



# National Bosun's Call



Vol 1 No 6

Once Navy, Always Navy

December 2020

## 20 November 2020—NAA 100th Anniversary National Commemoration at the Australian War Memorial Canberra



Above: National President David Manolas lays the NAA wreath at the AWM To his left is CMDR David Salisbury RN, Naval Attaché to the British High Commission

Right: RADM Colin Lawrence laying a wreath on behalf of the Chief of Navy

Photos AWM/Flickr



National Newsletter of the  
**Naval Association of Australia**



## Ord Smn Edward Sheean VC



On 12 August 2020, the Governor-General announced that Her Majesty The Queen had approved the posthumous awarding of the Victoria Cross for Australia to Ordinary Seaman Edward 'Teddy' Sheean.

Teddy Sheean was 18 years old when he was killed during an attack by Japanese aircraft which sank the HMAS *Armidale* in the Arafura Sea on 1 December 1942.

He turned his back on the chance of survival to return to his gun and fire on Japanese aircraft strafing his shipmates. He chose certain death to try and save his mates.

**The Governor-General will present the Sheean family with the insignia of the Victoria Cross for Australia at a ceremony at Government House on 1 December 2020.**

**The Naval Association of Australia Inc**  
**ABN 56 653 989 978**  
 221 Centenary Avenue  
 MELTON VICTORIA 3337

### Patron In Chief:

HM The Queen of Australia.

### National Patron

His Excellency General The Honourable David Hurley AC DSC Retd Governor General of Australia

## National President's Note

*Dear Members,*

*It was my privilege to provide the Address at our Association's Centenary Service in the grounds of the Australian War Memorial (AWM).*

*Given the restrictions imposed because of Covid-19, the presence of Government and Opposition Representatives, Rear Admiral C. Lawrence AM RAN, representing the Chief of Navy, CO Harman, Naval Attachés, NAA Representatives, ex-Service Association Representatives, a Navy Band Brass Quintet and Vocalist, Navy Chaplain and the Australian War Memorial Director and Staff, ensured the proceedings were a truly memorable celebration of our Centenary.*

*My best wishes to you all,*

*David Manolas*





## NAA Centenary 20 November 2020 - Wreath Laying Service

### National President – Address



Before us we see: A Sailor's Cap, symbolic of our Members, those serving in the Navy and Naval Veterans; the Counterpane is symbolic of those who are now at rest; and, the Bosun's Call symbolises the heralding of a New Day.

We are gathered here today to celebrate the Centenary of the Naval Association of Australia.

We salute all those who have served our nation as members of the Royal Australian Navy; those whose grave is the cruel sea, wherein the Naval Ode speaks so emotively of their resting place in the depths of the oceans beyond our reach. We salute those who, on returning from war service at sea and ashore, found their lives impacted so harshly by the effects of war. To them all, we are much indebted for the price paid for our freedom.

Our Association exists in order to safeguard their legacy and to minister to the wellbeing and recognition of the naval veteran; those who have completed their naval service and those still serving.

At the passing of one of our members we offer an 'Ode to The Naval Veteran':

*In Naval service their duty done  
At sea and ashore in peace and in war  
Wounds seen and unseen, deeds known and unknown  
Now at rest we pray, the memories with us stay*

Within the Naval Association of Australia, we are told that a chance meeting of former WWI shipmates in Melbourne in 1920, led to the establishment of an Association that would evolve into the only national organisation solely committed to watching over the interests of Serving and ex-Navy men and women here in Australia. We can look to the Royal Naval Association, with whom we share the motto: 'Once Navy, Always Navy', the Royal New Zealand Naval Association and the Association of the United States Navy, to see comparable examples of like-minded shipmates with whom we share an ethos borne 'in service at sea and ashore, in peace and in war'.

Our 2,860 members in 76 Sections and Sub-sections across Australia, afford each other companionship and support through naval fellowship. We gather together freely: each of equal standing; all with a story to tell of life in the Navy and beyond; a desire to watch out for our members and their loved ones; and, a generosity of spirit welcoming all who wish to join us. Our members actively participate in the full range of national and naval commemorative services where we serve to bear witness and to act as a rallying point for non-aligned naval veterans. We are the custodians of a wealth of naval experience and historic narrative, numerous collections of naval memorabilia and are entrusted with the oversight of a number of Memorials and Commemorative Services. As staunch supporters of our Parent Service, we advocated for an Annual Navy Day. The aim being to provide the wider community with an appreciation of the role and importance of

## NAA Centenary 20 November 2020 - National President Address

a strong and capable Navy. The first Australian Navy Day was conducted in October, 1966.

Our membership actively contributes to the preservation of the Australian Defence Force legacy and the wellbeing of serving and ex-service personnel, through membership of other groups and associations such as the: Naval Historical Society; Navy League; numerous ship associations; the WRANS and Naval Women's Association; the RSL; Vietnam Veterans Associations; and, a number of Veteran Support Organisations. We are active participants in ex-service consultative and advocacy groups; a foundation member of The Alliance of Defence Service Organisations; and a participant in the Ex-Service Organisation Round Table Forum. Looking to the wellbeing of future generations, our Australian Navy Cadet Liaison Officers are forging closer ties with Cadet Units nation-wide through sponsorship and other support initiatives.

We are proud of these and other achievements wherein:

- the Naval Association was successful in seeking parity for repatriation benefits and entitlements awarded to their Army and Air Force colleagues who had served in Malaya as part of the Far East Strategic Reserve during 1955 – 1960;
- we were successful in having the names of the two Sailors killed while serving in RAN Ships in Malayan waters and the four Sailors who lost their lives in WWII Mine Clearance Operations off the Australian Coast in 1947, inscribed on the Honour Roll in the AWM;
- our efforts were successful in having the risks of asbestosis recognised as being a long-term health risk to sailors living and working beyond the confines of ships' machinery spaces, as asbestos lagging material was used throughout those ships of an earlier era;
- efforts by members of our Association in demonstrating the potential exposure to dioxins through potable water produced by ship's evaporative distillation during the Vietnam War, was of immeasurable benefit to many of the 9,800 RAN personnel who had served in the Vietnam Logistic Support and Escort role and have had to deal with the unforeseen adverse health outcomes; and,
- we, along with so many others, were of firm resolve as to the awarding of a Victoria Cross to Teddy Sheean. This award earned in time of war will soon join the George Cross awarded to Chief Petty Officer Jonathon Rogers DSM, the Coxswain in HMAS Voyager, when the Navy suffered its largest loss of life in peace time. Acts of exemplary courage whilst in naval service *'in peace and in war'*.

At a time when we again need to recognise that so many of our Service men and women are bearing wounds that are not necessarily readily apparent,

we are encouraged to see that treatment for life threatening conditions such as Cancer and PTSD are now more readily available.

In our veteran's wellbeing endeavours, we are so admirably supported by those who step up to act as advocates. They are worthy of our wholehearted admiration and boundless gratitude as it is through their efforts that many veterans have achieved life-changing and life-giving support. We are blessed in our nation to have the means and inherent mechanisms to provide such support to our veterans, and for that we give thanks, while remaining ever vigilant in watching over its application.

May I take this opportunity to express my appreciation and admiration of all that our Members and Office Bearers have done during their *'Posting'* to the Association. As a core element of the Australian Navy Family you have all shown your commitment to evolve and adapt, for here we are at our Centenary, and still making every effort to fulfil our mission. It is through your resolve to *'turn-to'* and *'to stand your watch'* that we are still fulfilling this vital role in the wider Naval Community. It is with heartfelt regret that we cannot gather here in the numbers we would wish, but we can all proudly share in our ongoing story and in celebrating our achievements. We can look ahead with optimism and a renewed determination as we emerge from this *'make and mend'* period, well placed to sail on onwards.

*From your Leadership Team, a Bravo Zulu to you all!*



*David Manolas delivering the address*

*AWM/Flickr*



## NAA Centenary 20 November 2020 \_ Canberra

*Right: L-R CN Rep RADM Colin Lawrence, National Vice President Lorraine Grey, National President David Manolas, Past ACT Presidents JJ Harrison and Peter Cooke-Russell*

*Below: JJ Harrison with RADM Colin Lawrence comparing naval Technical Services*

*Below right: L-R ACT War Widows Guild President Dr Kathryn Spurling and ACT WRANS and Navy Women Association President Pauline Gribble*

*AWM/Flickr*



*Below: L-R National Vice President Lorraine Grey, New Zealand Defence Attaché CAPT Shaun Fogarty RNZN, National President David Manolas, Director Australian War Memorial Matt Anderson, United States Naval Attaché CAPT Matt Ort USN*

*AWM/Flickr*





## Remembrance Day 2020—Australian War Memorial



*National President NAA David Manolas with Air Force Association National Vice President Sharon Bown laying their wreaths at the Australian War Memorial Canberra service*

*AWM/Flickr*

## Last Post Ceremony AWM—HMAS Sydney II - LSTD Bettinson

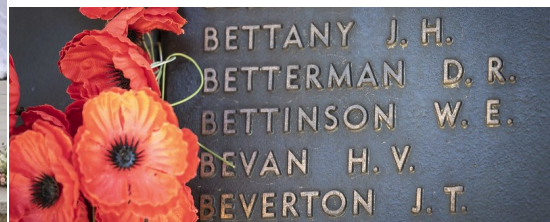


*Left: Alex McGown ACT NAA Vice President laying the NAA Wreath at the ceremony*

*Below: AWM Roll of Honour HMAS Sydney II Section*

*Below Left: NAA ACT Section Wreath card*

*AWM/Flickr*



*Above: Jim Quick President of the HMAS Sydney Association with Chief of Navy VADM Michael Noonan*



## World War II Commemoration Medallion

Left: Lionel Mead receiving the World War II Commemorative Medallion. Lionel joined the RAN from Queensland on 30 December 1942 trained in gunnery and joined HMAS Shropshire on her commissioning in the United Kingdom in March 1943. He also served at sea in HMAS Kybra a coastal Patrol vessel. Originally a Queensland Public Servant, Lionel transferred to the Commonwealth Public Service on discharge from the RAN in December 1945 and was the QLD DVA Deputy Commissioner prior to retirement. Lionel joined Sydney/Country Sub-section of the NAA in June 1982 transferring to the ACT Section in November 2005.



Right: Roy (Tim) Holt receiving his. He entered the RAN in November 1945 joining HMAS Hobart in April 1946 on completion of his gunnery training. He was rated a Leading Patrolman in November 1955 rising to the rating of Master at Arms in June 1968 and later served in HMAS Harman until discharge in July 1973. Tim joined the NAA in November 1981 and was an inaugural member of the Bribie Island Sub-section in Queensland. He transferred to the ACT Section in May 2016.

*Photos John Small*

## 95 years ago



Ex-Navalmen's Association Smoke Night Manchester Unity Hall Melbourne 16 July 1925

*Table Talk magazine July 1925*

## Change of Command at Fleet Headquarters

In a small but poignant ceremony on board HMAS *Brisbane*, Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead, AO, RAN hauled down his flag and passed the weight as Commander Australian Fleet to his successor, Rear Admiral Mark Hammond, RAN.

The Sydney Harbour ceremony was attended by a limited group of guests including family members and members of the Fleet Senior Leadership Group.

Since Rear Admiral Mead took the helm in January 2018, the Fleet has welcomed three new Hobart- Class destroyers, and the Mid-Life Capability upgrades for the Anzac Class frigates has begun.

Overall, fleet units are spending increasing numbers of sea days deployed into the Indo-Pacific region.

Joint and coalition activities have become the norm for the Australian Fleet, which has conducted an increased number of engagements with regional navies under Rear Admiral Mead.

Along with the Fleet responsiveness to Operation BUSHFIRE ASSIST and the new reality of enduring operations in the COVID-19 environment, the Fleet looks and operates in a significantly different manner than it did three years ago.

"Serving in this position has been an honour and a valuable education. It is a truly exciting time to be part of Navy," Rear Admiral Mead said.



*Rear Admiral Mark Hammond, AM, RAN, left, receives the weight of command from Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead, AO, RAN aboard HMAS Brisbane at anchor in Sydney Harbour.*

"My goals in my tenure were to generate forces, deploy forces and to be prepared to fight. We have made great strides in these areas.

"I have learned so much from the sailors and officers I have worked with these last few years and I leave this position with the utmost respect for the resilience, professionalism and agility of our Navy people.

Rear Admiral Mead will be promoted to Vice Admiral and appointed as Chief of Joint Capability.

Rear Admiral Hammond assumes Command of Her Majesty's Australian Fleet having previously served as Deputy Chief of Navy.

Imagery is available on the Navy Image Gallery: <https://images.navy.gov.au/S20203678>.



*Published on 17 November 2020 LEUT Tanalee Smith (author), ABIS Daniel Goodman (photographer), ABIS Leon Dafonte Fernandez (photographer)*

*Rear Admiral Jonathan Mead, AO, RAN farewells HMAS Brisbane's ship's company during a 'cheer ship' after completing the handover of command of the Australian Fleet in Sydney Harbour.*



## Recognition of Fleet Air Arm personnel for award of the Australian Service Medal for Operation Bursa



### Extract from "Broadside" November 2020

Award of ASM for Operation Bursa Operation Bursa was the counter-terrorist operation which commenced in 1980 to defend the Bass Strait oil and gas platforms against potential terrorist attack. Navy provided air support to Special Forces (SF) operations from the commencement of Op Bursa, until the task was handed over to Army Aviation in 1990. While eligible Army personnel were granted the ASM for Op Bursa, recognition of the contribution of Fleet Air Arm personnel was denied. This situation has now been rectified. Go to the Fleet Air Arm Association website for background information, advice on eligibility of FAA veterans and the process of applying for the award. <https://www.faaaa.asn.au/operation-bursa-recognition/>

### Extract from the FAAA Association newsletter article Operation Bursa Recognition

#### Background

In March 2011, the Governor General approved the award of the Australian Service Medal with clasp Counter Terrorism/Special Recovery (ASM-CT/SR) for designated Special Forces personnel engaged in Operation Bursa. This also included Army Aviation personnel in support of SF activity.

Requests to have Navy personnel included under the same guidelines as Army Aviation were denied. A key reason for this was Army Aviation units were "force assigned" to the support of SF, while Navy was not; although the tasking and commitment were largely the same. To address this inequity, a small group of dedicated aviators, under the guidance of CDRE Brett Dowsing, set about establishing criteria which could validate the award for Navy. This was ultimately successful, with approval finally signed in October 2020.

*A detachment of Wessex 31Bs at RAAF East Sale, having just completed a morning practice session.*

RAN

#### Eligibility

The eligibility requirements include Navy personnel, or allied foreign Defence Force members, who:

- served 60 consecutive or more days on Operation Bursa (a member who did not complete 60 consecutive days due to death, illness, injury or disability due to service in Op Bursa will be deemed to have completed 60 days)
- have not been awarded another medal for operational service over the same period;
- were qualified on aircraft type (Wessex 31B or SK-50A/B);
- were posted to the following Squadrons during the periods designated:
  - ◇ HC723 Squadron (1 Aug 80 to 9 Feb 84)
  - ◇ HU816 Squadron (9 Feb 84 to 1 Nov 86)
  - ◇ HS817 Squadron (1 Nov 86 to 31 Dec 89)

The 60 consecutive days qualifying period includes deployment, training and while on a reduced Notice-To-Move (NTM) (generally less than four hours) in support of Op Bursa. This award includes all personnel who meet the eligibility criteria.

#### Notes

*In mid 1980, Army requested the RAN allocate clearance divers to the TAG group being formed for off-shore oil installation protection. SASR did not have sufficient personnel trained in the diving and water skills and the RAN was tasked with providing clearance diving support.*

*"United and Undaunted - The First 100 Years" 2015*

*On 27 May 1980 the Government considered advice about the vulnerability of off-shore oil installations in Bass Strait. It knew that the RAN had been tasked with operations in the Strait for some time (principally using Patrol Boats but also with occasional Grumman Tracker and P3 Orion aircraft) but these had been in the nature of general surveillance*

*"Snippets of History; Operation Bursa." August 2016*





## Reserve training gets a revamp

The ambition to create quality Naval Officers who are well-prepared for a career at sea has resulted in a number of innovations to the Reserve Entry Officers' Course offered by the Royal Australian Naval College, HMAS Creswell.

The latest cohort of 16 trainees completed the Phase One component last month and were the first to benefit from several improvements to the 16 day residential program.

The trainees were the first to be included in the uniquely naval tradition of marching the colours, joining the New Entry Officers' Course participants on the quarterdeck of the historic college.

The October cohort includes Public Relations officers, Engineers, Legal officers, a Medical specialist, Nurse, Psychologist, Maritime Training Operations, a Military Police officer and the Navy's first Maritime Spiritual Wellbeing Officer.

Between them they have 31 degrees, two PhDs, and decades of experience in their chosen fields.

Course participant, Commander Benedict 'Eggs' Maguire, said the coordinators of the course were outstanding at their jobs.

"We were extremely privileged to have the finest people possible inducting us into the Navy way of life.

"They are complete professionals who provided care, leadership and clarity throughout, which led to excellent learning outcomes but also contributed to building strong bonds and cohesive teams," Commander Maguire said.

Another first for the group was their participation in an outdoor leadership training component, Operation Jaywick, inspired by the famous Reservist-led WWII operation of the same name.

Course coordinator Chief Petty Officer Christian Duncan said the inclusion of the bespoke resilience training element was designed to mirror the experience of the New Entry Officers' Course participants.

"It closely replicates the training undertaken by the New Entry Officers' Course and is designed to push our trainees physically and mentally to help them gel as a group and test their resilience.

"We are incorporating the

*The October Reserve Entry Officers' Course cohort participated in leadership training Operation Jaywick at Royal Australian Naval College HMAS Creswell for the first time last month.*

RAN

Reserve Entry Officers' Course participants into the rest of the college more than they have been in the past to give them the same experiences the New Entry Officers' Course gets over a much longer timeframe," Chief Petty Officer Duncan said.

The group have left their mark on the college, with two members breaking records in the gym for push ups and the beep test.

Commander Maguire said several in the group were particularly interested in breaking the records.

"We worked out our average age is 38 so for several of us there was an additional motivation to break records set by those younger than us.

"As it turned out the records broken by our division were previously set by the Physical Training Instructor who managed us on our resilience training so in many respects that was even more satisfying," Commander Maguire said.

There were several additional measures taken to ensure the course could be conducted in a COVID-safe way with the group kept in a bubble, with separate and specific dining times and distance maintained during combined activities such as parades.

The specialist entry reserve training is conducted in four phases using a combination of online and residential teaching methods and includes time at sea for all new officers.

It aims to provide a balance to allow professionals with full-time employment commitments outside of defence to complete the training while spending minimal time away from their jobs and families.

It provides the Navy with talented and experienced professionals with needed specialist skills who are ready to hit the ground running and bring in fresh ideas.

LEUT Angela Faulkner





## Change in command of Maritime Task Group

The inaugural Commander of the Australian Maritime Task Group, Captain Andrew Quinn, has handed over the role to Captain David Tietzel following a successful two-year appointment.

Commander of the Australian Maritime Task Group is responsible for the sea combat capability of multiple ships, their collective personnel, and aircraft.

An example of this was the Regional Presence Deployment 2020 in which five ships deployed overseas in company.

Captain Quinn handed over to Captain Tietzel at Fleet Headquarters in Sydney, ending a tenure that spanned a crucial period in Navy's shift towards task group operations.

Captain Quinn said he hoped to bring to the role a sharper focus on the sea combat element of task group operations.

"It has been really pleasing to achieve this over the past two years," Captain Quinn said.

"Deployments and training events like Indo-Pacific Endeavour 2019, Talisman Sabre 2019, the Ocean series of exercises and, most recently, the Regional

Presence Deployment 2020 prove that task group operations have been normalised.

"Task group operations will remain an exciting space. We continue to mature our amphibious capabilities. Our new air warfare destroyers are integrating into the fleet and our Anzac Class frigates are being progressively upgraded, so the lethality of our task groups is increasing.

"As a task group, we are conducting bilateral and multilateral engagements with our friends, neighbours and partners as we are active and persistent in the Indo-Pacific region, which demonstrates our commitment."

While Captain Quinn is looking forward to his next posting as Director-General Surface Combatants and Aviation, he said he would remember the dedication of his staff and the ship's companies he deployed with in his former role.

"One thing that's always struck me in my time as Commander of the Australian Maritime Task Group is how motivated and professional our Navy people are," Captain Quinn said.

*By Lieutenant Ryan Zerbe*

## Small Ships Navigation Course

The global pandemic presented the Royal Australian Navy the opportunity to devise innovative approaches toward training delivery and generating future capability.

Nowhere was this more evident than through the remote delivery of Small Ships Navigation Course No. 67, which was recently conducted in Darwin. This is first time ever that this training has been delivered anywhere other than Sydney.

Ordinarily the Small Ships Navigation Course is delivered at the School of Navigation Warfare at HMAS Watson, on Sydney's picturesque South Head.

Lead instructor for the course, Lieutenant Commander Alicia Runde spoke of the important milestone the course provides in the careers of the students involved.

"In the Minor War Vessel community, many of our sailors and officers are required to multi-task in a variety of different roles that they would not normally perform elsewhere in the fleet. Performing the role as Officer of the Watch on a ship's bridge and keeping the vessel navigationally safe is just one of these very important roles," she said.

The Small Ships Navigation Course delivers the foundation skills and knowledge that prepares the students to gain their Limited Navigation Watchkeeping Certificates as the basic qualification to stand bridge watches aboard minor warships in future postings and generating this capability for ships at sea.

The decision to remotely deliver the Small Ships Navigation Course in Darwin removed the need for

mandatory quarantine and interstate travel. The students completed six weeks of theory, generously delivered by local Navigators and Navigation Specialists from HMAS Coonawarra.

The theory module was then followed by two weeks of practical assessment at sea in HMAS Ararat.

Commanding Officer of Ararat, Lieutenant Commander David Martinussen said the remote delivery of this training in Darwin was both practical and cost-conscious.

"The cost of flying a cohort of trainees to Sydney, with the additional expense of having to quarantine prior to the course, made this remote delivery a more practical option," Lieutenant Commander Martinussen said. "More importantly, this provided the Patrol Boat community the chance to generate its own future capability on the platform the students will eventually serve in."

At sea in Ararat, the students stood supervised watches on the bridge by day and night as the ship operated near the Tiwi Island group to the North of Darwin, and the coastal fringes of the Kimberley Ranges.

In this setting the students were exposed to coastal navigation, engineering breakdown drills and operating the ship's sea-boats.

As graduates of the Small Ships Navigation Course, all students now return to their Darwin-based Armidale Class Patrol Boats, ready to tackle the next milestone of their career - achieving their Limited Navigation Watchkeeping Certificates.

*By SBLT Huon Fairbairn*



## Community Bus Services

### The Hon Darren Chester MP

Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Minister for Defence Personnel

Tuesday, 24 November 2020

Letter to the Editor: ADF personnel need our support

Dear Editor,

The last thing Australian Defence Force personnel, their families and our veterans need right now is your judgement. They need our support.

In the wake of the release of the Inspector-General of the Australian Defence Force Inquiry into Afghanistan, there has been plenty of media commentary quick to judge our servicemen and women.

But we can't allow the alleged actions of a few people, stain the reputations and the service of more than two million Australians who have done their duty with distinction throughout our nation's history.

They are the first people we turn to when things get difficult or too big for state authorities such as last Summer's bushfires and the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. And they keep us safe in an ever-changing world with peacekeeping missions and involvement in conflicts such as Afghanistan.

The courage, service and sacrifice of those wearing our nation's uniform who have done the right thing, must not be defined or diminished by this small minority. These are very serious allegations which require thorough investigation but all Australians are entitled to the presumption of innocence.

If you know a serving Australian Defence Force member, or a veteran, please show them your support. And if you are a Defence member, or a veteran, or one of the many families that support them, I would also ask you to please reach out if you need someone to talk to.



For all current Australian Defence Force members and their families, the Defence all-hours Support Line is a confidential telephone and online service and is available on 1800 628 036. And for all current and former ADF members, and their families, [Open Arms](#) provides 24-hour free and confidential counselling and support on 1800 011 046.

Open Arms also has support available through SafeZone and when you call, it is up to you how much or how little personal information you share. This is available on 1800 142 072.

Thank you for your service.

**Darren Chester MP**

Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Minister for Defence Personnel

**Media contacts**

Rachel Tharratt: 02 6277 7820

DVA Media: 02 6289 6466

Office of the Hon Darren Chester, Canberra ACT

## Veteran Central opens for business

Thursday, 12 November 2020

Veterans and their families in Western Australia will benefit from a new chapter in supporting wellbeing and support services with the official opening of the first Veteran Wellbeing Centre, ANZAC House Veteran Central.

"The key to these Veteran Wellbeing Centres is that they provide local solutions to local issues, bringing together all the support services veterans and their families may require under the one roof," Mr Chester said.

"ANZAC House Veteran Central will provide access to health providers specialising in hearing, physiotherapy, dental, occupational therapy and mental health support, as well as financial, legal and employment support services, home care and aged care services.

"In addition, it will see services provided by the Department of Veterans' Affairs and Open Arms — Veterans & Families Counselling, providing easy access to services and information when and where veterans and their families need it.

The Australian Government announced a \$30 million investment for the development of a national network of six Veteran Wellbeing Centres in partnership with local ex-service organisations and state and territory governments. Each is at a different stage of development and the Government is committed to delivering centres that meet the needs of the local veteran community.

Further information on the Veteran Wellbeing Centres can be access on the [DVA website](#).

## New Justice Portal to help

Monday, 23 November 2020

Veterans and their families will benefit from the Veterans' Review Board's (VRB) new Justice Portal, which will make it easier for all veterans, and their advocates, to monitor progress online 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said the new VRB Justice Portal would allow veterans and advocates to upload documents through an automated case management system and monitor their application's progress.

"The new Justice Portal will allow the veteran community to quickly and seamlessly interact with the VRB, which will particularly benefit those living in rural and regional areas," Mr Chester said.

To complement this, the VRB website has been refreshed to provide a simplified and more user-friendly experience so that veteran and current serving communities can better access the information they need.

"An improved VRB website will help our veteran and defence communities find the information they need to support them with lodging an application to review a decision — a process that can be daunting at times," Mr Chester said.

"The Government is committed to putting veterans and their families first and the improved website and new portal will ensure veterans across the nation benefit from quicker, easier and more seamless interactions with the VRB."

The Veterans' Review Board process allows for a veteran to refine the information provided for their claim or provide additional medical information that was not part of the initial claim, which may result in a variation.

Of the more than 90,000 claims made to the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) in 2019–20, the VRB reviewed just over 3,400.

Visit the VRB [website](#) and [Justice Portal](#) for more information, or sign up to the portal to get started.

## DVA CONTACTS

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

### PHONE NUMBER:

Telephone:  
[1800 VETERAN \(1800 838 372\)](tel:1800VETERAN)

International callers:

[+61 2 6289 1133](tel:+61262891133)

### POSTAL ADDRESS FOR ALL STATES AND TERRITORIES:

Health Approvals & Home Care Section department of Veterans' Affairs

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)

*Open Arms — Veterans and Families Counselling provides support for current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families. Free and confidential help is available 24/7.*

Phone [1800 011 046](tel:1800011046) (international: +61 1800 011 046 or +61 8 8241 4546) or vis-

## Veteran and community grants

PROJECTS supporting the health and wellbeing of veterans and their families may be eligible for funding, with applications for the Veteran and Community Grants (V&CG) program opening today.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Darren Chester said the health and wellbeing of the veteran community was an ongoing priority, and the V&CG program was a way of supporting ex-service organisations (ESOs) and partner community organisations in providing local solutions.

"Local communities know best what will benefit veterans and their families, whether that is improvements that make community spaces safer and more accessible, equipment that will enable COVID-safe activities, or assistance to connect online," Mr Chester said.

"This year we are encouraging applications for practical projects and activities that support safe, accessible environments for veterans and their families to enable social connection and positive engagement to improve wellbeing."

ESOs and community organisation partners are invited to apply for grants of up to \$20,000 for local, community-based projects and activities. A small number of large grants of up to \$150,000 are available for projects that deliver wellbeing support services and activities of broad-scale benefit to the veteran community.

The 2020-21 grant round opens online today (17 Nov 20), and follows the successful Veterans' Health Week where social connection amidst the coronavirus pandemic was the theme and key focus of events.





If undeliverable return to  
NAA ACT Section  
26 Nelson Place  
Curtin ACT 2605

POSTAGE  
PAID  
AUSTRALIA

Paste Address label Here

National Bosun's Call Vol 1 No 6

