



National Bosun's Call



Vol 2 No 3

Once Navy, Always Navy

April 2021

Last Post Ceremony AWM 28 February 2021



The loss of HMAS *Perth I* on 28 February 1942 was remembered at the Australian War Memorial (AWM) on that day in 2021.

Jack Aaron (centre with head bowed) laid the Naval Association wreath honoring Leading Seaman Robert Borwick at the AWM Last Post Ceremony as can be seen in the above photograph.

To the right in the photo ACT NAA Vice President Alex McGown can be seen beside VADM Russ Shalders who commanded *HMAS Perth II* in 1993 and 1994. Jack Aaron commissioned *Perth II* as a LSQMG in 1965 and later served in her again as a POQMG. Alex McGown also served in *HMAS Perth II* as a PO and CPO Greenie from 1979 to 1981.

Photos: Flickr AWM



National Newsletter of the
Naval Association of Australia

ONCE A MOBI - ALWAYS A MOBI 23 Mar 2021

Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Michael Noonan, AO, presented Commander Michael Brice, with his fourth Federation Star and a Certificate of Appreciation for 55 years of service at a ceremony held at Navy Headquarters, Canberra.

Congratulations to Mick Brice, seen here receiving the 8th clasp marked by a 4th Federation Star to his Defence Long Service Medal from Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Michael Noonan.

It was 8th clasp, and 4th Federation Star.

The Defence Long Service Medal may be awarded to a member who has, on or after 14 February 1975, completed 15 years qualifying remunerated service in the Australian Defence Force. This includes efficient service in Permanent and Reserve Forces. Clasps are awarded for each further periods of five years efficient service.

The first four clasps to the medal are indicated by rosettes. These are replaced by a single silver Federation Star for the fifth clasp. Additional Federation Star emblems are added for subsequent clasps.

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



DFRDB Inquiry

Accuracy of information provided to Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) members

On 18 March 2021 the Senate referred the following matter to the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee for inquiry and report by **Thursday, 24 June 2021**:

Accuracy of information provided to Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) members.

Submissions close: 30 April 2021.

Terms of Reference

The accuracy of information provided to Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) members, including:

- a. the accuracy of information provided to DFRDB members about the effects of commutation on future retirement pay entitlement, the consequences of this, and what remedial action (if any) could be taken;
- b. whether retirement payments were indexed as required by legislation and, if not, what remedial action (if any) could be taken;
- c. policy and legislative issues, including provisions for:
 - i. use of certain life expectancy tables,
 - ii. permanency of reductions to commuted pensions,
 - iii. indexation arrangements; and
 - iv. recommendations on any potential changes to administrative arrangements, policy or legislation;
- d. advice on costs associated with any recommendations;
- e. all relevant existing information and previous reviews in relation to DFRDB, including the findings of the Ombudsman's investigation;
- f. the level of understanding among DFRDB members about how the legislation works, and ways to improve this; and
- g. any related issues.

Committee Secretariat contact:

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee
Department of the Senate
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We are making changes that will give you a better, more accessible experience online.

To achieve this, we are moving MyAccount transactions to MyService so that you have a single platform to interact with, and we will say goodbye to MyAccount later this year.

- **From 27 March** you will no longer be able to use MyAccount to request the official letters that outline your DVA payments and concession eligibilities. You will need to use MyService to request these letters.
- **From 27 March** you will be able to request an Income and Asset statement using MyService.

MyService is a little different to MyAccount

If you are used to MyAccount you will notice some changes, including the look and feel and language. You may also see fewer questions asked because we are using the information you have already given us, saving you time.

To request an official DVA letter in MyService select 'Correspondence' under the Your information menu on your MyService homepage. You will then be able to select whether you want to download the letter or have it sent to your registered postal address.

On the horizon

We know that the need for better online services has never been more important and this is a priority for DVA. We are moving MyAccount services into MyService so that we have a single, modern online platform for you to use and MyService will be the place for all your DVA online needs when MyAccount is no longer available.

Of course, if you prefer to call us or submit a paper form you will still be able to do that.

We are excited to be improving our online service so that it is easier for you to interact with us.

For information about what is changing in MyAccount and guides on how to use MyService visit our website dva.gov.au

To see the functions available in MyService:

[Log on to MyService via myGov](#)

Haven't logged on to MyService or MyAccount for a while?

DVA's online services are now available through MyGov.

How to access DVA services via myGov:

If you do not have a myGov account [register online](#).

If you already have a myGov account [sign in](#).

- Call us on 1800 VETERAN and we will provide you with a linking code.
- Follow the prompts in myGov to link Department of Veterans' Affairs using the linking code provided.
- **Important Note: If you are an existing client you do not need to REGISTER for MyService.**

Simply call us and we will provide you with an Activation Code to get started.

RAN Marks its 120th Birthday 1 March 2021



'David Manolas, National President of the Naval Association of Australia attends the RAN's 120th Birthday Commemoration Service on 01 March 2021, at the RAN National Memorial on Anzac Parade in Canberra. There a wreath was laid on behalf of the members of the Association; our wreath is on the left of the three in this image'.

A commemorative service at the Navy Memorial, Anzac Parade Canberra has marked the Royal Australian Navy's 120th birthday.

Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Michael Noonan AO, RAN said Navy can draw strength and honour from humble beginnings 120 years ago.

"We are far from the fledgling naval force formed in the autumn of 1901," VADM Noonan said.

Admiral Noonan acknowledged the importance of Navy people and roles they have played in this development.

"Our competitive advantage is our Navy family, all those who have contributed past and present."

This service is demonstrated by looking no further back than 2020.

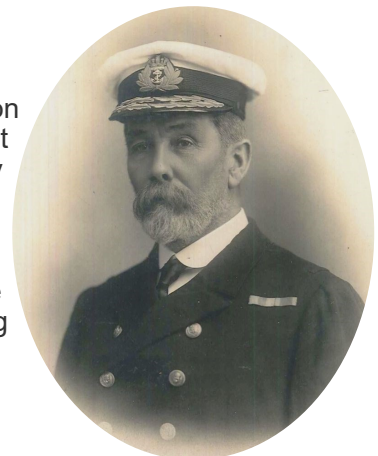
"In the past year, the Royal Australian Navy has faced new and unexpected challenges as part of the Australian government's responses to bushfires, a global pandemic and other humanitarian and disaster relief operations."

Vice Admiral Noonan discussed Navy in its upcoming 121st year.

"We will keep evolving, deepening our connection with the Nation and supporting our partners and neighbours."

For images of Navy serving Australia with pride at home and abroad visit the Defence Media gallery: available at <http://images.defence.gov.au/S20210386>

A commemoration service was held at Brighton Cemetery in Victoria on 1 March to remember Vice Admiral Sir William Rooke Creswell, founding officer of the RAN



AWM Development

From: AWM.Official
<AWM.Official@awm.gov.au>
Sent: Thursday, 4 March 2021 4:08 PM
Subject: Australian War Memorial – Development Update

Good afternoon,

I am pleased to share a copy of *Our Continuing Story* information booklet with you. This information outlines the Australian War Memorial's proposed plans for the expansion of our exhibition galleries to share the untold stories of 100,000 Australians who have served our country in war, conflict, peacekeeping, humanitarian and disaster-relief operations over the past 30 years.

The project received approval through the *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act* process on 10 December 2020 and the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Public Works referral on 22 February 2021. It now moves to the final stages of approval with the National Capital Authority and the nine-year program of work enters the construction procurement phase.

I encourage you to share this booklet among your networks, so that all interested parties can gain a comprehensive understanding of the project and its important role in telling stories of Australia's contemporary service.



As the heart of national commemoration, our Memorial must reflect our living history – for every veteran and for every Australian. Our Development Project offers this opportunity while remaining true to the vision of the Memorial's founder Charles Bean, to ensure the sacrifices of Australians are not forgotten.

If you have any queries regarding the Gallery Development public consultation and engagement process, or the project in general, please contact our Development Project team via email at development@awm.gov.au. A limited number of printed publications of *Our Continuing Story* are also available on request.

Yours sincerely,

Matt Anderson
Director, Australian War Memorial
AWM.Official@awm.gov.au

Individuals receiving military invalidity benefits – impact of court decisions

3 February 2021

This information will help you to work out if you are affected by the recent Full Federal Court decisions relating to military invalidity benefits ([/Individuals/Super/Indetail/Withdrawing-and-using-your-super/Treatment-of-military-invalidity-benefitsfollowing-Federal-Court-decision/](#)).

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:

Working out if you are affected

- 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.
- Individuals receiving military invalidity benefits – impact of court decisions | Australian Taxation Office

<https://www.ato.gov.au/Individuals/Super/Indetail/Withdrawing-and-using-your-super/Individuals-receiving-military-invalidity-benefits---impact-of-court-decisions/>

If you have received invalidity benefits paid by the DFRDB Scheme or the MSB Scheme, follow the steps at the above Australian Taxation Office webpage to work out if you are affected by the court decisions.

HMVS *Cerberus* Postage Stamp commemorating the 150th Anniversary of her arrival in Australia

Australia Post will issue a stamp on March 22 to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Her Majesty's Victorian Ship (HMVS) *Cerberus*' arrival in Port Phillip Bay, Melbourne, in April 1871.

The stamp depicts a painting by Sydney-based artist Ian Hansen of HMVS *Cerberus* during the late 1880s, steaming on the waters of Port Phillip Bay. The painting shows the ship in the fourth colour scheme, which was introduced in 1888.

Cerberus – named for the three-headed dog that guarded the gates to the underworld in Greek mythology – was commissioned as a coastal defence ship to safeguard Melbourne, Australia's largest and wealthiest city of the time. The funding agreement also allowed for Britain's Royal Navy to call upon her in times of war.

The ship was the most powerful warship in the southern hemisphere when it arrived on April 9, 1871, after a beleaguered departure from England and dramatic 123-day voyage.

Despite her original captain dying before departure and more than 50 crew members preferring to go to jail rather than fulfil their engagement obligations, the ship departed Chatham, England, on October 29, 1870, and made many stops to refuel with coal before arriving in Melbourne.

Museum Manager at HMAS *Cerberus* Commander John Goss said the voyage included a notable passage through the new Suez Canal.

"*Cerberus* only had three feet of clearance on each side, and had either of the two propellers touched the bank, they might have snapped off," Commander Goss said.

He also discovered many reports of public bafflement at the small and unconventional-looking vessel on its arrival in Australia.



HMAS Cerberus Museum Manager Commander John Goss with historic items from HMVS Cerberus in the HMAS Cerberus Museum

"HMVS *Cerberus* was notable for her place in the evolution of warship design. An early example in the iron ship era, this breastwork monitor was the future of battleships," he said.

Cerberus was iron clad and steam powered, the first British warship to do away with sails altogether, apart from for her voyage to Australia, and she had raised revolving gun turrets on a central superstructure and a low freeboard."

Upon Federation in 1901, *Cerberus* was incorporated into the Commonwealth Naval Forces, adopting the prefix HMAS.

In 1921, she was towed from Williamstown to Geelong, serving as a depot vessel for the RAN's six J-class submarines for two years and was renamed HMAS *Platypus*.

In April 1924, the vessel was sold as scrap to the Melbourne Salvage Co. and two years later to the Black Rock Yacht Club, with some assistance from the Sandringham Municipal Council. She was sunk at Black Rock, where she remains today as a breakwater.

The name *Cerberus* is perpetuated in the RAN's premier training establishment, HMAS *Cerberus*, situated at Westernport, Victoria, which coincidentally is about to celebrate its own historic milestone – a centenary of commissioning in 1921.

Commemorative products will be available from Australia Post outlets and the first day cover will carry the postmark HMAS *Cerberus* VIC 3920.

To find out more about the ship's history visit www.navy.gov.au/hmas-cerberus-hmvs

Gundula Holbrook—Honorary Citizen



Gundula Holbrook, who has died aged 106, was a last link with stirring events of the First World War. On the ski slopes in 1952, when the Austrian Gundula Bleichart met Norman Holbrook, she was fascinated to hear that, in the year of her birth, Holbrook had won the VC.

She learnt that on the morning of December 13 1914, Lieutenant Holbrook – who was then 26 – commanded the submarine B-11, when, despite treacherous currents, he dived under five rows of mines to enter the Dardanelles. There, in Sari Sig-lar Bay, he torpedoed and sank the Ottoman navy's ironclad Mesudiye, which was guarding the mine-field.

Holbrook's was the first naval VC to be gazetted in the First World War. The following year, 1915, amid a wave of anti-German feeling, the name of the New South Wales town of Germanton, once known as Ten Mile Creek, was changed to Holbrook.

A dozen other names of politicians, senior admirals and generals, including Asquith, Jellicoe and Kitchener, were considered, but the residents decided that Holbrook was more in keeping with the young nation whose soldiers were now fighting on the shores of the Dardanelles. In September the shire clerk wrote to Norman Holbrook informing him of the honour: it became and remains the only town to be named after a VC winner.

Gundula Helene Feldner was born on November 1 1914, the only daughter of an Innsbruck lawyer, Alois Feldner, and Gretel, née Kofler, whose family still own the Grand Hotel in Kitzbühel, in the Austrian Tyrol.

Educated privately in Switzerland, Gundula married an Austrian doctor, Raoul Bleichart, in 1939, but by 1941 the marriage had fallen apart under wartime conditions.

Postwar she travelled widely, including to Kenya and to South Africa, and married Norman Holbrook in 1952; in 1956 they visited the town of Holbrook for the first time, and there followed intermittent vis-

its, while the town, which was nowhere near the sea, became known as the "submarine town".

In 1971 a model of B-11 was installed in a park there, and after Norman died in Stedham, West Sussex, in 1976, Gundula retired to Austria, donating to the town of Holbrook her husband's medals, including his VC and his midshipman's chest, which was filled with personal artefacts including invitations to past dinners and events, many signed by the principal guests.

On Anzac Day, April 25 1986, the freedom of the town was given to the Royal Australian Navy's submarine squadron. In 1988 a bronze statue of Gundula's husband was erected at Germanton Park in Holbrook, and in 1994, when the Oberon-class submarine HMAS Otway was decommissioned, the boat was broken up and conning tower, and casing were transported in sections by road to Holbrook, where it was intended to be put together as a submarine memorial.

When Gundula Holbrook learned that the scheme had stalled, she wrote a generous personal cheque, which galvanised the community into completing the project. In 1997 she paid her last visit to the town, and was made an honorary citizen. "I think this is the most important thing that has ever happened to me," she said. "I don't feel like a visitor anymore, now I am a resident."

She had also helped to turn the town from a stop-over on the day-long drive between Sydney and Melbourne, into a place of destination which receives some 200,000 visitors each year. There, where she is remembered as being down to earth, articulate, possessed of a sharp mind and a nice smile; her hologram in the museum narrates her husband's story.

**Gundula Holbrook,
born November 1 1914,
died December 31 2020**

By Telegraph Obituaries

3 March 2021



Lieut Norman Holbrook VC

INQUIRY INTO RECOGNITION FOR MEMBERS AND FAMILIES OF MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE WHO ARE INJURED, WOUNDED OR KILLED IN OR AS A RESULT OF SERVICE National Council's submission to the Tribunal

1. After careful consideration, the prevailing view within The Naval Association of Australia (NAA), is that members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) who are injured, wounded, or killed in or as a result of service, or their families, should receive an Australian honour or award. In supporting this initiative, we have prepared two options for the Tribunal to consider.

Proposed Options:

2. Our preferred option; is the award of a Device to be attached to the medal ribbon of either a 'specific' Operational Service Medal or the Australian Defence Medal (ADM). We propose there be two devices; a Poppy for the loss of a life and a Sprig of Golden Wattle for having sustained a physical or psychological wound or injury, whether it be in operational or non-operational service.

DEVICE Preamble: *It is proposed these Devices be awarded in the name of the Australian Head of State to any member of the Australian Defence Force who, while serving under competent authority in any capacity after (date TBD), has been killed or having sustained a physical or psychological wound or injury as a consequence of their service, or as a consequence of an action intended to impact upon a hostile force.*

3. The alternate option; is for a Medal to be instituted to recognise and commemorate the loss of life, sustaining a physical or psychological wound or injury, whether it be in operational or non-operational service. The Devices proposed could perhaps be attached to this medal ribbon.

MEDAL Preamble: *It is proposed this Medal be awarded in the name of the Australian Head of State to any member of the Australian Defence Force who, while serving under competent authority in any capacity after (date TBD), has been killed or having sustained a physical or psychological wound, or injury as a consequence of their service, or as a consequence of an action intended to impact upon a hostile force.*

Start Date:

4. The proposed start-date is 03 September 1945, in-line with the ADM.

Recommendations:

5. In developing the Device and Medal options, we have been mindful of those considerations that featured prominently in these deliberations. This has led us to make the following recommendations:

- a. we advocate the loss of life whilst in Service, not be differentiated by whether it occurred in operational or non-operational service. To do so would invariably attribute a differing worth or significance to one over the other;
- b. to have sustained a 'wound' generally infers it is was as a result of a combative clash. There are, however, circumstances where sustaining a wound may have resulted from 'friendly fire'. In the NAA we remember the two sailors who lost their life and the four who were wounded when HMAS *Hobart* was mistakenly fired upon by a USAF Jet Aircraft during the Vietnam War. We also remember the sailors involved in the RAN Logistic Support role who would subsequently suffer the consequences of exposure to dioxins. We see it being an imperative that the 'consequence of an action intended to impact upon or impair the ability of a hostile force to function' i.e., friendly fire, including the use of traps, snares, mines, projectiles, the use of nuclear, biological, or chemical agents, be taken into account in this regard;
- c. we advocate there be no prioritising dependent upon operational status, applied to the sustaining of a wound or injury, whether it be physical or psychological. Regardless of the circumstance, the member's ability to fully-function in the Service and in life, may be compromised to such an extent as to have a profound and life-changing consequence. To differentiate based on operational status will inevitably attribute a different worth or significance to one over the other;
- d. in line with the wider Australian community who see that mental health matters affect many in our general and Uniformed Services communities, those within our

**RECOGNITION FOR MEMBERS AND FAMILIES OF
MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE (**
National Council's Submission (cont)

Association who strongly share this view, advocate psychological issues be deemed to satisfy the criteria of death, a wound or injury for the purposes of this Award; and,

- e. it is seen that DVA would need to be the determining authority as to what is to be deemed to be a death, wounding, or injury attributable to Service in the ADF.

6. In proposing the Device be attached to a specific operational service medal (concept images provided at the attachment), we see it would provide a direct link to the conflict or campaign in which the loss of life, wounding, or injury occurred, and it would be in-line with existing medal protocols when affixing a Device. In non-operational service, the appropriate Device would be affixed to the ADM ribbon. The ADM is awarded to all who have served and it will not be encumbered with 'bars' for additional periods of service as will be the case with other Service Medals e.g., National Medal-Defence Force Service Medal-Defence Long Service Medal. Where a member loses their life or is unable to continue their service due to being medically unfit before completing the required 4 years-service, we see provision is already made in the awarding of the ADM in such circumstances. This protocol could possibly be replicated in Services operating with the ADF e.g., the AFP or DFAT, within their respective service medals and awards criteria.

7. The Device Option is seen to eliminate the need to produce another medal and could facilitate a quintessentially Australian form of recognition, and one that could be implemented in a timely manner. Another consideration in regard to the Device is that it should not necessarily conform in size to the existing MID 'Oakleaf', rather, consideration could be given to designing something of a larger size befitting the desired gravitas. It is appreciated that in doing so would preclude its placement on a medal ribbon bar (worn only by serving members), but in the nature of such an award, that is not seen to be an impediment.

8. Should the determination be that a Medal be instituted, the proposed devices could be fixed to that medal ribbon, or the colours or

images of the Poppy and The Golden Wattle could perhaps, be incorporated in some aspect of the medal or medal ribbon design.

9. If it is determined that a Commemorative Medallion or Brooch is to be issued in lieu of a Device or Medal, we would advocate that the issuing of such a commemorative device be limited to 'one only', to be awarded to the applicant or designated next-of-kin in order to maintain the desired gravitas.

10. Different to other Australian Honours and Awards, we propose consideration be given to establishing a protocol wherein an individual is 'not recommended' for this award, rather, upon meeting specific criteria, the member applies in person or, it would be awarded in response to a request from the designated next-of-kin after the death of the member. In this instance we would not wish to compel someone to wear a Device or Medal if they would not want to deal with an 'intrusive inquiry' as to their personal circumstance that led to recognition being awarded in this form.

11. The NAA stands ready to assist The Tribunal in its deliberations on this matter, or to provide clarification as to any aspect of our submission.

12. For your consideration.

Yours aye,

ORIGINAL SIGNED

David Manolas
National President
Naval Association of Australia

Attachment:

Concept Images for Poppy and Golden Wattle Devices

See page 11 opposite

RECOGNITION FOR MEMBERS AND FAMILIES OF MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE

National President's Statement To NAA Members

In relation to whether there should be an Award in recognition of death, wounding or an injury through service in the ADF, the receipt of NAA Submission to Honours and Awards, has been acknowledged. Now we await the outcome of the Tribunal's deliberations.

I thank you all for your assistance in this matter and, I very much appreciate that there are supportive and contrary views within the NAA the wider Ex-Service Organisations, and within the wider Australian Community, on this matter.

Hopefully, the outcome will provide an appropriate form of recognition for those whose loved-one lost their life, and for those who have lost a component of their life, through their service in the ADF. Whatever our individual feeling on this matter, we have had the opportunity to participate in this very important and meaningful discussion and for the support and the way in which views have been expressed, I thank you all.

For your information: six Sections submitted their response to myself as to whether there ought to be a form of recognition, wherein all six Sections were in favour; of the Preferences presented for consideration, not all Sections nominated a first and second preference; five Sections identified the 'Device Option for a death, wounding or injury during Operational or Non-Operational service', as their first preference with three opting for the 'Medal for a death, wounding or injury during Operational or Non-Operational service', as their second preference. One Section chose the same Medal for their first preference and the Device as their second preference.

The images provided below are to provide some insight as to the 'concept' and not to be seen as being prescriptive in any way. We are much indebted to Peter Cooke-Russell for his 'art-work' in formulating the images we see in the Attachment; thank you Peter.

National Council's Concept of the Proposed Award

Approximately full size illustrations



Poppy Clasp

Incurred during Non Operational Service



Wattle Clasp

Incurred during Operational Service



Changing course for the better

By Corporal Julia Whitwell (Edited)
5 March 2021



Able Seaman Brianna Briscoe joined Navy four years ago, changing course from an otherwise desperate future. The Indigenous aircraft technician's story starts in rural communities around Laramba, north-west of Alice Springs.

From a young age, the Anmatyerr woman was exposed to substance abuse and violence. Aged 19, battered and in an abusive relationship, she started questioning her life choices.

"I look back now and think 'holy crap, what were you thinking' and I feel really grateful I had people pushing me to do better," she said. Among them was her mum.

Able Seaman Briscoe reluctantly attended a recruitment session after her mum nudged her towards joining the ADF. Her reluctance turned to quiet aspiration when her aptitude test revealed becoming an aircraft technician was a career option.

"Mum encouraged me to just try it and I was excited to give it a go.

"It was like a switch flipped in my head and I had a proper motivation to stop drinking, leave my relationship and make things better."

Able Seaman Briscoe applied herself to recruit school and trade training. She is now posted to No. 808 Squadron – a journey she credits to the "two strong women" in her life, her mum and her sister.

Able Seaman Briscoe said she hoped to inspire other Indigenous women to follow in her footsteps.

"I haven't seen many Indigenous women in the field I'm in," she said. "I'd like to be an advocate for them and empower them to get out there and tell their story without shame.

"My mum and sister pushed me to strive for greatness and get out of my comfort zone.

"I'm glad they did. "I'd like to foster other women's confidence so they can step out of their shell, too."

Childhood curiosity opened door for engineer

By Sergeant Dave Morley (Edited)
8 March 2021



Head of Navy Engineering Rear Admiral Kath Richards was little more than a toddler when she got her first taste of the Navy.

Rear Admiral Richards dabbled in different engineering fields while at ADFA, including electrical, before getting a good look around a ship's engine room.

"She completed a Bachelor of Mechanical Engineering with honours in 1992, then received her marine engineer charge qualification in 1998 while in HMAS *Newcastle*.

In 2001, then Lieutenant Commander Richards became the marine engineering officer in the frigate HMAS *Melbourne*, the first female to become a charge engineer of a major fleet unit.

She served on Operation Stanhope in the Southern Ocean in 1998, Solomon Islands during 2001 and Operation Slipper in 2002.

Then Captain Richards went on to command HMAS *Cerberus* from 2012-2013.

She became Head of Navy Engineering on February 4, responsible for Navy's safety and seaworthiness.

Rear Admiral Richards said she hoped she could be an inspiration for young women entering Navy.

"For someone starting off, it's really great to be able to see someone who might be like you somewhere further up in a hierarchy," she said. "It's hard to believe what you can't see. I also hope it can show young women they can be true to themselves. I'm married with three children and in many ways I'm just a pretty normal middle-aged woman, if there is such a thing."

With the handover of command on February 12 from Commodore Colin Dagg to Commodore Rachel Durbin as Director-General Engineering, this is the first time the two senior engineering roles are held by women simultaneously.

Although Rear Admiral Richards is the first female Head of Navy Engineering, she said it was progressive men who encouraged, mentored and guided her to the officer she is today.

DVA Minister Media Release**The Hon Darren Chester MP**

Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel

Extra support to help veterans secure employment

Veterans will benefit from specialised one-on-one support to help them find employment or change careers through the Support for Employment (SFE) program launched today.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel Darren Chester said the SFE program built on the Government's improvements to transition and employment support made in recent years and would deliver further pre-and-post employment assistance.

"Our ADF personnel have a great range of skills, expertise and a positive attitude to see them succeed in the civilian workplace. Simply put, hiring a veteran is good for business," Mr Chester said.

"In order to ensure our veterans are putting their best foot forward, the SFE will provide up to 10 hours of one-on-one support across a range of employment services, including resume writing, job seeking support, interview preparation and workplace adjustment.

"This will better support veterans to secure appropriate employment or change careers and is another step in the right direction as part of the Government's commitment to ensuring a successful transition for ADF members.

"To complement the SFE program, we are continuing to build an understanding in the broader community of the valuable skills that veterans bring to the workforce and how valuable they can be to an organisation."

The SFE program is open to veterans who have transitioned from the permanent ADF between 12 months and up to five years ago and are unemployed, consider themselves to be under-employed, seeking assistance to change careers, or require support to adjust to the civilian workplace.

The SFE program is part of the Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program, which supports veterans' employment and the promotion of their skills in the civilian workforce. For more information, visit the [Prime Minister's Veterans' Employment Program web site](#).

Media contacts

Rachel Tharratt or Cedric Szigeti: 02 6277 7820
DVA Media: 02 6289 6466

Office of the Hon Darren Chester, Canberra ACT

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

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

DVA Minister Interview**The Hon Darren Chester MP**

Minister for Veterans' Affairs
Minister for Defence Personnel

*ABC Radio National,
Fran Kelly interview
discussing Australian
Parliament House
culture and a Royal
Commission into
veteran suicide*

To read the transcript go to webpage;

minister.dva.gov.au/transcripts/2021/mar/210323-abc.htm

A Royal Australian Air Force F-35A Lightning conducts a flypast over HMAS Hobart during Exercise TASMAN SHIELD 21, off the east coast of Australia.



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