



Patron in Chief: Her Majesty the Queen

NAVAL ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

National President Letter to Members - 4/2019

The National Council participated in the AGM on Saturday, 30MAR19 at Launceston, Tasmania. There were several agenda items aimed at minor changes to the Rules, but a meeting highlight was the attendance of the Honourable Guy Barnett MP, Minister for Veterans' Affairs (Tasmania). The Minister opened the AGM to the delight of those in attendance. The Minister spoke of the most favourable view of the Naval Association across Tasmania, a glowing endorsement of the work by Alex McNeil – Tasmania Section President and his Shipmates. The Minister then described his support for more formal recognition of Ordinary Seaman Edward 'Teddy' Sheean, a consequence of his actions at the time HMAS Armidale was sunk on 1DEC42. The Minister was successful in having the Defence Honours and Awards Appeal Tribunal reconsider the actions of Teddy Sheean on that fateful day in 1942. Thanks must go to the Federal Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon Darren Chester MP for agreeing to the Appeals Tribunal receiving the application. The National Executive drafted a document in support of the application and that document was submitted along with Minister Barnett's application, with his concurrence. Minister Barnett's view is that the overall hearing, he as the Applicant and Vice Admiral Michael Noonan AO CSC RAN, Chief of Navy the respondent was generally favourable. He quoted aspects of CN's response and we can only hope that the Tribunal will receive and consider the submissions in a sensible and practical way. Past experience in relation to the Appeals Tribunal and recognition for past deeds has not been favourable to the applicants. We hope this will be different!

🇦🇺 **CARE:** The Productivity Commission (PC) review of DVA continues to occupy plenty of air time. The review will undoubtedly result in major changes aimed at improving present day activities. ESOs with a focus on daily support for Veterans, will find the draft recommendations put forward serious and different management arrangements. It will be several months before the government make a decision as to what recommendations will be implemented. Given the depth of the review, there will be changes made and we can only hope they deliver promised outcome to Veterans and family.

The Robert Cornall Study has also put forward changes that will have a direct impact on ESO's capacity to advocate. The new web based training system (ATDP) has already influenced Advocates.

🇦🇺 **COMMEMORATION.** On the 9APR we have the anniversary of the sinking of HMAS Vampire I. Nine members of the Ship's Company made the supreme sacrifice on that day in 1942, with another sailor making the supreme sacrifice a few days later. We are also approaching the anniversary of the Battle of the Coral Sea. Sections should remember these milestone events with a simple wreath laying service. Commemoration is our responsibility!

🇦🇺 **CADETS.** TS Tamar provided a Catafalque Party when the National Council conducted a wreath laying service at the Launceston Cenotaph recently. A well turned out crew that is well supported by the Tasmania Section. I look forward to hearing about the good work taking place elsewhere with Cadets.

🇦🇺 **CAMARADERIE.** It was decided at the National Council meeting that each State Section would be responsible for organising a significant milestone event to recognise our Centennial year – 2020. This is an opportunity for all of us to stand up and be counted. I look forward to hearing each State Section's intentions over the coming months.

🇦🇺 Over the past two years there have been quite a few changes within the National Executive, however, the most important change is the resignation of Peter Cooke-Russell, our long term National Secretary. In my view, no one has made a greater contribution to the Association than Peter. He will continue his participation in the ACT Section, where he has also made a remarkable contribution. Peter's award of the Association's Meritorious Service Medal late last year is testament to his work. On your behalf, I wish Peter the very best and thank him for his worthy support over many decades.

🇦🇺 On my membership hobby horse: have you identified a likely new member? Retaining existing members is a given, recruiting new members essential. We must keep up our work to pursue the four pillars and building on the number of Shipmates is critical to achieve that goal.

Yours aye,

Terry Marlings

7APR19