joy joined DFWA in 1997 and brought joy and organisation to the NSW Office. She provided much more than secretarial services, often a non-judgemental ear and advice for her “boys” as they go through the trials and tribulations of daily life and the many challenges of the NSW Branch office, boys because many were much younger than her and they all needed looking after.

Joy has had an interesting life to say the very least, growing up in Sydney’s Eastern Suburbs, her father ran a series of cinemas in Sydney, her first job at the age of seventeen was as a copy writer for “A Yank Downunder” produced at the Cinesound Studios.

She started her married life with Henry Jobbins in the small Victorian town of Eltham raising five children in a ramshackle house in the close-knit bohemian area. It was there she was catapulted into the high-flying world of advertising, by the sheer necessity of putting food on the table, in due course nabbing the lucrative Wool Board account.

In 1964 the family moved to Sydney where Henry put an ad in the paper for a family home ‘Anyone have an old white elephant available’. Surprised by an answer, the family moved into Berthong, next door to Boomerang, both mansions in Elizabeth Bay, but paying only a peppercorn rent.

In 1972 Joy left the Wool Board, and with her reputation set up her own advertising business Jobbin’s Journals through which she undertook many thoroughly interesting jobs.

Joy no longer lives in the mansion Berthong, she has settled into her own ‘Little National Monument’, a unique sandstone terrace in East Sydney which was formerly, as she will quickly point out, a brothel! Here she continues to eruditely piece together NATTER to keep DFWA NSW/ACT members up to date.

If you need to know more of Joy’s fascinating and inspiring life, her 2 books of memoirs are available. Contact the NSW Branch for further details.

Have you served in the ADF?

Your story can help others

We can give you free legal advice and help to get your story heard by the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

We are independent from the Royal Commission, ADF and DVA.

You can contact us by calling:

1800 33 1800 (FREE CALL)

www.defenceveteranslegalservice.org.au



**DEFENCE & VETERANS
LEGAL SERVICE**

Free | Independent | Confidential



Women in war Stamp Designer: Stacey Zass; Page 12; © Australian Postal Corporation 2017

UPDATE - 08 JUNE 2022

MEDICALLY DISCHARGED VETERANS VS ATO – THE SAGA CONTINUES

Government to introduce retrospective legislation to reverse the Federal Court decision

John Lewis Qld Branch

LAST CAMARADERIE OUTLINED government plans to introduce retrospective legislation to reverse the Federal Court Decision regarding taxation of the DFRDB and MSBS Class A and Class B Invalidation Benefits (Post 20 Sep 2007)– “the *Douglas* Decision.”

DFWA discussions with government ministers and some MPs indicated they believed the legislation was totally for the benefit of veterans and would overcome serious problems. Introduction in February and provision in the May budget was regarded as a quick win. It was certainly briefed that way with public statements from some pro-veteran Coalition MPs and even RSL National, all welcoming the planned legislation. However, none appeared to have seen the actual draft legislation. Most of the problems were a temporary glitch from bad management and there was a fair amount of spin about the solution. Actual numbers mentioned were dodgy.

Legislation Not Introduced. As reported last Camaraderie, the briefing papers provided to Ministers by Treasury addressed only direct taxation issues. DFWA had identified several additional areas where many veterans could have been adversely affected by the planned legislation and raised these with the responsible Ministers. We requested further consultation and more details of the numbers of veterans both positively and adversely affected by both the *Douglas* decision and the “cure” of the proposed legislation. The government reconsidered their plans, and the legislation was not introduced in February as previously announced.

Further Consultation. Considering the Treasury origins of the legislation, DFWA considered it likely that there would be moves to reintroduce the proposed legislation in one form or another again after the election. DFWA requested further consultation from both major parties after the election. DFWA briefed the shadow Minister, Shayne Neumann MP, who assured us of further consultations if Labor won the election. He also assured us he would be appointed Minister.

DFWA is now seeking a meeting with the new Minister Matt Keogh MP, to discuss the full range of veteran issues.

Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC) Ignores the Court Decision. CSC have been very slow in implementing the Federal Court decision of 2020. There was a lack of proactivity to address withholding tax schedules with the ATO meaning veterans would have more tax withheld fortnightly than was necessary. This provided an excuse for not implementing the decision. There was a lack of proactivity in keeping members informed of options to address such issues and of the availability of the major benefit of the Disability Superannuation Benefit (DSB). Administration of DSB applications was slow for many. These all contributed to problems experienced by veterans and their complaints which prompted the proposed legislation to reverse the *Douglas* decision as the cure. When the government announced the proposed legislation, this meant CSC no longer had to rely on their previous excuses for slow implementation. CSC immediately stopped their already slow implementation of the *Douglas* decision citing that the Federal Court decision would be reversed. CSC continued to withhold more tax from the majority of veterans than the law required. Yet the government clearly stated that under the new legislation, veterans would still receive the same tax benefit they gained under the *Douglas* decision.

Veterans have had their money withheld from them by CSC when CSC had no justification in law for doing so.

CSC Decides to Obey the Law. On 12 April 2022, six weeks after it became impossible to introduce the legislation in February as planned, CSC announced that it would now follow the law [Pardon!] and implement the tax changes following the 2020 Federal Court *Douglas* decision. The changes were implemented for the 19 May 2022 pay-day.

Comment. The *Douglas* decision impacted the tax treatment of DFRDB and Military Super invalidity benefit

pensions that commenced on or after 20 September 2007. The pensions became a series of superannuation lump sum payments. The major benefit to this change is the Disability Superannuation Benefit (DSB). This gives significant tax benefits; for many, several hundred dollars a fortnight.

In some cases, veterans who do not qualify for the DSB may have a higher amount of tax withheld each fortnight but receive a refund after submitting their tax return. There are several options available to veterans who fall into this category. CSC advises those affected to consider:

- claiming the Medicare levy exemption
- claiming the tax-free threshold
- claiming the disability super tax benefit
- seeking a private determination from the ATO to decrease withholding

Following CSC's implementation on 19 May 2022 there will be some veterans who will be worse off in the short term. It will take some time for those veterans to work through the options available to them. With current cost of living pressures mounting, it is disappointing that CSC didn't implement the change 18 months ago, and proactively manage those disabled veterans who will be negatively affected.

Regardless of the spin, it was CSC senior executives who made the decision to not to apply the law regarding the *Douglas* case. Their obligation to follow the law has not changed, and it is unlikely CSC or anyone at CSC will ever be held to account for delaying implementation. Meanwhile, many veterans who have claimed DSB have had thousands of dollars of tax withheld over the last year that should have been in their pockets.

What do you think?

The CSC announcement on 12 April was:

Legislative changes being considered have not yet proceeded and so CSC must now proceed to fully implement the law as set by the Federal Court.

How do you rate CSC performance in meeting customer obligations and their decision to comply with a Federal Court decision made in 2020?

The best and most succinct answers will be published next Camaraderie. A possible prize for a really great answer could be "Spin: The Art of Managing the Media" by Nick Clelland and Ryan Coetzee.

DID YOU KNOW ABOUT EX-SERVICE CEMETERY ALLOTMENTS IN THE ACT?

AVAILABLE AT GUNGAHLIN AND WODEN

CEMETERIES, an ex-Service allotment is a lawn grave, with memorialisation by way of a plaque affixed to a marble tablet at the head of the grave.

Interments can take place seven days of the week. Graves are dug to double depth. Most graves can be dug to triple depth, which incurs an additional fee.

Non-serving spouses may also be interred in the same allotment.

A memorial plaque and marble tablet are included in the cost of the allotment. Documentation will be issued post-burial and will include a plaque application form.

Approval to use Service emblems must be obtained from the Office of Australian War Graves. In the interim period between the burial and memorialisation, a temporary grave marker will be provided. Although fresh flowers

are permitted at the grave, Canberra Memorial Parks discourages any placement of personal, valuable or sentimental items on the site.

There is also a Garden of Remembrance situated in Canberra within the Woden Public Cemetery, Justinian Street, Phillip. The ACT Garden of Remembrance has a plaque capacity of 10,000. In addition to the bronze plaques and commemorative walls, the garden features a visitor pavilion, seating and symbolic artwork in a picturesque setting, surrounded by mature Chinese Elm trees.

For more information go to:

<https://www.canberramemorialparks.act.gov.au/>
and

<https://www.dva.gov.au/recognition/commemorating-all-who-served/gardens-and-cemeteries>

COMPARING

Super Schemes

by WIN FOWLES
JUNE 2022



A DF MEMBERS AND COMMONWEALTH public servants have seen their superannuation schemes come and go over the decades. Usually – but not always – members of superseded schemes can stay with their old scheme until they die even though their scheme is closed to new members.

Old schemes can last a century or more. The nation’s oldest Commonwealth super scheme celebrates its 100th birthday in October this year. The public service’s aptly named “1922 Scheme” still boasts 1,616 beneficiaries, quite a legacy after noting that the earliest born member retired in 1928 and that

the scheme closed to new members in 1976.

Old schemes are defined benefits schemes. Newer schemes are accumulation schemes in line with those in today’s Australian community. The Military Superannuation and Benefits Scheme (MSBS, or Military Super) is neither defined benefits nor accumulation but a combination of both, a “hybrid” scheme.

All schemes are different. Contributions, benefits, rules, eligibility and governance vary. Comparisons between Commonwealth super schemes need to be treated with great care. Read the data in the following Tables accordingly.

(Recipients and Contributors are as at 30 June 2021.)

Table 1.

Older Public Service Schemes – Average (mean) Annual Benefit

1922 Scheme (1922-1976)	\$33,997	(but only 1,616 recipients - no contributors)
PNG Scheme (1951-1976)	\$52,083	(but only 72 recipients - no contributors)
CSS (1976-1990)	\$43,278	(105,726 recipients - 2,317 contributors)
PSS (1990-2005)	\$35,853	(218,293 recipients - 61,850 contributors)

Table 2.

Older ADF Schemes – Average (mean) Annual Benefit

DFRB (1948-1973)	\$21,619	(but only 1,803 recipients - no contributors)
DFRDB (1973-1991)	\$31,034	(51,011 recipients - 881 contributors)
MSBS (1991-2016)	\$47,689	(23,674 recipients - 38,470 contributors)

Table 3.

Newer Accumulation Schemes

Military – ADF Super (2016-current)	17,979	contributors
Public Service – PSSap (2005-current)	135,385	contributors

It is not meaningful to compare recipient benefits or many other matters between the older ADF defined benefits schemes and the newer ADF or public service accumulation schemes. The rules are too different. For example, DFRDB contributors compulsorily pay 5.5% of their pre-tax salary to the government (consolidated revenue) while MSBS contributors compulsorily pay 5% and ADF Super contributors compulsorily pay nothing.

And benefits are very different. For example, DFRDB members can commute up to five times their DFRDB super pension in exchange for a reduced pension for life whereas MSBS and ADF Super members cannot. The DFRDB commutation benefit is why the DFRDB contribution rate is 5.5% of pre-tax salary as opposed to the MSBS contribution rate of 5%. Other factors are also in play.

Leaving the public service schemes to one side for a moment, serving contributors to the three ADF schemes are 881 (DFRDB) + 38,470 (MSBS) + 17,979 (ADF Super) for a total of 57,330.

The eagle-eyed reader will see a disconnect between contributor numbers in the CSC Annual Report and ADF full time member numbers of 59,095 (30 June 2020, the latest the writer can find). That may be because CSC is careful to say in a tiny footnote that its numbers are accounts and do not necessarily reflect individual member numbers.

If so many differences exist between and among ADF and public service super schemes what is the point of making any comparisons at all?

What can be said with certainty is that DFRDB produces lower super pension outcomes with higher compulsory contributions than the older APS schemes (CSS and PSS). But super pensions under DFRDB could possibly commence at a younger age than under the APS schemes, which may be beneficial to some DFRDB people even though the average DFRDB super pension is significantly smaller.

In other words, ADF people in the DFRDB scheme get less but some got it for longer. Of course one needed to serve for at least 20 years - 15 yrs in a few cases - to get any benefit at all from DFRDB but that's another story. So is the reliance by successive governments on grossly outdated life expectancy tables, which means that DFRDB members who commuted are significantly over-recompensing the taxpayer because their lifetime DFRDB super pensions are reduced by far too big a margin.

Each scheme has its bells and whistles, some good and some not good, that make each scheme unique. How does one compare, say, the unfair indexation of CSS, PSS, MSBS and DFRDB (for those aged under 55) super pensions with the raw average benefits in the tables above? That means extra care is needed before drawing any definitive comparison conclusions.

While it is not practical to make a full comparison here of each scheme's advantages and drawbacks, beware of comparing apples with oranges. Draw your own conclusions but be objective when doing so.

(All data in this article is extracted from the Appendix at page 308 of the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation's 2020-21 Annual Report, the latest available, and from: <https://www.csc.gov.au/Members/Why-CSC/100-years-of-service>. Note that judicial and parliamentary superannuation schemes are administered by the Department of Finance, not CSC, which is why they are not included in this article.)

AUSTRALIAN Tunnel Rats IN VIETNAM

by
LTCOL ALISTAIR POPE, PSC, CM, (RETIRED)

MILITARY TUNNELING

Since the invention of gunpowder, military engineers have been digging tunnels under besieged castles and then exploding large charges to bring down the walls and create gaps that could be stormed by the infantry. In fact, the term 'sapper' means one who digs trenches and a 'sap' is a narrow trench used to undermine a fortification. In WWI both sides founded Engineer Tunneling Companies as a means of attacking enemy trenches without the carnage of 'going over the top' into the teeth of enemy machine gun fire. One highly recommended, but harrowing film on this means of warfare is 'Beneath Hill 60' based on the diaries of Captain Oliver Woodward.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE TUNNEL SYSTEMS IN VIETNAM

When the Vietnamese began developing an underground network is uncertain, but the existence of the first tunnels appears to have begun during the Japanese occupation of Vietnam in WW2 from 1942-1945. When the French



War began in 1946 the use of tunnels expanded greatly. The French were well aware of their existence and formed their own specialist units to search and destroy those found. Many of the original tunnels were built by the Viet Minh simply as escape routes, or hiding places when the French came to a village. Other tunnels were built by villagers for rice storage as both sides tended to forage for food when in the field, leaving the villagers to starve.

However, in the early 1960's with the arrival in Vietnam of the American Army with its ability to quickly deploy enormous firepower, the face of war changed for the NVA/VC. If a large formation could be detected on the surface, in the jungle, or in the open, then it could be destroyed by the employment of massive aerial bombing or an artillery strike. Invisibility became essential so tunneling became an increasingly important necessity. What may have begun as a useful defensive protective measure soon grew into a large scale integral part of their aggressive war machine, with these underground bases becoming the holding and staging point

for large scale attacking operations.

The sophistication of this subterranean military 'camp' grew to include soldiers' barracks, cooking amenities, living and training rooms, hospitals, workshops and storage facilities. These would be connected by a series of tunnels that included escape hatches and even hidden fighting pits for sentries and snipers. At regular distances in longer tunnels there would be passing places for travelers going in opposite directions. One of the constant difficulties was ensuring there was always sufficient breathable air, so at various points concealed ventilation shafts would be driven through 10-12 metres of earth to the surface.

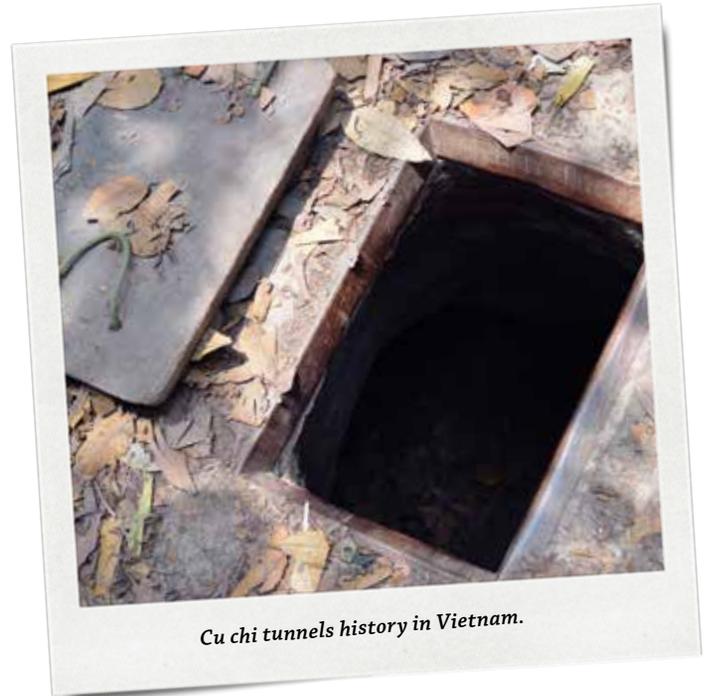
To further add to their ability to discourage 'intruders' from entering their tunnels and underground facilities they could be booby-trapped when not occupied. A sort of macabre 'home burglar alarm' that could be switched off on the occupant's return. Some dead end side-tunnels would be permanently booby-trapped to kill the unwary who entered them. As a further defensive measure to prevent any gas or smoke pumped in from penetrating the whole system a sump could be installed (similar to the S-bend in a toilet) that would prevent the gas from passing that point. As a final deterrent, a defender could quietly wait in ambush as he would know the twists and turns of the labyrinth perfectly, whereas the approaching Australian sapper would have no idea what lay ahead or was waiting for him around the next corner as his would be a journey of exploration in unmapped hostile territory.

Welcome to the world of that special breed of warrior now known as 'The Tunnel Rats'

The Australian Tunnel Rats are the men who served in the Engineer Field Troops in Vietnam (3 Field Troop and 1, 2 and 3 Troop of 1 Field Squadron, Royal Australian Engineers). Apart from those few "lucky enough" to come across extensive enemy tunnel complexes, every member of the Field Troops would have gone underground to search, clear and destroy enemy bunker systems (often with bunkers inter-connected by small tunnels). It was not unusual for the sappers to blow up over 100 enemy bunkers in a single operation.

ENTER 3 FIELD TROOP, 1ST FIELD SQUADRON, ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ENGINEERS

3 Field Troop was Engineer unit sent to Vietnam in support of IRAR. In January 1965 they were deployed on Operation Crimp in the Ho Bo Woods, part of the notorious 'Iron Triangle'. Their role was expected to be their normal one of road clearing, de-mining and destroying any enemy facilities or caches located by the infantry. The first surprise was



Cu chi tunnels history in Vietnam.

when they were called in to provide advice on what to do concerning some tunnel entrances that had been found. From one entrance, an enemy soldier had killed two Australian soldiers and wounded two others. Although untrained for the task, and despite the obvious danger, volunteers entered the 60cm wide and 75cm high, lightless, claustrophobic and almost airless tunnel armed with just a flashlight, a bayonet and a lot of courage. The complex had been evacuated very recently, but what they recovered was an intelligence bonanza. Thus began their unintentional career as Tunnel Rats.

What is most surprising, given the wealth of previous tunnel clearance experience from the French era, the searches carried out by the South Vietnamese Army sappers and the current US Army tunnel explorations, nothing had been passed on to the Australian Field Engineers. The 3 Troop sappers were therefore totally untrained and unprepared for this unexpected role. The consequence of this was soon felt.

On the 4th day tragedy struck when one of the NCO's, the 184cm tall Corporal Bob Bowtell decided to take his turn as a Tunnel Rat. His downfall was his size. As he crawled forward into tunnel his body prevented any air from circulating and he quickly suffocated and died. Several of his rescuers almost suffered the same fate, but fortunately they were either rescued by others or managed to climb out just in time. The deadly realities of war had been brought home to the troop, but none refused to continue to enter the tunnels and do their duty when required.

Over the six days 3 Field Troop spent on Operation Crimp exploring the tunnels they suffered six casualties by asphyxiation, one died and five were injured. The cause of this high level of incidents was simply referred to as 'bad

air' in the tunnel, but this does not pass logical scrutiny. The Vietnamese were constantly living and tunnelling in this underground labyrinth for lengthy periods without the air becoming toxic, even though there were a lot of humans down there consuming the oxygen. The cause of the asphyxiation is more likely have been the remnants of the tear gas and smoke the 3 Troop team members pumped into the tunnel using their newly issued Mighty Mite blower system. Once it had completed its work, it was essential that fresh air must be blown in, in a sufficient quantity to re-oxygenate the tunnel and clear all remnants of the tear gas and smoke from it before sappers entered the tunnels. Courage is no substitute for a lack of experience, effective processes and prior training.

After just six days the troop was withdrawn and moved firstly to Vung Tau and then to Nui Dat where the 1st Australian Task Force was moving to set up their operational base. It is possible that much more could have been achieved as the tunnel stem was extensive and further exploration may have uncovered even more intelligence. In fact, this labyrinth was the undiscovered command headquarters for all operations against Saigon, Bien Hoa and the adjacent provinces.

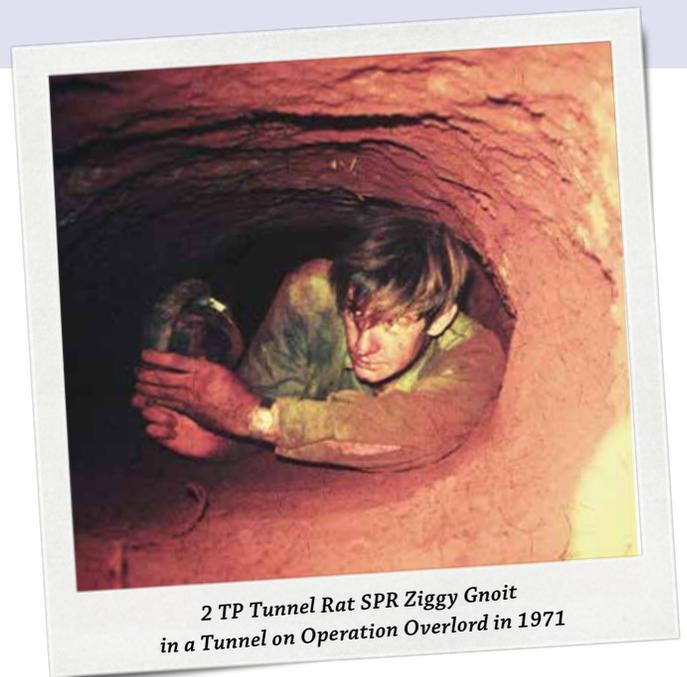
It should be noted that as 3 Field Troop was operating in an infantry support role much of their time was spent above ground defusing booby-traps, clearing paths through suspected minefields or acting as infantrymen when in contact with the enemy. Their other engineering role was to repair roads and bridges and upgrade the base facilities. It was a busy life!

The troop continued to explore any tunnels found, but their tour of duty was coming to an end so an even more important task was now taking centre stage: documenting the techniques they had developed and the establishing the training that was required for the sappers who would be following their example into the darkness (on hands and knees!).

EPITAPH

The danger in clearing the tunnels never went away, but the majority of the 35 sappers who died in Vietnam or the 200 who were wounded were mainly killed or injured in mine incidents of various sorts. This is a 36% casualty rate among highly skilled young men. Five Military Medals (MM) and one Military Cross (MC) were awarded between 1965-1971, which is extraordinarily low for a unit that incurred such high casualties and constantly operated in such a high risk environment. Their under-recognition is more a comment on the military and government hierarchy than on their operational experiences.

The following quote from Sapper Bob O'Connor in late June 1968 puts it all into perspective:



2 TP Tunnel Rat SPR Ziggy Gnoit
in a Tunnel on Operation Overlord in 1971

“No one is going to force you to do this kind of stuff, so if it's not for you, ask for a transfer. But if you decide to stay though, you've got to believe, and I mean really believe, that you're already dead. Tunnel rat casualty rates are ridiculously high, so it's not too hard to believe. Once you accept you're a dead man walking the job gets much easier. It even becomes a challenge. Nothing to do with the army, it's a personal thing.”

Only one sapper was shot and killed by the enemy while clearing a tunnel, but if you are claustrophobic, or are not excited by the thrill of one-on-one combat in the dark, in a one metre circumference confined space, then being a Tunnel Rat is probably not for you.

I recommend spending some time reading the newsletters on their website (listed in the bibliography following) as it provides an insight into what I consider represents the best of what Australians are really like.

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- The Tunnels of Cu Chi – by Tom Mangold & John Penycate, Berkley Books (Published by arrangement with Random House). First Published 1985.

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- Tunnel Rats : home – an excellent internet site that is worth taking the time to explore.
- Hill 60, Ypres: The peak of military mining - Sir John Monash Centre (sjmc.gov.au)
- Beneath Hill 60 - Wikipedia – based on the diaries of Captain Oliver Woodward.
- <https://tunnelrats.com.au/pdfs/newsletters/Holdfast-31.pdf>
- [Holdfast-35.pdf](https://tunnelrats.com.au/pdfs/newsletters/Holdfast-35.pdf) (tunnelrats.com.au)



Australian Defence Force doesn't need any scrutiny by ABC reporters

by
ROSS EASTGATE

PARDON ME FOR WONDERING, but when was the ABC added to the ADF order of battle to act as moral conscience under the Defence Force Discipline Act?

More than moral conscience, for that role rightly falls to the padres and good leaders.

Increasingly it seems to the multitude social interest groups that have inveigled their way into the ADF policy setting process.

Commanders now have enough trouble with operational planning ensuring there's an appropriate gender, race cultural and social mix without worrying their every action is under close observation by a standing performance commission in the guise of ABC investigative journalists.

It's bad enough when every battlefield action requires the prior approval of a legal advisory panel before a shot may be fired in anger.

It seems you can get a quicker decision from a third umpire in Test cricket where the computer says "yes" than in the intensity of battle where the computer says, "let me think about that".

When the guns fall silent and the smoke clears, not only will

commanders be responsible for a military after-action report, but every move will be scrutinised by the ABC like those endless football post-mortems where people who were not immediately present sit in judgment of those who were.

More crucially, the ABC agenda seems to be to highlight issues that have already been canvassed and judgment issued.

It's fine for footy commentators to return to the 2002 footy grand finale, but for all the gnashing of teeth and beating of breasts, the result will still stand.

The question which needs to be asked is why now, and who stands to gain from rehashing old ground? No matter how many times misguided supporters attempt to raise the alleged legal injustice against Morant and Handcock, the verdict stands and all the immediate players are dead.

The modern battlefield already places huge demands on those entrusted with taking the battle to the foe.

It seems the ADF hierarchy has moved to absolve currently serving senior officers who held more junior commands when the alleged incidents occurred.

That same protection should be extended to include all ranks.

SPOTLIGHT ON THE SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH

- MUCH IS HAPPENING! -

The SA Branch Report in this edition provides an update on current SA Branch matters. In addition SA Branch have been busy doing many other things!

1. 'THE VOICE OF LIGHT PROGRAM'

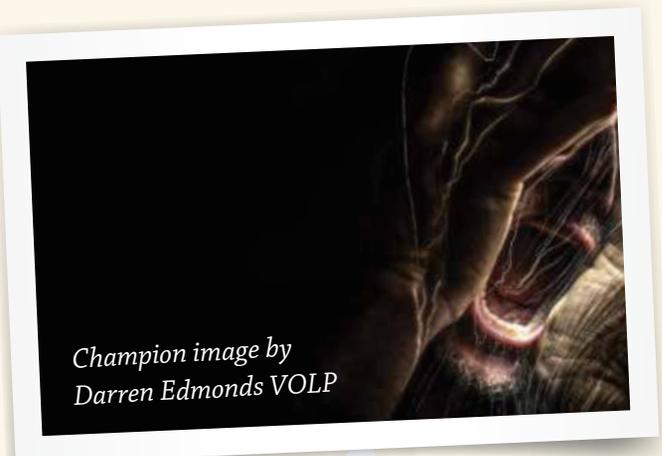
DFWA SA is excited to bring attention to our readership The Voice of Light Program.

The Voice of Light Program (VOLP) provides a powerful, innovate, and creative psychosocial recovery pathway for Veterans and First Responders living with service-related mental health disorders.

(Hon Frances Adamson AC Governor of SA viewing champion images on Anzac Day 2022)

9 South Australian Veterans and First responder participants recently created a 'voice without words champion image' to convey their personal stories. These powerful and somewhat confronting images are the culmination of a 7-week psychosocial arts-based intervention program.

The Program is a world first program; a person-centred model of recovery that is viewed from multiple dimensions, creating an opportunity to rewrite a personal narrative about trauma experiences. The sole purpose of this unique program is to



Champion image by
Darren Edmonds VOLP

build confidence, skills, and the ability to find a voice through peer facilitated light painting challenges.

The aim of the program is providing a zero-cost model to the participant while creating a trusted community and a safe place for their alumni to share ideas, hold light painting events and eventually become peer facilitators themselves.

The pilot program was a great success with 100% participant completion. The introductory program rounded out with a 3-day gallery exhibition over the Anzac Day long weekend.

Dignitaries from SA State Government, Veteran and Emergency service communities along with participant's family members, supporters and masses of the public came through the doors to view and feel the effects of the amazing imagery created by our Veterans and First Responders telling their personal stories.

DFWA-SA members were moved and inspired by the bravery and vulnerability shown by all involved along with the hard work and dedication from the Voice of Light team.

While the Voice of Light Program has been a wonderful success Program still needs support from the Veteran and extended community. DFWA-SA saw merit in this program and has formed a supportive partnership to assist in gaining grants and funding, along with building awareness while helping to find deserving participants from the Veteran community to benefit from the positive outcomes offered.

We urge you to explore this topic further via their website www.thevoiceoflight.com.au and further from here follow any social media presence.



2. CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT

DFWA South Australia has been awarded a grant of almost \$3,000 by Veterans SA to fund an advanced digital marketing certificate.

The course will be undertaken by a DFWA-SA member so that the Committee can better promote the organisation among veterans, increase membership and increase its exposure across the wider veteran and business communities.

On completion of the course DFWA-SA will be able to build a strong digital footprint for DFWA-SA across multiple social media platforms and strengthen the organisation's visibility.

Imparting knowledge onto other committee members through hands-on instruction is another key objective, along with setting up multiple moderators and a set of standards/guidelines to ensure consistent appropriate online etiquette.

This will help the way in which DFWA-SA connects with contemporary veterans and their families. "This visibility will help the committee members to connect with those requiring assistance, to link and to advocate with services providers, government, businesses, and jobs" said Mick Burgess, President of DFWA-SA.

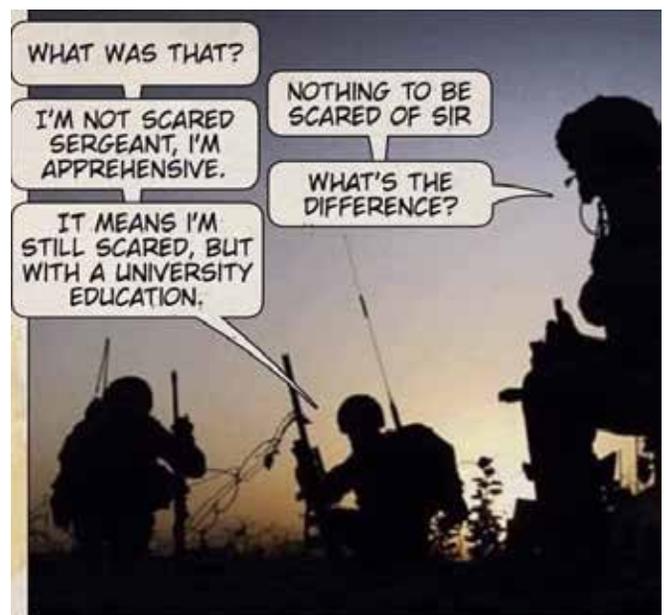
"The new committee is South Australia has a strong commitment to improving the way DFWA-SA assists veterans and each committee member is stepping up, engaging with a broad range of stakeholders, and seeking



ON THE LIGHTER SIDE...



"Sorry Arthur, your answer was actually correct, but Paul shouted his opinion louder so he gets the point. And an extra bonus point also goes to Sue as she was offended by your answer".





THE PADRE'S *Corner*

Reconnecting

2022 has been a year of reconnecting for many of us after the disconnections and disruptions of Covid and the many restrictions placed on our gathering and travelling. While this opportunity for reconnecting is available, I am mindful that not all of our veteran community have come back out of the isolation that they have been experiencing. As a chaplain I see the devastating impact of isolation when it results in depression and suicidal ideation and people ending up in crisis situations.

The devastating impact of disconnection is also seen in racism, tribalism, "us and them"- none of which is healthy or life giving.

One of my immediate action drills with people in crisis is to see how I can get veterans reconnected with people that have been supportive of them in the past, and more broadly reconnect them with the veteran community. It really has many things to offer people these days

Of course those that know me, realise that I'm not just involved in helping people get out of a crisis. What I really desire is to help people get really healthy and flourish to the point where they want to help others.

Something very special for our Veterans Care community is that 2022 has enabled us to take three groups of veterans to Timor.

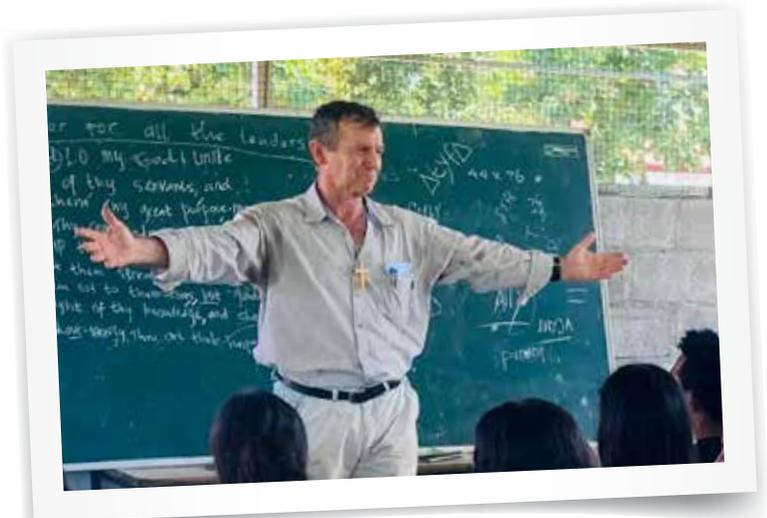
Each of these programs has been very well received both by Australian veterans participating, as well as the Timorese veterans who are very grateful for our friendship and assistance. Covid in Timor and in other parts of Southeast Asia has had a catastrophic impact upon poor people especially those who whose livelihoods relied upon tourism. . Generous veterans who have appreciated our programs enabled us to transfer approximately \$250,000 to Timor over the last two years of crisis, that was used by the Timorese veterans to provide basic humanitarian aid to those in extreme poverty, as well as to continue

work on our Veterans Institute of higher studies in the village of Same on the south coast, where we have funded construction of six large buildings, with hundreds of poorer children now getting residential vocational and life skills training.

Our veterans have benefited immensely from the satisfaction of seeing how we can help others in need through engaging in long-term relational activities.

Clearly it is necessary in working in the veteran space for us to be wanting to be able to access our just entitlements, but once we have got our own affairs in order, a nobler and more life-giving approach is to see what we can do to help the lives of other people. Fascinatingly, in helping others we actually help ourselves even more.

The starting point for any charitable or goodwill activity is to connect or reconnect with others and offer a hand of friendship. It can be life giving for all involved.



We love you this much!



Veterans together with Timorese after a day of work building extensions to our joint veterans education complex in Timor

People might be intrigued to know that the word “re-ligion” means to re-connect - like a ligament does. To be religious is to be a reconnector. The foundational intention of all the great religions was to gather people together to love their neighbour rather than fight them, and come together as one community, rather than a host of tribal adversaries. Clearly over the years religion has got a bad name because of bad behaviour by some people, but the underpinning fundamental of religion is to reconnect us.

For us to be involved in helping us reconnect is a good thing, a necessary thing, and a life giving attitude.

May we all do our best to reconnect, especially with those in need, for certainly that is something - the major thing, that God would desire of us.

May God bless you all.

your Padre,

Gary Stone OAM

The Veterans Padre

President Veterans Care Association Inc

**Holistic Care for of Body Mind & Soul for Veterans,
Families & Carers**

www.VeteransCare.com.au



Veterans distribution of aid to the poor who live at the Dili garbage dump.

DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN JOIN ONLINE? SIMPLY GO TO dfwa.org.au/join AND FOLLOW THE PROMPTS.

ALTERNATIVELY, PLEASE COMPLETE THE APPLICATION BELOW AND FORWARD IT TO YOUR NEAREST DFWA BRANCH:

Mr/Mrs/Ms/Rank Family Name

Given Names Post Nominals

Address

..... State Postcode

Contact Telephone Year of Birth

Email

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

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

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

DFWA NSW BRANCH and ACT CHAPTER, Bldg 96, Victoria Barracks Paddington. Locked Bag 7005, Liverpool, NSW 1871
(T) 02 8335 5447 (E) nswbranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 062-220 Acct 10266228

DFWA QUEENSLAND BRANCH, RUSI Bldg, Victoria Barracks Brisbane c/- Enoggera Mail Centre Qld 4051
(T) 07 2102 9879 (E) qldbranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 124-185 Acct 10480398
(Queensland Branch also administers NT membership)

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

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

DFWA SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH, PO Box 573, Stirling SA 5152
(T) 0419 858 774 (E) sabranch@dfwa.org.au BANK DEPOSIT TO: BSB 833-205 Acct 20374231

In addition to individual membership, **CORPORATE SPONSORSHIPS** and **CORPORATE** Subscriptions are available by contacting DFWA NATIONAL at national@dfwa.org.au Phone 02 6152 9162



BRANCH REPORTS Around Australia

NEW SOUTH WALES BRANCH

Patron:	Governor of New South Wales Her Excellency the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC, QC
Vice Patrons:	Fleet Commander, Forces Commander, Air Commander
President:	Michael Stuart-Watt
Vice President (Navy):	Ralph Derbidge MBE
Vice President (RAAF):	Alan Hind
Vice President (Army):	TBA
Treasurer:	Ralph Hannaford
Secretary:	Alan Hind
Assistant Secretary:	Meg Green AM
Project Officer:	John Kane
ACT Chapter:	Les Bienkiewicz
Location:	Victoria Barracks Building 96 Locked Bag 7005, LIVERPOOL NSW 1871
Telephone:	(02) 8335 5447 + Voice Mail
Email:	nswbranch@dfwa.org.au

CONTACT GROUPS

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45 Dalton Street	6 Platypus Avenue,
PARKES NSW 2870	SANCTUARY POINT NSW
Mobile: 0412 299 331	2540
	Ph: (02) 4443 7725
HUNTER VALLEY	
David Winkelmann AFC	Mr Kevin C Buchanan
PO Box 467,	12 The Triangle,
MAYFIELD NSW 2304	CULBURRA BEACH NSW 2540
Ph: (02) 4968 3811	Ph: (02) 4447 2461
ACT CHAPTER	
Les Bienkiewicz	
actchapter@dfwa.org.au	
(02) 6152 9166	

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

NEW MEMBERS

Your President and Committee offer a warm welcome to the DFWA family to the following new members who have joined the NSW Branch since May 2016.

Mrs L Bornholm, Mr N Butler, PO G J Copeland, WO2 J C Dunningham, Mr W A Fuller, LACY S Gahlain, SQNLDR

D Gaudry, Mr S Hogan, LS S Keating, PO D Ledger, Mrs B J Morrison, Mrs L F Oldfield, WGCDR C M Phelan, CPL R Smart, AB S Weigh, Mr J Youd.

VALE

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

CMDR R D Clarke, Mr G J Clunes, Miss Marie Cunningham, Mr D W Donkin MBE, SQNLDR J R Doohan, LTCOL R D Hamlyn, Mr J S Hogg, Mr N McMaster, GPCAPT M J Moore DFC, Mr D J Quick, GPCAPT C W Rowland, LTCOL W J Robson, Mrs M Le M Scrivenor, Mrs PT Sharpe, Mrs B Snow, Mr W H Sullivan.

QUEENSLAND BRANCH

President:	John Lowis
Vice-President:	Rod Murray
Vice-President SQ:	John Wilson
Secretary:	Vacant (John Lowis Acting)
Treasurer:	Walter Buldo OAM
Membership:	Vacant (Walter Buldo acting)
Communications Officer:	Deb Keir
Administration Officer:	Sharyn Hughes
IT/Project Officer:	Chris Lowis
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:	RUSI Bldg, Victoria Barracks Brisbane, c/o Enoggera Mail Centre, ENOGGERA, QLD 4051
Telephone:	(07) 2102 9879
E-mail:	qldbranch@dfwa.org.au
Office Hours:	Tue – Wed: 1000 to 1400 hrs

A more detailed report will be provided to Qld members in the Qld Branch newsletter "HOTLINE" which is mailed out with Camaraderie and available on-line soon after.

Earlier this year, with deep sadness, we lost Executive Vice President Robert Shortridge after a year's battle with pancreatic cancer. Rob gave many years' service to DFWAQ and to DFWA nationally contributing to many of the papers submitted by National to politicians, commissions and

inquiries as well as making many personal submissions. Luckily, we enjoyed his company and that of Claire his wife at our Christmas function. A full obituary is contained elsewhere in Camaraderie.

Qld ANZAC Day Trust. The Qld government finally made an appointment to the Trust from the candidates considered in October/November last year. We are pleased to report that DFVAQ nominee, Kate Bowden has been appointed. Kate brings experience of former ADF service and that of a wife of a veteran with service with Engineers in the Middle East as well as considerable business experience. Both are contemporary veterans with young families and experience in assisting veterans. The appointment is only to the end of the year when the role of the Trust is subsumed by the newly forming Qld Veterans' Council.

Qld Veterans Council. The Qld Office for Veterans sought Expressions of Interest (Eoi) in four positions open to veterans on the Council in May. These are part-time positions and attract remuneration. The government also sought Eoi in membership of the voluntary Veterans Reference Group (VRG) which provides advice to the Council and is chaired by one of the veterans on the Council. DFVAQ is hopeful that the DFVA members who responded to Eoi for both the Council and VRG positions are successful.

Qld Community Foundation Grant. DFVAQ has received a grant to make podcasts/short videos to support the veteran community and transition. We have teamed with Duty First Legal Services who are making "what to do" podcasts relating to a range of legal issues commonly faced by veterans and families. DFVAQ videos will be used to information snippets of services and issues. These, possibly with the legal podcasts are likely to be used at face-to-face ADF Transition Seminars and possibly at virtual transition seminars once there is uniformity regarding the DFVA National "brand". These may also be suitable for the DFVA website. If successful, we will be seeking further grants, extending the range.



Surprise DVA Award - SE Qld Veterans Wellbeing Hub.

The successful bidder for the Hub was private company "Lives Lived Better" with contribution to the Expression of Interest (Eoi) by Qld Branch of the VVAA. LLB have several outlets across SEQ providing Mental Health and Wellbeing services to the general community. It is understood, veteran "hub" services will be grafted onto these outlets. The other Eoi for the \$5 million hub funding was a consortium bid by RSLQ, Mates4Mates and Legacy which already had three sites (Ipswich, Brisbane North (Stafford) and Brisbane South (near Greenslopes hospital) in various stages of planning and development across Brisbane. 2 more \$5M hubs across the SE were election promises by Labor. These were Ipswich (former shadow Minister's electorate) and North Brisbane/Moreton Bay (incl Dutton's electorate and other LNP marginals). Funny old world!

Working with RSLQ. DFVAQ and RSLQ have worked together on a number of issues over the last year. This cooperative working has been a welcome development.

ACTIVITIES:

- AGM ANZAC Day Commemoration Committee (ADCC) – Chaired by Qld Premier
- ANZAC Day Dawn Service Brisbane, run by the ADCC.
- Various Douglas Decision Retrospective Legislation Meetings with RSLQ and veteran groups.
- Indigenous Service Members Service, run by RSLQ
- Attended commemoration of sinking of hospital ship Centaur at Caloundra ESL.
- RSL/Legacy ESO Forum – Joint Presentation with RSLQ re collaborative activities and raising of issue re some BUPA contracted on-base medicos refusing to complete medical section of DVA claims for in-service/transitioning ADF members. Other ESO reported similar occurrences.
- CSC Webinar.
- Continuation of ESO and Men's Shed initiative.
- Meetings/discussions re NLHC White Card and RESERVISTS.
- Attended Labor Party public announcement re Veteran Hub promises.
- Meetings/phone calls re Boys Case – RSLQ and various advocates and Dale Boys.
- Meetings re Welfare Support/cooperation with Veterans of Australia group at Hervey Bay.
- Duty First Legal Services re grant from Qld Community Foundation.

- Emails and Meetings with other MPs and candidates.
- Qld Parliament Speakers Reception – QCF Philanthropy Week and Awards
- Coming up in June:
- Defence and Veteran Suicide Royal Commission roundtable. Systemic Issues.
- DVA Managers/Delegates with DFVAQ re Ongoing systemic issues with Incapacity Payments offsetting and retrospective discharges. (Supported by RSLQ)

John Lewis
President Qld Branch

SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH

Patron	Her Excellency the Honourable Frances Adamson AC
President	Brigadier Mick Burgess
Past President	Lee Bowes
VP Navy	Aaron Hannam
VP Army	Mark Freer
VP Air Force	Taylor Harcourt-Heron
VP Wellness	David Everitt
Secretary	David Helman OAM
Treasurer	Mark Evens
Membership Secretary	Gavan Phillips
Convener Women Veterans	Charmaine Lock
Committee Member	Lee Bowes
Committee Member	Jodie Clark
Committee Member	Ben Wadham
Contact:	0419 858 774 or Email: sa.admin@dfwa.org

During the last few months, the South Australian Committee has been busy on several fronts as we redefine our commitment to improve the lives of veterans and their families. The focus has been on the contemporary veteran as the baton for their welfare is passed to the next generation.

The team here has been embedded in the production of the new Constitution as we see this as the bedrock for the National Executive and providing the guidance and direction for what is being pursued and achieved in each State.

Alongside this work, we have conducted a strategic review of what our SA Committee should be pursuing for our members and the broader veteran community. The key question is always “how does this meet the six policy objectives of the National body?” While these policy objectives are reviewed annually, the connection to the needs contemporary veterans and their families can be distilled at

State level so that a meaningful contribution by the States can be made back to the central objectives.

DFWA-SA will therefore pursue two key areas over the next two years:

- That a ‘condition of service’ should be support for transition and retirement. This supports the National Retirement and Superannuation objective, but broadens its meaning from simply focusing on superannuation issues.

We are able to support this objective by supporting research into transition experiences, the development of employment opportunities in the construction industry and return to studying at University. This is being realised now through our support to programs being run through Flinders University such as ‘Open Door’; a multi-disciplinary research hub that assists academics, practitioners and veterans interested in the research policy and service provision for veterans and first responders .

We are also supporting The Voice of Light to obtain a grant to continue their work, which provides a powerful, innovative and creative psychosocial recovery pathway for veterans and first responders living with service-related mental health disorders.

- That the veteran is a sovereign asset due to the unique nature of military service. This supports the National objective of Veteran Recognition through the Military Covenant, but seeks concrete outputs from the Covenant.

Our first step in achieving this has been to obtain a grant for veteran Committee member Dion Cowdray to complete a course in advanced digital marketing. The aim is to further our outreach strategy using Dion’s knowledge of effective marketing approaches, tools and platforms. This will enable DFVA-SA to promote the organisation among veterans, increase membership and exposure across the veteran and business community. It will also build on the practical lines of effort being pursued in transition and retirement support.

These two focus areas will support the National objectives by providing case studies and examples that enable the national policies to be pursued or amended as need. While there are other lines of effort that DFVA-SA are developing, each will feed into these two key areas to support the National effort.

I look forward to drawing further on the talents of the team in SA and developing the vision and strategies that will see us grow and strengthen in our support for contemporary veterans and their families.

Mick Burgess
Branch President

VICTORIA BRANCH

Patron:	The Honourable Linda Dessau, AC, Governor of Victoria.
President:	Daryll Topp
Vice President Navy:	Shaun Rodenburg
Vice President Army:	John James
Vice President Air Force:	Mike Gahan
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

Things are returning to a more normal state in Victoria with the lifting of the majority of COVID restrictions. The Branch office in Victoria Barracks, South Bank, is now manned at least three days per week. While the current cold weather gripping Victoria is not conducive to venturing out, members who require assistance can be assured of a warm welcome in the event they venture into the Melbourne CBD. Any members wishing to visit our Victoria Barrack's office are reminded that they need to contact the Branch Secretary at least one business day prior so that Base Security can be notified, and a visitor pass arranged.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The DFWA (Victoria) Annual General Meeting was conducted at the Mail Exchange Hotel on Wednesday 25 May 2022. The AGM minutes and the Branch financial statements will be forwarded to members with the next Information Supplement.

The AGM elected a new Branch President – Daryll Topp – and a new Vice-President Air Force – Mike Gahan. All other Executive Committee positions remained unchanged, and the past President will continue as a committee member.

FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

The Branch's finances were audited for the AGM and the Auditor confirmed that the Branch's finances continue to be well managed by our Secretary / Treasurer.

VALE

The Branch was not notified of the passing of any Branch members since the last Executive Committee meeting.

DIARY DATES

Branch Executive Committee meetings scheduled for the remainder 2022 are yet to be finalised and will be advised to members in the near future.

Branch Executive Committee meetings are normally held at the Mail Exchange Hotel, corner Bourke and Spencer Street, Melbourne commencing at 11.00 am. Hopefully this can continue in the future.

DFWA (Vic) members are most welcome to attend Executive Committee meetings although attendee numbers may be restricted due to ongoing COVID directions from Victoria's Chief Health Officer.

Those wishing to attend are requested to contact the Branch Secretary (Greg Powell) at least five business days prior to the meeting. Doing this will ensure that numbers do not exceed any COVID restrictions and that sufficient copies of the relevant meeting documents are available for all attendees.

Daryll Topp
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 and Wed 1000 to 1400 hrs
Email:	wabbranch@dfwa.org.au
Location:	Karrakatta Community House Matapau Road Irwin Barracks KARRAKATTA WA 6010

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

TRANSFERS IN

The President and Committee offer a warm welcome to WgCdr Stephen Phillips (Retd) and Mrs Pamela Phillips have moved back to WA from SA.

NEW MEMBER

The President and Committee offer a warm welcome to Mr Raymond Pearce JP.

VALE

With deep sadness we note the passing of Peter Greenfield, Gregory Hood, Joan Williams, Nancy Guyer and LCDR David Simmonds.

LOST CONTACT

The Branch office has lost contact with Violet Chalmers who was last known at Petra Street, Fremantle in 2020 and Patricia Davies of Booragoon. If you can help us trace these people, please get in contact.

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 polar fleece with DFWA embroidered badge. Size range XXL, XL, L, M, S.
\$40.00 including postage



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



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



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



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



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

DFWA Shop Order Form

ITEM	SIZE	QTY/SIZE	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL
1. Bisley Shirt - Men's	XL, L, M, S		\$45.00	
2. Bisley Shirt —Women's	XL, L, M, S		\$55.00	
3. DFWA Cap	xxxxx		\$15.00	
4. DFWA Lapel Badge	xxxxx		\$5.00	
5. DFWA Polo Shirt	XXL, XL, L, M, S		\$36.00	
6. DFWA Cloth Badge	xxxxx		\$10.00	
7. Embroidered Patch	xxxxx		\$10.00	
8. DFWA Zip Front Jacket	XXL, XL, L, M, S		\$40.00	
9. DFWA Zip Front Vest	XXL, XL, L, M, S		\$35.00	

TOTAL DUE \$

Notes:

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

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

DFWA QLD INC,
Victoria Barracks Brisbane, Enoggera QLD 4051

Or email your order and payment details to:

qldbranch@dfwa.org.au

YOUR DETAILS:

Title Initial Surname

Address

..... State

Postcode Phone

Email

PAYMENT DETAILS:

Internet Banking/Direct Debit:

Bank of QLD BSB 124 185 Account No: 10 480 398

Or enclose Cheque/Money Order: \$

Signature:

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

THE BRADFORD EXCHANGE WHERE PASSION MEETS ART

Since 1973 The Bradford Exchange has remained the world's largest and most trusted authority in the dynamic field of fine art collectables. With a presence in over 15 countries worldwide, The Bradford Exchange serves ten million collectors with editions which are consistently the best in the world. Our awards and accolades speak for the quality of our portfolio.

Our enduring success is based on understanding and respecting the passions and hobbies which add a rich dimension to the lives of our clients. As we proudly say, The Bradford Exchange is the place where passion becomes art. One of the most significant areas of interest in our diverse portfolio is our military-themed editions. The spirit of the Anzac legend runs deeply through generations of our customers. Each person has a story to tell of a loved one who served our nation proudly and our exclusive editions reflect that pride.

As its major sponsor, we respect and support the sterling work done by Defence Force Welfare Association of Australia in providing its own voice for our military personnel.

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2022 is a significant year in our military heritage. We will be seeing milestone anniversaries for a number of major engagements such as the Battle for Australia, Messines, Kokoda, El Alamein and Bullecourt. The Bradford Exchange will be creating editions which reflect the importance of these events in our appreciation of the unfolding Anzac story. In addition, we have commemorated Australia's latest Victoria Cross recipient, Teddy Sheean, with the support of his family.

As we approach our own 50th anniversary, The Bradford Exchange will continue to proudly support the men and women of our defence force whose duty and service to our nation represents the best of what it means to be Australian.

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