



The Bosun's Call



Vol 26 No 7

Once Navy, Always Navy

August 2021

HMS Queen Elizabeth sails through the Suez Canal en route to South China Sea

The journey marks the end of 'phase one' of HMS Elizabeth's deployment, which saw it carry out operations in the Mediterranean including exercises alongside French aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle. Phase one also saw the carrier involved in strikes on ISIS targets in the Middle East, aimed at helping US forces focus on their withdrawal from Afghanistan. Commodore Steve Moorhouse, who is in charge of the carrier group, said last month that *Queen Elizabeth* had been taking on the 'lion's share' of ISIS strikes.

'Phase two' of the deployment will see the group sail around the Arabian Peninsula and across the Arabian Sea to India for joint exercises with the country's navy. 'Phase three' of the mission will then see UK Carrier Strike Group head to the China-Pacific region for joint exercises with Singapore, Malaysia, Australia and New Zealand.



land which will include operating in the South China Sea. The deployment of the carrier group marks a major milestone for the British Navy and has been described as the single largest concentration of naval power to leave the country in a generation.

Chris Pleasance, MAILONLINE
7 July 2021

Above: HMS Queen Elizabeth, sailed through the Suez Canal for the first time during her maiden deployment with her carrier strike group

Left: F-35 fighter jets on her flight deck. Two squadrons of the jets are embarked - one British and one American

Events coming up

5 Aug General meeting Eastlakes Club Gungahlin
6 Aug Memorial Service for HMAS Canberra I Kings Park 1100



Newsletter of the ACT Section of the
Naval Association of Australia

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Naval Association of Australia ACT Section

Patron The Hon Sir William Deane AC KBE

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General Meetings Dates and Locations Programme

If the pandemic restrictions are not recycled the following program is to be followed:

5 Aug Eastlakes Club Gungahlin	1330
2 Sep Eastlakes Club Gungahlin	1330
7 Oct Eastlakes Club Gungahlin	1330
4 Nov Eastlakes Club Gungahlin	1330

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

If you need assistance getting to the meeting and/or functions, call Alan Masters on 6281 5630 who will try to organise transport for you.

President's Message

Shipmates,

Yet again we find that in so many areas our friends and loved ones may find themselves 'tied-up alongside in their home-port'; our thoughts and very best wishes are with you all and we pray you are all well and taking care.

As we look ahead to our HMAS *Canberra* Memorial Service, we see the expected weather conditions at this time of year are reminding us all that we will need to ensure we are well 'rugged-up' on Friday 06 August 2021. I am looking forward to seeing as many members as are able to join us for the ceremony.

Our BC Editor has again put together a very informative newsletter and there is a great deal there for those with a keen interest in past and present naval affairs. To see the return of Royal Navy Sea-Power in our part of the world is a very exciting and welcomed development. Thank you, Peter.

Yours aye,

Yours aye,

David Manolas



Requisitioned yacht—HMAS Southern Cross

**Committee meetings
PCR Establishment
1030 Thursday 29 July 2021**

**East Lakes Gungahlin
1100 Thursday 5 August 2021**

Joint media release — Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide

08 Jul 2021

Prime Minister, Attorney-General, Minister for Industrial Relations, Minister for Defence Personnel, Minister for Veterans' Affairs

Today the Government has formally established a Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide following approval by the Governor-General.

Prime Minister Scott Morrison said the Royal Commission recognised the unique nature of military service, and the ongoing effects on the physical and mental health of members and veterans as a result of their service.

"We recognise the contribution and sacrifice of the men and women who have served our country," the Prime Minister said. "The death of any Australian Defence Force member or veteran is a tragedy that is deeply felt by all Australians. As a Government we are committed to addressing the ongoing impact of service, including preventing future deaths by suicide and providing opportunities for healing."

The inquiry will be led by Mr Nick Kaldas APM, former Deputy Commissioner of the New South Wales Police Force, where he commanded around 14,000 staff members and a budget of more than \$2 billion. Mr Kaldas also has extensive international experience in law enforcement and peacekeeping, including as Director of Internal Oversight Services for the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, and as Chief of Investigations for the United Nations Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in Syria.

Mr Kaldas will be supported by:

The Hon James Douglas QC, an esteemed former Judge of the Supreme Court of Queensland and respected member of the legal community, and

Dr Peggy Brown AO, a consultant psychiatrist and national leader in mental health policy with extensive experience in health and mental health service planning, governance and administration.

The Royal Commission will inquire into systemic issues and common themes related to defence and veteran death by suicide, including the possible contribution of pre-service, service, transition, separation and post-service issues, and other matters believed by the Royal Commission to be relevant to its inquiry.

The Royal Commission will be able to inquire into any previous death by suicide, including suspected suicide. It will be conducted independently of Government, including the Departments of Defence and Veterans' Affairs.

In making recommendations on systemic issues, the Royal Commission will be informed by the individual experiences of defence members, veterans and their families and support networks.

The Royal Commission will conduct its inquiries in

a trauma-informed way and private sessions will be available to those who wish to share their story in private.

A legal financial assistance scheme will be available to people called as witnesses to the Royal Commission. An independent legal advisory service, counselling and support services will also be made available to people engaging with the Royal Commission.

The Terms of Reference have been informed by feedback received during an extensive public consultation process and views from states and territories. Over 3,000 submissions were received during the consultation on the themes.

"I thank all those who provided feedback on the themes for the Terms of Reference. Each piece of feedback received during this process was integral in informing the final Terms of Reference," the Attorney General, Michaelia Cash, said.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel Andrew Gee welcomed today's announcement and said he hoped the Royal Commission became a seminal moment in Australia's care of veterans and their families.

"The Royal Commission is a crucially important piece of national work that I hope can be a catalyst for positive change in the treatment and care of veterans and their families, both now and for future generations," Minister Gee said.

"Our country asks so much of the men and women of the ADF and we owe it to them and our veterans to make sure that this Royal Commission and its findings lead to lasting results."

The National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention Bill, currently before the Parliament, will be amended to ensure that the National Commissioner will complement, and not duplicate, the Royal Commission's important work. The National Commissioner will be the permanent body responsible for implementing the Royal Commission's recommendations. These landmark measures will together reduce deaths by suicide of defence members and veterans.

The proposed amendments will provide for the commencement of the National Commissioner's functions and powers following the conclusion of the Royal Commission, or at an earlier point in time if recommended by the Royal Commission.

The Royal Commission is due to provide an interim report on 11 August 2022 and a final report on 15 June 2023.

Further information on the Royal Commission, including the Terms of Reference and information on how to make a submission will be available at [Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide](#)

The Australian Government is committed to supporting the health and well-being of those who have served our nation in the defence forces. .

Terms of reference

The Commissioners are appointed to be a Commission of inquiry, and required and authorised to inquire into the following matters:

- a. systemic issues and any common themes among defence and veteran deaths by suicide, or defence members and veterans who have other lived experience of suicide behaviour or risk factors (including attempted or contemplated suicide, feelings of suicide or poor mental health outcomes);
- b. systemic analysis of the contributing risk factors relevant to defence and veteran death by suicide, including the possible contribution of pre-service, service (including training and deployments), transition, separation and post-service issues, such as the following:
 - i. the manner or time in which the defence member or veteran was recruited to the [the Australian Defence Force (the ADF)];
 - ii. the relevance, if any, of the particular branch, service or posting history, or the rank of the defence member or veteran;
 - iii. the manner or time in which the defence member or veteran transitioned from the ADF or transitioned between service categories;
 - iv. the availability, accessibility, timeliness and quality of health, wellbeing and support services (including mental health support services) to the defence member or veteran, and the effectiveness of such services;
 - v. the manner and extent to which information about the defence member or veteran is held by and shared within and between different government entities;
 - vi. the reporting and recording of information, relevant to the mental and physical health of defence members and veterans, at enlistment and during and after service;
- c. the impact of culture within the ADF, the Department of Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs on defence members' and veterans' physical and mental wellbeing;
- d. the role of non-government organisations, including ex-service organisations, in providing relevant services and support for defence members, veterans, their families and others;
- e. protective and rehabilitative factors for defence members and veterans who have lived experience of suicide behaviour or risk factors;
- f. any systemic issues in the current availability and effectiveness of support services for, and in the engagement with, families and others:
 - i. affected by a defence and veteran death by suicide; or
 - ii. who have supported a defence member or veteran with lived experience of suicide behaviour or risk factors;
- g. any systemic issues in the nature of defence members' and veterans' engagement with the Department of Defence, the Department of Veterans' Affairs or other Commonwealth, State or Territory government entities (including those acting on behalf of those entities) about support services, claims or entitlements relevant to defence and veteran deaths by suicide or relevant to defence members and veterans who have other lived experience of suicide behaviour or risk factors, including any systemic issues in engaging with multiple government entities;
- h. the legislative and policy frameworks, administered by the Department of Defence, the Department of Veterans' Affairs and other Commonwealth, State or Territory government entities, relating to the support services, claims and entitlements referred to in paragraph (g);
- i. any systemic risk factors contributing to defence and veteran death by suicide, including the following:
 - i. defence members' and veterans' social or family contexts;
 - ii. housing or employment issues for defence members and veterans;
 - iii. defence members' and veterans' economic and financial circumstances;
- j. any matter reasonably incidental to a matter referred to in paragraphs (a) to (i) or that [the Commissioners] believe is reasonably relevant to [their] inquiry.

The Australian Government is committed to supporting the health and well-being of those who have served our nation in the defence forces. \$11.7 billion in federal funding supports more than 325,000 veterans and their families each year.

If you, or someone you know, need support, you can contact:

- Lifeline Australia – 13 11 14
- Suicide Call Back Service – 1300 659 467
- Open Arms (current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families are able to seek this free and confidential support) – 1800 011 046
- ADF Mental Health All-hours Support Line (for current serving ADF personnel and their families) – 1800 628 036.
- Safe Zone Support (for current and ex-serving ADF personnel and their families) – 1800 142 072. When you call Safe Zone Support, you do not need to identify yourself if you do not want to.

Darren Chester's letter to the NAA National President**The Hon Darren Chester MP**

Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel

MC21-002701

30 JUN 2021

Mr David Manolas
National President
Naval Association of Australia
2 Lakeview Drive
MURRUMBATEMAN NSW 2582

Dear David

It has been a great honour to serve as Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Defence Personnel and I have appreciated the opportunity to work with you and others in the ex-service community over the past three years towards our common goal of supporting veterans and their families.

The work of ex-service organisations is so important for not only the direct support you provide but also the community connections you foster within the ex-service and broader Australian communities. Please pass on my sincere thanks and gratitude to your members, volunteers and advocates who give so much of their time and energy to making sure veterans and their families can get the support they need when they need it. You should all be very proud of your efforts.

I will continue to advocate strongly for Australians to understand that the majority of veterans will transition successfully to civilian life. The myth that all veterans are broken is damaging to their well-being and creates a vicious circle of despondency and desperation. As a grateful nation, we must support those who need our help but at the same time promote the many achievements of our veteran community.

There is still plenty of work to be done and I urge you to provide the incoming Minister and his team with the same constructive feedback, practical advice and input you have shared with me and my team.

Yours sincerely

DARREN CHESTER

Treatment of DFRDB AND MSB Invalidity Pension payments if commenced on or after 20 September 2007

From: Stephens, Kristine <Kristine.Stephens@dva.gov.au> **On Behalf Of** ESORT.SECRETARIAT

Sent: Thursday, 22 July 2021 10:32 AM

Subject: ATO seeking ESORT engagement regarding Douglas Decision [SEC=OFFICIAL]

Good morning ESORT members

The ATO has asked me to reach out to you all with regards to the Douglas Decision. The ATO has provided the following for context and background information;

In December 2020, the Full Federal Court handed down a decision concerning the tax treatment of certain invalidity payments made under the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) Scheme and the Military Superannuation Benefits (MSB) Scheme. This is known as the Douglas decision. The Court found that military invalidity benefits paid under invalidity pensions that commenced on or after 20 September 2007 are to be taxed as superannuation lump sums and not as superannuation income stream benefits.

The decision means that approximately 11,000 members of the DFRDB/MSB Schemes are impacted by the court decision and will have a change in tax treatment of their invalidity benefits. Further information on the Douglas Decision and how it affects individuals can be found on the following ATO webpage: [Treatment of military invalidity benefits following Full Federal Court decision | Australian Taxation Office \(ato.gov.au\)](#)

Under upcoming ATO remediation action, affected members will have the opportunity to engage with the ATO to have their historical income tax returns amended (streamlined amendment process) to reflect the change in tax treatment. The ATO expects the majority of amendments will result in a credit outcome however, this will be dependent on their personal circumstances. Further details on the ATO's streamlined amendment process can be found on the following ATO webpage: [Roadmap to remediation | Australian Taxation Office \(ato.gov.au\)](#)

As part of the planning for the remediation work, the ATO is keen to engage with outreach channels, including ESORT, to discuss options that would be most appropriate for ensuring that all affected veterans can be made aware of the impact that the court decision may have had to their personal circumstances.

The ATO has asked that any ESORT members that would like to participate in the consultation process please confirm their interest by contacting;

Jenny Lin

Assistant Commissioner

ATO - Superannuation and Employer Obligations

E Jenny.Lin@ato.gov.au

and/or

Paul Delahunty

Director

ATO - Superannuation and Employer Obligations

P 03 9275 9820

E paul.delahunty@ato.gov.au

Kind Regards

Tiki Stephens

Assistant Director

Governance & Ministerial Events Section | Parliamentary & Governance Branch

Ph: (02) 6289 4750 | Ext: 604750 | M: 0404 775 584

Kristine.stephens@dva.gov.au

Individuals receiving military invalidity benefits – impact of court decisions

This information will help you to work out if you are affected by the recent Full Federal Court decisions relating to military invalidity benefits.

Broadly, the court decisions affect the treatment of invalidity benefits paid under pensions provided under the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) Scheme and the Military Superannuation and Benefits (MSB) Scheme and which started on or after 20 September 2007.

If you received an invalidity pension provided under either of these schemes starting on or after 20 September 2007, you may be affected by the recent court decisions.

If you received an invalidity pension provided under either scheme starting before 20 September 2007, you are not affected and your pension payments have been correctly taxed as superannuation income stream benefits.

To work out whether you are affected by the court decisions you may need the following details:

- your date of discharge
- your invalidity benefit commencement date

if your classification has changed between Class A, Class B or Class C, the date or dates from which you were reclassified.

Working out if you are affected

If you have received invalidity benefits paid by the DFRDB Scheme or the MSB Scheme, follow the steps below to work out if you are affected by the court decisions.

Step 1:

Were you discharged on or after 20 September 2007?

If Yes, **you are affected**.

If No, go to step 2.

Step 2:

Did your invalidity pension start on or after 20 September 2007?

If Yes, **you are affected**.

If No, **you are not affected**. Your invalidity benefits were correctly taxed as superannuation income stream benefits.

Note: The information below may assist you in working out when your invalidity pension started.

When your invalidity pension started

The date your invalidity pension started will be stated on documentation provided to you by the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation (CSC).

This will generally align with when you were classified as Class A or B

If you were classified as Class A or B and reclassified to Class C, then reclassified as Class A or B, then you will have two invalidity pensions to consider:

- the first invalidity pension started when you were first classified as Class A or B and ceased when you were reclassified as Class C
- the second invalidity pension started when you were reclassified from Class C to Class A or B and your invalidity benefits recommenced.

Their Duty Nobly Done HMAS CHINAMPA—FY31

Kate Reid-Smith

In 1942 at the height of Imperial Japan's southwards advances, there were still some far-flung Netherlands East Indies islands in Allied hands. Jamdena in the Tanimbar Islands, roughly 300 nm north of Darwin, was one of them. Under Operation Plover, HMAS *Chinampa*, an RAN auxiliary vessel was tasked with shoring up the pro allied civilian authorities in the town of Saumlaki on Jamdena and HMAS *Chinampa* was one of them.

Chinampa was a 60-ton requisitioned ketch powered by an 80hp Vivian diesel engine, 52 ft long with a 17ft beam and draught of 6.5 ft. She was a former state-of-the-art New-Guinea oil research vessel. Her top speed of 7.5 knots belied her paltry armaments of one .303 Vickers machine gun and two rifles.

Under the command of Commissioned Warrant Officer Frederick John Henderson RANR (S), she was to transport nearly a hundred Dutch and Australian troops, and six tons of equipment to Saumlaki, and return with refugees. She sailed from Darwin in company with HMAS *Southern Cross* on Tuesday 29 July 1942. By an unfortunate coincidence, their planned arrival at Saumlaki was preceded by a Japanese landing force which landed before dawn on the 30th July. *Chinampa* and *Southern Cross* had no idea a large armed Japanese reception awaited them.

Saumlaki's defending force had consisted of thirteen Dutch soldiers armed with Tommy guns, a Lewis gun and hand grenades. The Dutch soldiers were expecting *Chinampa* and *Southern Cross* so the arrival of two ships in the harbour just after 0400 was not a surprise. Around 300 Japanese soldiers disembarked from the ships in boats and landed on the Saumlaki's 1,500 foot long jetty. The tiny force of Dutch soldiers repelled the initial landing inflicting heavy Japanese casualties. Subse-

quent landings were made elsewhere while the Japanese ships, probably large destroyers, opened fire on the defenders' position.

Six of the gallant Dutch soldiers were killed and the survivors were driven into the bush. By 0600 the town was in Japanese hands and the supporting ships departed shortly afterwards.

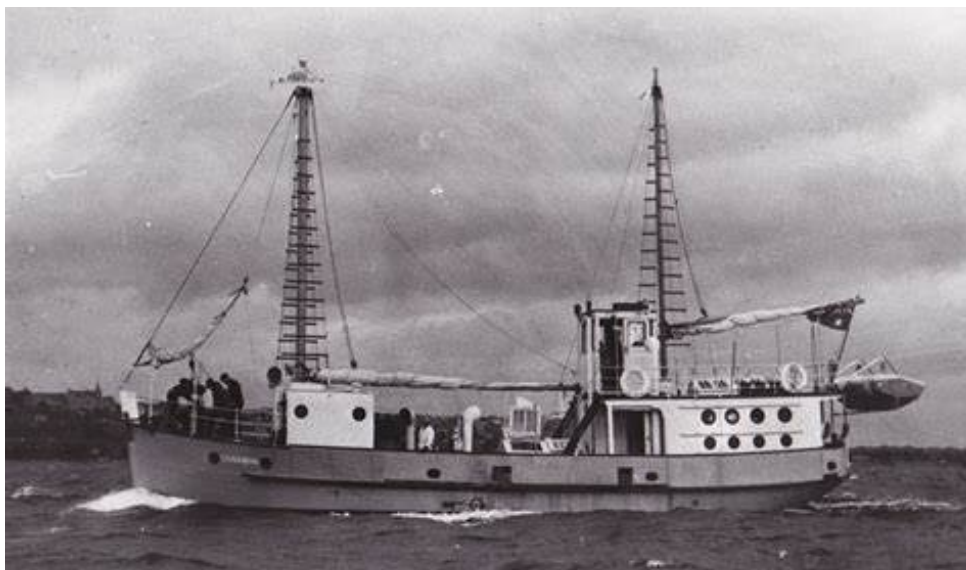
At that time *Chinampa* and *Southern Cross* were still some distance from Saumlaki and unaware that the town was in enemy hands. At around 0930 *Southern Cross* suffered an engine breakdown and *Chinampa* continued on independently. She anchored in the harbour that day and, expecting the small Dutch force to still be in control, her Commanding Officer, Commissioned Warrant Officer Frederick Henderson, RANR, went to the jetty but after being fired upon, rejoined his ship.

When the more heavily armed *Southern Cross* arrived the next day, 31 July 1942, *Chinampa* proceeded to the jetty to attempt to land her troops but was forced to withdraw after coming under heavy fire which killed the 34 year-old Henderson and wounded Lieutenant Anderson and a Commando while Rodwell and the Engine Room Artificer Willmott, suffered minor injuries.

Chinamp and *Southern Cross* consequently withdrew without landing their troops and once clear, *Southern Cross'* Sub-Lieutenant Keith Grant was transferred to *Chinampa* where he assumed command, successfully returning vessel and crew to Darwin by 2 August 1942.

Fredrick Henderson was buried at sea in the vicinity of Saumlaki on 31 July 1942

HMAS *Chinampa* and her crew are commemorated in a stained glass memorial artwork window, at Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Chapel, HMAS *Cerberus*.



Captain Jace Hutchison—Commanding Officer HMAS *Canberra* III

Captain Jace Hutchison graduated from the Royal Australian Naval College in 1999. In 2002 he specialised as a Mine Warfare and Clearance Diving Officer.

During his career he has served in a range surface ships as well as Australian Clearance Diving Team Four and 2 Commando Regiment (SOCOMD). In 2009 Captain Hutchison was fortunate to be posted as the Executive Officer of HMS *Brocklesby* (on Royal Navy Exchange), followed by an appointment as Commanding Officer of HMAS *Huon*. He has also served as the J5 of the Australian Amphibious Task Group; as SO1 Counter Network Strategies within Force Integration Division (ie: developing and putting together the operational and technical strategies of running HMA Ships *Canberra* and *Adelaide*); and as the Executive Officer of HMAS *Adelaide*.

Captain Hutchison's operational service has included deployments to the Middle East Region in Australian Clearance Diving Team Three, HMAS *Melbourne*, HMAS *Tobruk* and HMAS *Toowoomba*. In 2011 he deployed to Libya in HMS *Brocklesby*. He has also conducted a number of peacetime and domestic operations which include multiple border protection tasks as well as Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief operations both in Australia and the wider region.

Captain Hutchison was awarded the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service in 2013. He holds a Masters Degree from the Australian Command and Staff College (ANU) where he was presented the Chief of Navy AM Synnot prize.



Captain Hutchinson assumed Command of HMAS *Canberra* (III) in May 2021.

HMAS *Canberra* I Memorial Service 6 August 2021 Kings Park Commencing 1100



How to tackle a home declutter

"There's too many things," comedian Jerry Seinfeld once said. *The Barefoot Investor's* Scott Pape said it too. Truth is, our homes act as rubbish-processing centres. It's all very exciting when we buy something new – we'll bring it home and play with it for a while, but after some time passes, we're bored. It's thrown inside a drawer where we hide all our other slip-ups, then it goes into the garage, and best believe no item has ever made it back into the house from the garage. Pape even points out that the word 'garage' is literally one letter shy of 'garbage'.

It's easy to get wrapped up in buying, and hoarding, things we no longer need, therefore a regular home declutter is essential. "It's been said that what your outside space looks like is an example of what your mind looks like," psychologist Dr Heidi Heron, PsyD, says. "If you have a cluttered home, you'll most likely have a cluttered mind."

Breaking bad habits

Dr Heron says there's no better time to clean out your existing space than in retirement. "By decluttering before or while in retirement, you are setting up the rest of your life to be the best of your life," she says. "Retirement is a time for change, often creating more simplicity, time for family, hobbies or doing more of what you love!"

Decluttering can be a tiresome process, but it begins and ends with breaking bad habits – by learning how to shop critically, the amount of clutter you need to remove from your life will eventually become less and less. "When we have less to clean, store, arrange, tidy and look at, we are creating more space and more time for the things that truly matter," Dr Heron says. "Habits are formed fairly simply, so keeping things decluttered can become a great habit to have. But until that time, hoarding, keeping things, or recreating clutter is too easy to fall back into."

Words of encouragement

Adopting a positive mindset before starting a declutter is vital. It will take time, so to ensure you see the process through to the very end, make sure you're ready to roll up your sleeves. "For an entire house, allow two to three months of weekly activity – a different room or area each week," Dr Heron says. "Sometimes people have a lifetime of belongings to go through. Without a positive outlook, it can be draining, tiring and emotional. Keep in mind that it doesn't have to be!"

You'll likely come across many items that you know you shouldn't keep, so be brutal when deciding what to bin. "Keep in mind the task at hand – if something hasn't been touched, used, or seen in more than two years, it's probably okay to let it go," Dr Heron implies. Otherwise, she suggests passing on belongings you no longer need to family members or friends – consider it reincarnation. "There are people in your life that some of your

belongings may be better suited with. Be okay with that," she says. "Be prepared to say goodbye to some things and to reminisce about others."

Getting started

If you have plenty to declutter, take it one room at a time. No, that doesn't mean moving the clutter from one room to another!

The bedroom

Dr Heron believes the bedroom should be "one of the most peaceful places in your home", but it's often a nightmare of clutter made up of piles of unworn clothes, shoes and accessories. Be ruthless – toss anything that is tired, torn or outdated. "Clear out any objects that don't belong, recycle clothes that are not in fashion, things that don't fit, or even things you don't wear," Dr Heron suggests.

She recommends turning clothes hangers backwards, then the right way around after an item of clothing has been worn. This will allow you to see just how much of your wardrobe you wear, making the culling process much easier. "If you haven't worn it in the next six to 12 months, it's time to recycle it," she says.

The bathroom

Even if you're not a hoarder, it's easy to let expired products pile up under your sink or inside your cabinets. Most toiletry products, from lotions to hairsprays, have a Period After Opening (PAO) symbol, which resembles an opened jar and includes a number and the letter 'm'. This acts as a guideline for how many months after opening you should throw the product out.

Similarly, only keep products you use daily in your bathroom. Separate the items you use each day from the ones you don't and find a new home for the others. "The bathroom can become a gathering place for the old. Let this space be sparse, clean and welcoming," Dr Heron says. "If you don't use it on a regular basis, toss it out or find a new home."

The kitchen

Whether it's the pantry, fridge or one of the many cabinets, the kitchen is full of dishes, cutlery, food, spices, appliances and cleaning materials that we rarely use, and probably didn't even know we had. Dr Heron says we should consider the kitchen the hub of the home, which means it should be kept free of clutter.

"If you have an extraordinary number of dishes, pare down to what you actually need," she says. "Keep your refrigerator, pantry and cupboards clean. Toss out anything out of date and anything you haven't or won't use. Have appliances you haven't used in years? Find somewhere to donate them – someone else will use them if you won't."

(Continued on page 11)

Perth back in the water after upgrades

Anzac-class frigate HMAS *Perth* was back in the water on July 1 after completion of a major part of the Anzac Midlife Capability Assurance Program upgrades. She was lowered out of the dry dock at the Australian Marine Complex at Henderson, Western Australia, after completion of upgrades to her radar capabilities, communications systems and crew-habitable areas, which are a major part of the Anzac Midlife Capability Assurance Program.

"This is a significant step towards the completion of *Perth's* upgrade, which will now move on to the final stages, enabling the ship to return to the fleet and undertake deployments and exercises with our regional partners in 2022."

With the motto 'Fight and Flourish', the long-range frigate is capable of air defence, surface and undersea warfare, surveillance, reconnaissance and interdiction, and is home-ported at Garden Island, Rockingham, Western Australia.

She has the rare honour of being home-ported in her namesake city, which offers special opportunities for connection and engagement, including the



crew of *Perth* exercising their right to Freedom of the City, which last occurred in 2009.

"The ability for our ship to remain engaged with its city namesake is very important to us and we look forward to being able to build an even stronger connection as we prepare to return *Perth* to sea and to operational service," Commander Nagle said.

"We are honoured to represent Perth, and we want the people of Perth to be as proud of our ship as we are to carry the name HMAS *Perth*."

How to tackle a home declutter

(Continued from page 10)

The living/dining room

This is where the rule "a place for everything and everything in its place" truly applies, particularly if these spaces adapt to the needs of several family members. Start with a vigorous spring clean, tossing broken appliances, old DVDs, videos and CDs, and clearing magazines and newspapers. Even clear out underneath the sofa cushions – you'll be surprised by what you might find.

"Your living or dining room is often what is seen most or first in many homes," Dr Heron says. "Clear the dining table – find a home for what is there, even if that means throwing old papers, magazines, mail, etc in the bin. Create space in your dining room for dining – even if you don't eat there!" Dr Heron says.

The shed/garage

Do you really need five pairs of pliers? Toss excess tools, old paint, cans of oil and containers – these are merely collecting dust. Similarly, the chances of you using that elliptical that was shamelessly dragged from the home to the garage is slim to none. Sell old exercise equipment

and opt for a walk around the block.

"Instead of a dumping ground, think of the shed or garage as an extension of your mind," Dr Heron says. "How can you organise it? Do you need shelves, a rubbish bin, or a yard sale? If there are items that are old, untouched, unwanted – recycle or sell. If things don't work, call the council for pick-up."

In a world filled with so much stuff, it can be hard to part with our much-loved (or once-loved) belongings. But the key to an effective clean-out is to be brutal. You'll be amazed at how much a thorough declutter will improve your life – after all, less mess equals less stress!



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Wicked problem' facing veterans' affairs

An ex-soldier has sounded the alarm on the "wicked problem" of more veterans waiting longer for help because of a growing reliance on contractors to process claims.

Defence Force Welfare Association national president Kel Ryan, who served in Vietnam, also says some call centre staff used by veterans' affairs are abrupt and lack empathy.

"There's a lack of empathy with regards to some call centre staff ... who are dealing with veterans who cover the spectrum from WWII through to yesterday," Mr Ryan told a federal parliamentary committee on Tuesday.

He said the Department of Veterans' Affairs faced a "wicked problem" as a growing number of veterans came forward for assistance and the department relied increasingly on labour hire because of staffing caps.

The processing of compensation and other claims would only improve if there was a well-trained and stable public sector workforce, Mr Ryan told the Senate committee.

The Community and Public Sector Union said the increasing demand for help combined with a squeeze on resources created a perfect storm that was disastrous for veterans.

The department was dealing with 323,000 veteran "clients" and each staff member was expected to manage at least 130 claims, CPSU national secretary Melissa Donnelly said.

This meant the department could somewhat reduce its reliance on labour hire and increase the number of permanent staff.

But the department said it would need to continue to rely on a mix of labour hire companies and public service employees.

Chief operating officer Mark Harrigan acknowledged the significant workload.

"Our way to address that, to get through the claims to a high standard, is to bring the bodies on that we need, the individuals that we need that we can accredit to get the work done," he said.

"Whether they be taking phone calls from veterans, whether they be processing claims from veterans, our focus is on addressing the workloads, getting through the backlogs and this has necessitated a need to supplement our APS (public service) workforce with a non-APS workforce."

Microsoft News Georgie Moore 20 July 2021

Comments on the proceedings of 20 July 2021

National President DWFA and Spokesman for AD-SO—Kel Ryan's comments on his appearance at the Senate hearing on 20 July 2021 of the Finance and Public Administration References Committee

I made a statement to the Inquiry earlier this morning. It was well received as was that of Sandi Laaksonnon-Sherrin who now heads up Defence Families Australia.

While I will wait for the transcript some points of interest are:

- There were only two senators present. The Chair Senator Ayres (ALP NSW) and Senator Chandler (Lib, Tas).
- The CPSU was very considered in their Opening Statement and in answering questions from the senators. It stressed the continuum of staffing beyond the already provided budget provided i.e., 18 months. The following points were made.
- The movement of contract or labour hire staff across to the APS needs to be hastened to meet the still increasing workload.

- 195 contract staff have already been moved across to the APS. There are another 120 pending.
- There are currently 1,000 contract staff in DVA.
- A quarter of contract staff are lost within six months.
- DVA now has 323,000 clients and claims have trebled over the past three years.
- Between Jun and Dec this year claims have jumped from 44,300 to a projected 50,000.

DVA staff were given a 'going over' by the Chair who sought to elicit criticisms of the government policy decision particularly regarding funding – transcript will be interesting.

The issue that jumped out to me was the need for DFWA/ADSO to pursue the issue of funding for the increase in staff beyond the current 18 months. DVA staff kept coming back to this issue without being critical of the government decisions regarding funding – the Chief Operating Officer, Mark Harrigan, tapped danced very well.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS38 2021

Action to renew membership for 2021 can now undertaken in a number of different ways. The following, in order of preference for the Treasurer, are listed below, but any of them can be utilised.

The use of e-banking provides for ease of payment and your bank records act as your receipt. The annual subscription for 2021 is \$38.

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2. Payment using the mail system. Please do not send cash through the mail system. Cheques can be forwarded to Membership Registrar, 4 McEachern Crescent, MELBA ACT 2615. Receipts will NOT be mailed to payers.
3. Direct payment to Treasurer. The Treasurer will gladly accept cheques or cash from members at General Meetings. A receipt will be given to payers.

IF YOU HAVE CHANGED ANY OF YOUR CONTACT DETAILS SUCH AS HOME ADDRESS, E-MAIL ADDRESS, TELEPHONE NUMBERS PLEASE ADVISE THE MEMBERSHIP REGISTRAR.

Social Program

Fish 'n Chips is on the program, Snapper has reopened but will shut about May for renovation to the CYC, re-opening, we hope, sometime in September. Hence the use of the Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club.

19 Aug	Lakes Golf Club Gungahlin 1100
16 Sep	Lakes Golf Club Gungahlin 1100
21 Oct	Fish 'n Chips CYC 1200
18 Nov	Fish 'n Chips CYC 1200
2 Dec	Christmas /New Year Lunch
	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club
16 Dec	Fish 'n Chips CYC 1200

Bev Joce

Social Secretary

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)

International callers:

+61 2 6289 1133

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

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



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

A Happy Birthday to you in August 2021

- | | |
|----|----------------|
| 1 | Joe Slaats |
| 16 | Jim Quick |
| 16 | David Campbell |
| 21 | Toby Selby |
| 22 | Mark Fullick |
| 26 | Peter Guy |



USS The Sullivans is seen ahead of RFA Fort Victoria as the ships proceed through the Suez Canal in company with HMS Queen Elizabeth



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