



**CHIEF OF THE DEFENCE FORCE  
ORDER OF THE DAY**

**ORDINARY SEAMAN EDWARD 'TEDDY' SHEEAN, VC**

I welcome the announcement by the Governor General on 12 August 2020 that Her Majesty The Queen has approved the posthumous award of the *Victoria Cross for Australia* to Ordinary Seaman Edward 'Teddy' Sheean.

Edward Sheean was born in Lower Barrington, Tasmania. When Teddy's country called, he enlisted on the 21<sup>st</sup> of April 1941, following five of his brothers into military service.

Posted to the newly commissioned *HMAS Armidale*, the ship and her crew departed Darwin for Japanese-occupied Timor to relieve Australian forces and evacuate both troops and civilians. In the afternoon of 1 December 1942, the *Armidale* was attacked by thirteen Japanese aircraft and struck by two torpedos. The survivors abandoned ship, and were strafed by enemy aircraft.

Ordinary Seaman Sheean leapt to help free a life raft, and then returned to his gun – warding off the airborne attackers. As the *Armidale* slipped below the waves, he remained, strapped to his post; serving his country and his mates till the last beat of his heart. He was eighteen years old.

Ordinary Seaman Sheean's actions while under fire on 1 December 1942 were indeed brave and, as stated by the Chief of Navy, were amongst the most conspicuous and gallant that we have seen in our Navy.

Our values spring from the actions of those who have served before us, like Teddy, who, in the face of adversity, showed service, courage, respect, integrity and excellence.

This award, the *Victoria Cross for Australia*, is a great honour for the late Teddy Sheean, for his shipmates, for his family, for the Royal Australian Navy, for the Australian Defence Force, and for our country.

We are working with Government House to find a suitable time in the coming months for an investiture ceremony that befits the service, the magnitude of the award, and its significance to Australia.

For all members of the ADF at this time, the motto of the submarine that bears Ordinary Seaman Edward 'Teddy' Sheean's name is apt - *Fight On*.

**Angus J Campbell, AO, DSC**  
General  
Chief of the Defence Force

14 August 2020