



# THE BOSUN'S CALL

NEWSLETTER OF THE NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA



ACT EDITION DEC 2025

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ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY



An HMAS Melbourne Christmas: (L-R) Rudolph (Ship's Warrant Officer, WO Paul Fawbert), ABCIS Vanessa Magri, ABCIS Sarah Godfrey, Santa (CPOMT Gavin Marks), Santa's Little Helper (LSPT Tricia Muller)

## In this issue

- Page 3 Peter Cooke-Russell - Bosun's Call Editor
- Page 4 2026 International ANZAC Day Tickets
- Page 6 DVA - Real Stories, Real Lessons
- Page 7 Notice of Review - NAA Constitution & By-Laws
- Page 8 The Tobruk Ferry Service
- Page 10 November Committee Meeting Minutes
- Page 11 November General Meeting Minutes
- Page 12 DVA Contact Information

## ACT SECTION CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Christmas Lunch will be held at  
Eastlakes Gungahlin on  
Thursday December 4  
commencing at 1200hrs



## Naval Association of Australia (ACT Section)

Founded 1 July 1944

Patron The Hon Sir William Deane AC KBE

### Office Bearers 2025 - 2026

#### Executive Committee Members

**President** David Manolas  
0427 504 564  
stbdstayportgiveway@gmail.com

**Vice President** Alex McGown  
02 6258 6167

**Secretary** Darren Rush  
0435 911 607  
darren.rush@navalassoc.org.au

**Treasurer** Alaric O'Neill

#### Committee Members

Tiger Lyons 02 6254 3453

**Welfare** Alex McGown  
02 6258 6167

**Membership** Peter Cooke-Russell  
0412 757 505  
peter.cookerussell@gmail.com

**Social Sec** Bev Joce

**Bosun's Call** Darren Rush  
wem@navalassoc.org.au

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY

### December Birthday List

Kathryn Spurling

### January Birthday List

Brian Eagles  
James Sandison  
Merle Hare  
David Manolas

## Upcoming Events

- 4 Dec Christmas lunch –Gungahlin Eastlakes Football Club 1200
- 26 Dec Last Post Ceremony AB Stafford Dowsett HMAS Parramatta, Mediterranean Sea
- 7 Jan Last Post Ceremony AB Lester Halpin HMAS Napier
- 28 Feb Last Post Ceremony Loss of HMAS Perth and ERA4 Vincent McGovern Sunda Strait

## Meeting Dates & Locations

*Tables are normally booked for drinks and lunch in the host club from 1200 prior to the meeting.*

<b>5 Feb</b>	<b>Eastlakes Club Gungahlin</b>	
	<i>Committee Meeting</i>	1100
	<i>General Meeting</i>	1330
<b>5 Mar</b>	<b>Eastlakes Club Gungahlin</b>	
	<i>Committee Meeting</i>	1100
	<i>General Meeting</i>	1330
<b>2 Apr</b>	<b>Eastlakes Club Gungahlin</b>	
	<i>Committee Meeting</i>	1100
	<i>General Meeting</i>	1330
<b>7 May</b>	<b>Eastlakes Club Gungahlin</b>	
	<i>Committee Meeting</i>	1100
	<i>General Meeting</i>	1330
<b>4 Jun</b>	<b>Eastlakes Club Gungahlin</b>	
	<i>Committee Meeting</i>	1100
	<i>General Meeting</i>	1330
<b>6 Aug</b>	<b>Eastlakes Club Gungahlin</b>	
	<i>Committee Meeting</i>	1100
	<i>General Meeting</i>	1330

## Social Program

**4 Dec Christmas Lunch 1200**  
*Eastlakes Footy Club Gungahlin*

*Fish & Chips - held at Snapper & Co.  
(Canberra Yacht Club)  
Mariner Pl, Yarralumla ACT 2600*



**15 Jan Fish 'n Chips 1200**  
*Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co)*

**19 Feb Fish 'n Chips 1200**  
*Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co)*

**19 Mar Fish 'n Chips 1200**  
*Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co)*

**16 Apr Fish 'n Chips 1200**  
*Canberra Yacht Club (Snapper & Co)*

**Bev Joce**  
*Social Secretary*



## Steering the Bosun's Call since 1996

Peter Cooke-Russell joined the NAA ACT Section in December 1995. At the meeting held in February 1996 he was nominated for the position of Federal Secretary. Since taking up that position in May 1996, he has given the Naval Association of Australia a remarkable level of performance and participation in the organisation and management of the NAA at both National and ACT Section levels. His continuous sterling and exceptional service since May 1996 has been at a level far higher than that which would be expected from an Ordinary/Full Member of the NAA.

### *Positions held:*

Federal Secretary	1996-2002
Federal Membership Registrar	2001-2002
Federal Public Officer	1999-2002
National Secretary	2002-2008
	Dec 2016- 2019
National Membership Registrar	2002 - 2017
National Public Officer	2002- present
National Vice President	2008-2011
ACT Section Vice President	2007 -2009
ACT Section President	2009-2012
ACT Section Vice President	2012-2014
ACT Section President	2014-2016
ACT Section Committee	2016 to present

After 29 years at the helm of the National Bosun's Call, Peter has decided to step down from this position. He is still a very active member of the ACT Section.

We would like to thank Peter for his hard work every month producing the Association's Flagship Newsletter and wish him well.

Bravo Zulu Peter.

### *In His Own Words*

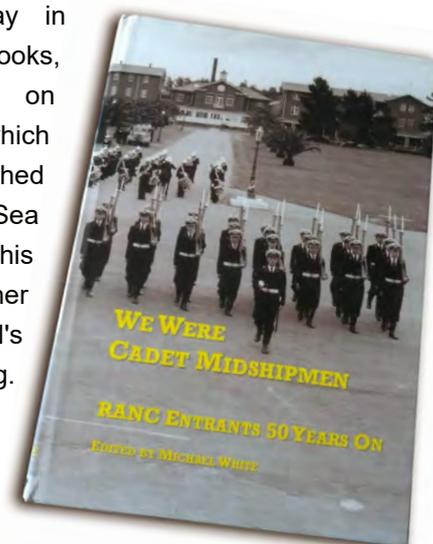
I started using MS Publisher in 1992 when I was volunteered by my wife to print a newsletter for Canberra Spinners and Weavers (CS&W) every month until 2009 when she ceased being a member. In this time I typeset and designed two short books for members of CS&W.

As a result of this experience I helped Ken Cartwright set up the NAA ACT Newsletter Bosun's Call in 1996.

In 2004 to 2006 I worked with Ken Doolan to produce a book telling of our training at the Royal Australian Naval College (RANC) and Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth UK to mark the 50th anniversary of our Passing Out from the RANC. It is titled '*We Were Cadet Midshipman*' of 308 pages with an index and hard cover. Ken put the manuscript together and I did the rest to turn it into a book of B5 size. The print run was 350 copies..

Ken and I produced six more books dealing with the Defence Force and personal history of the authors. I also worked with Hector Donohue

in a similar way in producing two books, the first on Minesweeping which has been republished by the RAN Sea Power Centre this year and another marking the RAN's 100 years of Diving.



# THE (ACT) BOSUN'S CALL A NEW FACE AT THE HELM



I joined the Nirimba Sub-Section of the NAA in June 2014. In 2015 I was nominated and elected to Sub-Section Secretary.

In 2017 I relocated to Canberra for work and having worked as a Graphic Designer for most of my career after the Navy, commenced working as the Art Director for the White Ensign Magazine.

In 2018 I transferred to the ACT Section - it being obvious that I was in Canberra to stay.

#### *Positions held:*

Nirimba Sub-Section Secretary	2015-2017
WEM Art Director	2017-present
HMAS Sydney II Virtual Memorial National Webmaster	2018-present from Apr 2025
Member Database Working Party	from Apr 2025
ACT Section Secretary	from May 2025
National Bosun's Call Editor	from Nov 2025
ACT Section Bosun's Call Editor	from Nov 2025

This year, Peter Cooke-Russell decided to step down from the role of publishing both the ACT Section, and the National Bosun's Call Newsletters. A few months ago, Peter approached me and asked if I would be prepared to take on the Bosun's Call Newsletters when he felt the time was right to stand down. At the November ACT Section Committee Meeting, Peter advised that he would like to step aside and I agreed to step in to take up publishing both Newsletters.

I hope I can do justice to the legacy that Peter has established.

Darren Rush  
(new) Bosun's Call Editor



## REGISTRATION FOR TICKETS TO INTERNATIONAL ANZAC DAY SERVICES NOW OPEN

Since the first Anzac Day was observed in 1916, 25 April is a time for all Australians to recognise the more than 1.5 million service men and women who have served our country in all conflicts, wars and peacekeeping operations.

Attending an international Anzac Day Dawn Service is a meaningful opportunity for Australians to come together and commemorate Australia's wartime history on the very lands where these events took place.

The Anzac Day Dawn Service in Türkiye will take place at the Anzac Commemorative Site, Gallipoli, followed by a mid-morning Australian Memorial Service at Lone Pine Cemetery.

In France, the Dawn Service will be held at the Australian National Memorial near Villers-Bretonneux. An Australian Service will be held later in the afternoon at the 'Digger' Memorial, just outside the town of Bullecourt.

Those planning to attend the international Anzac Day Dawn Services in Türkiye or France will need to register for an attendance pass for entry. It's free and now available online at [commemorations.teg.com.au](http://commemorations.teg.com.au).

DVA also supports Anzac Day Dawn Services in Sandakan (Malaysia), Hellfire Pass (Thailand) and Isurava on the Kokoda Track in Papua New Guinea.

Those not attending an international Anzac Day Dawn Service in person can share in the commemorative spirit by watching the live ABC broadcast of the Türkiye and France services.

We encourage Australians travelling overseas to become familiar with the entry requirements for each country and stay up to date with the latest travel advice via [smartraveller.gov.au](http://smartraveller.gov.au).

More information on all overseas services is available at [dva.gov.au](http://dva.gov.au).





**WE WISH YOU A**

**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

**HAPPY**

**NEW YEAR**



**TO ALL OF OUR NAA FAMILY,  
WISHING YOU A SAFE AND  
HAPPY HOLIDAY SEASON**



## Real stories, real lessons: supporting veterans to make informed choices

12 November 2025

As part of our Making a Claim education initiative, DVA is sharing real-life stories from veterans who have experienced challenges when seeking support to lodge compensation and rehabilitation claims.

These deidentified stories, drawn from submissions to the recent Senate inquiry into veterans' advocacy services, highlight the risks some veterans have faced when engaging fee-for-service advocates. They serve as a powerful reminder of the importance of understanding your options, and your rights, before making a claim.

### Why we're sharing these stories

We know that navigating the claims process can be complex. That's why DVA is committed to helping veterans and families make informed decisions about how they access support.

Veterans have the right to [choose how they make a claim](#). This includes:

- **Self-claiming** through [MyService](#)
- **Accessing free advocacy support** from trained, independent advocates through ex-service organisations (ESOs) using the [Advocacy Register](#)
- **Booking a 1-1 appointment** with a DVA [Veteran Support Officer](#)
- **Accessing free support from DVA** through DVA's [Claims Lodgement Assistance program](#), online or in person
- **Paying for advocacy services**, if they choose to do so.

### What to know when paying for advocacy

It's important to remember that, not all advocacy services are the same. Some commercial, fee-for-service providers charge high fees or commissions, and not all are subject to the same training, oversight or professional standards as free ESO advocates. In some cases, veterans have been left out of pocket, misled, or unsupported when things went wrong.

By sharing these stories, we aim to:

- raise awareness of the potential risks of using unregulated fee-for-service advocacy
- encourage veterans to ask questions and read the fine print before signing any agreements
- promote safe, informed choices when seeking support to make a claim.

### What to expect

Over the coming weeks, we'll be publishing a series of short, deidentified stories that reflect the real experiences of veterans. These stories are not intended to discourage anyone from seeking help. Instead, they highlight the importance of choosing the right support for your needs.

Real stories, real lessons #1: [Understanding hidden fees](#)

Real stories, real lessons #2: Coming soon

Real stories, real lessons #3: Coming soon

Real stories, real lessons #4: Coming soon

We encourage all veterans and families to explore our [Making a Claim guide](#) to learn more about your options, including how to find free, qualified support through trusted organisations.

### Safeguarding the system for everyone

DVA is safeguarding the integrity of the veteran support system and rolling out reforms to improve transparency, accountability, and service quality across the board. These include:

- updates to health service provider responsibilities to enhance compliance
- fee schedule reforms for initial liability compensation reports
- publicly naming non-compliant providers.

Together, these initiatives aim to protect veterans from misleading services, promote informed decision-making, and ensure fair, consistent support for all. The Institute of Veterans Advocacy will also set national standards for advocacy in the future.



## ANNOUNCEMENT OF A REVIEW OF THE NAA CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

At the 2025 Annual General Meeting of the National Council of the Naval Association of Australia (NAA), the Council approved the establishment of a Sub-committee to **review and modernise the NAA Constitution and By-laws**. The sub-committee is made up of the following members of the association:

Russell Pettis (Chair)	- Victoria Section
Bruce Kafer	- New South Wales Section
Gordon Fuller	- Tasmania Section
Cheryl Fittock	- South Australia Section
Kaye Morgan	- Queensland Section
Lorraine Grey	- New South Wales Section

The sub-committee held its inaugural meeting on 21 October 2025. It was agreed at that meeting that the group's first action would be:

- Advise all NAA members that the Constitution Review has commenced, and
- Seek input from all members regarding their opinions of the current constitution, its strengths and weaknesses, where it can be improved or where it should be reduced in content or coverage.

**The consultation period will last until the end of February 2026.** The sub-committee would appreciate comments from all elements of the NAA – Section Executive Committees, Sub-section Executive Committees and individual members. Feedback should be sent to the State Section Secretaries for collation and submission to the Constitution Review Sub-committee.

**Russell Pettis**

Chair, NAA Constitution Review Sub-committee

# THE TOBRUK FERRY SERVICE

On December 7, 1941, the Siege of Tobruk ended after 242 days.

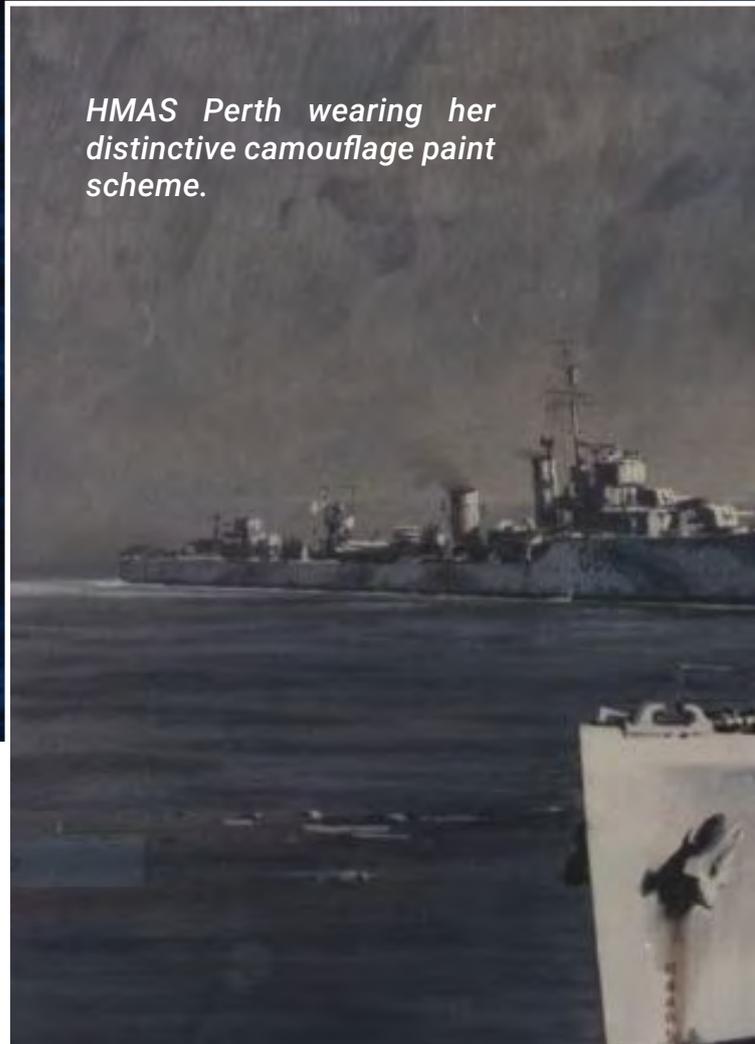
RAN ships supported the Allied forces in Tobruk by running a 'ferry service' bringing in ammunition, food, water, medical supplies, and fresh troops, while evacuating wounded and prisoners of war.

The Tobruk Ferry Service was the Allied naval operation to supply the besieged city of Tobruk during World War II. It was a dangerous supply run where ships shuttled vital supplies like ammunition and food into the port, while evacuating wounded personnel, often under daily air attacks. The service was a collaborative effort involving Royal Navy and Royal Australian Navy ships, as well as other Allied and South African vessels.

## Key aspects of the Tobruk Ferry Service

- **Purpose:** To keep the besieged Allied garrison in Tobruk supplied with war materiel and to evacuate casualties, enabling them to continue resisting Axis forces.
- **The "Scrap Iron Flotilla":** The Royal Australian Navy's 10th Destroyer Flotilla became known as the "Scrap Iron Flotilla" and played a crucial role in this service. The name was coined by Nazi propaganda Minister Joseph Goebbels.
- **Hazardous conditions:** The runs were extremely perilous, with ships frequently attacked by air and sea. The German Luftwaffe conducted daily raids, and navigating through the harbor was made difficult by the numerous wrecks of previous vessels.
- **Logistics:** Ships would often sail from Alexandria, Egypt, late at night, arrive at Tobruk around midnight to unload supplies and load wounded soldiers, and then return to Mersa Matruh before heading back to Alexandria.
- **Ships involved:** A variety of ships were involved, including destroyers, sloops, and smaller vessels. Some Australian ships that participated included HMAS Parramatta, HMAS Waterhen, HMAS Vendetta, HMAS Napier, and HMAS Nizam.
- **Losses:** The operation resulted in significant losses for the Allies, with several ships sunk, including the Australian destroyers HMAS Parramatta and HMAS Waterhen.

*HMAS Perth wearing her distinctive camouflage paint scheme.*



Australia's defence of the Libyan harbour town of Tobruk against German and Italian forces was key to slowing their advance into Egypt and the Suez Canal. Tobruk's location made it strategically valuable. While the Allies held Tobruk, Axis powers were forced to carry their supplies overland. The terrain was across 1,500 kilometres of desert from the port of Tripoli, to get to Egypt.

Between April and August 1941, around 14,000 Australian soldiers, along with 4 regiments of British artillery and some Indian troops were commanded by Lieutenant General Leslie Morshead. They were besieged in Tobruk by a German-Italian army commanded by General Erwin Rommel. The Nazi propagandist William Joyce (known as 'Lord Haw-Haw') derided the defenders as 'rats'. However, the Australian soldiers embraced this moniker and became known as 'the Rats of Tobruk'.

The Royal Australian Navy (RAN) and the Royal Navy provided the garrison's vital link to the outside world. They received support from units that came from India and South Africa. The 'Tobruk Ferry Service' was run by the Royal Navy's Inshore Squadron under the command of Captain Albert Poland RN. It operated between Alexandria and Mersa Matruh, in Egypt, and Tobruk.



**Services provided were:**

- gunfire support
- supplies
- troops
- evacuations for the wounded.

**Nine Australian ships contributed to the service:**

- the 5 destroyers of the Scrap Iron Flotilla,
- the destroyers HMA Ships Napier and Nizam,
- and the sloops HMA Ships Parramatta (II) and Yarra (II).

They were based in Alexandria, some 350 nautical miles from Tobruk. The run became known as 'bomb alley'. Australian vessels made a total of 139 trips in and out of Tobruk – HMAS Vendetta held the record, with 39 individual passages.

Two RAN ships were lost during Tobruk Ferry runs, both in 1941. On 20 June, Waterhen was attacked by Axis dive bombers off the coast of Egypt, near Salum. It was sunk early the following morning, though with only minor casualties.

There were only 24 survivors from the crew of 162 in Parramatta when she was sunk off Tobruk. This occurred while escorting an ammunition ship in the early hours of 27 November 1941. Parramatta was struck by a torpedo from the German submarine U559.

The Commander-in-Chief of the Mediterranean Fleet, Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, reported the results of the Tobruk Ferry to the Admiralty:

'They evacuated 34,115 troops and replaced them with 32,667 fresh troops. 7,516 wounded men were transported to base hospitals and 7,097 captured prisoners were taken to the rear.

'The ships delivered 72 tanks, 92 guns, 33,946 tons of stores, ammunition, food and fresh water and 108 live sheep (food for the Indian troops).

'Twenty-seven naval ships were sunk and another 27 damaged. Seven merchant ships were sunk and six damaged. The casualties were naval personnel killed or missing 469, wounded 186; and Merchant Service killed or missing 70, wounded 55.'

# ACT Section - Committee Meeting Minutes - 6 November 2025

Attendees: Alex McGown (Chair), Darren Rush, Peter Cooke-Russell & Denis Lyons

Apologies: David Manolas & Alaric O'Neill

## Meeting Opened at 1125hrs

### 1. FESR Monument Design

- Monument Designs:
  - Four sculptures considered, but only two approved by the War Memorial board; two others were sent back for improvement ("go away and make it better").
  - Critique of designs, including descriptions such as "looks like a plastic crate."
  - Noted that these candid assessments did not appear in official meeting minutes.
- Feedback and Decision Process:
  - Some designs were criticized for redundancy (e.g., family memorials already present).
  - Preference seemed to fall on the least objectionable rather than the most popular.
  - There is a lack of communication from the artists/committee about design updates.
  - Budget discussed: target not to exceed \$500,000 for the project.
- Ongoing Actions:
  - Awaiting further input from associated committees.

### 2. Financial Administration

- Bank Access:
  - Issues with accessing the Bendigo Bank account due to password changes; carried out check and determined payments received for Membership Dues.
- Reimbursement:
  - No urgency in reimbursement for printing/postage costs for ACT Bosun's Call.

### 3. Committee Roles

- Bosun's Call:
  - Peter Cooke-Russell advised that he would like to stand down from editing/producing both the National and ACT Bosun's Call Newsletter.
  - Darren Rush agreed to take on that role.
  - No objections to handing over the newsletter and related duties.

### 4. Membership Database and Long Service Certificates

- Database Progress:
  - Significant work ongoing to standardize and update national database across ACT, Victoria, South Australia, New South Wales, Tasmania, Queensland & Western Australia.
    - ACT and Victoria "up to date."
    - South Australia updating.
    - Awaiting info from Queensland & WA.
  - System improvements include ability to email specific member groups.
- Long Service Certificate Changes:
  - Eligibility periods changed from 15, 30, 45, 60 years to 10, 20, 30, 40... effective last year.
  - Affected members now eligible at shorter intervals; efforts underway to verify and process overdue or newly eligible awards.

### 5. Publication Content and Editorial Notes

- Distribution to Key Stakeholders:
  - Ensuring certain high-level stakeholders (e.g., Minister for Veterans Affairs, Chief of Navy's assistant) receive appropriate versions.

### 6. Data Privacy and AI Recording

- Legal and Privacy Checks:
  - Compliance with Listening Devices Act: recording permissible with participant consent.
  - Constitution also allows recording with permission.
  - Once AI transcription complete, data is removed from cloud, sent to one email address and moved to offline storage to minimize risk.

*Meeting closed at 1155hrs*

*No Meeting on 4 December*

ACT Section Christmas Party @ Eastlakes Club

*Next Meeting*

5 February 2026 @ Eastlakes Club

Attendees: Alex McGown (Chair), Committee, Graeme Quinn, Heather Milward, Pauline Gribble, Bev Joce, Glenn McNamara, Joe Slaats, Harry Beardsell & Alan Masters

Apologies: David Manolas, Alaric O'Neill, Rob Ridgeway, Ray Horne, John Small, Mick Hardwick, Tony Vickers

Visitors: John Henstock, Deb McGown, Mary Slaats & Lex Beardsell

## Meeting Opened at 1330hrs

### 1. Recital of the Odes

Naval Ode, Ode to the Naval Veteran & Ode of Remembrance

### 2. November Birthday List

- Veronic Hurd
- Tim Hayden
- Viv Littlewood
- Graeme Quinn
- Jeff Walford

### 3. Newsletter Highlights

- General Meeting Days & Christmas Party details:
- Article on new Aged Care Act (effective Nov 1).
- Update on Veteran Pension rates
- Article on maintenance of Nuclear Submarine USS *Vermont* at HMAS *Stirling*
- Minutes from October Section Meeting
- Membership Renewal (\$40 pp) and 2026 Social Calendar

### 4. Minutes of Previous Meeting (October)

- Available on Page 8 (Nov ACT Bosun's Call)
- No questions raised
- Motion to accept minutes
  - Moved: Alan Masters.
  - Seconded: Harry Beardsell.
  - Carried.

### 5. President's Health & Absence

President David absent due to ongoing health issues. Recent hospitalization and heart tests (angiogram) showed no heart issues, but fatigue persists and further tests are pending.

## 6. Committee Reports

- Vice President:
  - Two Last Post Ceremonies scheduled for January & February 2026.
- Secretary:
  - Correspondence in:
    - Naval Historical Society Newsletter (Call the Hands) includes reprint (with consent) of story published in White Ensign Magazine.
    - NAA National response to proposed Defence Honors and Awards Bill (copy available on request).
  - Ongoing work being carried out on National Membership Database has identified members eligible for Long Service Awarded Certificates.
- Membership Registrar:
  - 66 total members
    - 47 Financial
    - 7 Unfinancial
    - 8 Honorary
    - 1 Club
    - 3 Honorary Life
  - Peter has requested to step down from editing/producing the Bosun's Call (ACT & NAT) Darren to take on the position.
- Welfare:
  - President (David) & John Small's wife (Wendy) noted for health concerns.
- Social:
  - Limited recent events due to low participation.
  - Suggestion for more diverse events (possibly dinners during daylight saving months).
  - Next major event - Section Christmas Party

## 7. General Business

- HMAS *Sydney* Association successful Veterans Health week grant. Barbeque at Duntroon Golf Club. NAA invited (mid Feb 2026 - TBC)
- FESR Memorial Flyer - two proposals shortlisted. Feedback to be collected from ESO's.

Meeting closed at 1350hrs



## Australian Government Department of Veterans' Affairs

### DVA Contact Numbers

Provider invoicing & billing enquiries: 1300 550 017

Provider enquiries: 1800 550 457

Transport bookings: 1800 550 455

Veterans' Affairs Pharmaceutical Advisory Centre (VAPAC): 1800 552 580

### Hearing or speech impairment assistance

If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the [National Relay Service](#) (NRS):

Talk To You (TTY) users phone 1800 555 677 then ask for 1800 838 372

Speak and Listen users phone 1800 555 727 then ask for 1800 838 372

Internet relay users connect to the NRS then ask for 1800 838 372

Information on health services may be obtained from DVA. The contact numbers for health care pro-viders requiring further information or prior financial authorisation for all States and Territories are listed below:

**TELEPHONE:** 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372)

**INTERNATIONAL CALLERS:** +61 2 6289 1133

### POSTAL ADDRESS FOR ALL STATES AND TERRITORIES:

Department of Veterans' Affairs

Health Approvals & Home Care Section

GPO Box 9998

BRISBANE QLD 4001

**DVA WEBSITE:** <http://www.dva.gov.au/providers/allied-healthprofessionals>

**DVA EMAIL:** For prior financial authorisation: [health.approval@dva.gov.au](mailto:health.approval@dva.gov.au)

The appropriate prior approval request form can be found at: <https://www.dva.gov.au/providers/servicesrequiring-prior-approval>

### CLAIMS FOR PAYMENT

For information about claims for payment visit: [www.dva.gov.au/providers/how-claim](http://www.dva.gov.au/providers/how-claim)

**CLAIM ENQUIRIES:** 1300 550 017 (Option 2 Allied Health)

Claims will take a variety of times to complete based on whether or not the claim is prioritised for allocation to a decision maker and the complexity of the claim itself. For example, if the service of the individual crosses two or more Acts or contains a lot of health conditions and injuries or both. This results in some claims being decided faster than the average time, while some claims take longer.

For any condition, to make the claiming process smoother, follow these 3 steps:

- Step 1: Get your medical practitioner to con-firm your diagnosis.
- Step 2: Supply the documents you need to;
- Step 3: Check if you are already eligible for free health care and treatment.

## CLAIMS PROGRESS

As at 31 October 2025, DVA had 89,597 claims on hand, comprised of 22,820 unallocated claims and 66,777 claims being processed.

In the financial year to date (FYTD) (1 July 2025 to 31 October 2025):

DVA received 39,032 claims

DVA made 36,099 determinations

For all claims on hand including older claims being processed the average TTTP for MRCA IL was 333 days, up from 304 days in the previous FYTD. The median TTTP was 271 days.

There have already been some significant improvements in processing timeframes for new IL claims received and determined within the last 12 months.

For claims received within the last 12 months, the average TTTP for MRCA IL was 110 days. The median TTTP was 96 days.

## OPEN ARMS

Veterans & Families Counselling

Open Arms provides mental health and wellbeing support to anyone who has served at least one day of continuous fulltime service in the ADF and their immediate families.

### 1800 011 046

## SAFE ZONE SUPPORT

Free and anonymous counselling line for all current and ex-serving ADF personnel, veterans and their families. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week

### 1800 142 072

## DEFENCE FAMILY HELPLINE

Available 24/7 or online at [www.defence.gov.au/members-families/defence-helpline.asp](http://www.defence.gov.au/members-families/defence-helpline.asp). Staffed by qualified human services professionals including social workers and psychologists.

### 1800 628 036

## DEFENCE ALL HOURS SUPPORT LINE

24/7 confidential telephone service for Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and their families to facilitate access to ADF or civilian mental health services.

### 1800 628 036