



The Bosun's Call



Vol 26 No 9

Once Navy, Always Navy

October 2021

Australian, UK and US partnership

On 16 September 2021, the Prime Minister of Australia, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom and the President of the United States of America, announced an enhanced trilateral security partnership between Australia, the UK and the US (AUKUS).

AUKUS is a momentous partnership in Australia's history that will significantly deepen our three countries' cooperation on a range of security and defence capabilities for decades to come.

This partnership is pivotal for Australia to become a more capable power in the 21st century, in line with our liberal democratic values, and to deepen our already steadfast defence and security collaborations.

Nuclear-powered submarines

The first major initiative under AUKUS is Australia's acquisition of at least eight nuclear-powered submarines. The Australian Government intends to build these submarines in Adelaide.

This announcement means the Australian Government will no longer be proceeding with the Attack Class Submarine Program.

Australia, the UK and the US have committed to a comprehensive program of work over the next 18 months that will bring this capability into service. The optimal pathway to achieve this is through a significant increase in Australia-UK-US defence collaboration.

This period will be used to examine the full suite of

requirements that underpin nuclear stewardship, with a specific focus on safety, design, construction, operation, maintenance, disposal, regulation, training, environmental protection, installations and infrastructure, basing, workforce and force structure.

The Government has established a Nuclear-Powered Submarine Task Force led by VADM Jonathan Mead AO to facilitate Australia's role in AUKUS.

Nuclear-powered submarines have superior characteristics of

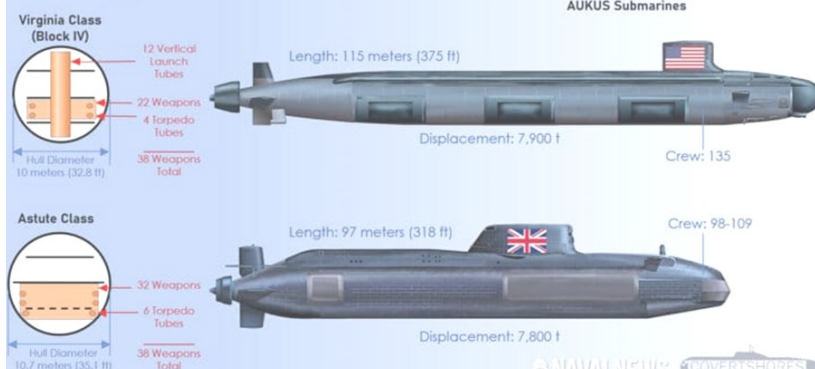
stealth, speed, manoeuvrability, survivability, and almost limitless endurance, when compared to conventional submarines. They can deploy unmanned underwater vehicles and can also carry more advanced and a greater

number of weapons. These abilities allow nuclear-powered submarines to operate in contested areas with a lower risk of detection.

These advantages mean that the transition to nuclear-powered submarines represents a substantial capability leap for the Royal Australian Navy.

The Government is committed to maximising Australian industry participation in this program. Opportunities for Australian industry participation range from capability design to complex project management, to construction and sustainment activities.

Nuclear Attack Submarines Currently Under Construction



Events coming up

7 Oct	General Meeting –Cancelled
15 Oct	Close of lockdown—hopefully
21 Oct	Fish 'n Chips Snapper CYC BYO 1200



Newsletter of the ACT Section of the
Naval Association of Australia

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Naval Association of Australia

ACT Section

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General Meetings Dates and Locations Programme

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

7 Oct Eastlakes Club Gungahlin	Cancelled
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.

ADF Help in Regional NSW

ADF Vaccination Outreach Teams have administered more than 46,000 COVID-19 vaccines in more than 30 regional and remote NSW communities since late August, making a big difference to vaccination rates.

In the outback opal mining town of Lightning Ridge, an ADF team set up in a sports hall and was formally greeted with a Welcome to Country by Indigenous Elder Auntie Liz Smith, who teaches the Gamilaraay language at local schools.

Standing in the shade of a tall gum tree, she thanked the ADF, NSW Health and NSW Police for their "awesome" help to protect regional, remote and vulnerable communities from COVID-19.

"My family is based in Gundooga and we have been hit quite hard, with 48 positive cases in the one [extended] family," Auntie Liz said.

NSW Police Superintendent David Waddell, who accompanied Colonel Young to inspect pop-up vaccination clinics in western NSW, said the ADF vaccination teams were effective and efficient.

"The 46,000-plus vaccinations for the ADF is a really big contribution and, from what I have seen and speaking to the police, it's been really well received by the communities," Superintendent Waddell said.

Trinette Simms, the acting Chief Executive Officer of the Lightning Ridge Local Aboriginal Land Council, said it was fantastic to have the ADF assisting NSW Government agencies.

"Luckily enough, we have a couple of vaccination options in our community. The facility the ADF in Lightning Ridge is large enough for people to feel more comfortable and it's central," Ms Simms said.

Lightning Ridge Mayor Ian Woodcock thanked the ADF for supporting the vaccination rollout in western NSW. In the central western town of Mudgee, ADF members administered vaccinations in a large hall at St Mathew's Catholic School. Mayor Des Kennedy praised ADF members for lending a hand in his community. "It's been fabulous. Over two weeks, we have got about 25 to 30 per cent of our total eligible population vaccinated by the ADF. We would have been months and months away without their help," Councillor Kennedy said.

Dubbo Region Mayor Stephen Lawrence also linked the ADF help to a surge in vaccinations in his community. The central western city's showground was repurposed as a vaccination hub. "The reality is, before the ADF came to our region, our vaccinations were the lowest in the state per region. We were not in a good position at all," Councillor Lawrence said.

*Leut Brendon Trembath *
29 September 20 21

Committee meetings

East Lakes Gungahlin
1100 Thursday 4 November
2021

Find the best way to get proof of your COVID-19 vaccinations for your situation

You can get a COVID-19 digital certificate or your immunisation history statement to show proof of your vaccinations.

How you get proof depends on your situation. This includes if you need to create a myGov account, link services or enrol in Medicare.

If you're 14 or older, you'll need to get your own digital certificate or immunisation history statement using either:

- Your [Medicare online account](#) through [myGov](#)
- The [Express Plus Medicare mobile app](#).

Once you've had all your required doses, you can [add your COVID-19 digital certificate to your digital wallet](#).

If you've had mixed doses of [approved vaccines](#), you can use your COVID-19 digital certificate or immunisation history statement as proof.

Use our tool to find out the easiest way to get proof of your COVID-19

If you're not eligible for Medicare

If you're not eligible for Medicare, you need an Individual Healthcare Identifier (IHI) to get your proof online. You can get an IHI using the Individual Healthcare Identifiers service (IHI service) through [myGov](#).

First, you need to check if you already have an IHI. You have an IHI if any of the following apply:

- you have a Medicare card
- you have a DVA card
- you're enrolled in Medicare.

If any of these do apply, you can get your proof using either your:

- [Medicare online account](#) through [myGov](#)
- [Express Plus Medicare mobile app](#).

If you don't have an IHI, you can use the IHI service through myGov to apply for one and link it. To do this, sign in to [myGov](#) then:

1. Select **Services** or **Link your first service**.
2. Select **Individual Healthcare Identifiers service** and then follow the prompts.

You don't need an IHI to get the vaccines, you only need it to get proof of your vaccinations.

If you're a veteran

If you're a DVA gold card holder and you have a Medicare number, you can access your COVID-19 digital certificate through either:

- Your [Medicare online account](#) through [myGov](#)
- The [Express Plus Medicare mobile app](#)

If you're a DVA gold card holder and don't have a Medicare number, you'll need to access your My Health Record and link it to your myGov account.

This way, you'll be able to get proof of your COVID-19 vaccinations.

To do this, you'll need to call the [My Health Record enquiries line](#). They'll verify your identity and give you an access code, also called an Identity Verification Code, to link your accounts.

Find out how to [get COVID-19 vaccination proof through My Health Record](#) from the Australian Digital Health Agency website.

If you can't get proof online, you can also call the [Australian Immunisation Register](#). Select option 4 for the AIR veteran and defence support line. Then ask us to send your immunisation history statement or COVID-19 digital certificate to you. It can take up to 14 days for your statement or certificate to arrive in the post.

If you can't get proof online

If you can't get proof online, your vaccination provider can print your immunisation history statement for you.

You can also call the [Australian Immunisation Register](#) and ask us to send your immunisation history statement or COVID-19 digital certificate to you. It can take up to 14 days for your statement or certificate to arrive in the post.

If you want to use your My Health Record

You can also get COVID-19 vaccination proof through My Health Record. If you haven't used My Health Record before, you need to link it to myGov. Find out more about [how to get proof of vaccination through My Health Record](#) on the Australian Digital Health Agency website.

There are 2 ways to show proof of your vaccinations:

Your [COVID-19 digital certificate](#) which shows proof of only your COVID-19 vaccinations that you can add to a digital wallet

Your [immunisation history statement](#) which lists your COVID-19 vaccinations and all other vaccinations.

[You can use our tool](#) to find the best proof for your situation. It can depend on how many doses you've had.

Your vaccination provider needs to report your vaccination information to the [Australian Immunisation Register](#) (AIR) before it will appear on your statement. It can take your vaccination provider up to 10 days to update the AIR.

International COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate

The Australian Government has also announced the introduction of an upcoming internationally recognised International COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate. It's part of the government's framework for how international travel will look in coming months.

Read more about the [announcement and the International COVID-19 Vaccination Certificate](#) on the Prime Minister of Australia website.

The second 266 departs WA

O 266 After 15 years of service, HMAS *Sirius* has commenced her final deployment, which will take her to South-East Asia and the south-west Pacific.

Commanding Officer *Sirius* Commander Chris Doherty said the ship's crew would conduct her final replenishment at sea before her support function to the fleet is taken over by the two new Supply-class replenishment ships.

"*Sirius* has been an enabler to the fleet and our regional partners for over 15 years, so a final deployment serving Australian and allied warships is a fitting end to her," Commander Doherty said.

Sirius entered service in the RAN on September 16, 2006. The former commercial tanker was purchased by the Australian Government in 2004 and underwent extensive modifications, including the addition of a flight deck, before being commissioned.

Sirius has the capability to replenish ships at sea by day and night, and replenish two ships at a time while also conducting simultaneous vertical replenishments via helicopter. She has transfer points for fuel, water and stores.

Sirius has served with distinction as the fleet replenishment vessel, conducting more than 740 replenishments at sea with Australian ships and a variety of foreign warships, including US aircraft carriers.

On completion of the operational phase of her current deployment, *Sirius* will hand over responsibility for replenishment and logistical support to HMAS *Supply* and Nuship *Stalwart*, which is due to enter service later this year.

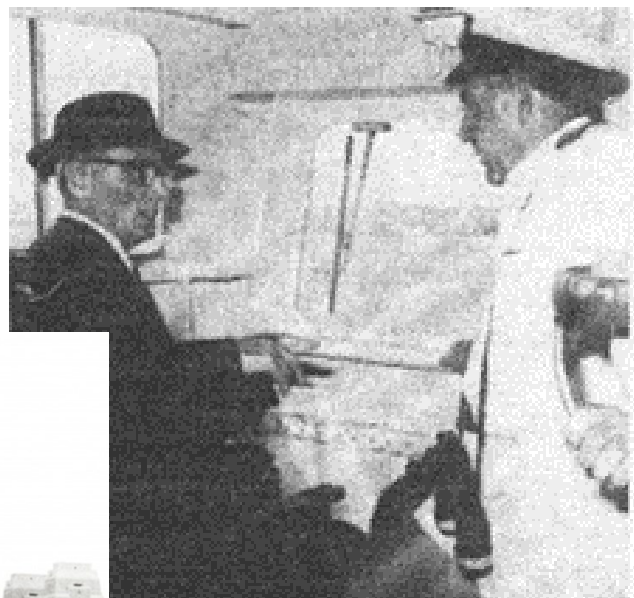
GOR 266 HMAS *Diamantina* (below) was commissioned 27 April 1945, operating in the SW Pacific in WWII, then paying off into reserve on 9 August 1946. She recommissioned on 23 June 1959, was based in Fremantle WA carrying out RAN's Oceanographic Research/Survey tasks and HMAS



HMAS Stirling Port Services personnel look on as HMAS Sirius departs Fleet Base West, Western Australia, for her final deployment.

Leeuwin's training ship for 20 years until she paid off on 29 February 1980.

Manned by Queensland Maritime Museum members and a RAN party of 12 serving personnel, she departed Sydney under her own power on 1 October 1980 anchoring in Moreton Bay on 3 October. Whilst at anchor, her first commanding officer CMDR M.G. Rose VRD RANR joined her for the final leg of her life. On arrival in Brisbane she was handed over to the Queensland Maritime Museum and then prepared for her exhibition in the South Brisbane Dock.



Above: Seated in the Captain's Chair, CMDR M Rose talks to Diamantina's last RAN seagoing captain LCDR Bob Burns GM RAN during the farewell cruise of Sydney Harbour.

Navy News 30 November 1979

Left: HMAS Diamantina approaching Garden Island Sydney after flying her Paying Off pennant on a final cruise around Sydney Harbour on 23 November 1979 with CMDR M Rose onboard.



Photos RAN

Value of ships' long service acknowledged



The Navy's oldest vessels, HMA Ships *Paluma* and *Mermaid*, were farewelled from service during a ceremony at HMAS Cairns at the weekend.

For more than 30 years, the survey motor launches collected hydrographic data necessary for creating products used by military, commercial and pri-

vate vessels to safely navigate the waters around Australia.

In addition to their critically important survey function, Commanding Officer *Mermaid* Lieutenant Commander Christopher Voysey said the ships also moved into operational support roles over the years.

"Since *Mermaid*'s first hydrographic operation at Bee Reef on February 26, 1990, the ship has steamed nearly 420,000 nautical miles and conducted innumerable surveys," Lieutenant Commander Voysey said.

"Surveys aren't the only function undertaken though. In February 2000, *Mermaid* and *Paluma* deployed to Bougainville Island in support of the peace monitoring group conducting Operation BEL ISI II ashore.

"Later in November that same year, the ships deployed to East Timor to support the United Nations transitional administration to East Timor operations."

More recently, the ships supported Operation Resolute, which Lieutenant Commander Voysey said showed the breadth and adaptability of the platform and crews.

As the older of the two, *Paluma* held the 'First Lady of the Fleet' title, which was passed on to HMAS *Shepparton* during the decommissioning ceremony.

Commanding Officer *Paluma* Lieutenant Commander Craig Hamilton said the title handover and ceremony were fitting and memorable moments to recognise the important legacies the ships leave behind.

"Our ships have served the Navy and region for many years and many proud personnel have served on board," Lieutenant Commander Hamilton said.

"The ceremony today and the response we've had in the lead-up to it from previous crew

members and those with an affiliation to the ships, shows the impactful role our vessels have had to so many.

"We now look forward to integrating into and helping to develop Navy's incoming maritime mine countermeasures and military survey capability through SEA1905 Phase 1."

SEA1905-1 will provide Defence with innovative and adaptive capabilities to meet the growing threat of mines, while developing maritime environmental knowledge.

The decommissioning of *Paluma* and *Mermaid* is part of the staged introduction of up to eight specialist vessels, which will have robotic, autonomous and artificial intelligence systems.

"While the future is very exciting and technology-driven, today was about our people past and present and these two robust vessels, which have served the Navy so well over the years," Lieutenant Commander Voysey said.

By Lieutenant Jessica Craig
20 September 2021

Paluma-class survey motor launch HMAS *Shepparton* II is the new First Lady of the Fleet.

The title, recognising the longest-serving commissioned ship in the fleet, was handed over to *Shepparton* at a ceremony at HMAS Cairns following the decommissioning of HMA Ships *Paluma* and *Mermaid*. Commanding Officer *Shepparton* Lieutenant Commander Andrew Shiels said the vessel was in her 31st year of commissioned service and the crew was honoured to take possession of the prized First Lady of the Fleet plaque.

By Able Seaman Emily Wain and
Able Seaman Rebecca Churches
1 October 2021

HMA Ships Paluma and Mermaid in their original colour scheme which was changed to Pusser's grey in 2002



Two reports provide valuable insights into veteran suicide

1 October 2021

On 29 September, two reports were published that will help the Government tackle the tragedy of suicide in the Defence and veteran community.

One was released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW). The other was prepared by the Interim National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention, and tabled by the Government.

AIHW report

DVA commissions the AIHW to conduct research each year to help the Government to understand the incidence of suicide and to ensure programs and services are directed to prevent Defence and veteran suicide. This is the fourth annual update. The report is called *Serving and ex-serving ADF members who have served since 1985: suicide monitoring 2001 to 2019 report*.

This research provides DVA and the Department of Defence with an even stronger evidence base from which we can target our efforts to support those most at risk.

This year's update includes a significant expansion of the study population (from 223,000 to 373,500) and, for the first time, includes anyone with a single day of ADF service from 1 January 1985 who died by suicide between 2001 and 2019. The larger study population enables more detailed analysis, providing greater insight into the risk and protective factors for suicide within the permanent, reserve and ex-serving populations.

This update reports 1,273 deaths by suicide among all service groups between 1 January 2001 and 31 December 2019.

Because the ex- population included in this latest update is significantly larger than the previous report, the number of suicides reported in this report has increased. However, the general patterns, including rates of suicide and comparisons with the general Australian population, remain similar to previous studies.

Similarly, the report's findings are consistent with previous years in terms of those groups that are considered more at-risk than the general population, for example those who discharge involuntarily on medical grounds, younger men, early leavers and those not of officer rank.

Interim National Commissioner's report

The National Commissioner for Defence and Veteran Suicide Prevention's *Preliminary Interim Report* was tabled on 29 September 2021.

When undertaking her inquiry, the Interim National Commissioner Dr Bernadette Boss CSC conducted many engagements with the Defence and veteran community, government departments, medical professionals and peak bodies. In addition, a broad assessment of previous inquiries, reports and reviews was undertaken.

The Interim National Commissioner's report provides 41 recommendations for the Government to consider. These recommendations not only highlight a number of areas where improvements could be made, but also a number of positive outcomes that have been achieved as a result of significant investment in reform and new initiatives by the Government in recent years.

Dr Boss emphasises the significance of the Veteran Centric Reform Program, the progress made by Defence and DVA in establishing the Joint Transition Authority and also the benefits we have seen for veterans from the peer support program.

We acknowledge there is still plenty of work to do to further reform and to improve the services and support available to our Defence and veteran communities. Dr Boss has provided advice on a number of areas on which she recommends we should focus.

There are a number of recommendations that require further consideration by the Government. The Government has indicated its intention that these will be examined as part of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide.

Support

Help is available, including free, lifetime mental health care for anyone with a single day of continuous full time service in the Australian Defence Force; immediate financial assistance for those submitting mental health claims; and case management for those with complex needs.

Services that understand the military experience are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, including:

- Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling, offering free and confidential counselling to the veteran community on 1800 011 046
- Safe Zone is available for current and former ADF personnel on 1800 142 072. Calls to Safe Zone are confidential and never recorded.

Dr Bernadette Boss CSC admitted to practice in the United Kingdom in 1992 and then in Australia in 1993. From 1996 to 2002, Boss was a legal officer in the Australian Army. Appointed ACT Magistrate 2012



No smartphone to check in? No problem!



A new Check In CBR card is being introduced for those people who don't own a smartphone or are unable to download or use the Check In CBR app.

The card contains a unique QR code which can be scanned at all businesses and venues across the ACT that currently accept the Check In CBR app.

Checking in will be faster, easier and with private as there is no need for venue staff to manually enter a customer's details.

For more information on the Check In CBR card, visit the [ACT Government COVID-19 website](#).



SAVE THE DATE

Memorial Weekend for all HMAS Sydney warships, 19-21 November, 2021, Denham, WA.

Commemorating the 80th Anniversary sinking of HMAS Sydney II on 19 November 1941, and honouring personnel from all HMAS Sydney warships.

sydney2021@checkedevents.com.au

To all,

On behalf of my small team and I we are pleased to advise the HMAS Sydney II Memorial Weekend in Denham 19-21 Nov2021 is definitely ON. We have finally been successful in our last grant application to now provide the program we have been hoping for. A formal email will be sent out to everyone outlining the program details for the weekend next week.

My sincere apologies for the lack of information as we have had a good number of setbacks which has caused us considerable delays and decision making. Denham accommodation has 3 x Caravan Parks and a variety of single/shared accommodation options with November being part of the low season with up to 1500 beds available. Hope this helps.

Yours Aye

Adrian Burns (Radar)

Lead Contact and Liaison
HMAS SYDNEY II 80th Memorial Weekend
Denham 19-21 November 2021
Mob: 0406 359 477

Service pension for partners

Last updated:

20 September 2021

What is a partner service pension

The service pension provides a regular income to veterans and their partners. When paid to a veteran's partner, it is called a partner service pension.

You may be able to qualify as a current or former partner, or as a widow or widower.

A service pension is an income support payment, so your income and assets affect how much you can receive. If you are partnered, we assess your combined income and assets as a couple.

Who can get it

You may qualify for a partner service pension if you are the:

- current partner of a veteran who has [qualifying service](#)
- former partner of a veteran who has qualifying service
- widow or widower of a veteran who had qualifying service.

There are other requirements depending on your situation. The following sections contain more details about who is eligible.

Current partners

You may be eligible if the veteran you are partnered to either:

- receives a [service pension](#), or is eligible to receive one
- is registered as a member of the [Pension Bonus Scheme](#) (PBS)
- **Has [qualifying service](#) but is not yet eligible for a service pension, and you have reached [Age Pension age](#).**

Who counts as a partner

We consider you to be partnered if you and the veteran either:

- are legally married and live together
- live together in a de facto relationship
- remain a couple but have to live apart due to illness.

If we need to clarify whether or not you are partnered, we consider whether you:

- think of yourselves as a couple
- share financial and household responsibilities
- do social and leisure activities together
- appear as a couple to the general community.

We may consider you to be partnered if some or all

of those factors apply. Go to [Your relationship status](#) or more details.

Age requirements for current partners

To be eligible for a partner service pension you need to be at least 60, except in some situations.

You may be eligible from age 50 if your partner either:

- receives a [disability pension](#) under the [Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986](#) (VEA) at above the general rate (AGR)
- has at least 80 [impairment points](#) under the [Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004](#) (MRCA).

The following rates of VEA disability pension count as AGR:

- [extreme disablement adjustment](#) (EDA)
- [intermediate rate](#)
- [temporary special rate](#)
- [additional disability pension for specific disabilities](#).

You may be eligible for a partner service pension at any age if one of the following applies:

- you have a [dependent child](#) or children when you apply
- your partner receives a disability pension under the VEA at the [special rate](#) (TPI)
- your partner receives or is eligible to receive a [special rate disability pension](#) (SRDP) under the MRCA.

If none of the above categories apply to you, and your partner has qualifying service but is not yet eligible for a service pension, you need to be [Age Pension age](#).

Former partners

If you have been receiving a partner service pension and your relationship with the veteran ends, your service pension will usually continue for 12 months. There are some exceptions, depending on your circumstances.

You can remain eligible for service pension indefinitely if either:

- you reach [Age Pension age](#) within 12 months of your separation
- special domestic circumstances apply.

Special domestic circumstances apply if the veteran has a mental health condition, and you or your family were in an unsafe or abusive domestic relationship before your separation. If this may apply to you, [contact us](#).

If the above points do not apply, you will stop being eligible for partner service pension 12 months after the date of your separation.

(Continued on page 9)

Service pension for partners

(Continued from page 8)

If you enter a new relationship, you will stop being eligible for partner service pension immediately. The only exception is if you qualify as the current partner of a veteran in your new relationship. To keep receiving service pension, your combined income and assets as a couple would need to be below the cut-off limits.

If you weren't receiving a partner service pension at the time of your separation, you can apply for one as a former partner. The age requirements are the same as for current partners. This means your eligibility may depend on which payment or payments your former partner receives.

What to do if your relationship ends

If you become single, you need to let us know so we can pay you correctly. We will need to remove your partner's income and assets from your assessment. We will also need to change your pension to the single rate.

You may need to give us new bank account details to pay your pension into. If you have authorised your partner to communicate with us on your behalf, we can update your preferences to remove this authority.

For more information about how your relationship status affects your payments, visit Your relationship status.

Counselling and support

If you or someone else is in crisis and needs immediate help, please call:

- Triple zero (000) if you feel like you may hurt yourself or someone else
- Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling on 1800 011 046
- ADF Mental Health All-hours Support Line on 1800 628 036
- Lifeline Australia on 13 11 14
- 1800RESPECT, National Sexual Assault, Domestic and Family Violence Counselling Service on 1800 737 732.

Find more options at Receive urgent help and support.

In some situations, we may be able to pay you a crisis payment.

Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling is a free and confidential 24-hour service for current and ex-serving ADF members and their families. Call 1800 011 046 or visit their website to get support or find out more.

If you are no longer eligible for a partner service pension but need financial support, contact Services Australia to find out about Centrelink payments.

Legal and financial advice

For legal advice, you can contact Legal Aid in your state.

You can also contact legaladvice.com.au, an independent organisation.

A Financial Information Service is available through Services Australia to help you make informed decisions about your finances.

Widows and widowers

If you were receiving a partner service pension immediately before the veteran's death, you continue to be eligible regardless of your age.

If we grant you a war widow(er)'s pension, you will no longer be eligible for a service pension but you may receive an income support supplement instead.

If you were not receiving a partner service pension at the time of the veteran's death, you can apply for one as a widow or widower.

You may be eligible if the veteran either:

- was receiving, or was eligible to receive, a service pension
- was registered as a member of the Pension Bonus Scheme (PBS)
- had qualifying service, and you have reached Age Pension age
- had made a claim for service pension which would have been granted if they had not died.

If you enter a new relationship, you will stop being eligible for partner service pension immediately. The only exception is if you qualify as the current partner of a veteran in your new relationship. To keep receiving service pension, your combined income and assets as a couple would need to be below the cut-off limits.

Age requirements as a widow or widower

You may be eligible from age 60 if, before the veteran's death, you either:

- were receiving a social security pension
- had lodged a claim for partner service pension
- were registered as a member of the PBS.

If you currently have a dependent child, you can apply as a widowed partner at any age.

In all other circumstances, you need to have reached Age Pension age.

What to do if you become widowed

When someone receiving a service pension dies, we may pay a bereavement payment to their surviving partner or estate. In some situations, we may also help with the cost of a funeral. Visit Bereavement payments for more information.

It is important to notify us of the death as soon as possible, so we can make sure your payments are correct. A family member, friend, representative or funeral director can notify us.

(Continued on page 10)

Exchange strengthens regional partnerships

Cook Islands, Fiji and Singapore have become the first three nations to successfully complete the inaugural Sea Training Group – Defence Cooperation Program (STG-DCP) non-reciprocal exchange.

The exchange was established in 2018 primarily to support the introduction into service and training of the Guardian-class patrol boats as part of the Pacific Maritime Security Program (PMSP).

Beginning earlier this year, the three-month program at *HMAS Stirling* in Western Australia invited three partner nations from across the Indo-Pacific to send a participant to embed with the Australian STG-DCP team.

These members, alongside their Australian counterparts, will be responsible for training other participant Pacific nations.

The non-reciprocal exchange program supports Navy's mission to nurture and strengthen its alliances and regional partnerships.

It allows Australia to provide partner nations with opportunities to enhance their maritime skills and provide them with the knowledge and experience to be-

come sea trainers, taking the critical capability back to their respective countries.

Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu, Samoa, Tonga, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Palau, Kiribati and Vanuatu are among the nations which have already received the Guardian-class patrol boats under the PMSP.

Chief Petty Officer Timoci Tokaru, Republic of Fiji Navy, said it was an honour to be the first participant from Fiji in the program that would allow him to take valuable lessons back to his workplace.

"Throughout the program, I was involved in the delivery of training to the crews of Vanuatu's RVS *Takuare* and to Kiribati's RKS *Teanoai* II. It was very professionally rewarding and enabled me to refine my skills as an instructor and a mariner," CPO Tokaru said.

"I was also fortunate to be able to work side-by-side with sea trainers from Australia, Singapore and the Cook Islands."

The latest exchange rotation began this month with participants from Indonesia and Papua New Guinea

*By Sub Lieutenant Nancy Cotton
29 September 2021*

Service pension for partners

(Continued from page 9)

If you become widowed while receiving a partner service pension, your payments will change to the single rate.

Depending on the circumstances, we may automatically grant you a [war widow\(er\)'s pension](#) and replace your partner service pension with an [in-come support supplement](#). If this does not happen automatically and you believe the veteran's death was related to their service, you can apply for a war widow(er)'s pension. Go to [Pension for orphans and war widow\(er\)s](#) for details.

Our [Planning ahead kit](#) can help you and your family prepare for bereavement.

You can also contact [Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling](#) for support.

How to apply

You can apply for a partner service pension online through [MyService](#).

Using MyService means:

- it is simpler and faster to submit your claim
- you don't need to send us [proof of identity](#) documents
- we can access the information we need quickly
- there is no need to wait for documents through the post.

Find out how to [register for MyService](#). If you need help to register, call us on [1800 VETERAN](#) (1800 838 372). To access MyService, sign in to [MyGov](#).

If you prefer to use paper forms, [contact us](#) and we

can send you the ones you need. There may be different forms to complete depending on your circumstances.

You can download the following forms:

- [D0504 Claim for service pension by a partner, a former partner or widow or widower part A – eligibility](#)
- [D0648 Claim for service pension or income support supplement part B – income and assets](#)
- [D0503-4B About claiming service pension](#)

Go to [Forms](#) to find others you may need.

Get help with your claim

Many ex-service organisations have advocates who are trained to help you submit your claim. You can use the [Advocate Register](#) to find one near you.

You can also [contact us](#) if you have questions about applying.

Transferring from another payment

If you are receiving a Centrelink payment from [Services Australia](#) and become partnered to a veteran, you will need to notify Services Australia. If your partner receives a service pension, they will need to [notify us](#).

You may be eligible for a partner service pension, which would replace your Centrelink payment. Go to [Current partners](#) for details about who is eligible.

We will need information about your combined income and assets as a couple. This is regardless of whether you actually share your finances. Go to [Income and assets](#) for more information.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS38 for 2022

Action to renew membership for 2022 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 2022 is \$38.

1. **Direct transfer of funds to the NAA (ACT Section).** Using e-bank facilities, transfer funds to Naval Association of Australia –ACT Section Account **BSB: 633 000 . Account Number 162 834 097 Please ensure you have identified yourself as the payer in order that the Treasurer can correctly credit your payment.**
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. I saw a long queue waiting at it door on TV news last week so I think that it is back in business.

21 Oct	Fish 'n Chips CYC 1200
4 Nov	Lunch Eastlakes Gungahlin 1200
18 Nov	Fish 'n Chips CYC 1200
2 Dec	Christmas /New Year Lunch
	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club 1200
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 epartment 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

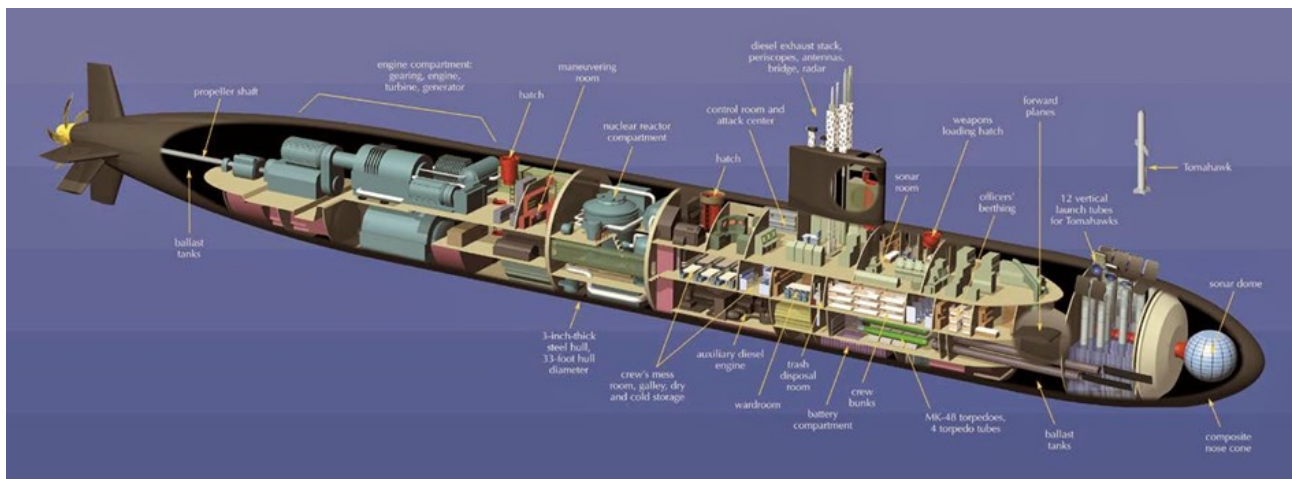
For information about claims for payment visit:
www.dva.gov.au/providers/how-claim



HAPPY BIRTHDAY

**A Happy Birthday to you in
October 2021**

- 5 Robert Drew
- 6 David Bowditch
- 10 Carl Hyauiason
- 28 Irish Vickers
- 30 Ross Smith



US Vigilant Submarine Block V build

Complement 135 (15 officers 120 sailors)
 Armament: VPM module 28 Tomahawk BGM-109), 12 VLS Tomahawk BGM tubes, 4 x 533mm Torpedo tubes (Mk 48 torpedo) UGM 84 Harpoon, 65 in total torpedoes and missiles



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

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