



National Bosun's Call

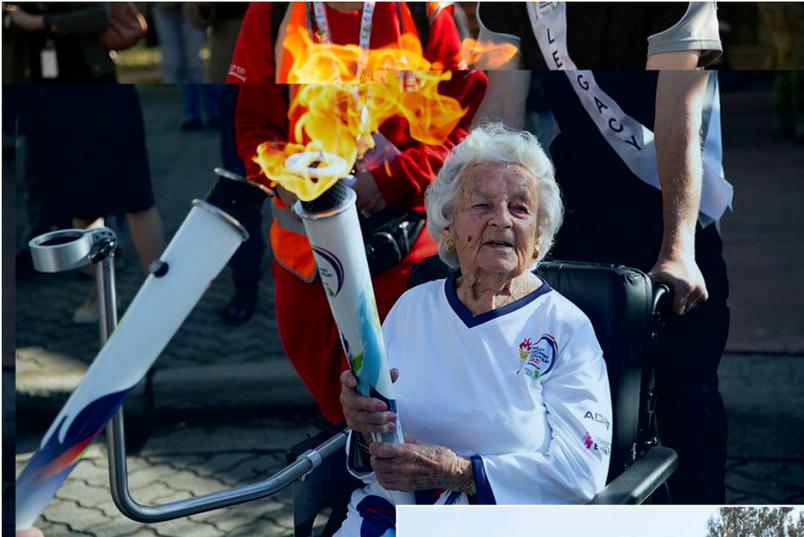


Vol 5 No 9

Once Navy, Always Navy

October 2023

Legacy flame passes through ACT and Victoria



NAA Member, 103 year old Merle Hare at Legacy House lighting the flame before commencing her leg during the 2023 Legacy Centenary Torch Relay in Canberra.
Photo Nicole Mankowski



Commodore Jim Dickson AM, MBE, RAN Rtd, assisted by Private Elise Scott from the 5th/6th Battalion, Royal Victoria Regiment, at the conclusion of the Mornington Peninsula leg of the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay.

Photo: LSIS James McDougall

1 September 2023

Defence supported Legacy during the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay which celebrated the 'Centenary of the Legacy Promise', 100 years of looking after families of those who have served.

Legacy provides support to the families of serving and former serving personnel who have died or been injured as a result of their service. Legacy supports around 40,000 beneficiaries including wid-

ows, widowers, children and dependents with a disability. A ceremony at the Australian War Memorial launched the event, at the start of Legacy Week, with a ribbon being cut to start the Canberra leg of the relay, which involved 54 torch bearers. They worked together hand in hand to complete the walk, which passed through Canberra's iconic sites including Parliament House and Government House.

By Corporal Luke Bellman



Advocacy—Regional Support Groups

Last updated: 7 August 2023

The Advocacy Training and Development Program (ATDP) regional management structure consists of 3 Regional Support Groups (RSGs). The RSGs are led by Regional Managers and facilitate communication between the volunteer advocate community and DVA.

Responsibilities

The RSGs are responsible for supporting the planning and delivery of training across their region based on the nationally consistent curriculum.

Areas covered by each region

The three regions established under the ATDP are:

- Region 1 — Queensland and the Northern Territory
- Region 2 — New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory and Western Australia
- Region 3 — Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia.

Regional Managers and Program Support Officers

ATDP Regional Managers and Support Officer					
Region	Regional Manager		Program Support Officers		
	Name	Email	Name	Email	Phone
Region 1	Bob Grandin	rm1@atdp.org.au	William Pham-Huynh	ATDP.PSO1@dva.gov.au	0472 704 592
Region 2	Geoff Harrison	rm2@atdp.org.au	Samone Mason	ATDP.PSO2@dva.gov.au	0472 674 665
Region 3	Roger Greene	rm3@atdp.org.au	Phil Boys	ATDP.PSO3@dva.gov.au	0472 704 948

Members; Each RSG contains members of the local veteran community, and who have experience and skills in the provision of advocacy service and/or advocacy training

Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide Hearing Block 12 - Sydney has been delayed

Due to operational requirements, the Royal Commission will now hold its 12th public hearing block in early 2024. The hearings will still be held in Sydney, but will no longer take place in November 2023. We understand this will be frustrating and inconvenient for those who planned to attend Hearing Block 12, and we appreciate your understanding. More information will be shared through this newsletter, via social media and on the [Royal Commission's website](#) in due course.



Dr Peggy Brown AO



Nick Kaldas, Chair



The Hon. James Douglas KC

The Naval Association of Australia Inc

ABN 56 653 989 978

221 Centenary Avenue
MELTON VICTORIA 3337

Editor: Peter Cooke-Russell Contact peter.cookerussell@gmail.com

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



Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide

8 September 2023

The Chair of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide says he fears the Defence hierarchy is waiting for the inquiry to end so they can go back to business as usual.

The Royal Commission has today concluded its 11th public hearing in Melbourne, where it's heard further evidence about cultural and systemic issues within the Australian Defence Force and Departments of Defence and Veterans' Affairs.

In his closing statement, Commissioner Nick Kaldas warned the problems will never be fixed if leadership does not accept they exist.

"We still have not identified any strong evidence to suggest that Defence is prioritising the mental health and wellbeing of its people in a sustainable way," Commissioner Kaldas said.

"Nor does it seem to be responding adequately to the pressing issue of suicide and suicidality in its ranks with any sense of urgency."

"We Commissioners fear the Defence hierarchy is simply waiting for this inquiry to end so that it can

go back to business as usual. We hope that's not the case," he told the hearing.

The two-week hearing focused on the experience of ADF personnel transitioning to civilian life; cultural problems within Defence and how the hierarchy manages complaints relating to unacceptable behaviour; the lack of support from Defence and DVA for veterans and their families; and the military justice system in the ADF and how that is monitored.

The Royal Commission heard evidence from a former medical advisor within DVA who painted a bleak picture of the Department – highlighting poor leadership, a culture of blame and lack of interest in innovation.

"[R]egardless of the good work the DVA has been doing recently to clear the backlog of claims – its outdated systems and processes, as well as its adversarial approach to those it is supposed to be supporting, seem to be designed to limit access to entitlements. This must change," Mr Kaldas said.

The Royal Commission will next sit in Sydney from Monday 20 November 2023. Its final report is due to be delivered by no later than 17 June next year.

Address by Commissioner Nick Kaldas APM (Chair) National Press Club, Canberra

Conclusion to National Press Club address

13 September

Let's be clear: This Royal Commission does not seek to undermine our Defence capability.

We seek to help build a more resilient, stronger and better ADF, with a psychologically-safe workplace to meet Australia's future Defence challenges.

Operationally, when we first commenced this inquiry, we did not expect to be stymied and stonewalled along the way.

We have faced significant delays in the provision of vital data and information sought from Defence, as well as other challenges such as cabinet-in-confidence, public interest immunity and parliamentary privilege – and the need to sensitively gather evidence without impacting issues of national security.

This Royal Commission is responding to a national crisis, decades in the making.

Despite the Government establishing a Royal Commission – and the legislature wanting certain issues investigated – obtaining critical in-

formation from Commonwealth bodies in a timely manner has been difficult.

Our success will require Government and its agencies – including the ADF, Defence and DVA – to, once and for all, get on board and act.

The stark reality is that despite 57 previous inquiries over the last 20 to 30 years examining the risk factors for suicide in our military community – and almost 770 recommendations arising from those inquiries – very little has changed.

People are still dying to this day!

We urge the Prime Minister, relevant ministers and the leadership of Defence and DVA to see this Royal Commission as an opportunity to drive the long overdue change that is required to ensure our brave men and women in uniform – and their families – have the support they need and deserve.

It's important to recognise that there will be no quick fix to these issues – and real, long-lasting and meaningful reforms will take some time.

And the focus on these issues must not end with the work of this Royal Commission.

(Continued on page 4)



Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide

(Continued from page 3)

Accordingly, we Commissioners believe an enduring, powerful, independent body is necessary to hold Government, the ADF, Defence, DVA and other relevant agencies, as well as State and Territory governments, to account – to make sure that they prioritise the major, long-term, complex reforms that are needed.

This body must not only be independent, it must have the confidence of serving and ex-serving ADF members, and seek direct and significant input from them.

It must be an 'oversight' body: but not one that usurps the leadership of the DVA or ADF, nor one that absolves that leadership of its primary responsibility for veterans' wellbeing.

And it must have sufficient powers to deal with the issues it faces.

We will release a report on this entity in the coming months and consult further with key stakeholders before finalising a recommendation to Government.

Bipartisan commitment will be required to ensure mistakes from the past do not continue.

We expect strong, decisive leadership from both sides of politics, as well as crossbench MPs and senators, to ensure the final recommendations of this Royal Commission are implemented – and that the ADF, Defence and DVA are forevermore held to account, so that the wellbeing of past and pre-

sent members, and their families, remains the focus going forward.

It is not enough to support and reflect on the sacrifice of our veterans only on days of commemoration and remembrance.

The theme of Suicide Prevention Week this year is 'We all have a role to play'. And nothing could be truer in relation to Defence and veteran suicide.

We all have a role to play in holding Government to account when it comes to ensuring the mental health and wellbeing of those who risk their lives each day in the service of our country.

Voters and the media must maintain interest and demand action. That has been lacking.

Every one of us has an important role to play in protecting those who protect us.

Australia has let down its veterans for far too long.

This Royal Commission must be a call to action – no longer can we allow the preventable deaths of our finest to be ignored.

Thank you.

Complete text available at

[https://
defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au/
news-and-media/media-releases/](https://defenceveteransuicide.royalcommission.gov.au/news-and-media/media-releases/)

15 September 2023—RC Statement

The Royal Commission's focus on hearing from people with lived experience of suicide or suicidality in the military will be greatly supported by the introduction of a new bill to Federal Parliament on 7 September 2023.

The Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide received more than 1000 eligible applications for private sessions prior to the closing date on 28 April 2023. Commissioners have already conducted 535 sessions with people who have lived experience of suicide and suicidality in the Australian Defence Force.

There are some 400 sessions still to be undertaken between now and June 2024, when the Royal Commission's final report is due to be handed to Government.

Current laws mean only a Royal Commissioner can conduct a confidential one-on-one meeting with a person with lived experience.

"We Commissioners are undertaking as many sessions as possible, both in person and virtually;

however, to get through the large number of outstanding private sessions in the time we have left, we must appoint an Assistant Commissioner to help us," Commissioner Kaldas said.

The new legislation will allow for the appointment of an Assistant Commissioner with the appropriate skills, experience and gravitas required to undertake private sessions alongside the three existing Commissioners over the next nine months.

"We know how important these sessions are to veterans and their families, and the catharsis and validation they bring to so many people impacted by suicide and suicidality.

"We want to continue to give them the time and attention they deserve and the addition of an Assistant Commissioner will ensure that."

"We thank the Defence and veteran community for their ongoing support of the Royal Commission's inquiry, as we work towards delivering our final report," he said.

For more information on the [Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide](#) visit the website or for support contact 1800 329 095.

Legacy flame passes through Canberra and Victoria



Above: His Excellency, General the Honourable David Hurley AC, DSC (Retd), Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia, 103 year old participant Merle Hare and Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley at Government House in Canberra after the Canberra leg of the Legacy Centenary Torch Relay.

Below: Legacy torch bearer Maureen Barrett with torch bearer James Morrice (Jo Marris, retired Captain RAN) after passing the flame at Government House in Canberra for the Canberra leg of the the Legacy Centenary

Photos: Nicole Mankowski

A ceremony at the Australian War Memorial launched the event, at the start of Legacy Week.

The cutting of a ribbon started the Canberra leg of the relay, which involved 54 torchbearers.

They worked hand-in-hand to complete the walk, which passed through Canberra's iconic sites including Parliament House.

The Canberra leg of the relay finished at Government House, where the last bearer was escorted to light the cauldron.

The Legacy Centenary Torch Relay 2023 has been on a six-month journey that started in Pozieres France, through London then around Australia.

The torch will travel more than 50,000km, through 100 locations, carried by more than 1000 torchbearers.

The relay will continue on through 12 locations in Victoria, three in Tasmania then its final two in Mel-



bourne, the last location being the Shrine of Remembrance on October 13.

Legacy helps families of deceased personnel and seriously injured veterans.

It provides financial assistance, social connection services and developmental opportunities.

By Corporal Luke Bellman



26 September 2023

The ships company of HMAS Cerberus gather on the sports oval to commemorate the 100th year Legacy Centenary Torch Relay.

Photo CPOCIS Gary Swanton

DVA—Our commitment to you

Last updated:

22 September 2023

This page provides information about what you can expect from DVA when you submit a compensation claim.

On this page

[Communication Standards](#)

[Feedback](#)

DVA is committed to provide a responsive, quality service that will enable you to make your own decisions about what matters to you and your family.

You can expect us to:

- be courteous, considerate and respectful
- listen to you
- respect and protect your privacy
- be fair and ethical in our dealings
- deliver our services in a timely and prompt manner
- inform you of any delays in processing your matters
- provide accurate, clear and consistent information
- keep you fully informed of your rights and entitlements
- recognise that you have varying and changing needs
- develop and equip our staff so they can provide you with quality service

DVA has people working under flexible arrangements across many Australian locations, you can expect to receive the same level of service no matter where we are working from.

Communication Standards

We recognise that regular communication can alleviate uncertainty throughout the claims process and help to improve your DVA experience.

Contact with you throughout the compensation claims process may be conducted through SMS, email, letter or telephone call. If you have a preferred method of contact please be sure to inform us.

If you have nominated a representative to act on your behalf during the claims process and you have not received communication from the Department, you should also check with your representative.

Please notify us if your experience is not as described through [Feedback | Department of Veterans' Affairs \(dva.gov.au\)](#) and we will investigate the matter on your behalf.

Here is our service guarantee to you:

- We will **acknowledge receipt of your claim** within **5 business days**.

- We will **return your calls** within **2 business days**.
- We will **respond to your emails** within **5 business days**.
- We will **contact you every 30 days** while your initial liability **claim is waiting to be allocated** for processing and to link you in with relevant supports.
- We will **call you** within **14 days of your claim being allocated for processing** to inform you of next steps and to request additional information if required.
- We will **contact you every 30 days** to provide you with **progress updates** on your claim.
- We will **call you** to advise that a **determination is about to be made**, the likely outcome and the reasons for decision.
- We will **call you** to conduct a **Needs Assessment**, after we accept liability, to determine any benefits and services available to you.

We will provide you with information on how you can contact us, including a telephone number

(Continued on page 7)

Communication Standards

We will:	
At all times	 respond within 2 days*  respond within 5 days*
You submit your claims	 acknowledge within 5 days*
When your claim is registered	 update every 30 days
We assign your claim to a delegate	 contact within 14 days of allocation  update every 30 days
We make a decision on your claim	 contact prior to determination  provide written determination letter

*business days

Energy rebate to provide bill relief

31 August 2023

The Commonwealth, state and territory governments are working together to provide targeted and temporary electricity bill relief to eligible households.

You can get bill relief if you are the primary electricity account holder or, for some energy providers, another named account holder on your electricity account. You must also hold a Pensioner Concession Card, a Commonwealth Seniors Health Card or a Veteran Gold Card.

Your household can only get one bill relief rebate, even if there is more than one eligible person living there. You can only get this bill relief for your principal place of residence. How much you get depends on where you live, with between \$175 and \$500 available to targeted households and \$325 to \$650 available to small businesses.

If you are eligible, are not named on the bill and you pay for electricity, contact your electricity provider to discuss your options.

If you live in Queensland or Western Australia, you do not need to take any action because these state governments are including this energy bill relief in their state rebate programs, which are being given to all households.

If you currently receive energy concessions, in most cases the electricity provider will automatically

apply the bill relief to your electricity account and you do not need to do anything.

This will reduce the amount you owe on your next bill. How and when this happens depends on where you live as each state and territory may do things a little differently.

If you don't receive energy concessions, please go to energy.gov.au/bill-relief to find a link to your state or territory with instructions about what to do. This could be to contact your energy provider or your state/territory government with your concession card type and the DVA file number on it. Give them consent to check your card online for payment of the rebate.

If you get your electricity from your strata or landlord in a caravan park, apartment building, retirement home or village and your household is eligible for the bill relief, you will not automatically receive the rebate. However, you will be able to access a direct payment through your state or territory government.

Please check energy.gov.au/bill-relief for the latest information.

DVA - Our commitment to you

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and email address, when we contact you. Throughout the claims process we may contact you to check if your circumstances have changed, but you are encouraged to contact us at any time your circumstances change or you require support through the claims process, on [1800 VETERAN \(1800 838 372\)](tel:1800838372) or Open Arms on [1800 011 046](tel:1800011046)

The [Compensation Claims Communication Standards Policy](#) provides a further information about the frequency and mode of contact you can expect from us during the claim process. The Policy provides further details regarding the communication touchpoints during the compensation claims process. We encourage you to familiarise yourself with the policy and to notify us if this is not your experience through [Feedback | Department of Veterans' Affairs \(dva.gov.au\)](#), so that we can investigate the matter on your behalf.

Feedback

We welcome your comments on any aspect of our service, you can lodge feedback via the DVA website: [Feedback | Department of Veterans' Affairs \(dva.gov.au\)](#)

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL \$40 for 2024

Action to renew membership for 2024 can now undertaken in a number of different ways.

The use of e-banking provides for ease of payment and your bank records act as your receipt.

The annual subscription for 2024 is \$40

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

Deep down you know it makes sense - Australia's submarine pedigree: History, why submarines, why nuclear powered?

By Commodore Bob Trotter OAM RAN (Rtd) © 2023

"The year 1866 was signalised by a remarkable incident, a mysterious and puzzling phenomenon, which doubtless no one has yet forgotten. Not to mention rumours which agitated the maritime population and excited the public mind, even in the interior of continents, seafaring men were particularly excited. Merchants, common sailors, captains of vessels, skippers, both of Europe and America, naval officers of all countries, and the Governments of several States on the two continents, were deeply interested in the matter. For some time past vessels had been met by 'an enormous thing,' a long object, spindle-shaped, occasionally phosphorescent, and infinitely larger and more rapid in its movements than a whale.

Upon this imaginary creature rested the responsibility of all these shipwrecks, which unfortunately were considerable; for of three thousand ships whose loss was annually recorded at Lloyd's, the number of sailing and steam-ships supposed to be totally lost, from the absence of all news, amounted to not less than two hundred!

Now, it was the 'monster' who, justly or unjustly, was accused of their disappearance, and, thanks to it, communication between the different continents became more and more dangerous. The public demanded sharply that the seas should at any price be relieved from this formidable cetacean."

Today, this threat from the deep described by the French novelist Jules Verne in the prophetic words of his 1870 novel *20,000 Leagues Under the Sea* is as real now as when it horrified 19th Century readers. Ever since then, Navies of the world began serious experimental work on underwater craft. For instance, a French submarine, *Gymnote*, one of the first all-electric submarines and the first functional submarine equipped with torpedoes was launched in 1888.

Now, most middle-power and above Navies have established pedigrees as operators of a Submarine Force, some finer than others. Australia's Submarine Force has an impeccable pedigree established over more than a century; its submarines are commanded by highly professional officers supported by crews of the best submariners in any navy; its Force is supported by a world class industry and scientific organisation. Australian-built Collins Class diesel-electric submarines continue to achieve great results.

Whilst the Royal Australian Navy is very much younger than many of those of the major powers, its submarine history is almost as long and as enduring.

Australia was a very early entrant to the business of submarine ownership. It started in 1907 when

Prime Minister Alfred Deakin became convinced of the value of submarines by Britain and subsequently selected AE1 and AE2 submarines in what might have been a courageous act for a country of less than 6 million people. Australian Government efforts to maintain its submarine capability during the first 50 years were intermittent and difficult, but it never quite gave up.

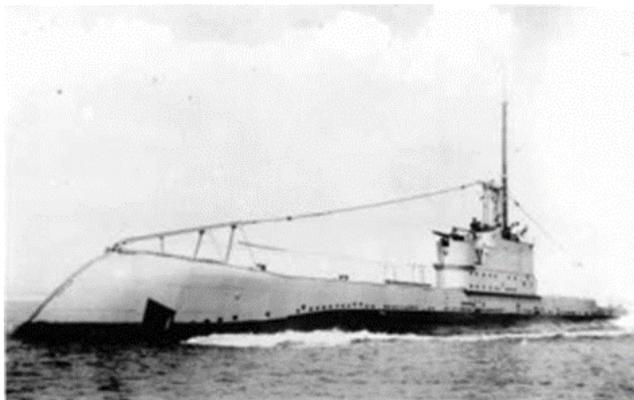
On 24th May 1914 His Majesty's Australian Submarines AE1 and AE2 entered Sydney Harbour for the first time, having completed the longest ocean passage ever taken by any submarine — sailing from Barrow-in-Furness in the United Kingdom. In their very short lives they exerted significant and very long-lasting influence out of proportion for their size (800 tonnes dived) and numbers in their crew (35). AE1 and her entire crew were to be Australia's first casualty in World War I while AE2 was the first submarine to penetrate the Dardanelles during the Gallipoli Campaign, entering the Sea of Marmara and showing the way for other Allied submarines to attack Turkish supplies from the rear.



Very few Australians know the stories of AE1 and AE2. Nor would they know about the 'Peace Boats', six Australian J Class boats (1919-1926), nor the two Odin Class boats HMAS *Oxley* and *Otway* (1927-1931). Even fewer know that the operations of US, British and Netherlands submarines based in Brisbane and Fremantle played a major role in the defence of Australia from 1942 to 1945. Only a handful of people know that Fremantle was the second largest submarine base in the World,

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Deep down you know it makes sense - Australia's submarine pedigree: History, why submarines, why nuclear powered?



HMAS Oxley (I)

(Continued from page 8)

and that the 160 or so submarines operating from North Wharf conducted the most successful and cost-effective operation in the history of submarine warfare by denying Japan's access to fuel and other key supplies.

Australia's Modern Submarine Force

On the 18th August 1967, the first of six Oberon Class submarines of the Australian Submarine Squadron, HMAS *Oxley*, surfaced between Sydney's North and South Heads into the eyes of Australia via all the national television networks, for the Commissioning of her new home, the newly established submarine support base HMAS *Platypus*. *Oxley's* arrival alongside *Platypus* heralded the start of Australia's modern submarine force.

Australian Capability

After serving as Chief of Naval Staff 1937-41, Admiral Sir Ragnar Colvin KBE CB RN, summed up the Australian naval character as being

"... never mere copyists. They assimilated the knowledge and traditions of the older service, but blended with it something peculiar to themselves and the result was unmistakable and unmistakably good."

So, this was the case with the Aussie Submariner from the very beginning of the modern Australian submarine force fifty years ago. They had operated, maintained and modernised Australian Oberons subtly better than in their parent navy, in their view rather wonderfully so! They went on to develop knowledge and skills that

HMAS Oxley (II) arrives in Sydney after her delivery voyage from the UK, 18 August 1967

Painting and photos; RAN

proved Colvin's words again and again. Delivering the Weapons update of the 1980s – their own work that created the most effective conventional submarine of the day – was just one example.

HMAS *Platypus* motto sums up the Submariner, "Nothing Too Difficult".

The Australian Oberons developed an impressive reputation for very long-range intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance operations. Australia's Oberon update program during the 1980s also established a very clever technology capability in Australian industry when high-end capabilities were successfully introduced despite doubts expressed from within the UK, the Oberon's 'parent' navy.

They moved up a step when the O-Boat Force and industry were instrumental in creating what became the highly effective, Australian-built Collins Class of the 1990s and beyond.

Despite early challenges for the Collins Class submarines, they regularly surpass world class standards of performance while operating in the most demanding environment ever required of conventionally powered submarines.

What will the future look like?

The highly complex strategic situation now before us, especially in Indo-Pacific, has been studied by our best analysts with access to the latest intelligence. Their advice is clear and the Australian government has rightly acted on it by deciding that our replacement the Collins Class needs to be a fleet of nuclear-powered submarines (SSNs).

Why is that so?

It seems that many correspondents question why we need submarines. So, without wishing to make a meal of it, the following is an answer to the "Why Submarines" question before answering the next questions, "Why nuclear-powered?"

It's assumed that no-one is denying that Australia needs defending; indeed, that is a fundamental re-

(Continued on page 10)



Deep down you know it makes sense - Australia's submarine pedigree: History, why submarines, why nuclear powered?



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sponsibility of any Government whatever the strategic environment might be. In Australia's case that must be to maintain a Defence Force capable of defending a huge land mass in a region situated in two huge oceans and in a period of enduring and great strategic uncertainty. We are an island maritime nation that relies entirely on the use of those seas for our wellbeing.

It's important to stress that, presently, there is no known or forecast recipe for a technological smorgasbord that will defeat the cloak of invisibility provided to the submarine by the world's oceans.

Submarines are the ultimate stealth platform, able to operate without fuss in areas where sea and air control is not assured and to gain access to areas denied to others. Large submarines operate at long range for weeks. Their menu of capabilities is extensive:- they can carry a flexible payload of sensors, weapons and specialist personnel; simultaneously observe activities under water, on the surface, in the air and over the electromagnetic spectrum in areas denied to other eyes and ears including satellites; deliver the most

HMAS Oxley (II) in Sydney Harbour. Note the rounded Sonar dome forward, which was distinctive to post SWUP Oberons

potent antisubmarine capability; covertly position precision land attack missiles; protect surface naval operations; covertly launch and recover special forces; and, lay sophisticated, precision mines to deny access to selected facilities and areas.

In situations short of conflict, submarines can covertly provide unique indications of another's long term intentions, facilitating counter measures via diplomacy and force preparation that will hopefully avoid an escalation to conflict.

To exploit the initiative gained from their stealth, Australia's submarines must be able to covertly reach sensitive areas throughout our region with

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Collins Class Submarine operating out of Fleet Base West



Deep down you know it makes sense - Australia's submarine pedigree: History, why submarines, why nuclear powered?

(Continued from page 10)

enough mobility, range, payload and adequate habitability for crew during the long duration missions involved, frequently in hot tropical waters.

A very capable Australian submarine force creates great uncertainty to any potential foe and countering submarines is difficult, very expensive and cannot be guaranteed. Its deterrent effect is therefore its greatest value to an effective defence. They are an excellent insurance policy.

Why a nuclear-powered submarine (SSN) rather than diesel electric (SSK)?

The existing Collins Class diesel-electric submarines commenced service in 1996. They continue to provide excellent operational service but their safe hull life requires that they will need to start to be replaced within the next couple of decades.

A modern SSK is highly capable, but it has two limiting features which affect its strategic flexibility and its tactical operations when deployed. First, it needs to recharge its battery regularly during transit and once in its operational area. It does this by snorkelling, (sucking air into the submarine through a tube raised just above the sea surface and known as "snorting" by submariners) and which entails charging the battery at periscope depth with the diesel generators – a noisy period and a risky one when in hostile waters. The other need to snort is to refresh the air in the submarine to maintain breathable oxygen levels and to remove noxious gases such as carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, hydrogen and others.

Every SSK commander constantly considers the battery percentage, always knows how far the boat can run if it has to evade, and takes every opportunity to 'snort'. The design and build philosophy for the SSK focuses on the need for everything to have as low a power consumption as possible to maximise battery endurance.

Even modern SSKs are much slower than an SSN and have limited range at maximum speed when on battery power alone. They cannot quickly relocate to another area should the tactical situation change while deployed.

The SSN, on the other hand, is propelled by a steam turbine using steam from water heated by the

reactor. It has twice the speed of an SSK and is completely independent of the ocean surface throughout any deployment. It has virtually unlimited power so decisions can be made with less regard to energy efficiency. For example, it can produce its own oxygen from water, removed carbon dioxide, power sophisticated self-noise reduction, powerful digital combat systems and many other power-hungry equipment.

The SSN has endless endurance and a turn of speed that generates a vast search area that stretches even the best anti-submarine forces. Relieved of the constraints of a battery and the need to 'snort' every few days, the command team of an SSN is free to focus on pushing things to the limit, and it is this approach that adds enormous leverage to the SSN's inherent capabilities.

Modern SSNs never require refuelling. So, as the reactor module for new builds will be provided to Australia already fuelled, there will not be a need for a nuclear fuel handling industry in Australia.

Deep down we know it makes sense.

Submarine DNA is now firmly in that of the Navy, industry and the nation.

So, Australia has had good cause to be proud of its robust pedigree of submarine operations and industrial capability and, it is well placed for success with the next generation of Australian nuclear-powered submarines which will establish the submarine capability for the next 100 years.

Bob Trotter OAM

August 2023

Steam Submarines 4ever

Note; Painting and photographs are not a part of the original manuscript

*Virginia Cklass submarine
Likely successor to the Collins Class*



HMAS Perth in WA



The RAN hosted the crew of INS Vagir during a visit to Fleet Base West, Western Australia in August 2023. The visit marked the first time an Indian Navy submarine had visited Australia and included maritime exercises off the coast of Western Australia involving RAN and RAAF personnel and assets. A harbour phase provided opportunities for professional development, sporting activities and face-to-face engagement between military personnel from India and Australia

Above: (Front to back) INS Vagir, HMAS Rankin and HMAS Perth conduct a manoeuvre exercise in the WA Exercise Area during the Indian Submarine INS Vagir visit to Fleet Base West

Below: The Governor of Western Australia, His Excellency the Honourable Christopher John Dawson, AC, APM, presents the 2022 Duke of Gloucester Cup to former Commanding Officer of HMAS Perth, Commander Anthony Nagle, CSC, RAN who accepted the award on behalf of the HMAS Perth ship's company

Photos: Defence



Indo-Pacific Endeavour 2023



HMAS Anzac returned to her homeport of Fleet Base West, Western Australia on Monday 11 September 2023 after departing in mid-April 2023.

The ship's company conducted a successful regional presence deployment in Southeast and Northeast Asia as well as supporting



Indo-Pacific Endeavour 2023 in Indonesia and the Philippines. Regional presence deployments play a vital role in Australia's long-term security and prosperity by protecting Australia's interests, preserving a rules-based order, enhancing cooperation and relationships with regional partners and allies, and developing capability and interoperability

Above; Commanding Officer HMAS Anzac Commander Barton Harrington, RAN with his son, Louis, on Parkes wharf at Fleet Base West upon the completion of the ship's regional presence deployment 2023.



Left: Chief Petty Officer Marine Technician Mark Powell with his granddaughter, Hayley

Photos: ABIS Rikki-Lea Phillips

HMAS *Stirling* exercises it Freedom of Entry into the City of Rockingham



Left: Chief Petty Officer Jenene Bentley (centre) carries the Freedom of Entry Scroll as HMAS Stirling conduct a Freedom of Entry Parade through the streets of Rockingham, Western Australia.

Photos: [ABIS Rikki-Lea Phillips](#)



Right: HMAS Stirling ship's company formed up at Churchill Park prior to conducting the Freedom of Entry parade through Rockingham, Western Australia

13 September 2023

First granted on November 12, 1988, in conjunction with the celebration of Rockingham becoming a city, the parade and spectacle 35 years on from the initial ceremony was inspiring.

The Navy Band's timeless beat kicked things off before, in keeping with tradition, City Marshall Senior Sergeant Ian Francis, from Western Australia Police, halted the parade at the crossroads of Flinders Lane.

Chief Petty Officer Naval Police Coxswain Jenene Bentley was the scroll bearer and brought forward the signed entry manuscript.

With the authority of the mayor, councillors and citizens of Rockingham, *Stirling* was permitted to pass.

Commanding Officer *Stirling* Captain Ken Burleigh said the occasion showed the bond and trust between the Rockingham and *Stirling*.

"To receive this accolade is an honour, to share this with families and friends today makes it remarkable. *Stirling* continues to grow and, with it, a stronger community. We build our stability, renew our commitment and dedication to the City of

Rockingham and all those here today," Captain Burleigh said.

Locals enjoyed wandering around stalls as the day led into a Defence-themed community festival.

There were demonstrations, live music and competitions, with stallholders including Clearance Dive Team Four, Navy Medics, Navy Cadets, Reserve Support, Defence Member Family Support, Legacy and Buddy Up.

The WA Police's mounted guards brought up the rear and the parade concluded in front of the war memorial.

Mayor of Rockingham Deb Hamlin said the city was proud to hold longstanding ties with Defence, and in particular the Navy.

"Thousands of current and former service personnel call our city home, and today's freedom-of-entry parade will be a powerful gesture that honours the relationship we've developed over many years," Councillor Hamlin said.

During medieval times, citizens would only allow armed troops to enter their walled cities if they were certain the troops would not attack. Granting freedom of entry is still seen as the highest accolade a city can bestow upon a group.

The sixth Invictus Games 9-16 September 2023, in Dusseldorf Germany



Anti clockwise from top:
Australian Invictus Games 2023 team family and friends;
Jamie McGlinchie (Navy) throws a shotput during the shotput finals;
Erin Brigden (Army) and Laura Reynell (Navy) celebrate winning gold and bronze respectively in the women's IR6 one-minute sprint indoor rowing;
Karney Armstrong (Navy) with her gold medal the wheelchair 100 meter final
Cooper Blackwood (Navy) kicks off to start the 50 metre backstroke final to win silver

Photos: CPOIS Andrew Dakin



The Invictus Games is an international adaptive sporting event for serving and former serving military personnel who have been wounded, injured or become ill during their military service. Up to five hundred competitors from 21 nations competed in 10 adaptive sports. Prince Harry, The Duke of Sussex is the Patron of the Invictus Games. The games use the healing power of sport to inspire recovery, support rehabilitation and celebrate the crucial role played by family and friends



Indo-Pacific Endeavour 2023



Japanese Ships Izumo and Samadarie, followed by HMAS Anzac, astern of HMAS Canberra during Indo-Pacific Endeavour 2023. (Manoeuvring distance appears to be a little sub-standard. Ed)

Photo: CPL Robert Whitmore

Indo-Pacific Endeavour (IPE) is Australia's flagship regional engagement activity, supporting the Australian Government's commitment to investing in our regional diplomatic and defence partnerships.

IPE23 will conduct activities across Southeast Asia and the Northeast Indian Ocean, reinforcing Australia's commitment to a peaceful, secure and prosperous region.

The Australian Defence Force will visit 14 countries from 30 June to the end October 2023, with Defence personnel participating in military activities and engagement covering issues such as maritime law, Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR), and Gender, Peace and Security (GPS).

In collaboration with the host nations, personnel will participate in military exercises, workshops, training, sporting events and cultural activities.

IPE provides a practical demonstration of Australia's commitment to building effective security partnerships in our near region. Ships from the Royal Australian Navy, Army detachments and Royal Australian Air Force aircraft, will also contribute to exercises and engagement activities, allowing for information sharing and training opportunities

Right: HMAS Toowoomba (bottom) and Indian Navy INS Sahyadri conduct OOW manoeuvres during a cooperative activity in the Timor Sea.

Photo: LSIS Earnesto Sanchez



Australian War Memorial's Napier Waller Art Prize opens

The Australian War Memorial's 2024 Napier Waller Art Prize is now open for submissions from current and former Australian Defence Force personnel.

Entrants can submit any original work in any visual art medium, with the winner to receive a \$15,000 cash prize.

The winning work will be displayed alongside highly commended works at Parliament House in May 2024, and will be accepted into the Memorial's National Collection.

Memorial Director Matt Anderson said the prize aims to promote artistic excellence while recording experiences of service.

'This prize displays the artistic endeavour, personal experiences and sheer talent of our service personnel,' he said.

Head of Art at the Memorial, Laura Webster, said: 'We are inviting entrants to contribute a contemporary view of their diverse experiences. The prize entries display the creativity and diversity of the Australian Defence Force.'

Last year, Mrs Anneke Jamieson won the 2022 Napier Waller Art Prize with her portrait, 'The Promotion', a painting featuring a uniformed service-woman breastfeeding her baby.

Mrs Jamieson, a mother of three, took inspiration from her own experiences when creating the work.

I dedicate her to the mothers that serve; to their sacrifices and conflicted hearts and to the families who support them,' Mrs Jamieson said in her artist statement.

Mrs Jamieson took first prize and the People's Choice Award. The portrait is now part of the Memorial's National Collection.

'Winning this prize means opening a door to the next chapter of my life,' she said.

Mrs Jamieson said the art prize provides a platform for current and ex-service personnel to tell their vitally important stories, and a 'means for us to process and validate our story and be seen and heard'

Finalists' works will also be displayed on the Australian War Memorial's website. The general public can vote in the People's Choice Award, the winner of which will receive \$5,000.

Entries are accepted from Friday 8 September and close on Sunday 17 December 2023.

Each entrant may address the theme of their choice, with the work being completed in the past two years from date of entry. The recipient of the prize will be chosen by a panel of judges and art experts.

Entry information is available on the [Memorial's website](#) where you will also find previous winners' artworks. Submissions may include the use of any visual art medium, including but not limited to painting, drawing, printmaking, photography, digital, decorative, sculpture, and installation.

Initiated in 2018, the Napier Waller Art Prize was named after Mervyn Napier Waller, an Australian artist who enlisted in the Australian Imperial Force in August 1915. In May 1917 he was wounded in the right arm while serving with the 11th Field Artillery Brigade during the fighting at Bullecourt. His arm was later amputated, and during his convalescence he learned to write and draw with his left hand, saying, "an artist draws with his head, not his hands". In 1937 Waller was chosen to create the mosaics and stained glass windows in the Australian War Memorial's Hall of Memory.

Farewell two Armidale Class patrol boats



CO HMAS *Maryborough*, LCDR m. Thomas RAN, and CO HMAS *Larrakia*, LCDR C Saville RAN, lead their respective ship's company off their ships

Photo: POIS Leo Baumgartner

Ship's company, family members and an extended Navy community said goodbye to two Armidale-class patrol boats in September.

The 17-year-old vessel HMAS *Larrakia II* and 15 year-old HMAS *Maryborough II* were decommissioned at HMAS *Coonawarra* in Darwin, on 3 October 2023.

Both ships were involved in a variety of operations alongside the Australian Border Force, Australian Fisheries and the Australian Federal Police.

Larrakia II deployed to the Solomon Islands to support the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force's COVID-19 response in 2021.

In 2017, the crew of *Maryborough II* responded to a major engine-room fire and were awarded the Joint Operations Command Group Commendation for exceptional actions.

DVA CONTACTS

Provider enquiry numbers

- Provider invoicing & billing enquiries: [1300 550 017](tel:1300550017)
- Provider enquiries: [1800 550 457](tel:1800550457)
- Transport bookings: [1800 550 455](tel:1800550455)
- [Veterans' Affairs Pharmaceutical Advisory Centre \(VAPAC\)](#): [1800 552 580](tel:1800552580)

Hearing or speech impairment assistance

- If you are deaf, or have a hearing impairment or speech impairment, contact us through the [National Relay Service \(NRS\)](#):
- Talk To You (TTY) users phone [1800 555 677](tel:1800555677) then ask for 1800 838 372
- Speak and Listen users phone [1800 555 727](tel:1800555727) then ask for 1800 838 372
- Internet relay users connect to the [NRS](#) then ask for 1800 838 372

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:1800838372)

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

Claim Enquiries: 1300 550 017
(Option 2 Allied Health)

Claims will take a variety of times to complete based on whether or not the claim is prioritised for allocation to a decision maker and the complexity of the claim itself. For example, if the service of the individual crosses two or more Acts or contains a lot of health conditions and injuries or both. This results in some claims being decided faster than the average time, while some claims take longer.

For any condition, to make the claiming process smoother, follow these 3 steps:

- **Step 1:** Get your medical practitioner to confirm your diagnosis.
- **Step 2:** Supply the documents you need to;
- **Step 3:** Check if you are already eligible for free health care and treatment.

Claim Processing

Where things are at

In the month of August 2023 we:

- made 8,126 decisions on claims
- received claims from 5,370 veterans

As at 31 August 2023 we:

- were working on 49,720 claims
- had 25,487 active claims not yet allocated to an officer for processing (known as the claims backlog), lodged by 17,032 veterans



OPEN
ARMS

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