

Australian Peacekeeper

SPRING 2016

MAGAZINE



60th Anniversary of ADF Deployments
to the Middle East.

A Fight to the Death- South Sudan



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MAGAZINE

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Australian Peacekeepers Magazine attempts to provide insight into the experiences of peacekeepers, Defence members and war veterans and the issues that confront them together with encouraging informed debate regarding issues dealing with but not limited to Commonwealth compensation, pensions, superannuation and occupational health and safety that affect peacekeepers and their families. We welcome input from members and would love to feature personal experiences in each issue. Please email the editor with any stories you would like to see printed. The views expressed in the articles are those of the particular author and not those of the Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association (APPVA). The APPVA will not be legally responsible in contract, tort or otherwise for any statement made in the articles in this publication.



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Royal Australian Air Force Airfield Defence Guard, Leading Aircraftman Adam Newton-Wade, provides external security during the unloading of United Nations humanitarian stores from a Royal Australian Air Force C-17A Globemaster at Juba International Airport, South Sudan.



46th Anniversary of ADF Deployments to the Middle East
A Fight to the Death - South Sudan

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We are unable to provide Gregs full name due to his classified contract.

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From the President's Desk



Welcome back to all our members and followers, for those of you who were not aware I took a leave of absence from my position as your appointed National President after our Winter Edition of "The Peacekeeper" Magazine. The purpose behind my absence was so I

could run for a Senate position at the last Federal election. In order for me to take on such a role I had to disassociate myself from the association during the election period. Why? Some people asked, the reason for my absence was that the association had to remain apolitical throughout the whole process. Well I am happy to inform you that I am now back as your National President fulfilling my obligations to you as a member of the APPVA National Team.

I did not have the chance to provide you with a summary of the events that took place prior to my leave of absence so I am now including it in the Spring Edition of the Peacekeepers Magazine. I attended as your representative on the Ex-Service Organisation Round Table (ESORT) Meeting which was the 33rd meeting held in Canberra on 12 April 2016, during that meeting we welcomed in the new National President of Legacy Australia Mr Tony Ralph OAM and also acknowledged Air Vice-Marshal Tracy Smart AM and Rear Admiral Brett Wolski AM RAN who were both acting as members of the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission (MRCC).

At the start of the Ex-Service Organisation Round Table meeting the representatives congratulated Mr Craig Orme (Deputy President of the Repatriation Commission) and Ms Patricia McCabe (TPI Association) on their Australia Day Honours, The Chair Mr Simon Lewis also paid tribute to the passing of Brigadier Bill Rolfe AO (Ret'd). During the meeting we welcomed the new Minister for Veterans' Affairs, the Hon. Dan Tehan MP and invited him to speak on behalf of the Department.

Some of the discussions that took place on the day were; the Terendak Repatriation and the arrival of those soldiers who died in Terendak and Kranji Cemetery was planned for 2 June 2016 at RAAF Richmond; we were also updated on the Department's private hospital procurement process, the key focus for the Department is the quality of care provided to DVA clients, particularly in regards to the provisions of private rooms; The Department provided a further update on the Review of Dental and Allied Health arrangements.

Members received correspondence from the Department seeking an indication of their desired nature and level of engagement with the Review. This invitation closed on 21 January 2016. The Department received three nominations,

one each from the War Widows' Guild of Australia, the Returned and Services League of Australia (RSL) and the Vietnam Veterans' Federation of Australia.

The ESORT were updated on Mefloquine use in the ADF and the Defence response to date. The presentation also highlighted to members Mefloquine's place in the Repatriation Medical Authority's Statements of Principles. The Chair advised the ESORT that an article on Mefloquine would be published in "Vetaffairs" to raise further awareness in the veteran community; and an update was provided on the VEA.

After the conclusion of the first phase of the VEA, 75 participants are now involved in some form of workforce participation. The second phase commenced in March 2016 and involved around 100 DVA clients; An update was provided on the VEA. After the conclusion of the first phase of the VEA, 75 participants are now involved in some form of workforce participation. The second phase commenced in March 2016 and involved around 100 DVA clients; and the ESORT was updated on the Veteran Vocational Rehabilitation Scheme (VVRS). From 20 March 2016, the extension of psychosocial and medical management rehabilitation to the VVRS will result in a whole-of-person rehabilitation across all three Acts; The ESORT heard two guest presentations.

Mr Stewart Cameron CSC and Mr Bill O'Chee from RSL Queensland gave an overview of their organisation's work on veteran homelessness, while the Aspen Foundation's Mr Bruce Armstrong and Mr Andrew Condon CSC updated the ESORT on their organisation's Ex-Service Organisation Mapping Project; and The ESORT heard three member submissions:

- TPI Federation Australia and Partners of Veterans' Association (PVA) provided a joint submission requesting the appointment of a DVA liaison officer (or a hotline for ESOs) to liaise on behalf of veterans and their families regarding Department of Health and Centrelink issues;
- TPI Federation Australia provided a submission outlining the need for a consultative forum that deals specifically with the issues of female veterans and clients of DVA; and
- The PVA provided a submission requesting the funeral benefit under the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 to be increased.

The next meeting of the ESORT will be held on Wednesday 10 August 2016, I will keep you updated with events and activities at our next Summer Edition of the Peacekeepers Magazine.

Yours in the Service of Peace,

Allan Thomas JP
National President.



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From the Editor's Desk

By now many of you would have heard about the Herald Sun Investigation into the suicides of our veterans. 41 veterans were highlighted in this exclusive by Herald Sun journalist Ruth Lamperd. Ruth has been working closely with the APPVA with this Investigation and it is a National Shame that we are losing so many veterans to suicide. The APPVA supports any Senate Inquiry into the high number of suicides in the ADF, along with the Veteran Working Group into a Royal Commission into DVA. These suicides justify such a Royal Commission, that cannot be ignored any longer by the Government or the Political Parties that make up our Parliamentary System.

At this point in time, whilst the National Executive have repeatedly requested to meet with the Minister to discuss a wide range of veteran issues that are affecting young veterans. The Minister's Staff have blocked access for the National President and the National Vice President to seek a meeting with Dan Tehan, MP. Letters written to the Senior Levels within DVA remain unanswered. These issues raised and need to have dialogue and consultation with the Minister are very important issues that are not necessarily being represented by the major Ex-Service Organisations (ESO). We have yet to see anything that is of any significant value to our veteran cohort. This is a major concern, where the APPVA has significant Subject Matter Expertise in Young Veteran issues and Legislation, that is simply being ignored at the highest levels of the Department.

It is absolutely critical that the Minister meets with the APPVA. Since Ruth Lamperd's Report, 2 more veterans have taken their lives. This is only three days after the release of the story. It is understood that the Prime Minister has now taken an interest in this matter. It is serious enough that the Australian Public are asking questions as to why we are losing so many veterans? It is serious enough that we need to know what is causing these once mentally tough service personnel to take their lives?

The wounds of war and other Operations, particularly Peacekeeping Operations, where the Peacekeeping Mental Health and Rwanda Health Studies released in October 2014 by the then Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Senator Michael Ronaldson, has not been actively responded to by the Department of Veterans' Affairs, which the Studies provide serious problems with our Peacekeeping Veterans; by finding that 1 in 3 returned ADF UN Peacekeepers from 1989 to 2002 suffered from a diagnosed mental illness. Phoenix Australian Centre for Post Traumatic Mental Health has forecast that at least 1 in 4 returning ADF UN Peacekeepers will suffer at least one mental illness in their lives.

The support for our veterans couldn't be more critical now than ever. Veterans like Ray Williams who has been waiting 20 years for his case to be resolved by Defence for retrospective reclassification to warlike service as a result of him being a UN Military Observer in the Lebanese War in 1984 still lingers without adequate resolution; ADF personnel who deployed to OPERATION HABITAT in Northern Iraq from May to June 1991 still await consideration

toward reclassification to warlike service, as was the case for other ADF members within the identified Area of Operations; the medallic recognition system needs fixing by equally recognising all service, starting with including all those who served on Border Protection Operations since the first RAAF Lincoln Bomber took off on Maritime Surveillance patrols in 1948; to the Royal Australian Navy Patrol Boat Group that was tasked by the Department of Primary Industries in 1967 to protect Australia from a range of concerns, not just illegal immigrants coming to our shores by sea; the Regional Force Surveillance Units that were specifically raised to protect our North from a range of illegal activities. I could go on with many more matters, however these are long standing issues that needs some common sense, logical and objective decision-making, not subjective opinions.

With the Federal Election now passed and Parliament beginning to sit again, we have a golden opportunity to lobby to rectify a number of matters. Some detractors may call the Senate loaded with "Rogue Independents". Perhaps it is a message from the people of Australia that they are fed up with the behaviour of the Major Parties that have led to a large number of Independents in the House of Representatives and in the Senate. In the usually safe seat in Herbert, which has a high number of ADF members and veterans living in the Electorate, has seen the Government get a bloody nose, by now being the most marginal Seat in Australia. Many veterans and ADF members are fed-up with being ignored over a range of issues.

These are exciting times that will see the APPVA undergoing a significant campaign of our lobbying to see the wrongs of veterans righted. The continued erosion of Veteran Entitlement Legislation with the Safety Rehabilitation & Compensation Act 1988 (SRCA); the Veteran Entitlement Act 1986 (VEA); and the Military Rehabilitation & Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA), is becoming more and more adversarial. This needs to stop. There was an undertaking made by the people of Australia to our veterans, and those times have not changed since 1921. Ask any public member if they believe that veterans should be treated as Insurance Claimants and they will tell you that it is a disgrace to even consider such an approach.

On closing, I would like to remind our readers that commentary is made on various articles, particularly comments on quotes from Journalists in various publications. Based on these quotes, it is difficult to fully understand the context of such quotes and commentary is made accordingly. Such commentary is never intended to cause offence, particularly when the context of a quote is incorrect in fact. Journalists will tend to only take out parts of an interview or text, without realising they are not fully conversant with the subject, in our case peacekeeping or ADF service. Therefore, offence is never intended and if the commentary is interpreted as an attack on an individual, that is certainly not the case, nor the intent.

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WHEN RESULTS MATTER

COGG-T Observations and Reflections – May 2015- May 2016

On arrival to UNTSO and as Chief OGG-T in May 2015—my second deployment to UNTSO—I reflected on the significant changes to the political and security environment in the Middle East, starting with the Arab spring, the ongoing internal conflict in Syria, and the increasingly volatile geopolitical environment that the UNTSO area of interest encompasses. The requirement for UNTSO to continue to evolve to reflect its contemporary operating environment remains ever-present; the UNTSO mandate, in accordance with UNSCR 73 enabling this required flexibility. In turn, OGG-T required to be agile and evolve in its conduct of operations, and therefore to be forward-looking in its approach.

The past 12 months fully confirmed that observation, and OGG-T, of necessity, worked hard to ensure it became more operationally focused. The environment remains unpredictable, both before and after the 27 February 2016 Cessation of Hostilities, as evidenced by incidents such as the November 15 Yarmouk Martyrs Brigade vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED) detonating approximately 900m from OP 51, and the OP 54 Easter Sunday MAYDAY. In early May 2015, two UNMOS on OP

51 were wounded by fragmentation when running to the shelter. With hindsight, I would include the requirement for **accurate, detailed and timely reporting** – IOT assist detailed analysis of the operational situation - and to inform forward looking assessments – the ‘so what’.

On my arrival I asked the outstation to maintain its operational focus and situational awareness, ensure all equipment was respected and maintained, and that UNMOs rapidly got to know their Team and OP AOR, and not just the barrels but more importantly, to have a good understanding of the operational situation, evacuation routes and emergency procedures. Throughout my tenure, I observed a ‘raising of the bar’ in this respect, evidenced through my visits to OPs and through assessing the majority of OGG-T’s Chief’s Challenge (CC2) and subsequently Senior Observer Tests (SOT).

Also from an operational perspective, OGG-T refined and standardized reporting and processes, and increasingly adopted technology to drive efficiencies. OGG-T now uses TRBOnet to track the OGG vehicle fleet; OGG-T also has a ‘live’ Daily Operational Report which OPs can add observations to real time; enabling the Duty Officer to focus



L-R: CAPT Alex SCHREIBER; LTCOL Deb WARREN-SMITH; CAPT Em MORDIKE, Christmas on OP 51



OP 55 Team Wadi Training. LCDR Francisco MELIPIN (CHL); CAPT Jo PEIER (CHE); CAPT Yves PERRET (CHE); MAJ Frode FAKSVAG (NOR) Team Leader; MAJ Cyrus WAGNER (CHE); MAJ Yari MUSTONEN (FIN); MAJ Sangay TSHERING (BHU); LTCOL Deb Warren-Smith (COGG-T – AUS); MAJ Dipesh MAGAR (NEP); MAJ Prem TAMANG (NEP); CAPT Garth MAGNUSSEN (NZ); MAJ Vallo LAUL (EST); MAJ Aseri ROKOURA (FIJI); CAPT Petteri VIHMALO

on operational tasks when on the duty box. MAJ Mihael Pavsic from Slovenia was the driving force behind this improvement.

UNMOs are now increasingly well prepared and informed to perform their job; OP relief briefs now include a detailed UNDOF JMAC (J2) and OGG-T Ops (J3) brief; OGG personnel from the UNDOF JMAC attend Team Training on a monthly basis. We are also, through the good offices of HQ UNTSO, working hard to further embrace ISR technology to enhance our reporting and observations.

OGG-T initiated a range of other training activities to improve and ensure continued focus on force protection, safety and security, including regular bimonthly medical and emergency evacuation exercises, with the UNDOF QRF—Irish FRC and the Fijian BMR. OGG-T formalised and standardised their ‘stand-to’ exercises and drills and emergency evacuation procedures across the operational outstation and they are now conducted regularly with UNDOF liaison and coordination through HQ OGG.

Early in my tenure, OGG-T and OGL (COGL - LTCOL Ruth PUTZE - NZ) shared ideas on how we might improve our outstation’s induction training regime and how this might facilitate effective inter-station transfers. Subsequent DCOS Chief’s meetings agreed the requirement to standardise procedures and procedures where appropriate including training standardization. All OGG-T UNMOs now undergo a detailed OGG-T HQ induction training package to prepare them for SOT 1,2, 3, including standardised medical and operations training *prior* to deploying to the OPs. On being assessed as competent on SOT 1 at approximately the 2 week mark, an UNMO is deemed qualified and competent to remain on the OP with a new UNMO. This change provides significant flexibility to Team Leaders and Deputy Team Leaders roster planning, and could not have been effected without the vision and subsequent actions of

CAPT Jeremy Mateparae (NZ), OPSO and CAPT Renzo Wessels, TRGO (NDL).

In the military personnel space, OGGT now has a weekly newsletter that keeps all OGG UNMOs informed of upcoming positions, housing requirements, and all matters personnel. We also have an improved roster management system of managing the OGG-T Tetris roster! Thank you MAJ Richard Little (CAN).

In the mission support area, OGG-T military and civilian staffs are now engaged in ongoing OP inspections with a view to improving internal security, lighting, and perimeter security. The support from OGGT’s Administrative Officer Ms Natalia Sidokhina who recently returned from a secondment to OCHA in Jordan and Turkey, to facilitate and action these visits has been exceptional, especially when operating within a resource constrained environment.

The UN DPKO’s Office for Peacekeeping Strategic Partnership conducted an audit of OGG-T earlier this year; we achieved a very good bill of health and were advised that in several areas OGG-T demonstrated best practice including training conduct and evaluation, and that OGG-T’s operational documentation including Directives and SOPs remains contemporary due to constant review, and incorporation of lessons observed and learned.

Of course there remain areas that require constant attention, including working to streamline the interoperability between OGG and UNDOF, so that lessons observed become lessons learnt. Collectively, OGG-T and OGG worked well together with UNDOF to improve OP emergency and support requirements; continued training, mentoring and rehearsals will ensure further improvements and that the conduct of these exercises becomes routine. The UNDOF QRF was always very welcome on the OPs and I know that they will continue to be very welcome. My thanks to UNDOF for their continued support for my time here.

Other challenges that we must collectively continue to consider and plan for, includes the requirement to protect civilians - a highly important obligation for any



UN peacekeeping force. Whilst this obligation requires capability and resources, flexibility, planning and timely decision-making is also key to saving countless lives, a point impressed on OGG-T and OGG staff from OGG-T OPSO MAJ Flavio Marchesi, from his previous mission experience.

Whilst not a family mission for the military staff, the support provided by our families either in the mission area or at home, is often the unsung. It is often families at home who have the harder time of a deployment; they have to adjust to their normal life with their loved one away for long periods – which can be disruptive. Thank you to your families who continue to support each and every one of us—military and civilian, and assist us to fulfil our small part in the Middle East peace process.

I will again leave a small part of my heart in this mission, much as I did when I left Syria 10 years ago – at that time not knowing what was in store for the Syrian people. I am unsure what lies ahead for Syria, Iraq, – Balkanisation? And what future part UNTSO UNMOs may play through future Observer Force CONPLANS.

What I do know is that the next 12 months will also present some unique challenges to LTCOL Christine HEGGLI as the new Chief OGG-T, who also comes with previous UNTSO experience.



UNDOF Evacuation Training; LCDR Francisco MELIPIN (CHL)

And whilst we are the first female outstation Chiefs in OGG-T, the requirement remains for UNTSO to continue to petition UNNY DPKO to improve their gender balance and female UNMO participation rates from the current 2% to the UN target of 10%, reap the rewards of a diverse workforce, especially within UN Peacekeeping Missions.

It was a great honour and privilege for me to serve as your Chief and Custodian of OGG-T.

LTCOL Deb Warren-Smith



MAJ Sangay TSHERING (BHU), delivering Safety and Security Brief to FC UNDOF MAJGEN Jai MENON (IND), OP 54




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OP PALADIN – 60 years of ADF Support in the Pursuit of Peace

By LTCOL Deb Warren-Smith

On Saturday 23 April 16, Australian Defence Force (ADF) Officers serving as part of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organisation (UNTSO) hosted a commemoration event in Tiberias, Israel to mark 60 years of ADF involvement in UNTSO.

Established in May 1948, UNTSO was the first ever peacekeeping operation established by the United Nations (UN).

Since then, UNTSO military observers have remained in the Middle East to monitor ceasefires, supervise armistice agreements, prevent isolated incidents from escalating and assist other UN peacekeeping operations in the region to fulfill their respective mandates.

Australia has a rich military history in the region having committed forces during both the First and Second World Wars.

In 1956, as a result of increased tensions between Israel and Egypt, UNTSO requested the UN to recruit more observers to fulfill its mandate.

Canada and New Zealand had already joined the mission and Australia – at the time, an elected member of the Security Council – decided to again commit ADF elements to the region.

Current Commander Australian Contingent, Lieutenant Colonel (LTCOL) Deborah Warren-Smith, reflected on the significance of the contribution made by the ADF.

“Australia initially sent four observers; two Captains and two Majors, who arrived in Jerusalem in early July 1956,” LTCOL Warren-Smith said.

“Since then over 800 ADF Officers have served within UNTSO, including three as UNTSO Chief of Staff (Force Commander).”

“Sadly the mission has also resulted in one Australian death when on 12 January 1988, Captain Peter McCarthy was killed while on patrol in Southern Lebanon when the vehicle he was travelling in struck a mine.”

The event was open to all serving members of UNTSO as well as Australian Embassy Staff and senior leaders from other UN missions in the region.

Also attending, the Australian Forces Entertainment Unit provided a band, comedian and singer to entertain the crowds, as well as performing for troops assigned to the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, located in the Golan Heights.

“This event provided not only an opportunity to acknowledge those ADF Officers who have given service in the pursuit of peace but also to acknowledge the bonds and networks formed between the ADF and the 26 other troop contributing nations,” LTCOL Warren-Smith said.

There are currently 12 ADF Officers serving within UNSTO who typically service for a year within the Mission Area, which includes Egypt, Syria, Israel, Jordan and Lebanon.





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Task Group Taji Rotation 2 Completes Mission

Australian personnel from Task Group Taji Rotation 2 have formally handed over responsibility for training the Iraqi Security Forces at the Taji Military Complex in Iraq.

The Transfer of Authority Parade allowed the outgoing Commander, Colonel Gavin Keating, to hand over future training responsibilities to incoming Task Group Taji Rotation 3 Commander, Colonel Andrew Lowe.

Colonel Keating praised the achievements of his Australian and New Zealand soldiers.

“The Task Group trained nearly four thousand Iraqi Army soldiers during our six-month deployment,” he said.

“We provided high quality and innovative training to the Iraqi Army which has given them the skills needed for upcoming operations.

“This is a significant contribution to the Coalition’s efforts to help the Iraqi Security Forces defeat Daesh.”

Colonel Keating said while the numbers of Iraqi soldiers trained was significant, Task Group Taji 2 had additional achievements to be proud of.

“We have also reinforced with Coalition partners our excellent reputation as effective, capable and reliable allies,” Colonel Keating said.

While Task Group Taji 2’s personnel are keen to return home, their hard work has ensured they provided a comprehensive handover to the incoming third rotation.

“We are confident the new team will continue the excellent work completed by the first two rotations and improve upon it,” he said.

Commanding Officer of Task Group Taji’s Training Unit, Lieutenant Colonel Jim Hammett, said Rotation 2 had introduced a number of innovative programs including bayonet training, night training, infantry and armour cooperation and helicopter familiarisation.

“The key to success has been accepting it is mastering the basic skills that are most important to the Iraqi Army,” Lieutenant Colonel Hammett said.

Lieutenant Colonel Hammett said it had been important to include battlefield lessons into training programs.

“We have made the training as realistic and relevant as possible, drawing battlefield lessons from the soldiers themselves,” he said.

Chief of Joint Operations Vice Admiral David Johnston said Task Group Taji Rotation 2 personnel should be proud of their contribution to the Coalition building-partner capacity mission.

“The Iraqi Security Forces have received professional and expert training from the Australian and New Zealand personnel from this rotation and are well prepared for

countering Daesh.”

“Task Group Taji Rotation 2 have reinforced the positive relationship and close military heritage that is shared by our militaries.”

Task Group Taji 3 consists of around 300 Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel drawn largely from the Australian Army’s 1st Brigade, alongside approximately 105 New Zealand Defence Force (NZDF) personnel.



Commanding General Coalition Joint Forces Land Component Command – Operation Inherent Resolve Major General Gary J Volesky of the United States (left) presents Commander Task Group Taji II Colonel Gavin Keating, CSC with the Task Group Taji II flag during a parade to mark the Transfer of Authority to Task Group Taji III at the Taji Military Complex in Iraq.

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Debunking the Royal Commission Myths DVA Misinformation

By Rod Thompson

For well over twelve months the Royal Commission Working Group (RCWG) has been advocating for a Senate Enquiry, preferably a standalone Royal Commission into the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA). Over this period the RCWG has travelled the country conducting rallies in Canberra, Hobart, Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane and Townsville so far, we have also picketed the Ministers electoral office in Warrnambool during the recent Federal Election.

While in Canberra we also met with Members of Parliament from all spectrums of the political divide, each and every one of those parliamentarians had had at least one constituent complain over some aspect of their dealings with DVA. In one case Senator Jacqui Lambie has over 400 complaints registered with her office alone.

Travelling widely over the country has given the RCWG the opportunity to speak with hundreds of veterans and their families about their concerns regarding DVA. Many had suffered significant psychological and financial detriment and spent long periods of time reviewing decisions to the Veteran Review Board (VRB) or the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT). Serious concerns were also raised in relation to the Departmental complaints process, which simply does not exist as a functional, fair and balanced process providing due process in accordance with the APS code of conduct, Model Litigant Rules and the DVA Service Charter. DVA have now implemented new procedures and policy in relation to dealing with complaints which only affirm that DVA, by way of its Senior Management, are not willing to deal with client complaints in a transparent, expedient and fair manner, but wish to define any complaint as unreasonable and vexatious allowing the complaint to be dismissed at any stage by lower level Delegates with no reasons provided.

Sadly, the call for a Royal Commission and/or a minimum a Senate Enquiry has not been widely supported by the older Veteran Generation all of whom are covered by the more beneficial Veterans' Entitlement Act (VEA), which has been widely tried and tested to the Federal and/or High Court levels and is significantly different to both the Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988 (SRCA) and the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 2004 (MRCA). Certain statements made by Senior Departmental Staff such as *"be careful what you ask for"* and *"you could end up worse off"* is further evidence that DVA have been conducting a divide and conquer campaign by instilling fear and doubt within the veteran community.

There have been identified by the RCWG several Myths that other Ex-Service Organisations (ESO), have been perhaps, informally advised by Senior DVA Executives.

Myth 1. A Royal Commission may find that veterans are too well compensated and VEA benefits may be reduced

This myth is just that, a myth, legally and morally, DVA would have significant issues removing or reducing any agreed or pre-Legislated compensation from any individual and in the current political climate this would be akin to Electoral suicide for any Government wishing to alter the status quo regarding the VEA.

Myth 2. A Royal Commission will be too expensive and may take a very long time to see any positive changes implemented from the findings

In recent times we have seen Royal Commissions instigated and concluded over a fairly short period of time, one case in point is the "Pink Batts" Royal Commission, not taking away anything from the tragic deaths of four people and the significant waste of taxpayer's money, but no concerns were raised about the cost of this Royal Commission. Sadly we have approximately 300 suicides in the Defence and ex-service community in the last 17 years with a significant upward spike in recent years. We do know that a number can be directly linked to DVA's bureaucratic belligerence and bungling and sadly the process is not getting any better. Compounding this situation are the errors made by the DVA in its modelling and forward financial planning creating a circumstance where instead of going back to the drawing board and consultatively working with the ESO's to find a user friendly, simplified, unambiguous "one size fits all" legislation, that uses the VEA as a basis for any legislative changes. The Department is slicing and dicing different areas of the 3 legislations making cuts and removing services to fill a financial black hole of its own creation.

Myth 3. The DVA is aware of the problems and is striving to rectify the situation

DVA by way of the Secretary Simon Lewis in a news article in the Canberra Times of December 2014 link: <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/national/public-service/veterans-affairs-failures-exposed-in-australian-public-service-commission-capability-review-20141207-122e15.html> basically outlined the need for an independent inquiry as the DVA's performance over the last 2 years has deteriorated to dangerous levels with many instances of incompetence across all areas of Departmental responsibility including but not limited to; Liability – where we see conditions rejected because of poor understanding of the nature of military service in one instance a Delegate discussing a client's case over the phone replied to the clients assertion that he had

had “Numerous contacts with the enemy while deployed to Afghanistan”; with the statement that “I have numerous contacts with people I don’t like and I don’t have PTSD”. In another instance of lack of understanding of the nature of service a Senior Delegate from the Melbourne office when questioned over the rejection of a Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Primary claim, made the statement “If he was in the Infantry we would have accepted his PTSD but because he was a Bomb Dog Handler he could not have been in any danger”. Many claims are lost and the processing timeframes are well over the 200 + day mark, in some cases well over a year.

Permanent Impairment (PI) – At least 50% of all PI assessments are wrong and mostly it is Delegates’ mistakes interpreting GARP M1 and the use of unreflective Medico-Legal reports and in some cases sheer vindictiveness and poor management.

Rehabilitation – The rehabilitation area of DVA is significantly understaffed with poorly trained delegates and managers who have no understanding of the complexities of rehabilitation and are dependent on contracted rehabilitation providers, some of dubious intent to provide for all aspects of case management for MRCA and SRCA clients undertaking rehabilitation. In some cases these unsupervised providers are charging DVA for services not provided to the client (fraud) and this occurs on a regular basis, further to this some providers are filing reports on clients that they have not met in person and when questioned become threatening even to the extent of telling clients that their incapacity payments may be taken away if they do not comply or are seen to be questioning the validity of the providers rehabilitation plan. These matters are being reported to DVA but are not being addressed. This area is leaking taxpayer’s dollars and unscrupulous providers are manipulating the system to their own financial benefit at the expense of the client and the Australian taxpayer.

Incapacity Payments (SRCA & MRCA) [IP] – Another problematic area for DVA with, according to a DVA Delegate from the IP section, only 4 staff are attending to one of the most important areas in DVA as this is the sole section providing income for clients under the SRCA and MRCA, with some clients waiting up to 6 months for decisions regarding IP. So, understaffing appears to be a contributing factor along with poor training and management. This is compounded by an inability to communicate not only with the veteran but with other areas of the Department as IT systems do not inter-operate with each other as has been highlighted in the article of the Canberra Times, there are over 200 different IT systems within DVA, which none of them are able to interoperate. Hence, a client recently rang DVA on the 133254 number (the only advertised number to contact DVA) 3 times in a week to enquire about his IP, he was given 3 different answers by 3 different delegates all of which were wrong telling him he was not in receipt of payments, he was getting \$13 per fortnight, he was not entitled to IP because he was on a COMSUPER pension finally, as this veteran has had significant problems across all areas of DVA and has lodged a recent Ministerial Submission, the matter was referred to DVA Senior Management who provided the following response: “After discussing with Mr XXXXX about his concerns it appears he



has been contacting the VAN² rather than IP. The VAN does not have all of the same system accesses as IP [Branch] hence why they could not answer all of his questions in detail. Mr XXXXX advised he had no issue with his [IP], just that he had requested a bank account change through MyAccount”. It should also be noted that his MyAccount had not been updated for 8 months so was not reflective of his current situation. This level of incompetence not only drives a wedge between Veterans’ and DVA but actually impacts on the Veterans’ mental health and inhibits rehabilitation and recovery which is outside of the DVA service charter APS Code of Conduct and the Model Litigant Rules and more than likely in some cases breaches basic Human Rights Legislation. This is also the section that is responsible for Millions of dollars worth of overpayments every year meaning that many clients incur a significant debt to the Commonwealth through no fault of their own solely due to defective Departmental administration.

Myth 4. That the RCWG in some way stands to gain from a Royal Commission

This is the most laughable piece of misinformation that is being spread around; the RCWG consists of three Level 4 Advocates all covered under VEA/SRCA, one other who is also VEA / SRCA and a MRCA/SRCA veteran as well, covering off all 3 legislations from an advocacy and personal experience perspective. Members of the group have self-funded much of their activities along with donations from a Victorian based ESO and the wider veteran community through a go fund me page which has been used to cover the legal expenses through the RCWG’s legal advisor Simon Harrison. The members of the RCWG have given up much of their valuable time, effort and money to stand up and bring the issues raised above to the attention of the DVA Senior Management, the Australian Parliament, individual members of parliament regardless of their political persuasion and the mainstream and social media. Individually and collectively the RCWG have been belittled, mocked and relatively unsupported by the older ESOs, who

are not wanting to rock the boat for fear of the potential loss of entitlements and a place at the table. A significant lack of understanding as to how different the MRCA and SRCA systems are to the VEA and the significant discrimination that occurs in the areas of health care, fortnightly income (sustainable past 65), access to Rehabilitation Appliances Program (RAP), transport, medication (RPBS³), application of offsetting against COMSUPER, limited access to Gold Card entitlement, coverage under a beneficial legislation; are some of the items that are listed over every facet of DVA's responsibility to Veterans.

The RCWG is committed to having the DVA brought before an Independent External Review Body with the power to make binding legislative and policy change to simplify the complex bureaucratic system in place by the way of 3 conflicting legislations, which are not in any way mutually co-operative, compounded by failed policy changes regarding the new national processing policy which has removed the ability of the separate states to expediently process the claim of a veteran residing in that state across all areas of the process. This has resulted in some veterans claims being lost in transit between different states and in one case a veteran had 5 different Delegates in 4 different states looking after different aspects of his claim and it is not unusual to have 3 different Delegates in 3 different states handling just one primary claim of a veteran. This needs to change and DVA have so far been unwilling to address these matters with the RCWG rather, they have taken a "bury your head in the sand" approach claiming everything is fine and the IT fairy will be sprinkling her magic dust over DVA and all the problems will go away with a shiny new IT system second hand from Human Services. Just ask Queensland Health or The Australian Bureau of Statistics how their shiny new toys went. An IT system is only as good as the people managing it and currently good managers are a very shallow pool at DVA. DVA can no longer be trusted with personal data with breaches of privacy occurring on a regular basis. In the case of Senior DVA management sadly, they can no longer be trusted to tell the truth using manipulated and misleading statistics obtained by wasting tax payer funds on a non-reflective and non-inclusive surveys weighted toward the older client demographic to provide a positive reflection of DVA's service and other reviews, studies and reports that provide no tangible benefit to the veteran and ex-service community. In some extreme cases such as the Gulf War Veterans' Health Study DVA rewrote the report to reflect their policy position which was not in keeping with some aspects of the researchers findings. ESO's have not been able to access the original un- altered report under FOI because of departmental objections.

The only benefit the members of the RCWG expect to receive in a "one size fits all" simplified legislation and process managed competently in keeping with historical beneficial provisions applied to veterans in the past.

In summary, DVA has passed the point where consulting with all the ESO's and working collaboratively with the veteran and ex-service community will change current policy has taken the DVA down a path of cost cutting slowly shaving entitlements from the VEA and refusing to provide services under the MRCA and SRCA, reducing staffing

at lower levels while maintaining a top heavy senior, bureaucratic management that seems excessive for a department of 1500 or less total staff with approximately 22 % of those in higher management.

The best example of this is the recent amendment of SRCA dated the 13th of December 2013 reducing the Above the scheduled fee medical treatment for accepted conditions moving all SRCA clients onto the Repatriation Card System limiting their ability to seek quality and continuity of care with previous specialists and treating medical practitioners also limiting their access to rehabilitation aids and appliances and some pharmaceuticals to an equivalent to what is received in the Health and Aged Care sector – not compensation philosophy.

The saving for DVA from March 2012 to March 2015 on the SRCA health budget would appear to be approximately \$100 million if the statistics below can be trusted. In March 2012 the health expenditure for some 11,786 SRCA clients was \$36.5 million dollars. Some 3 years later after the removal of the above the scheduled fee treatment in 2013 the number of SRCA clients increased to 50,700 and the expenditure on health for SRCA clients reduced by \$100,000 to \$36.4 million. One question is where has this money been re-assigned and how are veterans benefiting from this significant saving. Only a Royal Commission or Senate Enquiry can be trusted to impartially review not only the DVA's operations and policy but primarily, the complexity of the 3 legislations which is the root of many of the problems.

2015 DVA Statistics

http://www.dva.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/publications/datastatistical/statsataglance/SaaG_Mar2015.pdf

2012 DVA Statistics

http://www.dva.gov.au/sites/default/files/files/publications/datastatistical/statsataglance/SAAG_Mar12.pdf

The Homelessness of veterans - continues. The stress that is experienced, by simply negotiating with the Department to receive rightful entitlements, in a highly complex legal minefield by the veteran and his/her family - continues. The Time Taken To Process (TTTP) continues to blow out the Department's Key Performance Indicators [KPI].

The suicides of Young Veterans as a result of a multitude of reasons, is yet to be significantly investigated - continues. Only a Fair Dinkum approach by this Government to find out why young veterans are angry, stressed and suicidal will identify the problematic and clunky bureaucracy that is literally killing our veterans.

(Endnotes)

- 1 GARP M: The Guide to the Assessed Rate of Pension – MRCA version.
- 2 Veteran Area Network.
- 3 Repatriation Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

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RAAF Air Task Group Strikes Daesh Headquarters Building in Mosul

The Royal Australian Air Force Air Task Group (ATG) recently launched a large-scale early morning airstrike on a key Daesh headquarters compound in the northern Iraqi city of Mosul.

Under the cover of darkness, a pair of F/A-18A Hornet fighter aircraft dropped a total of six two-thousand pound, precision guided bombs that penetrated and destroyed the building from the inside, causing the large structure to implode on itself. The two-story building set on the edge of a small lake was a key Daesh operational headquarters for the region that also functioned as a training facility.

Hornet pilot, Squadron Leader Chris, described his role as the mission commander and detailed the successful destruction of the Daesh target.

“We took off from our main air operating base in the Middle East region shortly before midnight, fully loaded with fuel and weapons – the total weight came very close to our maximum payload,” said Squadron Leader Chris.

“It was a long transit up to northern Iraq and the city of Mosul, so we needed to be refuelled by our KC-30A air-to-air refuelling aircraft a total of five times during the mission.

“We reached Mosul and the target a few hours before sunrise, rendezvoused with other coalition aircraft, and then conducted a sweep of the target area with our infrared sensors to look for any civilian traffic in the area.

“After confirming the target area was clear of civilians, we conducted our target attack, and successfully placed all of

our weapons into the exact sections of the building that we planned – right down to the rooms that were assessed to be the most effective points of impact.

“Our pair of F/A-18s formed part of a coalition package of aircraft which simultaneously targeted over 40 locations in the Mosul region that night.

“The coalition strikes successfully destroyed a large number of Daesh facilities, including the headquarters building, which I hope will assist the Iraqi Security Forces as they begin their fight to take back the city.”

The ATG of Operation OKRA is operating at the request of the Iraqi Government within a US-led international coalition assembled to disrupt and degrade Daesh operations in the Middle East Region (MER). The ATG comprises six RAAF F/A-18A Hornet fighter aircraft, an E-7A Wedgetail airborne command and control aircraft, and a KC-30A Multi-Role Tanker Transport air-to-air refuelling aircraft. Additionally, the ATG has personnel working in the Combined Air and Space Operations Centre, and embedded with the ‘Kingpin’ US Tactical Command and Control Unit.

The ATG is directly supported by elements of Operation ACCORDION including the Theatre Communications Group, Air Mobility Task Group, and the Combat Support Unit, whose mission is to provide airbase and aviation operational support to sustain air operations in the MER. There are up to 350 personnel deployed at any one time as part of, or in direct support of, the ATG.

A Royal Australian Air Force F/A-18A Hornet refuels from a KC-30A Multi-Role Tanker Transport in the skies over Iraq.





8/9RAR soldiers providing force protection for Australians deployed to Kabul

Soldiers from 8/9RAR are providing essential security for Australian Defence Force personnel working inside and around Kabul.

Their role as 'Guardian Angels' sees the soldiers providing close personal protection to the many ADF mentors and advisors working with their Afghan counterparts.

The A Coy 8/9RAR Force Protection Element (FPE), deployed in January, after completing three months of mission specific training and armoured vehicle familiarisation.

On arrival in Kabul, the FPE was split into three sections, each tasked with providing physical protection to Australians deployed to different units around Hamid Karzai International Airport (HKIA) and Kabul.

Corporal (Cpl) Bradley Spaccavento is one of the FPE section commanders.

"Our role is to conduct protected red and green zone moves in and around Kabul in armoured four wheel drives," Cpl Spaccavento said.

"We work with the Kabul Garrison Command-Advisory Team (KGC-AT) six days a week, escorting them to work and providing 'Guardian Angel' protection while they conduct advisory work with their Afghan counterparts.

"When we are not working with KGC-AT we also are tasked to provide security to other ADF units in the area."

A typical work day has the 8/9RAR FPE clearing and securing the KGC-AT advisor's work place before allowing them into their building.

"Once the building has been cleared we stand up our command post where we coordinate and movements for the advisors," he said.

"During the day we accompany the advisors while they work alongside their Afghan counterparts."

Section 2IC Private (Pte) Chris Di Florio is the senior soldier in the section and has been in the Army for six years.

"I deployed to Afghanistan in 2012 with Mentoring Task Force 4 (MTF 4) but this time my role is very different, as I was outside the wire and not in an urban environment," Pte Di Florio said.

"I arrive after the building has been cleared and assist with the set up of the computer servers and the command post."

When the building is safe to work in Pte Di Florio has an important role to carry out during the rest of his work day.

"I'm the battle tracker," he said.

"I facilitate communication between the FPE soldiers and the command post, I also track everyone's location on a white board.

While the job is different to what both Cpl Spaccavento and Pte Di Florio have experienced on previous deployments to Afghanistan, operating in Kabul is no less dangerous.

"The red zone moves we do are a bit more dangerous compared to working inside the HKIA area," Pte Di Florio said.

"We have to be alert for threats such as vehicle IEDs in cars and motorcycles and possible IEDs on or under the road."

So far on this deployment it's the leadership component Cpl Spaccavento said he has enjoyed the most.

"It can be challenging at times and there are occasions when I've thought, I or the section could have done something better," he said.

"It's a matter of staying on top of everything we do, fixing problems and moving on.

"This isn't a mentoring mission like my 2IC and I have completed before. It's a different kind of operation, but it's very rewarding to be here."

Australian Army soldier Corporal Bradley Spaccavento (left) briefs Private Chris Di Florio upon arrival at their work location. Both soldiers are two members of the 8/9RAR Force Protection Element working in Kabul, protecting other Australian Defence Force personnel as they perform their jobs.



IAI will Present an Impressive Array of Land Technologies at the Land Forces 2016 show

Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) will display a variety of cutting-edge defense solutions at the upcoming Land forces show, to be held in Adelaide, Australia, from September 6-8, (Hall-2).

IAI, Israel's largest aerospace company, places an important emphasis on fully-operational solutions for land-purpose use in the air, on land and in the cyber arena. IAI is engaged in both the defense and commercial markets. For decades, the company has been offering its customers an extensive spectrum of technological knowledge and proven experience in various fields. IAI has groundbreaking products, and is a center of excellence for systems.



At Land Forces the company will present special Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), ground robotics systems, a variety of sensors and radar systems, air defense systems, and advanced cyber solutions, the newest Members in IAI's Loitering Munitions Family, command and control solutions and electro-optical payloads for intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance missions.

Unmanned Systems for Air, Land and Sea: IAI offers systems ranging from ground tactical vehicles to combat marine systems and Medium Altitude Long-Endurance (MALE) aerial systems. IAI's robotics center is at the cutting edge of robotics technology in autonomous navigation, C4I, sensor fusion, communications, high and low level control, and micro robotics. IAI's robotics development methodology is integrated with operational experience, creating practical robotic solutions for a wide variety of operational fields and missions.

Radar Systems, Special Mission Aircraft, C4ISR and Cyber-Intelligence Platforms: IAI's subsidiary and group ELTA Systems, specializes in a wide spectrum of defense electronic systems in the area of radars, special mission aircraft, ISTAR, electronic warfare and communications. ELTA provides comprehensive solutions for military and para-military uses, tailored and adapted to customers and users' special requirements, thereby creating a unique competitive advantage. ELTA has a variety of technological excellence centers, as well as unique state-of-the-art facilities and national infrastructures and is Israel's national radar house - providing state of the art air and missile defense radars. ELTA systems has accumulated extensive



experience in critical infrastructure, border and oil rig protection, as well as Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) protection and monitoring. The Company also offers full suits and comprehensive tools for all cyber-intelligence and defense needs, serving law enforcement and homeland security agencies, military and national intelligence agencies. IAI's cyber solutions handle all levels from the interception of raw signals, their collection and analysis, to advanced user-directed monitoring of activities, research and targeting.

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A fight to the death?

Calls for peace don't seem to mean much in South Sudan



By Rajiv Golla
WAW, 11 July 2016

If the fighting in Juba between the forces of President Salva Kiir and Vice President Riek Machar marks South Sudan's return to civil war, it won't be for a lack of warnings over the shakiness of the peace.

The power-sharing agreement that saw Machar return to Juba in late April was always going to be difficult to implement. There were already concerns about the demilitarisation of the opposing armies, issues over drafting a new constitution, and, thorniest of all, Kiir's determination to create additional states – opposed by Machar and the international community.

Machar's return marked the end of a two-and-a-half-year civil war in which government and opposition forces alike committed mass atrocities against civilians. Much of the brutality took place along ethnic lines, with Kiir's largely Dinka soldiers targeting civilians of Machar's mainly Nuer people, and vice versa.

After five days of fighting in Juba, the situation remains confused. Hundreds of people have been killed in the violence, in which heavy artillery and helicopter gunships have been used. Thousands more have been displaced, fleeing the city or looking for refuge in churches, schools, and NGO compounds. The humanitarian community is in lockdown.

"Some neighbourhoods have been badly hit and you can imagine that after five days of fighting people's food stocks are low," Feargal O'Connell, country director of the aid agency Concern, told IRIN.

"Both parties signed up to this peace agreement and are aware of their obligations," said O'Connell. "Regardless of what's going on, it's clear what everybody needs is peace."

But there had been a sense of inevitability about this latest round of violence. Both leaders were seemingly shoehorned into the peace deal – Kiir even questioned it as "not made to be implemented" – and in the last few weeks there were reports of senior members of Machar's SPLA-IO being assassinated in Juba by hitmen from Kiir's SPLA.

Not-so phoney war

Juba was also not the first incidence of violence this year. In February more than 18 people died when SPLA soldiers broke into the UN-administered Protection of Civilians compound in Malakal, Upper Nile, following growing ethnic tensions between the Dinka and the Nuer and Shilluk communities in the camp.

Philippe Carr, regional communications advisor for Médecins Sans Frontières, described Malakal today as "stable so far", but it's just one of several ethnically mixed areas that could be enflamed by the violence in Juba.



UN House IDP camp in Juba - fighting has come close to UN compounds. UN Photo/Albert González Farran

What was a political division between Kiir and dissenters within the ruling SPLA has degenerated into an ethnic conflict.

Kiir's determination to increase the number of states from 10 to 28 is regarded by his opponents as deliberate gerrymandering to expand Dinka political and economic power.

The purging by the government army two weeks ago of parts of Wau, South Sudan's second largest city, is seen by some as just the latest example.

The government claimed the city was attacked by the "Islamic Militia Movement", an unlikely alliance of Uganda's Lord's Resistance Army, Sudan's notorious Janjaweed militia that terrorised the Darfur region, and dissident local game rangers – all backed by Khartoum.

A longstanding plan

But eyewitnesses insist the attack was mounted by the army and aimed at the Fertit, a community that some within the government believe are allied to Machar's SPLA-IO. There are reports of mass graves and bodies dumped into the nearby Jur River, with some accounts putting the death toll at around 400.

Much of Wau remains abandoned. Homes were torched and looted by the SPLA and local Dinka youth in the southern and western sections of the city, beginning in Nazareth Quarter and stretching down Lokoloko Road, which is known to be predominately Fertit.

This weekend, shooting could still be heard around Lokoloko Road, with reports of burning and theft continuing



in the Jebel Kher area.

Juma Marial, a resident of Nazareth Quarter, showed IRIN what remained of his home. The thatching on his roof was burnt away and his brick walls are scorched black. The rooms inside have been ransacked, old family photos and clothes strewn across the yard.

"We ran to the church on Friday," he explained. "We came back the next day and found this. There's nothing left."

Marial continues to sleep in the church compound, too fearful of SPLA patrols to return home.

Huge suffering

Some 120,000 people fled their homes in Wau. Approximately 25,000 displaced have taken refuge at the UN's camp; tens of thousands others are scattered across the city seeking shelter wherever they can, and countless more have taken to the bush. According to the International Committee of the Red Cross, they have reached 70,000 with food aid in the past two weeks.

"The last time I remember something of this scale was in the 1980s [during the civil war before independence]," Father Moses Peter, humanitarian coordinator with the Catholic Diocese of Wau, told IRIN.

The surge in violence began in December, when the army deployed additional troops in a heavy-handed counter-insurgency operation against Fertit rebels to the west of Wau. According to Human Rights Watch, soldiers "killed, tortured, raped, and detained civilians and looted and burned down homes".

The troops were under the command of Chief of General Staff Paul Malong, the former governor of Northern Bahr El Ghazal, who is seen by some as the architect of the current violence in Juba.

Many IDPs IRIN spoke to believe the attack on Wau is part of a longstanding policy aimed at extending Dinka domination in what is an ethnically divided region.

The existence of a Fertit militia dates back to 2012, when a demonstration against what was perceived as government encroachment on Fertit land was fired on by the SPLA. Twenty-four protesters were killed.

Fertit youth took to the bush. In 2014, their militia allied with the better-armed SPLA-IO, cementing the animosity and mistrust brewing between Dinka and Fertit groups.

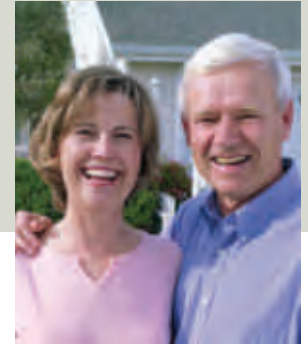
There is a proliferation of militia in South Sudan, which has complicated demobilisation. Before last week, both sides accused each other of continuing attacks.

But Kiir's SPLA has seemed the more aggressive party, attacking cantonment sites in Western Equatoria and Western Bahr el Ghazal, where SPLA-IO troops were supposed to assemble. The government's response has been to deny there are legitimate SPLA-IO forces in those regions.

And so South Sudan has slipped and slid to this current point. On 9 July, it celebrated its fifth anniversary of independence. Kiir and Machar might call for peace, but there is growing unease that what we are actually witnessing might be a fight to the death.

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United Nations to move non-critical staff out of South Sudan

The United Nations said on Thursday it will move non-critical staff out of South Sudan after an eruption of violence and has received reports accusing President Salva Kiir's troops of targeting U.N. staff and foreign aid workers amid the fighting.

U.N. spokesman Stephane Dujarric described the reports as "highly disturbing" and called on South Sudanese authorities to investigate and bring the perpetrators to justice. He said the U.N. peacekeeping mission in South Sudan, known as UNMISS, was also investigating the incidents, including its own response.

"The reports include allegations of the killing of at least one South Sudanese national working for an international NGO, as well as rapes, including of international NGO staff. U.N. staff members have also been assaulted," Dujarric told reporters.

He said the allegations were made against South Sudanese army troops, who are loyal to Kiir.

The South Sudanese mission to the United Nations was not immediately available to comment on the accusations.

Fighting between rival troops began a week ago in the capital Juba, which has been calm since Monday evening when Kiir and Riek Machar - the former rebel leader and now vice president - ordered their respective forces to cease hostilities. But residents remain tense and many foreigners have been leaving.

"The U.N. mission, as well as other U.N. agencies, funds and programs are preparing for the temporary relocation of non-critical staff from Juba," said Dujarric, adding that they would likely be moved to Nairobi, though he did not have any figures.

U.N. peacekeepers have been deployed in South Sudan since the country gained independence from Sudan in 2011. There are currently some 13,500 troops and police on the ground.

U.N. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon urged the Security Council on Monday to impose an arms embargo on South Sudan, sanction leaders and commanders blocking a peace deal and fortify the peacekeeping mission.

Kiir and Machar have long been rivals in politics and on the battlefield. A civil war that began in December 2013 came a few months after Kiir dismissed Machar as his deputy. They signed a peace deal in August 2015, but implementation has been slow.

Uganda's army began evacuating citizens from inside neighbouring South Sudan, while the United States has deployed 47 troops to South Sudan to protect U.S. citizens and the embassy in Juba.

(Reporting by Michelle Nichols) Retrieved from: <http://www.reuters.com/article/southsudan-security-un-idUSL1N1A01FN> on 16 July 2016.



Families displaced by ongoing fighting seek shelter in the UN Protection of Civilians site in Wau, South Sudan. Photo: UNICEF/UN027532/Ohanesian

UN Mission in the Sudan UNMIS

By Major David Williams

In Mar 2005 the UN Security Council Resolution 1590 authorised a peacekeeping mission in Sudan following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) by the warring Government of Sudan and the Sudanese Peoples Liberation Movement (SPLM). The CPA ended a civil war that had lasted 21 years. This Mission was known as the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS)

The Australian Government provided a small contingent to UNMIS drawn from the Army, Navy and Air Force. The contingent was stationed in multiple locations throughout the Sudan. The contingent was involved in a variety of roles within the UNMIS as both Staff Officers and UN Military Observers. UNMIS was scheduled to stay in the Sudan for seven years from 2005-2011. During 2010 I was part of the Australian Contingent Sudan 11. I worked as an Operations Officer in the main Military HQ in Khartoum in Northern Sudan and in Western Bahr Ghazal and Western Equatoria in the South. One of my roles was to act as the Military Liaison Officer to the United Nations Integrated Referendum and Election Division (UNIRENED). I also worked in developing Military Policy and SOPs for Troop Contributing Countries.

I will try and convey to you some of my experiences and observations from my time with UNMIS. Also, I will try to give you an impression of what is to be a Peace Keeper.

Please forgive the fact that at times I may express views and opinions that do not necessarily reflect Govt, UN, NGO or other interested parties views.

The main task of UNMIS was to monitor and support the implementation of the political, military, humanitarian and developmental aspects of the CPA. This included:

- Assist with the return of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP).
- Providing de-mining assistance.
- Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of former combatants.
- Protect and promote human rights.
- Assist in with efforts to control / eradicate HIV / AIDS.
- Promote the rule of law, develop an independent Judiciary and the re-establishment of the Sudanese prison system.
- Prevent, mitigate and resolve tribal conflict also known as in the UN Military HQ as "Cow Wars".
- Assist with the conduct of the elections and referendum on self-determination.
- Monitor the redeployment of forces North and South of the Current Border Line (CBL) also known as the 1-1-56 line.
- Other Standing Military Tasks where to:
 - Protect UN pers, installations facilities, and equipment.
 - Ensure security and freedom of movement of UN



Photos: APPVA Member Major David Williams and his service with the United Nations Mission in South Sudan [UNMISS].



pers and humanitarian workers.

- Without prejudice to responsibility of the Government of Sudan and within capability, protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence. (POC)

The Sudan was the largest country in Africa and is dominated by the river Nile River and its tributaries. It is bordered by Egypt, Eritria, Ethiopia, Kenya, Uganda, The Democratic Republic of the Congo, The Central African Republic, Chad and Libya. (All of whom are really great neighbours!) In the north it is mainly desert and in the south jungle and flat savannah. At times it is hot, dry and wet much like Australia. A daytime temperature of 50 Deg C in downtown Khartoum was not unusual. The Sudan has vast undeveloped natural resources in which many are interested.

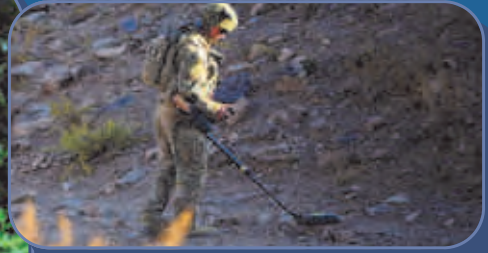
The situation in Sudan was, and still is, far more complicated than being about tension between the GoS and the SPLM. Tensions also exist between its many tribes, rebels in Dafur, on the eastern border with Eritrea and militias or Other Armed Groups (OAG) as we knew them. You need to understand that the Sudan is an extremely complicated country with a vast array of competing issues.

When I arrived in the Sudan the situation in UNMIS AOR was slowly deteriorating with a noticeable behavioural change in the SAF / SPLA towards UNMIS operations. The election had been held successfully paving way for the referendum of self determination. UN forces had lost freedom of movement; with constant clashes between varied groups occurring throughout the country prior to the referendum. These included numerous tribal incidents in the south. Daily reported deaths become so common that we did not report them unless more the 50 occurred in any one incident. The overall security situation in the UNMIS AOR continued to deteriorate, while I was there,

with many examples of continued troop movement towards the 1-1-56 line by both sides occurring. The SPLA imposed restrictions on the freedom of movement of UNMIS and contractor logistic support convoys. A number of conveys were interdicted by the SPLA with examples of driver harassment and unauthorised opening and / or seizure of vehicles and the containers they carried. These incidents where clear violation the CPA. One incident involved the theft by the SPLA of 13 Bangladesh APC that took many weeks to get back.

On-going concern about tribal violence remained a focus of UNMIS throughout my time in the Sudan. In the south cows were of more value then people. Cattle raiding and abduction of women and children was a constant occurrence. The likelihood of military contacts between SAF and SPLA was also a constant threat, with many of the acts of violence, such a rape and murder, committed by these organizations whose role it was to protect the very people they violated. Many OAGs such as Kony's Lords Resistance Army operated throughout the Sudan exposing issues such slavery and the use of children as soldiers. The ability of UNMIS Military to provide rapid reaction to incidents took three days at best, never at worst.

What is like to be a UN Military or Police Peacekeeper in an environment of this nature? Upfront I would like to say that the UN is full of very good people and very bad people. It is overly bureaucratic and at times can be a self interested and inwardly focused. Poor management and inefficiency exists creating an environment that does not, at times, support those at the coal face. Getting any thing done is challenging and time consuming. Lots of stamps and signatures are required to enact the simplest requirement. The UN take a lot time to gain consensus for minor decisions let along major ones. Patience and diplomacy are very much needed tools when working in the UN.



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Delivering global protection

It is integral to being a member of a UN Mission that you remain impartial and be prepared to be very consultative in getting things done. As I said I was also the Military Liaison Officer to the United Nations Integrated Referendum and Election Division (UNIRED). This was a group of people, I was to lean, were very skillful in these areas. When I started in this role the Election had been held forming the Government of National Unity and paving the way for the referendum to determine whether the Sudan should be divided into two separate countries or remain as one. The people who worked for UNIRED came from many different countries with many of them having been in the Sudan for several years prior to the Election. Several had worked East Timor assisting with the elections there. They had organised a very successful election and were gearing up for the referendum to be held in a few months time. I found them to be a very dedicated team who worked hard in what at times was a very confusing and hostile environment. The success of both the Election and Referendum is testament to their dedication and ability. I had great respect and admiration for the members of this team.

The Military and Police that I worked with were from many nations and were typically very easy to work with or very challenging with some even refusing to work at all. It was just too hard for the UN to get rid of those Military or Police personnel that were not willing to work. It all became too diplomatic or confrontational. That said I worked with many fantastic Military, Police and Civilian personnel from many countries for whom I had and have the highest regards. You develop very good relationships with many and tend to get quite close to them. I worked with Officers, Policemen and civilians from all over the world. I became particularly close to many of the AFP and Dutch Police contingent. These UN Police men and women worked very hard in establishing the rule of law, developing community policing and rebuilding the prison system in the Sudan.

As the desk officer for nearly two thirds of Southern Sudan I regularly attended the UNMO Team Leader meetings where the Team Site Leaders would discuss activity within their area of responsibility seeking resolution of issues they encountered. One Team Leader a Norwegian Navy Commander, whose team site was based in a town called Maridi, was complaining of wide spread cases of Malaria at the team site and an issue with a plague of Black Mamba Snakes. The Black Mamba is popularly regarded as the most dangerous and feared snake in Africa. The venom of the black mamba is highly toxic, commonly causing collapse in humans within 45 minutes or less from a single bite. Without effective antivenin therapy, death typically occurs in 7–15 hours. These two issues sounded relatively simple to solve but they were not. Malaria can be controlled easily, but it became clear that the Bangladesh Soldiers at the team site had no equipment or drugs to do so. The required equipment and drugs were available in the UN Logistic Base at El Obeid, but we found that much of it had not been issued to the Team Sites in the previous six years of UNMIS. A Japanese Army Officer who I worked with, MAJ Toshie Sato, worked very hard to remediate this issue against a background of resilient bureaucracy. Time and perseverance eventually paid off with the equipment and drugs getting to all Team Sites.



Major David Williams who has served in the Australian Army for over 40 years.

The Maridi Team Site Leader had also said that they had killed over 60 snakes in the previous month and he also pointed out that a locally employed security guard had died the previous week from a snake bite. He should not have died as antivenin was available, but the Bangladesh medical officer could not get permission from Senior Medical personnel in the Khartoum HQ to use it. This issue did not occur again because of some angry outcry by certain Staff Officers in the Military HQ.

Life as a peace keeper is not all “Beer and Skittles” and the life in an isolated team site can be difficult in the extreme. Many in Australia would be shocked to know that Military and Police Peace Keepers are in most cases responsible for providing their own food and sometimes accommodation. Yes the UN provides money to do this, but in a country where most people are subsistence farmers you don’t find a Coles or Woolworths store on every corner. My mates in Maridi lived on what could be purchased in Juba on rare visits and then transported back to their Team Site. Fresh meat was a luxury purchased once a week when the meat was fresh killed with fresh vegetables restricted to local onions and tomatoes supplemented by canned veggies.

As a member of UNMIS some unique opportunities occur such as ANZAC Day in downtown Khartoum. I attended the 2010 ANZAC day at the Commonwealth War Grave in Khartoum. This War Grave is the same as those found throughout the Western Front, beautifully kept and peaceful with graves going back to the Maridi’s Sudan War. To give you an idea of the eclectic nature of the Military and Police Peace Keepers I worked with this ceremony was attended by Australians, Canadians, British, New Zealanders, Germans, Japanese, Turkish, Indian, Egyptian, Dutch, Bangladesh, Rwandans and Brazilian UN Military, Police



An MI-17 UN Helicopter

and Civilian men and woman, friends and former enemies, a strange ANZAC Day indeed.

This is a very small snap shot of what unarmed Military and Police Peace keepers encounter and do. Any of the individual tasks carried out by them would fill many pages, Disarmament, Demobilization, and De-mining activities would fill books. I have not spoken of our work in detail

Families speak about military loved ones lost and how we failed them

Each family which agreed to be part of this special report lost their sons, husbands or fathers in the past two years. They ranged in age from 21 to 57. Most of them were in their 20s and 30s when they died. Almost all had been deployed to overseas operations, including Iraq, East Timor, Afghanistan or served on navy ships involved in border patrol.

The concerns were backed by former Chief of Army and Soldier On chairman Peter Leahy, who said the government needed to “step up and own the problem”. “The number of suicides and the incidence of despair, depression and broken lives among our veteran community is a national shame,” Retired Lieutenant General Leahy said. “Before we lose any more lives we need action and we need it now. It is time to stop talking about the problem.”

The investigation has found:

- Families are forced to look after sick and suicidal veterans with no offer of help or training from the defence force.
- The system set up to help injured veterans after they leave service — administered by the Department of Veteran Affairs — was too complicated, legalistic and slow.
- Some veterans waited four years or more to finally receive legitimate entitlements from the DVA because an “insurance company” mentality meant they fought veterans’ claims unnecessarily and lost their documents.
- The GPs of veterans who leave or are discharged from military service are not automatically forwarded mental health records.
- Service people injured at work and medically discharged from the ADF have to prove their service-related injury to the DVA when seeking compensation or pensions later.
- Charity groups are scrambling to help fill the welfare void, with almost 3500 listing veterans as beneficiaries — 519 of which have them as sole beneficiaries.
- Parents of school leavers are calling some veteran groups asking them to encourage their children not to enlist.
- Online registers run by veteran volunteers must rely on social media and families and friends reporting the suicide deaths. They believe the true numbers are likely to be much higher, but there are no official figures available.
- At least 300 veterans who wrote despairing social media messages known as “last posts” were door-knocked by veteran volunteers around the country in the past year.

Lauren Ashby, wife of Sergeant John Ashby, a veteran of East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan, said the military let her husband

and have only attempted to give you a small window into the life of a Peace Keeper. It is sad to say that not much has changed in the Sudan since I was there. The most important change was the referendum of self determination that separated the country into Sudan and South Sudan. A new UN mission now exist in the south, UNMISS, and I still have the opportunity to read reports on their activity. It is sad to note that the same things that I reported some six years ago are still being reported on today. UN forces have lost freedom of movement; with constant clashes between various groups occurring throughout the country including numerous tribal incidents, with daily reported deaths common. All that the Peace Keeper can do is continue to work to improve these conditions; you must remember that evil will always win when good men and women do nothing. I am pleased to say that the UN is full of good men and woman who try to do something against all that is thrown at them from within and without.

down because of its lack of support for his PTSD. He suicided in October 2014. When he was discharged, the breadth of his service meant he fell across three complicated DVA entitlement Acts, “It took such an enormous effort to have his claims accepted. And I’m trained in administration so I can’t imagine how hard it would be for others,” Mrs Ashby said.

Source: Ruth Lamperd.

From the Facebook site Iraq and Afghanistan Veterans’ of Australia (IAVA):

“We have often stated on this Page that perhaps DVA are no longer the effective and efficient vehicle to deliver services to the veteran community. We are aware there are calls for a Royal Commission into the operations of DVA and perhaps with the apparent lack of action by DVA and indeed the revolving door of Ministers, a Royal Commission may be the most appropriate vehicle to bring change and apportion blame to why this system is failing its clients. It is time to have this serious debate.

We know that senior DVA staff (and Defence) follow this page and raise the point that the Canberra centric bureaucratic focus of “one size fits all” is no longer the appropriate method of service.

Today’s article in News Ltd again spells another series of failures for DVA. Our advice to senior DVA staff is to get out of Canberra and sit one on one with veterans who have been failed by the system and the Dept. We commend senior Defence members for doing this but still Defence has a path yet to travel with how people are discharged.

News Ltd claims DVA, which processes veteran claims, is plagued by a system so archaic it has not yet arrived in the digital age. Files are sent snail mail, city to city, to sections within DVA for lengthy processing. They get lost or stalled on the desks, adding to the distress of young vets who may be homeless or contemplating suicide.

In March, a Senate committee inquiry found veterans were “being discharged into homelessness” from psychiatric wards. It considered this a “significant dereliction of duty” by DVA and the hospitals concerned.

Where will this mess end? Another family break-down? Another suicide? Another homeless veteran?”

Retrieved from Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/IAVAUST/?fref=nf> Iraq & Afghanistan Veteran’s Association (IAVA), dated 17 April. Retrieved on 8 August 2016.

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Visit to the NATO Memorial by our recently appointed Australian Representative



By The NATO International Memorial Foundation

Paul was recently in France lecturing in Paris on the symptoms and effects of PTSD. Whilst he was here he made a special pilgrimage to the NATO Memorial to lay a wreath dedicated to the memory of the 42 Australian soldiers killed in action during the deployment

of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan. The President, First Vice President and all members of the NATO Memorial Committee wish to pass on their appreciation to Paul for making such a visit under very difficult circumstances. The trip to Fréthun was initially by TGV but this was cancelled at the last minute due to a combination of strike action and the unfortunate breakdown of the local train from his Hotel to Gare du Nord.

Not being deterred Paul hired a car and made his way to Fréthun arriving late afternoon on 5th June 2016. Paul was duly invited to visit the UK with our Secretary and British Military Liaison / Webmaster on the 6th June D-Day, to visit the Secret War Tunnels under Dover Castle and the Underground Hospital which saw many a Pilot on their singular operating table. Paul returned to Australia on the 7th June having had a full schedule and many a long day. Paul passes on his gratitude to all those he met during his

short but action packed stay. Paul hopes to visit us again next year.

Paul Copeland served in the Australian Regular Army for 20 years. During that time he specialised in Communications, Information Systems, and Electronic Warfare. Paul served in a range of postings in Field, Strategic, Special Forces, Electronic Warfare, and Force Development. Paul also served on Humanitarian Operations in 1992 - Vanuatu (OP ASPEN) Active service in 1993 - to the Force Communications Unit to the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (OP GEMINI) and Peacekeeping Service during the period 1995 - 1996 in the Multinational Force & Observers - Sinai (OP MAZURKA).

Paul holds Ministerial appointments and membership in a range of Veteran and Defence National and State (Victoria) forums. Paul is the former National President of the Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association (APPVA), a position that he held from 2002 to 2010. He is the Association Internationale des Soldats de la Paix (AISP) aka Soldiers of Peace International Association (SPIA) Australian President and the Oceania Representative, building International ties with veterans from all over the world.

A link to the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial Site can be found on our Friends page <http://www.nato-memorial.eu/our-friends-nos-amis/>



L-R Iza Radzik (Poland); Laurent Attar-Bayrou (National President SPIA of France); Jerzy Banach (International Vice President SPIA and President Polish Peacekeeper Association); Krystnya Banach (Polish Peacekeepers); Vitaly (Lithuania); Piero Loddò (SPIA France); and Paul Copeland (International Vice President SPIA and President SPIA Oceania/Australia).



A United States Marine Corps MV-22B Osprey aircraft lands on board HMAS Canberra off the north east coast of Hawaii during Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2016.



MV-22 Osprey lands on HMAS Canberra

HMAS *Canberra* has successfully landed a United States Marine Corps (USMC) MV-22 Osprey tiltrotor aircraft on its flight deck for the very first time.

The trial was conducted as part of the Sea Phase for Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2016 off the north east coast of Hawaii.

Commander Air, HMAS *Canberra*, Commander Adrian Capner said the trial was the culmination of twelve months work.

“The achievement has been very rewarding,” he said.

“It demonstrates that we are capable of interacting with our coalition partners, in particular the United States.

“It also shows that we can adapt and remain agile to operate a whole range of international aircraft, not just aircraft in the Australian fleet.”

Manufactured by Bell Boeing, the MV-22 Osprey has a wingspan of 14 metres and a length of 17.5 metres.

The aircraft has a cruising speed of 446 kilometres at sea level; a range of more than 1,600 kilometres, and the capacity to carry up to 32 troops or 9,000 kilograms of internal cargo.

To arrive at HMAS *Canberra*, the Osprey flew several hundred kilometres from the US Navy Landing Helicopter Amphibious, USS *America* on station off the east coast of Oahu.

USMC Osprey pilot and USS *America* Detachment Commander, Major Brandon Woods was prepositioned

in *Canberra*’s Flight Command (FLYCO) for the aircraft arrival.

“Generally speaking, what we’re looking to achieve is interoperability with the Australians,” he said.

“In the future, when the United States and Australian navies are operating together, we can fluidly land on our respective ships and conduct missions, whatever that tasking may be.

“After today’s success, we are well on our way to doing this organically.

Leading Seaman Aviation Support Michael Wenzell said the Osprey’s size was impressive.

“Directing such a large aircraft to land and take off was daunting at first,” he said.

“Once we got it on board and sized it up, it was excellent.

“We treated it just like any other aircraft.”

The MV-22 Osprey deck trial is part a series of high end war fighting exercises taking place during the Sea Phase of Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 16.

RIMPAC is the world’s largest international maritime exercise, providing a unique training opportunity that helps participants foster and sustain cooperative relationships that are critical to ensuring the safety of sea lanes and security on the world’s oceans.

The exercise is the first major international engagement for the Royal Australian Navy’s Landing Helicopter Dock (LHD), MH-60R Seahawk and MRH-90 helicopters.

A United States CH-53E Super Stallion aircraft from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 463 based at Marine Corps Air Station Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii lands on the flight deck of HMAS Canberra off the coast of Hawaii during Exercise Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) 2016.



SPIA Oceania Activities for 2016

To all SPIA Board Members; APPVA National Executive; SPIA Delegates; and Representatives

Assistance to Timor Leste

1. The SPIA Oceania is to contact the Timor Leste Embassy in Canberra, in order to provide support toward a call from former President, now Minister for Planning and Strategic Investment, Xanana Gusmao. Mr Gusmao has called on the Peacekeepers of Australia to lobby the Australian Government to assist with an International borderline dispute for rich oil and gas reserves to be owned by Timor Leste.

The matter is being sought through various channels in order to contact Mr Gusmao through the Timor Leste Embassy to discuss the dispute and seek further information to fully understand the situation and discuss with veterans of Peacekeeping in East Timor to consider such support.

Link: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-11-17/east-timor-appeals-to-australian-public-in-border-dispute/6949604>

International Terrorism

2. We are increasingly concerned with Islamic Extremism in Australia and Internationally. Australia was shocked with the brazen and brutal attacks by Terrorists on Paris on 13 November 2015 at St Denis. Our thoughts and sympathies go to not only the immediate families and friend of those who were murdered or affected by these cowardly attacks, but with France itself in having such an attack that follows the Charlie Hebdo, Jewish Market and other killings in France.

Additional credible terrorist threats have been and continue to be made in Eastern Europe in Germany and Belgium. It is clear that the need for stabilisation of the Middle East is required to bring not only a degree of peace to the troubled region, but also to eliminate da'esh (ISIS), particularly in the Syrian Campaign.

Australia also remains a target, with our Intelligence and Security forces thwarting a number of attempted and planned attacks on innocent civilians, police and Military establishments on our home soil. The problem is a major concern to all free countries.

3. The effect of the Syrian Conflict has had marked effects in Iraq, Turkey and Europe with the mass exodus of refugees, which is one of the largest crisis that the world has seen since World War 2. The UN must provide a Humanitarian Intervention of a Multinational Force. However, the politics involved in Syria and Iraq are complicated and can be lost in the provision of an effective potential Peacekeeping Force with Chapter VII of the UN Charter provisions.

4. This is a matter that we recommend is lobbied by all Delegates to their respective Governments to seek resolution to this crisis, which will in turn bring about International Peace, Stabilisation, Humanity and Security.

Web-based Membership – SPIA

5. Discussion with many members of the Australian Peacekeeper community – particularly with the Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association (APPVA), has identified the economical requirement of SPIA to provide a web-based membership system.

6. At this point in time, Australian Peacekeeper Veterans are declining membership with SPIA as a result of cost prohibitive charges for wiring money to SPIA in Lyon. Whilst 5 Euro is around \$8AUD, which is cheap, the fees for the transfer to wire the money individually is \$37AUD (23.59 Euro), which is viewed by APPVA members as excessively expensive.

7. Therefore, it is highly recommended that SPIA develop a web-based Membership payment system in consultation with the SPIA Board of the President and the four International Vice Presidents at a meeting this May/June 2016.

Australian Peacekeeper Mental Health Study

8. After several years of lobbying for a “snap shot” of Australian Defence Force Peacekeepers [ADF PK], the APPVA was successful in lobbying to have a Mental Health Study that began in 2008. Paul Copeland was the Peacekeeper Consultative Member on this Study Committee. The results were belatedly released on 28 October 2014 by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs.

9. The results show a very concerning situation of a highly vulnerable group of Peacekeeper Veterans who have a high rate of incidence of Mental Health and PTSD comorbidity [38%], eclipsing the Australian Viet Nam War Veterans in terms of illness per head of capita of veterans. The study highlighted the Mental Health of five Australian deployments of UNTAG (Namibia – 1989-1990); UNAMIC & UNTAC (Cambodia 1991-1993); MINURSO (Western Sahara 1991-1994); UNOSOM, UNITAF & UNOSOM II (Somalia 1992-1995); and UNAMIR II (Rwanda 1994-1995).

10. There are high levels of substance (Drugs and Alcohol) abuse; isolation; anger; suicide; demoralisation; and relationship failures. Paul Copeland has published a paper in the “Australian Peacekeeper Magazine”, link: www.peacekeepers.asn.au Go to the “Past Editions” hyperlink on the navigation pane. The Article is in the “Spring” Edition and attached.

11. The Canadian Veteran's Administration (CVA) were highly interested in the results of this study, as they will be using the data to make comparisons with Canadian Peacekeepers. The study is claimed by the Australian Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) as a “world first” of it's kind, and is specifically related to the mental health of Peacekeepers, with comparative groups from veterans deployed to East Timor, Solomon Islands, Iraq and Afghanistan, along with the general population of Australia.

12. It is intended that Paul Copeland would like to present a paper, with approval from the President and SPIA Delegates, on a comparative analysis of Australian Peacekeeper Mental Health with other International Studies of Peacekeepers at the UNOG Commemoration and UNESCO in May/June 2016. The DVA link to review the data, including the separate Rwanda Veteran Health Study is at: <http://www.dva.gov.au/health-and-wellbeing/research-and-development/health-studies/peacekeepers-health-study>

Future Events

13. Participation in a Young Veteran Rally in Canberra on 2 March 2016. This is a protest Rally to call on the Federal Government to enact a Royal Commission into the problems encountered by veterans in the Australian Department of Veterans' Affairs.

14. Visits across Victoria (S.E. Australia) to raise money for the National Peacekeeping Memorial in Canberra. Link: <http://www.peacekeepingmemorial.org.au/> This is in preparation for the 70th Anniversary of Australian Military Peacekeeping Operations on 14th September 2017. Planning will be made with the Committee to Commemorate this significant milestone.

15. Continue liaison with Mr Gusmao of Timor Leste in relation to the Oil and Gas fields problem.

16. Lobby Government for the rights of Australian Peacekeepers and Young Veterans in Legislative changes. This includes follow-up action on the outcomes of the ADF Peacekeeper Mental Health Study.

17. Continue to serve as a member of the National Advisory Committee (NAC) for the Veteran's and Veteran's Families Counselling Service [VVCS]. Link: <http://www.vvcs.gov.au/>

18. Continue to provide Advocacy for Australian Veterans in service classification and medallic recognition, particularly for UNTSO in Lebanon [1958-1984] and NATO OP PROVIDE COMFORT [1991].

Event Dates

19. 2 March – Political Rally for Veterans in Canberra.

20. 7-11 March – Participate in the Australian Defence Force [ADF] Peace Operations Training Centre [POTC], Seminar, Canberra.

21. 25 April – 101st Anniversary of the Gallipoli Landings (Australian and New Zealand Army Corps [ANZAC]) Day. ANZAC Day is Australia's major Veteran Day event for the year. APPVA will be conducting services and activities across Australia. This year commemorates the 50th Anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan (South Viet Nam War) and the battles on the Western Front in France and Belgium from World War One. Visit Up-Coming Events on the APPVA Website: www.peacekeepers.asn.au

22. 24 or 25 April (TBA) – ANZAC Day, Antibes, France (Flyer is attached). The theme is the value of the service of horses during the First World War. Point of Contact is SPIA Australia Vice President, Steve Wright, email: anzac.antibes@yahoo.com



23. 19 May to 6 June – Visit to Peacekeepers Associations in Poland, and Belgium. Participate in SPIA activities at UNOG, Lyon and UNESCO. Commemoration of the 67th Anniversary of UN International Day of UN Peacekeepers [29 May].

24. 14 September – 69th Commemoration of ADF Peacekeeping Operations, National Peacekeeping Memorial Site, Canberra.

25. 24 October – 71st Commemoration of the United Nations. United Nations Association of Australia [UNAA].

26. Potential participation in the Statutory Committee for Veterans in the Asia Pacific [SCAP] of the World Veterans' Federation [WVF].

Conclusion

27. 2016 is presenting itself as a busy year for SPIA Oceania. The 70th Anniversary of Military Peacekeeping in Australia will be a significant milestone in our Peacekeeping History in Australia and we are confident that this will coincide with the completion of our National Memorial, which has been planned since 2005.

28. Our team looks forward to a progressive year in the SPIA and hope to see a progressive development of the SPIA, with the view to improve the membership and information of the SPIA to the International Peacekeeper Veteran Community.

Yours Sincerely,

(Signed)

P. A. Copeland OAM JP

CBus; Adv Dip Communications - Electronic Mgt; Adv Dip Government Management; Dip FM; Dip Project Mgt; Dip TAS



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Generally speaking, the 'communicator' (the deliverer) is responsible for making themselves understood and the 'communicatee' (the recipient) should seek to gain clarity, for it is amidst misunderstandings and miscommunication that some of our greatest tragedies and faults occur at all layers of humanity – within individual relationships, family settings, communities, organizations and societies, and between countries.

"To be discerning about the information you receive is the key to its effective utilization. Ascertain what information is valid and true, useful and constructive, and then apply it in a manner that achieves positive, worthwhile outcomes." (p45)

Contrary to the belief of many, withholding information that

has the capacity to enlighten, inform and educate others is a negative use of one's personal power. Likewise, when someone uses information to deliberately cause hurt, or control others, or manipulate a situation for their sole or another's benefit, the outcome achieved will never be the most positive one possible. It's in everyone's best interests to see information as a tool for humanity's growth and development; a tool for helping us to achieve positive outcomes.

"....each step that we take, each decision we make has a strategic impact..." (p70)

Working together and sharing information will make us stronger in the face of adversity. When we think of peace, and how to achieve it, Ms Hennessy looks to our greatest strength being achieved together - in numbers. The more people advocating and working for peace, the more likely we are to achieve it (sooner rather than later).

"Sometimes it's difficult and very challenging to make sense of things that are happening every day. When your mind becomes cluttered with useless or too much information it's difficult to see the wood for the trees.

Time is what you must use wisely — to reflect, organize, rearrange or understand. Take time out to clear the debris, the unnecessary memories. Allow your subconscious mind time to process all the data you have inputted each day. Take time to work through your feelings. Listen to your heart. Take time to determine what you really want and then take action." (p88)

Powered by Serenidad Consulting® and supported through The Peace Ranch® being created in Texas USA, the new Facebook Page "Peace Powerhouse" was launched in August 2016. The Peace Powerhouse serves everyone everywhere, free of charge to members, as an information sharing and empowerment forum. Through sharing information and communicating together about peace, we can ensure the positive dialogue endures through all current adversity and can act as a bright light for positive change into the future. We welcome you to be a part of the peace conversation and use your personal power in the best possible way!

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Peacekeepers on the Move

June 2, 2016 by Henry Benjamin

Peacekeepers in Sinai are being moved from the north to south due to escalating violence by Islamic State militants.

The Americans have moved their soldiers and there are plans in place to bring all 338 Fijian troops home following their move from north to south.

The soldiers are part of a Multinational Force and Observers [MFO] whose mission is to supervise the implementation of the security provisions of the Egyptian-Israeli Treaty of Peace.

An Australian defence spokesman told J-Wire: "Twenty-five Australian Defence Force (ADF) members working under Operation Mazurka are assisting the Multinational Force and Observers in the Sinai, Egypt.

The security situation and force protection of ADF personnel are monitored on a daily basis in response to the specific tasks and conditions faced in each operational location.

The ADF will not discuss force protection measures in detail for operational security reasons."

New Zealand's Minister for Defence Gerry Brownlee told J-Wire: "We have concerns of the heightening activities of ISIS in the area. We are reconfiguring MFO and are using electronic surveillance. The Egyptians are taking the situation very seriously and I have spoken recently to both my Egyptian and Israeli counterparts.

The peace treaty between Israel and Egypt must be maintained.

Most of our contingent have been moved to the south camps and we will review the situation in late July/August.

Saying that the situation is being constantly monitored, Defence Minister Brownlee added: "We will see how successful the configurations are and have no other immediate plans."

New Zealand's Prime Minister John Key will visit Fiji next week.

Retrieved from: <http://www.jwire.com.au/peacekeepers-on-the-move/> on 3 June 2016.



Australia's Sponsorship to the MFO

Australia has agreed to become a financial donor and is committed to providing fiscal support for 3 years starting in MFO FY 2013 (October 1, 2012-September 30, 2013).

Australia has made many contributions to the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) over the years. This has included participation in an ANZAC helicopter unit in 1982-1986, contribution of a Force Commander, LTG David Ferguson (1994-7), and a current Australian contribution of 25 personnel in specialized roles on the staff of the Force Commander, led by an Australian deputy Chief of Operations.

The MFO has been advised that Australia, through the Ministry of Defence, will provide US\$500,000 of funding to the MFO in each of the three years, earmarked for force protection-related expenses. Australia joins Norway and the United States in being both a troop and financial contributor to the MFO.

The MFO's Director General, Ambassador David Satterfield, welcomed this increased Australian support for the MFO mission. He stated that "Australia's commitment to the MFO is long standing, and this decision only strengthens Australia's support for our mission of peace. My visit to Canberra in February 2012 confirmed that Australia has a keen appreciation of both the importance of our peacekeeping role and of the compelling case for broadening our sources of funding, particularly to help us continue to address recent security challenges in conducting our mission. The MFO is busier than it has ever been in the service of the Treaty of Peace, and this recognition of our work is greatly appreciated."

Retrieved from: <http://mfo.org/en/news/article/australia-becomes-mfo-donor> on 18 August 2016



Australian Peacekeeping Memorial to commence construction



Over the last decade a voluntary group of Australian peacekeeping veterans and organisations have been working, under the banner of the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial Project (APMP), on a vision to construct a national memorial to commemorate

Australian Peacekeeping - past, present and future. The goal is in sight.

Thanks to grants from the Australian Government supplemented by generous donations from Australian companies, veteran organisations and individuals, the project has now raised 75% of the funds necessary to realise the national memorial as it was originally envisaged following the national design competition. All design and documentation has been completed and a prototype programme undertaken to identify and eliminate any construction problems. Furthermore, all materials that had long acquisition times have been purchased and are now held in storage by the construction contractor.

The APMP now has sufficient funds to complete the site platform and courtyard, including insignia and inscriptions, and the installation of the memorial beam on which all peacekeeping missions will be shown.

Work should get underway at the approved site on Anzac Parade, Canberra in the next couple of months.

The two black monoliths separated by a "golden" lit passageway depicting the role of peacekeepers keeping belligerents apart will then be installed as soon as the remaining \$1m needed has been raised. If those funds have been raised by mid 2016 there will be a seamless continuation of construction that will ensure that the memorial is ready for 14th September 2017, the 70th anniversary of the first Australian peacekeepers to leave

home to participate in the world's first peacekeeping mission.

We seek your support to both publicise the Memorial's commencement and to encourage all Australian companies, veteran organisations and the Australian community to donate the additional funds needed to complete the total vision. All donations are tax deductible.

This funding will ensure that the wonderful contribution made by some 50,000 Australian peacekeepers – military, police and civilian – in over 60 international missions and into the future will be appropriately acknowledged and commemorated.

The National Peacekeeping Memorial Project has been operating for over 10 years. The concept initially raised by BRIG Allison Creagh (Retired); along with the APPVA National Delegation to the then Minister Dana Vale, MP in early 2004, seeking funds to commit toward the Project. The Delegation was led by Paul Copeland, the then National President of the APPVA; The National Secretary Robert Kennard; and the NQLD President Geoff "Lofty" Evans. The Government agreed that a National Peacekeeper Memorial that would recognise Australia's significant contribution toward International Peacekeeping Operations since the world's first unarmed UN Military Observers (UNMO) deployed into the field in Batavia, then the Dutch East Indies (Indonesia). These UNMO Officers were four Australian Defence Force members comprising of 2 Army, 1 Royal Australian Navy and 1 RAAF Officers, who laid the historical milestone of ADF Peacekeeping Operations that have been conducted non-stop to the present day. This year on 14th September 2016, will mark the 69th Anniversary of that deployment.

Our Peacekeepers continue to receive International accolade. Australian Peacekeepers also comprise of Australian Federal Police (AFP), who commenced their





non-stop Peacekeeping Record by serving in the UN Force in Cyprus in 1964, which continues to this day. There are a number of long term Peacekeeping Operations that our Military and Police continue to serve.

The memorial also commemorates Australian Civilians who have served on various UN and other Multinational Peacekeeping Operations as support staff and diplomats; along Defence Civilians (particularly in Bougainville as Peace Monitors).

Dana Vale, in 2004 undertook to commit \$200,000 toward the Peacekeeping Memorial and suggested that it be in the gardens of the Australian War Memorial (AWM). This of course was unacceptable to the Delegation who undertook to explain the merits of having the Memorial on ANZAC Parade, alongside those who have also served, died and suffered as a result to such noble service.

The Australian Peacekeeping Memorial Project Committee (APMPC), has been very fortunate to have been Chaired by Major General Tim Ford, AO (Retired), who has convinced the Australian Capital National Authority, the Prime Minister, various Ministers, various ADF Senior Officers and the Australian War Memorial [AWM] to have this worthwhile dedication to over 70,000 Australians who have served on such Operations. We have been very lucky to have a Chairman with the calibre of Tim. With Tim, there is a team of dedicated volunteers, who have worked hard for 10 years to make the Memorial a reality.

Between now and leading up to the proposed Dedication of the National Peacekeeping Memorial on ANZAC Parade, the APPVA is undertaking to fund-raise. In Victoria, Paul Copeland has liaised with the Victorian Branch President Major General David McLachlan, AO (Retired), in order to gain his approval to undergo a fund-raising campaign with a large number of Victorian Sub-Branches, seeking

Donations and placing fund-raising cans on the beer counters and in the gambling rooms. A campaign of awareness toward the Memorial will be conducted with each visit to each Sub-Branch. The first Sub-Branch will be the Geelong RSL Sub-Branch, followed by the Box Hill Sub-Branch.

Other APPVA Members are encouraged to undergo a similar Fund-Raising approach. A copy of the APMPC presentation is available by contacting Paul Copeland, co-founder of the APMPC and the long serving APPVA Representative on the APMPC Committee.

The importance and significance of this National Peacekeeping Memorial cannot be understated. Australia will join it's Commonwealth cousin, Canada in having such a National icon to remind the Public of the service, courage and sacrifice for several tens of thousands of Australian Defence, Police and Civilian Peacekeepers. This is a living memorial, recognising the non-stop service, particularly of the ADF of 70 years, which we aim to have the Memorial fully funded through such awareness and fund-raising. By having the continual reminder to the Public and the many visitors to Canberra, of our proud Peacekeeping History, makes it a prominent feature to understand the dangers of such service and helps with further understanding by the wider Community of the difficult nature of Peacekeeping Operations in some of the most dangerous countries in the world.

Please, Donate to this worthy cause. Visit the website: <http://www.peacekeepingmemorial.org.au/>

Become a Mate, a Sponsor or Donor today and help us build a Memorial that Commemorates Australia's longest ever Commitment to International Peace, Security and Stability.

Paul Copeland

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P02991

UN: Is increasingly focused on international attacks

Editor:

Another dimension or dynamic toward Peacekeeping Operations has revealed an increase in Terrorist attacks. We have seen the slaughter of 27 UN Peacekeepers with over 40 wounded in Mali this year by Islamic Militants. The Australian Contingent to the Multinational Force and Observers Sinai [MFO Sinai] has now moved its base to South Camp in the Southern Town of Sharm-el-Sheikh.

The Fijian Battalion did have the Tactical Area of Responsibility [TAOR] of the Northern Sector, with the Columbian Army providing North Camp Security.

The situation remains tenuous in all Peacekeeping Operations in the Middle East and Africa.

It is time for the ADF to review the Conditions of Service of those serving in MFO Sinai, UNMISS and UNTSO, due to this increased threat.

By MICHAEL ASTOR

UNITED NATIONS (AP) — The Islamic State group is entering a new phase with an increased emphasis on attacking international civilian targets, according to a United Nations report circulated Thursday.

The report by Secretary General Ban Ki-moon to the Security Council says the global threat from the Islamic State group remains high and continues to diversify even though its territorial expansion has been halted or even reversed in Iraq and Syria.

"Recent international attacks perpetrated by members of ISIL demonstrate that the terrorist group is now moving into a new phase, with the increased risk that well-prepared and centrally directed attacks on international civilian targets may become a more frequent occurrence," the report



United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon



states, using an acronym to refer to the group.

The report notes that in the last six months the Islamic State group has carried out attacks in 11 countries, excluding fighting in Syria, Iraq, Yemen, Afghanistan or Libya, killing more than 500 people and injuring hundreds more.

It also said that an increasing number of "foreign terrorist fighters" were returning to their home countries and that while some had done so after becoming disillusioned with the group, many returned with the intent and capability to "conduct terrorist attacks in their country of origin or residence."

According to the report, the group is seeking to elevate the role of its affiliates and may even be transferring funds to them as they find themselves under increasing pressure in Iraq and Syria.

The report also says that for the first time since the declaration of "so-called Caliphate" in June 2014, the group is under financial pressure with international air strikes reducing oil production by between 30 and 50 percent. Despite this, the report says the group does not appear to be lacking or short on arms or ammunition.

Retrieved from: <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/d12865673d2a413ab15343274b34851b/un-increasingly-focused-international-attacks> on 4 June 2016.



What Does it Mean to be Australian?

By Paul Smith, APPVA NSW

Please take a moment to answer this question: *What does it mean to be Australian.*

Here's another: What kind of attitude and or activity would you described as *un-Australian*?

Did you find it easier to answer one of these questions than the other? ¹

Immigrants to Australia and their Australian born descendants have had a strong but changing sense of what it means to be Australian since not long after the First Fleet. From the beginning of free settlement to sometime during the Second World War, large numbers of us saw ourselves as part of the great British mission to "civilise the world and put its resources to productive use". Yet even from before the middle of the nineteenth century, we increasingly saw ourselves as not just British, but as Antipodean British – *Australian Britons – destined to outshine the Motherland in physical and moral vigour.*

This was particularly pronounced in the self-image of the military expeditions sent from Australia to Britain's imperial wars. It became problematic during the South African War, but reached its zenith in the First World War when Australia, by then a Federal Democracy for a decade and a half, was said to have become a "Nation". The diggers of the Eureka Stockade reached their apotheosis in the Diggers in the Trenches of Gallipoli and France; and the man from Snowy River became the Australian Centaur of the South African and Middle Eastern campaigns. Australian Britons had been put to the test and found worthy, and for most of us at that time, *that's* what it meant to be Australian.

This sense of being worthy was consolidated during the Second World War, particularly in North Africa. When the homeland came under threat from Japanese forces the sense of being Australian differentiated itself completely from any remaining sense of being British, and Australian forces were called home to defend their own country. While they were on their way an Australian Militia distinguished itself by halting the advance of an enemy of superior numbers and experience, and once again what it means to be Australian was said to have been definitively demonstrated under fire. Few doubted that we had indeed become superior in physical and moral stature.

From the outset, however, there was much scepticism about the Colonies' and then the Nation's role in the British Empire, and about military engagement as the measure of worthiness. Troops returning from the Sudan were ridiculed; and the Boer War, though vigorously supported at the outset, failed to capture the imagination of the majority of the public at its conclusion. Critics of the First World War, however, were held in utter contempt and presented with white feathers; and the total mobilisation of the Second

World War silenced all but the most hardy who risked the charge of treason if they refused to contribute to the war effort. After the Second World War, however, scepticism returned with an unprecedented potency as *every pre-war assumption about what is right and proper* was questioned in the light of the *Holocaust* and the spontaneous global movement for *self-determination* and *decolonisation* on the one hand, and the outbreak of the *Cold War* on the other. Utterly *different versions of what it means to be Australian* have competed for the soul of the nation ever since, and scepticism, systematically applied as *critical thinking*, became the new orthodoxy during the sixties and seventies.

When Australian governments invited refugees and other migrants to come to this country in the immediate post-war period, they were acting primarily in the interests of Australia's industrial and economic development, but could also claim to be extending a generous hand to people "in need of a better way of life". That is certainly how we, the newly self-anointed Heirs of Good Fortune, related to "New Australians" for the next thirty years or so. By the early eighties however, the word *multiculturalism* was on the rise, reflecting the growing realisation that we as a nation had benefited from the presence of the new comers in more ways than the "ethnic" food we learned to enjoy. For the next quarter century we gradually dropped the term ethnic as we recognised that *diversity* in most things that mattered *had become part of what it means to be Australian*. In the mid nineties, however, there was a very vocal reaction against diversity, as part of the society reasserted "traditional" values. Then came September 11, and a new "cold war" broke out between the Left and the Right within the developed world. Islam became the new Communism, and "political correctness" the new label of abuse. Anything that embodied critical theory, including science itself, came under attack. The term *un-Australian*, though previously used on rare occasions as a rhetorical flourish in arguments, began to be used as a substitute for argument. In general terms, some Australians remained comfortable with the idea of diversity as a necessary part of what it means to be Australian, while others have become more inclined to name what is un-Australian, and that tends to be anything they don't like. Some (many? most?) have a foot in both camps which might be why it can be so hard to describe what it means to be Australian.

Another useful way to ponder what it means to be Australian is to ask what would have happened if the Axis Powers had won the Second World War and Japan took possession of Australia. Decolonisation might have happened eventually, but not as quickly as it did under the old colonial powers which were empires already in decline. Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan would have claimed victory as proof of entitlement to their millennium in the sun, and behaved in victory as that had during the war. Under the oppressive rule of those two inhumanly brutal regimes the opportunity

for deep public critical reflection would not have existed and we certainly would not have known about the Holocaust. There would have been emigration to Australia but it would not have been refugees coming as manpower for industrial development geared to national priorities. It would have been about conscripting manpower from every available source for the industrial exploitation of resources to serve Japan's interests. We would have been used as slaves, or at best left to fend for ourselves in a militarised state in which some of us would have joined the security apparatus set up to prevent insurrection. So the question is: we know how we as a nation performed on the battle field, but how would we have performed under total occupation? ***In those circumstances, what would it mean to be Australian?***

This question is important because there can never be any guarantee that we will always be the custodians of good fortune. Throughout history every human society has been overwhelmed by invasion or changes of economic paradigm. Our turn ***shall*** come. When it does, how will we respond? Will it matter to us that the invaders care nothing for our concept of who we are? ***In those circumstances, what will it mean to be Australian?*** What internal resources would enable us to maintain what is essential about our identity? Or, in those circumstances, should we care at all – would our identity matter to us?

Among the immigrants who did come to Australia after the Second World War were refugees from a culture that has an ***emphatic answer*** to the question: *Does identity matter?* This was a culture that, *from antiquity* – the Babylonian Captivity of Judah, in the sixth century BCE – *until 1948*, was never independent. Some imperial powers were more benign than others and for significant periods between the fall of Babylon to the Roman occupation, Jewish culture *flourished*. When resistance to Romanisation led to the destruction of the Temple State and Jews were dispersed far and wide through the Roman Empire and beyond, Jewish culture *adapted*. But for two millennia it *never ceased* to be Jewish: a fact that most other cultures responded to with periodic violence, culminating in the Holocaust, the objective of which was to put an end to Jewish identity forever.

Australia took more Jewish refugees *per capita* than any other country in the world except Israel. Like other immigrants, including those from English speaking countries, they endured the insults of the established population, which were rarely related to the anti-Semitism of the old world. Though contact with all newcomers was often initially intolerant of or condescending towards their ways, Australians gradually overcame their presumptions of physical and moral superiority, and became a culturally sophisticated and politically outward looking nation that supports the interests of self-determination and international justice. This is, to a very significant extent, due to the ***generosity of migrants*** whose forbearance in situations of cultural tension enabled us to “grow up” as a nation.



This generosity was not unique to Jewish immigrants, but they are conspicuous for their ***seamless integration into Australian culture*** yet retaining the identity they share with others in almost every country in the world as *Jews*.

So what is it about Australia that encourages this sense, not only for Jews but for most other nationalities or cultural groups, of being at home in a land where good things can happen? In what way is Australia, where anti-Semitism has no place, different from European countries, where anti-Semitism flourished for centuries and still festers? Is the fact that we do not embrace bigotry about Jews reflected in our relationships with other distinct groups within our society? Does the absence of bigotry towards others in our society predict any other social characteristics that we might look for in our efforts to say what it means to be Australian? Are any of those social characteristics made visible by phrases in *our language*, such as *Fair Go*? Is there evidence in *our behaviour* of occasional or persistent contradiction of what we might think of as “Aussie character”? Do we, for example, systematically fail to give certain people a fair go?

Finally, is there another group or “sub-culture” within Australia for whom the question of identity is of the utmost importance; and if so, how do we accommodate their desire to be faithful to their history?

(Endnotes)

1 Because we don't have to answer out loud we can answer these questions honestly without being concerned about being judged by others. Or we can dismiss them if we wish.

But there is a serious pay off for answering them honestly (especially if, like most people, you've always assumed you know what it means to be Australian but have never actually got around to spelling it out.)

The pay-off is quite simple: it means that we can have a rational discussion with other people about the subject – instead of shouting matches – because, in arriving at my definition of what it means to be Australian, I am likely to have seen how complex the issue is, and how easily someone else could have arrived at another definition.

Furthermore, even if we never have such conversations with other people, wouldn't coming to a *considered* position on what it means to be Australian make us *better* Australians?

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The conference will also focus on the development of regional innovation and collaborative commercial opportunities relevant to Land, Sea and Air Defence.

Attending as a special guest speaker is RAAF's Commander Air Combat Group and VC awardee Mark Donaldson.

HunterNet Defence is proudly donating the proceeds generated by the conference to Legacy and Solider On.



FURTHER INFORMATION

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Howard proud of peacekeeping success

By AAP

In almost 10 years of peacekeeping in the Pacific Islands, Australian soldiers and police fired not one shot and a decade after the last intervention, they remain free of violence and unrest.

That's the verdict of Professor Bob Breen, author of the latest volume of the official history of Australian peacekeeping operations following the end of the Cold War.

This covers missions to Fiji after the 1987 and later coups, where Australian help wasn't required, and Bougainville in the 1990s and the Solomons up to 2006, where it was.

The book was launched by former Prime Minister John Howard whose government launched the Bougainville and Solomons operations.

He said the rest of the world looked to Australia to take a lead role in peacekeeping in our part of the world, by reason of our economic strength, military expertise and capacity to project soft power.

"I am very proud of what we did in the time my government was in office," he said at the launch at the Australian War Memorial.

That followed a tradition, he said.

"The previous Labor government had done some very fine things particularly in relation to the peacekeeping operations in Cambodia and Somalia. It's part of a tradition of Australia being a good neighbour," he said.

Although the official histories typically examine military operations, Mr Howard stressed that Bougainville and the Solomons involved the whole government, including the defence force, police, diplomats and officials from a range of departments.

Having dealt with two US administrations, Mr Howard said Australia did this better.

"One of the things I left politics with a firm view about was that in so many ways the concept of a whole-of-government decision-making process was better established and better advanced in Australia than I had found in other countries."

Prof Breen, from Deakin University, said Australia's armed forces and unarmed civilian peacekeepers should be proud of their legacy and achievements.



"The fact that during just under 10-years of intervention, not one shot was fired by Australian peace enforcers is a testament to the intentions of the Australian armed forces and police to do no harm," he said.

Prof Breen said Mr Howard and his Foreign Minister Alexander Downer should also be proud.

"The absence of serious civil unrest and political violence since the last intervention in 2006 is one of the Howard government's enduring legacies and finest achievements. May the last 10 years of peace in the Pacific Islands continue forever," he said.

The Good Neighbour - Australian Peace Support Operations in the Pacific Islands 1980-2006 by Bob Breen, Cambridge University Press, 540pp, \$120 RR

Retrieved From: <http://www.9news.com.au/national/2016/07/05/15/08/howard-proud-of-peacekeeping-success> on 8 July 2016.

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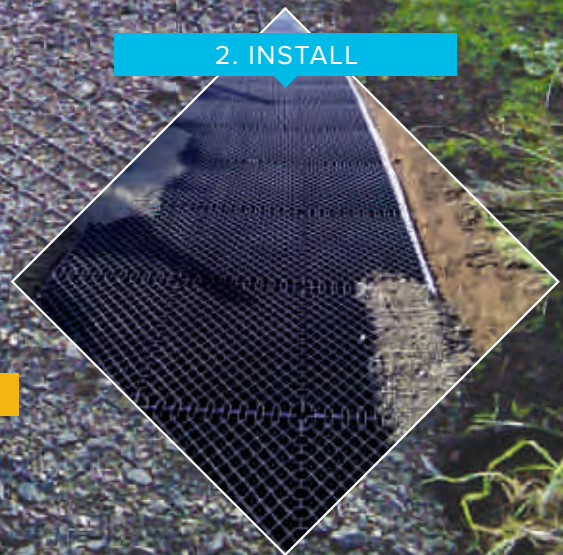


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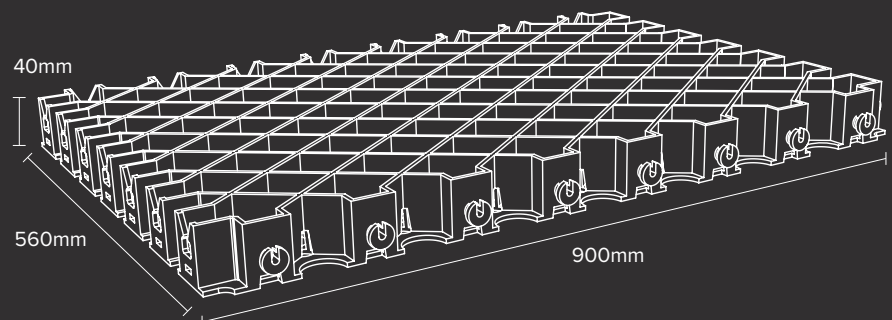
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Advocacy Training & Development Programme: Frequently Asked Questions

1. ATDP Transition

1.01 What is the ATDP?

The Advocacy Training and Development Programme - or ATDP for short - is the next evolution of the Training and Information Program, better known as TIP. The ATDP is a partnership with the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA), Ex-service Organisations (ESOs) and the Department of Defence.

The vision of the ATDP is to train and develop nominated practitioners to provide high quality advocacy services to current and former Australian Defence Force (ADF) members and their dependants, covering rehabilitation, compensation, appeals and welfare.

1.02 How is the ATDP different from TIP?

The ATDP will introduce a nationally accredited training program, and through competency based training and development, will help to ensure a high standard of advocacy services are provided to veterans, irrespective of where they live or when they served.

The ATDP recognises and builds on the excellent work undertaken by TIP over many years. It embraces the spirit of mates helping mates and builds on many of the initiatives that TIP pioneered energetically in developing and delivering advocacy courses.

1.03 Why are we changing from TIP to the ATDP?

TIP was a solution designed for a point in time and has served those needs well. TIP is now over 20 years old and it is time for the program to respond to changes in the veteran community along with changes and advances in learning and development practices.

In March 2014, DVA commissioned an Advocacy Training Review that was led by the late Brigadier Bill Rolfe. Following consultation with the ex-service community, the Review found that the TIP framework needed to evolve to be able to respond to changes in the environment and client cohorts.

A Working Party was formed, comprising members of DVA, Defence and ESOs who developed the Blueprint for the new program which was subsequently endorsed by the Ex-service Organisation Round Table (ESORT) and the then Minister for Veterans' Affairs.

1.04 When will the ATDP come into effect?

From 1 July 2016, the ATDP governance structure will commence managing the delivery of advocacy training and development.

1.05 What changes will occur when the ATDP is introduced on 1 July 2016?

After 1 July 2016, the ATDP will continue to manage the delivery of TIP courses for advocates that have already undertaken some TIP training until the phasing-out of TIP training from 31 December 2016. In parallel, from 1 July 2016, new trainee advocates will begin training and development in the relevant ATDP Level 1 compensation or welfare pathway.

ESOs will be invited to nominate applicants who meet appropriate prerequisites for entry into the ATDP training and development pathway.

1.06 When will the training prerequisites be made available to ESOs?

The training prerequisites will be made available as soon as they are finalised. It is anticipated that this will be circulated in time for the ATDP commencement on 1 July 2016 for ESOs to apply.

1.07 Will existing TIP courses already scheduled continue to run?

Yes, TIP courses currently scheduled will continue to be offered for those advocates who commenced training under TIP until the phase-out of TIP training courses. These courses will be visible through the online management system, accessible at www.TIP.org.au.

1.08 What differences will ATDP trainees see?

From 1 July 2016, units of training that new ATDP trainees will complete will be the same or slightly modified versions of current TIP courses. Until TIP materials are transformed to ATDP materials, the major difference from TIP will be that the units of training will be completed within a single learning pathway rather than as standalone subjects.

The ATDP training structure places a great emphasis on on-the-job learning. New advocates will be required to maintain a workplace record which contributes to evidence of competency at each of the training program exit points.

2. Governance

2.01 What governance structures oversee the ATDP?

The Strategic Governance Board (SGB) provides strategic oversight of the program.

The Capability Framework Management Group (CFMG) reports to the SGB and is responsible for designing and implementing the program.

The Regional Management Groups (RMGs) will be responsible for the day to day administration of the program and will report to the CFMG.

2.02 Who sits on the SGB?

The SGB consists of the following members:

| | |
|----------------------|---------------------------|
| Ms Jenny Walker | Chair SGB |
| Mr John Hodges | SGB Member |
| Mr Ken Foster OAM JP | SGB Member |
| Mr Richard Kelloway | SGB Member |
| Mr Paul Way | SGB Member (Defence) |
| Ms Lisa Foreman | SGB Member (DVA) |
| Mr Bill Kearney | Chair CFMG |
| Mr Greg Hoving | National Training Manager |

2.03 Who sits on the CFMG?

The CFMG consists of the following members:

| | |
|------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mr Bill Kearney | Chair CFMG |
| Mr Greg Hoving | National Training Manager |
| Mr Roger Greene JP | Deputy Chair |
| Mr Clem Russell | Deputy Training Manager |
| Mr Brian Warren | CFMG Member |
| Ms Louise Povolny | CFMG Member |
| Mr John Printz OAM | CFMG Member (Interim) |
| Mr Alan Thomas JP | CFMG Member (Interim) |
| Mrs Helena Smith JP | CFMG Member (Interim) |
| Mr John Cadd | CFMG Member (Interim) |
| Mr Alan Robertson | CFMG Member (Interim) |
| Rev Dr Alan Stubbs RFD | CFMG Member (Interim) |
| Mr Richard Magor | CFMG Member (DVA) |
| Mr Glenn Whatman | CFMG Member (Defence) |

2.04 Who appointed these members?

The SGB members were appointed by the Minister for Veterans' Affairs following nominations by the Ex-service Organisation Round Table. The CFMG members were appointed by the SGB and subsequently the National Training Manager and CFMG Chair also became members of the SGB.

2.05 What selection process was used for CFMG members?

Expressions of Interest were sought through ESORT and the Younger Veterans Forum. The Department of Defence and DVA also provided nominees to positions in the SGB and CFMG.

2.06 How can I find out more about these people?

Further information will be made available through the DVA website in the near future at www.dva.gov.au.

2.07 How will the regional management structure operate?

From 1 July 2016, the ATDP will be managed on a regional basis. The regional management structure will consist of three Regional Management Groups (RMGs) that will oversee the management of ATDP operations and will replace the current six State-based Training Consultative Groups (TCGs).

The RMGs will be responsible for the planning and delivery of training across the region, based on a nationally consistent curriculum, and will be accountable to the CFMG. They will also be responsible for engaging with ESOs in each region to establish effective communities of practice that will support and encourage the development and retention of advocates.

Work is still continuing in the CFMG to formalise how the structure will work and this information will be communicated when it is available.

2.08 Why has the regional management structure replaced the TIP state-based structure?

The move to a regional structure as opposed to a state-based structure is intended to better balance the workload and resources.

2.09 What will happen to the TIP State Chairs?

The TIP Chairs are interim members on the CFMG. The CFMG agreed that the TIP chairs from the three largest states will temporarily perform the roles of Regional Managers up until December 2016 when these positions will be filled permanently.

Expressions of Interest will be sought from ESO and TIP networks for appointment to the Regional Manager Groups. The new Regional Managers will be nominated by members of the RMG once they have been shortlisted.

2.10 How have the new governance structures harnessed the expertise and experience of TIP?

Existing TIP Chairs are interim members on the CFMG and the TIP chairs from the three largest states will temporarily perform the roles of Regional Managers. These individuals are: Helena Smith (Qld and NT), Allan Thomas (NSW, ACT and WA) and John Printz (Vic, Tas and SA).

Their experience will prove invaluable in informing the incoming Regional Managers.

2.11 How will the program ensure it is relevant for younger veterans?

The SGB and the CFMG have identified a number of forums to seek initial engagement with younger veterans, including the Younger Veterans Forum facilitated by DVA. The SGB and the CFMG will be working closely with RMGs to identify other ESOs with specific interest in younger veterans to engage their members and local communities.

3. Training, Accreditation and Recognition of Prior Learning

3.01 What is a single learning pathway and how will this be applied under the ATDP?

The learning pathway refers to the specific courses, programs and learning experiences that individual trainees complete as they progress toward qualification.

Under the TIP approach advocates were able to select from a range of different courses according to their interests and utilise multiple learning pathways. Under the ATDP this will no longer be the case and all learning will be through

a single pathway. The single learning pathway under the ATDP will provide a consistent and structured approach to learning that will ensure all advocates gain the necessary skills and knowledge they need to assist a much broader range of clients.

The single learning pathway will apply across all levels of competency, from levels one to four in the compensation stream and levels 1 to 2 in the welfare stream. This will ensure that advocates are adequately trained and experienced before progressing to the next level.

3.02 If I was trained under TIP, will I have the opportunity to be accredited under ATDP?

Yes, all trainees will be offered the opportunity to be accredited under the ATDP. Your previous training and workplace experience will be taken into account through a Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) process. There will be various entry points into the ATDP single learning pathway and they are being designed to ensure they are flexible with minimal impact on advocates.

3.03 I am currently authorised by my ESO to provide advocacy services. Do I have to be accredited by 1 July 2016?

No, from 1 July 2016 you will continue to operate as you currently do now. The RPL frameworks are being developed and are expected to be completed in the coming months. Once these are developed, we will communicate these to you.

3.04 If I don't want to get accredited under the ATDP can I still provide advocacy and welfare support?

The ATDP is the new advocacy model endorsed by ESORT and the Government. TIP training will cease which will ultimately mean if advocates do not transition across to the ATDP you will not be able to keep your knowledge and skills up to date. You may also face indemnity insurance coverage issues and advocates are encouraged to talk to their ESO about such matters.

3.05 Does someone have to be a member of an ESO to be an ATDP practitioner? If so, which ones?

Yes, under the ATDP model advocates are nominated by an ESO for training and the ESO will provide on-the-job training and mentoring to advocates to support them through the accreditation process. Workplace assessment will also occur utilising the community of practice approach to ensure support for those who may not have a trained mentor or workplace assessor within their local ESO.

3.06 I've heard RPL is really time consuming, is this true?

No, the Department has engaged a Registered Training Organisation (RTO) to assist and streamline this process in a way that it will be as simple as possible and will not adversely impact on your current activities. The process will be piloted with a small group of practising advocates before it is made widely available to nominees.

3.07 As an advocate, wouldn't my time be better spent on supporting clients rather than RPL?

The RPL will be designed to limit the impact to advocates as we understand advocates are volunteers and that they are busy providing services to the veteran community.

RPL will also enable you to subsequently undertake mentoring and workplace assessment training which will enable you to utilise your skills and experience to develop the next generation of advocates who will serve the veteran and ex-service community. Obtaining ATDP accreditation will also help to ensure that clients seeking advocacy services in the future will have ready access to the services of accredited advocates.

3.08 How will the RPL work?

The transition process to ATDP accreditation will be gradual and voluntary. Proposals for RPL and entry points into the new ATDP pathway will be developed in conjunction with the RTO and will be widely circulated when finalised to enable Advocates to consider the options available.

3.09 Will the RPL process involve more study?

It will depend on each individual case. The RPL is designed to be simple and allow current advocates to provide the necessary evidence that they possess the relevant competencies and related knowledge to become accredited. Where this can be demonstrated then further study is unlikely to be necessary to become accredited. Where competency or skills cannot be demonstrated then some further training may be required.

The above principles apply to both Pension and Welfare officer RPL processes. An alternative stream will be available for Welfare accreditation to assist Welfare Advocates in this process.

There will be training and a place for everyone.

3.10 After the implementation of the ATDP on 1 July 2016, will I be able to operate under TIP?

From 1 July 2016, the ATDP governance structure will commence managing the delivery of advocacy training and development. However authorised advocates will not be affected in terms of their capacity to continue to perform functions as authorised by their ESO.

3.11 As a practitioner, am I responsible to my ESO or to the ATDP governance bodies for what I do?

To your ESO. The ATDP is only overseeing the accreditation and training of advocates.

3.12 My ESO conducts training. Do I have to undertake ATDP formal training?

The competency based training process assumes that adults acquire their skills and knowledge from a variety of sources. Under the ATDP model it is assumed that 70% of the skills and knowledge acquired comes from "doing"; 20% comes from other informal learning such as through a mentor; while only 10% comes from formal training.

Any training conducted by ESOs to support their advocates in the process is welcomed and contributes to the 90% gained outside of the formal learning process. Such training must be aligned and consistent with ATDP requirements.

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It must be understood though, that the 10% of learning supplied by ATDP formal training, also includes assessments of the other 90%. The ATDP then certifies that an individual has met the required standard for a certain level. It is therefore necessary that every advocate undertakes the ATDP formal learning and assessment process.

3.13 Do I have to have a mentor if I've been practicing for 10 years or more?

Participation in a community of practice will be strongly encouraged both in terms of the expected benefit to each individual through on the job mentoring as well as to the overall improvement of advocacy services. Details of mentoring requirements will be made available in the coming months once the mentoring strategy has been finalised with the RTO. The benefits of peer review should never be discounted regardless of one's level or experience.

3.14 I have volunteered to be a mentor for a new learner. What will be required of me?

The role of the mentor is fundamental to the success of the ATDP program. It is assumed that having volunteered and subsequently been nominated by your ESO to be a mentor, you are highly experienced as either (or both) a welfare or compensation advocate. Once you have been nominated, you will be contacted by the ATDP and asked to undertake an RPL process which validates your experiences and verifies that your skills and knowledge meet the requirements for those of a mentor to Level 2 standard or above.

3.15 What if I don't want to be a mentor?

That's fine. Only those advocates who wish to undertake formal mentoring or workplace assessment will be required to undertake the relevant training. All advocates who wish to continue to practice will however be required to undertake the RPL process when TIP refresher training is no longer available.

3.16 How is this going to make me a better advocate?

The ATDP is based upon the application of adult learning principles and competency based training to ensure nationally consistent and recognised training and development. This process involves very clear role definition and will enable your ESO to clearly understand what work should be undertaken at the various stages of the single learning pathway. Clients will also have greater confidence that they are obtaining the services from trained and professional advocates with the appropriate certification to provide those services.

3.17 What if I'm an advocate due for a refresher course after 1 July 2016? What happens?

Refresher training will continue to be provided during the transition process. Refresher courses will continue to be available on the www.tip.org.au website.

Under the ATDP it is envisaged that there will be a training and development model based upon the principles of continuous learning that will enable you to maintain your knowledge and currency.

3.18 How will welfare be included in the ATDP?

The training and development of welfare advocates is an integral part of the development of nationally accredited training programs and will be aligned with relevant competencies. The welfare course will include up-to-date information on aged care reforms and how to connect to these services.

3.19 What if I don't want to be involved in the ATDP?

Volunteering is a personal choice. The ATDP is working to ensure that it is as easy as possible to transition over to the new program so advocates can continue volunteering to assist the veteran community. The ATDP is confident that existing practitioners will see the benefits in the new program and will want to continue volunteering.

As outlined in earlier questions all current practitioners will be encouraged to have their previous training and experience recognised under the RPL process.

4. Caseload Impacts

4.01 Will cases I currently have in the system be affected by the implementation of the ATDP?

No, the processing of claims and applications by DVA is based on the information provided and will be unaffected by the transition to ATDP.

5. Insurance Coverage

5.01 How will this ATDP affect my VITA coverage?

The Veterans' Indemnity and Training Association (VITA) has been engaged by the ATDP and is working with its insurer to ensure its members will be covered with the transition and full implementation of the ATDP. This work is currently happening and any developments will be communicated as they occur.

The implementation of the ATDP is not expected to have any significant impacts on VITA coverage.

5.02 Will I still be covered by VITA insurance based on my TIP training if I don't get ATDP accredited?

In the short term yes, both TIP and ATDP will be covered until the ATDP courses are fully implemented.

5.03 What are the insurance impacts for ESOs or individual advocates who use their own insurance cover rather than VITA?

The transition and implementation of the ATDP is not expected to have any significant impact on insurance coverage. For those currently insured under different arrangements, i.e. not VITA, individual policy holders will need to brief their insurer on the ATDP implementation and seek their advice.

6. Impacts to ESOs

6.01 How are we going to recruit and train suitable mentors?

A mentoring strategy and a training course for potential

mentors will be developed in conjunction with the RTO. It is anticipated that mentors will come from the existing Level 2 Welfare and Level 3 and 4 Compensation Advocates.

6.02 What happens if we cannot recruit qualified mentors?

Initial feedback from the present Level 2 Welfare and Level 3 and 4 Compensation Advocates who have been approached, indicates that this is unlikely to be a problem.

6.03 Will there be any monitoring of the standard of work of advocates?

Yes, the ATDP will focus on quality assurance and lifetime learning to ensure advocates are fully supported to deliver high quality advocacy services.

The continuing improvement of any training system relies on feedback as to its effectiveness. The strategies for obtaining and assessing this feedback in the ATDP will be developed in conjunction with ESOs and the RTO over the coming months.

6.04 How will an advocate's e-Learning progress be monitored?

Under the ATDP all advocates undertaking training will have access to a facilitator who is able to monitor their progress and assist with understanding the unit content. The ATDP online management system also serves to record completions of e-Learning courses and the progress of an advocate through all the units required for a particular level of training. It is expected that ATDP Regional Managers will utilise these existing arrangements for e-Learning within their Region.

6.05 What are Communities of Practice and how will these work under the ATDP?

A Community of Practice is a network of advocates and community members who support one another within a locality such as a state or region. It is a group of people who engage in collective learning and provide support to one another through mentoring, knowledge-sharing and networking. While there is no one-size-fits-all model of a Community of Practice, it is envisaged that these groups will either meet face-to-face or communicate by telephone or in an online forum. All will be welcome to be involved in these communities, including ATDP trainers, ESO volunteers, advocates of all levels of experience and veterans and their family members who share an interest in supporting advocates in the community.

A central focus of the Communities of Practice will be the mentoring experience from one advocate to another, which is fundamental to the success of the ATDP. Mentoring will enable advocates to learn and gain experience from their peers. Communities of Practice will facilitate these networks by providing local support and mentoring to practicing advocates.

7. Need more information or want your own question answered?

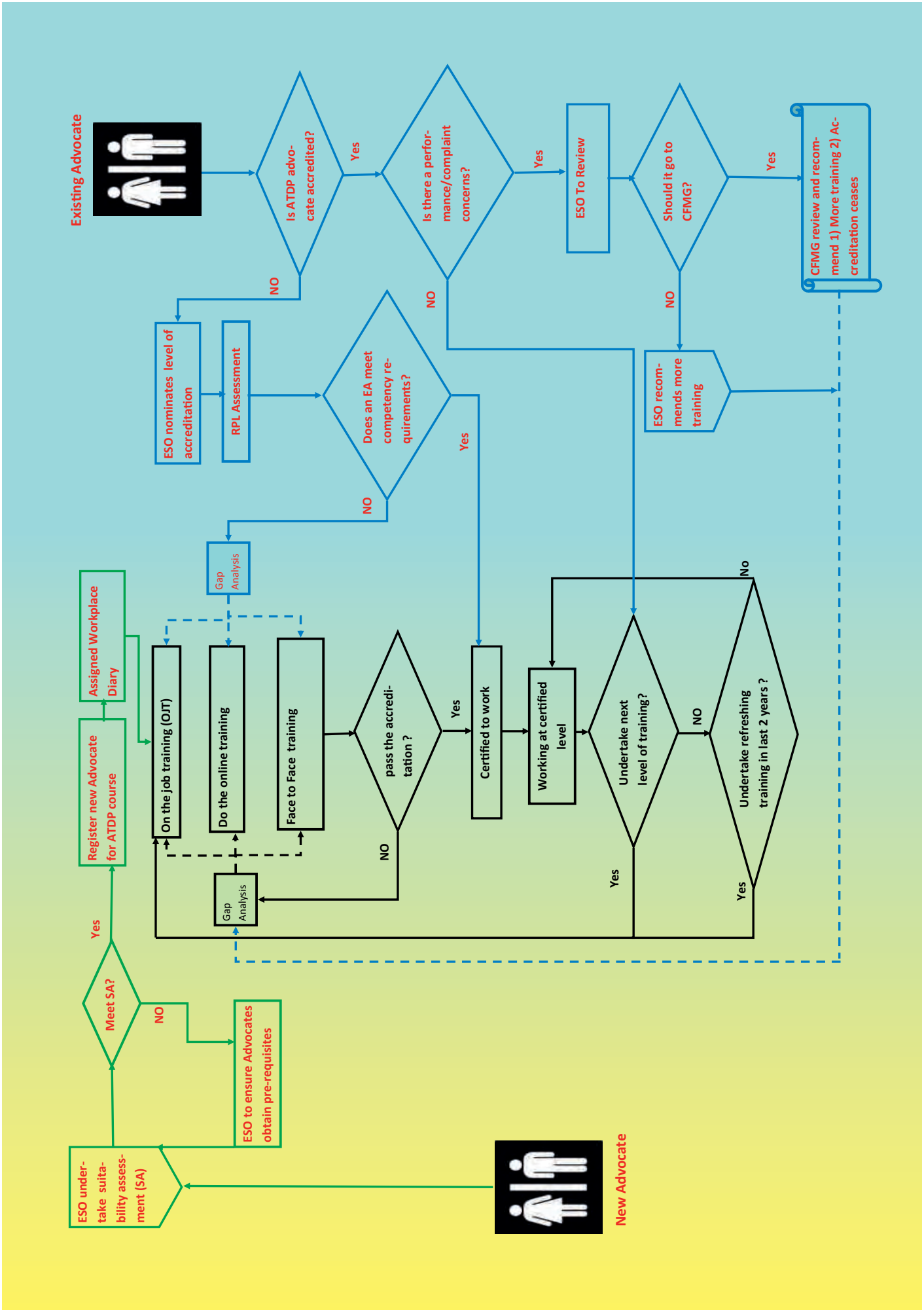
The CFMG is developing a range of communications material and information for distribution to all stakeholders.

This will be made available in a variety of ways, including by:

- Letters and information sheets
- Email
- Through the ESO Round Table;
- The DVA website
- The ATDP and the TIP website

A general mailbox has also been established for people to contact





Tribute to the President of the APPVA Queensland Branch,

Christopher Raymond “Smokey” Dawson, 11 September 1953 to 9 August 2016.

315650 Sergeant Christopher Raymond Dawson was born in Woomera, the son of a Signals soldier during the Atomic Testing on 11th September 1953. “Smokey” following his father’s footsteps as a soldier, enlisted into the Australian Regular Army on the 21st of June 1972 and was allocated to the Royal Australian Corps of Signals (RASigs), as a Driver and as he progressed in the ranks, Smokey became a Transport Supervisor. Smokey became very well known in the Corps of Signals.

He was also a football player for 2 Signal Regiment, hence seeing him posted to that unit over 3 times and other postings to Melbourne. Smokey served on various postings to RASigs units in Brisbane, Townsville, Melbourne, Sydney and Operational (Warlike) Service in Cambodia.

The Cambodia experience saw Smokey posted to the Australian Service Contingent to the Force Communications Unit of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (ASC FCU UNTAC) from the 11th May 1992 through to the 16th March 1993. Smokey was the Supervisor of the Air Dispatch Service (ADS). ADS was a very dangerous job, because if it wasn’t for the various warring factions trying to shoot down his helicopter, it was the tenuous condition of the Russian MI-17 Helicopters that were renown for breaking down and sometimes falling out of the sky.

The ADS task involved continuous Air delivery of vital Mission centric Signals and documents, and more importantly delivering mail to Australian and New Zealand troops serving in the FCU, all over Cambodia, which boosted morale.

Smokey Discharged from the Australian Army on 30th of December 1995. There was something about Townsville that Smokey loved, perhaps it was the tropical weather and the layback life-style, albeit away from his Mother and Brother in Croydon, Victoria, that saw him settle in Townsville after two postings to 103 Signal Squadron, as the Transport Supervisor.

Smokey went on to be a Licence Tester and working with Main Roads Queensland, until he became ill with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, as a result of his service in Cambodia. After some time recovering, Smokey joined the Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans’ Association (APPVA) North Queensland Branch, on the 13th of April 2007 as member 701, and became a Committee Member, assisting Lofty Evans who was then the President.

From 2007, Smokey undertook to help as many younger veterans as he could. Some times to the detriment of his own health and well-being. However he was a strong advocate for veteran issues, particularly drawing them to the attention of the Commander of 3rd Brigade. He established a very good rapport with Lavarack Barracks in Townsville, and has helped many current and ex-serving members in gaining their rightful entitlements as a result of their service to Australia. In 2010, Smokey took over the role as President of North



Sergeant Christopher “Smokey” Dawson in UN Ceremonial Dress (UN Beret and Cravat) at the Force Communications Unit, Phnom Penh, Cambodia, 1993.

Queensland Branch after the retirement of Lofty. This was a critical period for APPVA in Queensland, as the two branches (North and South Queensland) began to develop into the one Branch. Smokey became the inaugural President of the APPVA Queensland Branch in 2012, until his recent passing.

Smokey was a dedicated advocate for the APPVA and gave the organisation valuable distinguished service. He was assisted by his wife Lorraine, who took on the position of Secretary of the Branch, as there was no other person to take it on. These were hard times, of which Smokey remained persistent to see the job through.

Both Smokey and Lorraine helped to establish the APPVA in Townsville at “Zac’s Place” in Thuringowa, setting up an advocacy Office of the APPVA with the Viet Nam Veterans’ Association of Australia (VVAA). He had close and successful ties and an excellent relationship with the VVAA Townsville Sub-Branch, along with the Queensland President, who have given valuable support to the APPVA and Smokey in Townsville for some years.

Unfortunately, we say farewell to a man who would not take no for an answer and who didn’t like seeing veterans being wronged. He fought hard for them and was a strong advocate for them and the APPVA.

Service related cancer quickly took Smokey's life on the 9th of August 2016, in Townsville Hospital. His Army mates, his Footy teammates and his friends in the APPVA will sorely miss him.

Smokey leaves behind his wife Lorraine; Son: Trevor; Daughters: Ashley; Jennifer; and Rachel.

Rest in Peace mate, your job here is more than done.

LEST WE FORGET.

Allan Thomas JP
National President.

Tribute from a Mate

How do you write a story, a farewell, and a tribute to a person? Christopher Raymond (Smokey) Dawson, a husband, proud father, boasting grandfather, soldier, athlete, gold fossicker, a passionate advocate for current and ex serving pers. To his credit he openly admitted that he was one of the few fanatical Collingwood supporters left on this earth and really his choice of ring tones on his mobile was truly questionable. Smokey loved a beer on a hot or cold day could spin a yarn with the best of us. Did not hold back when bragging about how many grandkids he had and their accomplishments. Sometimes he could try the patience of a saint when he wanted to do something, would charge off and do it, then come back and realign all the mistakes, other times he would research and doggedly



Chris Dawson at the Rally for a Royal Commission into DVA in Townsville, April 2016, with his daughters Ashley and Jennifer. Senator Jacqui Lambie is in the background.

push forward to get the job done. He was no different to a lot of people but he was his own man and did what he did to the best of his ability. He loved his family and supported his mates.

RIP Mate
Geoffrey "Lofty" Evans OAM.
Past President,
APPVA North Queensland Branch.

Commemorative Service Australia's 69th Anniversary of Peacekeeping Involvement

Wednesday 14 Sep 16 - commencing at 11 a.m.


reflect - remember - commemorate
the past - the present - the future

As Chair of the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial Committee, I warmly invite you to commemorate the 69th Anniversary of Australia's involvement in Peacekeeping.

The Commemorative Service, to be held at:
The future site of the Boer War Memorial on ANZAC Parade, Canberra.
Opposite the AUSTRALIAN PEACEKEEPING MEMORIAL which will be under construction.

We further invite you or your representative to lay a wreath.




MAJGEN Tim Ford (Retd), AO, Chair

RSVP - 1 SEP 16
Please advise us if you intend laying a wreath

Secretariat APMPC
0406 168 655
secretariat@peacekeepingmemorial.org.au
www.peacekeepingmemorial.org.au

THE AUSTRALIAN PEACEKEEPING MEMORIAL PROJECT

Colleagues, in view of the commencement of construction of the national memorial to peacekeeping, this year's commemorative and remembrance ceremony will be held on the site of the future Boer War memorial which is directly opposite that of the peacekeeping memorial on Anzac Parade, Canberra. Parking is normally available on the west side of Anzac Parade, at the northern end of Anzac Park West and along Anzac Park East.

5th September 2016 marks the 25th Anniversary of the deployment of the first contingent of 45 Australian Army soldiers to Western Sahara in 1991. In all 5 consecutive contingents were deployed to provide force communications to the Mission des Nations Unies pour un Referendum au Sahara Occidental (MINURSO) - UN Mission for the referendum in Western Sahara until May 1995.

<http://www.peacekeepers.asn.au/operations/MINURSO.htm>

Future Events

| DATE/TIME | EVENT | BRANCH | LOCATION | DETAILS |
|---|--|---|--|---|
| 18 August | Vietnam Veterans Day | | | |
| 18 August 11am | QGM | VIC | RAAF Association 24-36 Camberwell Rd Hawthorn East Vic 3123 | Point of Contact: Secretary & Membership Officer Kevin Ryan JP, APPVA, P.O. Box 480, BORONIA, VIC, 3155 Mobile: +61 419 544 342 secretary@peacekeepers.asn.au |
| 5 September | 25th Anniversary of the deployment of the first contingent of 45 Australian Army soldiers to Western Sahara on 5th September 1991. In all 5 consecutive contingents were deployed to provide Force communications to the Mission des Nations Unies pour un Referendum au Sahara Occidental (MINURSO) - UN Mission for the referendum in Western Sahara until May 1995. | | | |
| 14 September | Australian Peacekeepers Day 69th Anniversary of Australia's Involvement in Peacekeeping | | Australian Boer War Memorial site, ANZAC Parade, Canberra. Details as per notice in this Edition of "The Peacekeeper" Magazine | Reflect - Remember - Commemorate; the Past; the Present; the Future. Link: http://www.peacekeepingmemorial.org.au/ |
| 29 September | National Police Remembrance Day | | | |
| Thursday 13 October | Advocacy Training Seminar / Workshop | National | Townsville, Qld Don't Miss Out! Please RSVP COB 30 Sept 16 | Point of Contact: Secretary & Membership Officer Kevin Ryan JP, APPVA, P.O. Box 480, BORONIA, VIC, 3155 Mobile: +61 419 544 342 secretary@peacekeepers.asn.au |
| Friday 14 October | National Conference | National | Townsville, Qld Don't Miss Out! Please RSVP COB 30 Sept 16 | Point of Contact: Secretary & Membership Officer Kevin Ryan JP, APPVA, P.O. Box 480, BORONIA, VIC, 3155 Mobile: +61 419 544 342 secretary@peacekeepers.asn.au |
| 20 October | 25th Anniversary of the deployment of Australian Communications Specialists to the UN Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC), 20th October 1991. | | | |
| 24 October | United Nations Day UN Day marks the anniversary of the entry into force in 1945 of the UN Charter. With the ratification of this founding document by the majority of its signatories, including the five permanent members of the Security Council, the United Nations officially came into being. 24 October has been celebrated as United Nations Day since 1948. | | | Check your State Branch or State Branch of the United Nations Association of Australia (UNAA) for Details |
| 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month | Remembrance Day Services held at 11am at war memorials and schools in suburbs, towns and places across the country. | | | In remembrance of those who served and those who died in the Great War of 1914-1918 and armed conflicts and peacekeeping operations since. Check your Local or State RSL Branches for details. |
| 9-14 November | The Royal Australian Signals National Reunion Yarra Valley Vic | Royal Australian Signals Commemorative Dinner at the Melbourne Cricket Club [MCC] Dining Room, Saturday, 12th November. RSVP No Later Than 30th September 2016. | Points of Contact: Mr Gavin Lee (Vic President) gavin.lee18@hotmail.com or 0425 722 347 Mr Phil Nelson (Vic Treasurer) philkris@bigpond.net.au or 0407 215 501 Weblink: www.rasigs.com go to the Victorian box and follow the prompts for list of attendee's Return details to email: info@rasigs.com & gavin.lee18@hotmail.com | |

| | | | | |
|--|------------------------|-----|--|---|
| Sunday 27 November 11am | AGM/QGM | VIC | RAAF Association 24-36 Camberwell Rd Hawthorn East Vic 3123 | Mark Moles, Branch Secretary, APPVA-VIC, PO Box 480, Boronia, VIC, 3155 Mobile: 0412 090 443 Email: vicsec@peacekeepers.asn.au |
| Saturday 3rd December 4pm | Christmas Party | VIC | 25 Oliver St Ringwood Vic 3134 | Christmas Party for the Volunteers in the Aussie Vets Op Shop & all APPVA Vic Members. Please RSVP 27 November 2016. Mark Moles, Branch Secretary, APPVA-VIC, PO Box 480, Boronia, VIC, 3155 Mobile: 0412 090 443 Email: vicsec@peacekeepers.asn.au Saturday 3 Dec 2016, 4pm onwards. |



**2017
APPVA COMMEMORATION DINNER
Celebrating 20 years of APPVA (24 October 1997)
&
Commemorating 70 years of Australian
Peacekeeping Operations (14 September 1947)**

The APPVA was established on 24th October 1997 by the inaugural five (5) Members in attendance at the Pine Rivers RSL Sub-Branch, Kallangur, Queensland. As Our motto – “Looking After Our Own”, APPVA recognises, fosters, supports all walks of life Service men and women who individually or collectively, directly or indirectly making

Contributions to the Peacekeeping or Peacemaking operations since Australia’s first Involvement back on the 14 September 1947. APPVA wishes to acknowledge the Service, courage and sacrifice of those who have served on Operations past and present.

Time flies when you are having fun and where has the time gone – cliché yes, but more Importantly where are they now? For some of us the thought that an Ex Service Organisation like ours is turning 20 years old is beyond our belief let alone celebrating these Two (2) milestone events.

Watch this space to for future updates, and together we celebrate honouring our Veterans, Peacekeepers, Peacemakers, and the ADF community.

If you have items of interest to be included in our commemoration, photos and or contacts (Past Committee members and or members), please send your email with the subject heading as indicated below.

Email: nswsec@peacekeepers.asn.au Subject: 2017 APPVA Commemoration Dinner



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AUSTRALIAN PEACEKEEPER &
PEACEMAKER VETERANS' ASSOCIATION
APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP



(INCORPORATED IN VICTORIA)
ABN 59 558 194 094
APPVA
PO Box 480, Boronia Vic 3155
Phone: 0419 544 342
Email: secretary@peacekeepers.asn.au
Website: www.peacekeepers.asn.au

Patron: Major General Ian Gordon AO (Retired)

Contact Details

Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms, Dr (Rank) Address

Last Name City

Given Name(s) State Post Code

Date of Birth...../...../..... Country

Name of Parent/Partner/Child Email.....
(Complete only for Affiliate Membership)

Phone Mobile

Service Details

Missions *(Attach separate sheet if necessary)*

Service (Navy, Army, Air Force, AFP etc) Operation name Country

Service Regt Number Dates deployed to

Current / Former Rank..... Operation name Country

Post Nominal Date deployed to

I apply for either Full, Associate or Affiliate Membership to the Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans' Association (APPVA). I agree to abide by its Constitution, rules and regulations. By signing the document, I authorise the APPVA to verify my stated Service or that of my partner or parent / child. I understand my details as supplied on this form, will be kept on record by the National Executive and my respective State or Territory Branch.

Signed Dated

Membership Payment Options (due 1st of July annually) \$30 Renewal \$40 New

Credit Card

Send application with completed details to: APPVA PO Box 480, Boronia Vic 3155

Please charge my credit card for the amount of: \$30 (renewal) \$40 (new) Visa Mastercard

Credit Card No _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ Expiry Date _____ / _____

Name Signature

Cheque of Money Order

Send application in mail with cheque or money order payable to APPVA

Direct Credit - Internet Transfer *For Def Credit account holders:*

Account: APPVA **BSB:** 803 205 **Acc:** 20638827 **APPVA Membership No:**

Lodgement Reference Field: include your name and or membership number (if known)

Surname: Enter AUS (1st 3 letters of acc name), then enter amount required

Enter Member No: 153601 (if required)

For All other Financial Institutions:

Account: APPVA **BSB:** 803 205 **Acc:** 20638827 **APPVA Membership No:**

Reference field: Include your name and or membership number (if known)

If unsure of APPVA Membership No. – Contact secretary@peacekeepers.asn.au

Membership Type - Please select criteria

- Full Member**
Open to any member or ex member of the Australian or New Zealand Armed Forces, Police Forces, Government Organisations or Defence Civilians who have Served on Warlike Operations; Peacekeeping or Peacemaking Operations; or Non-Warlike Service. In addition, Peacetime serving and ex Serving members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF). Full voting rights
- Associate Member**
Open to members of other National Armed Forces or Police Forces who have served in War, Peacekeeping or Peacemaking Operations. Persons who have served with Non-Government Organisations. No voting rights.
- Affiliate Member**
Open to all persons who have not been discharged for reasons of discipline, War Widows / Widowers, Defence Widows / Widowers, Partner(s), Parents and Children of an APPVA Veteran. No voting rights.

Persons applying for membership as a member or ex-member of an Armed Force, Police Force or, as a Defence Civilian meeting the above criteria for Full or Associate Membership, are required to complete the Service Details above. Persons applying for Affiliate Membership as a Parent, Partner or Child of a current APPVA member are required to complete the "Parent / Partner / Child" section in the Contact Details area above, to confirm the membership of the APPVA Member.

**AUSTRALIAN PEACEKEEPER &
PEACEMAKER VETERANS' ASSOCIATION**
MERCHANDISE ORDER FORM



(INCORPORATED IN VICTORIA)
ABN 59 558 194 094
APPVA
2603 Moggill Rd, Pinjarra Hills QLD 4069
E: andrea.appva.advocacyq4@gmail.com
Website: www.peacekeepers.asn.au

Patron: Major General Ian Gordon AO (Retired)

| MERCHANDISE | QUANTITY | OPTIONS – Please Circle | COST (incl gst) | SUB TOTAL |
|--|----------|---|-----------------|-----------|
| Navy Blue Polo Shirt | | S M L XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL MENS/WOMENS | \$30 | |
| Pink Polo Shirt | | WOMENS size 10-16 | \$30 | |
| Short Sleeved Chambray Shirt | | Size: M XL 2XL 3XL 4XL 5XL MENS | \$45 | |
| Short Sleeved Chambray Shirt | | Size: 10 12 14 16 WOMENS | \$45 | |
| APPVA Cap Navy Blue | | One Size | \$20 | |
| APPVA Cap Pink | | One Size | \$20 | |
| APPVA Stickers | | | \$6 | |
| Book - COMBAT MEDIC | | | \$29 | |
| Book - SOLDIERS' Tales | | | \$19 | |
| Book - Aussie SOLDIER | | | \$29 | |
| Stubby Holder black with gold logo | | | \$8 | |
| Postage and handling costs for all items as below: 500gm bag \$8.25 Less than 3kg \$13.40 Less than 5kg \$17.10 Any other larger posted items will be notified of costs as necessary with purchaser. | | | TOTAL | |

CREDIT CARD

Send order form with completed details to Merchandise - APPVA, 2603 Moggill Rd, Pinjarra Hills Qld 4069

Please charge my credit card for the amount of:..... Visa Mastercard

Credit Card No _____ / _____ / _____ / _____ **Expiry Date** _____ / _____

Name..... **Signature**.....

CHEQUE OR MONEY ORDER - Post cheque or money order payable to APPVA, 2603 Moggill Rd, Pinjarra Hills Qld 4069

DIRECT CREDIT - Internet Transfer

For Def Credit account holders:

Account: APPVA (AUS) BSB: 803-205 Account: 20638827 Member No: 153601
Include your name and the word "Merch" in the reference field and mail the order form.
Enter Member No 153601 (if required)

For All other Financial Institutions:

Account: APPVA BSB: 803-205 Account: 20638827 Member No: 153601
Include your name and the word "Merch" in the reference field and mail the order form.
Enter Member No 153601 (if required)

DELIVERY DETAILS

Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms, Dr (Rank) Address
Last Name City
Given Name(s) State Post Code
Email..... Country.....
Mobile.....

The Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association (APPVA) will accept returned products / merchandise where:

- The product is faulty, or not fit for the purpose
- The product does not match the sample or description

Proof of purchase (APPVA merchandise receipt) must be provided in order to:

- Obtain a refund (if paid by credit card, the credit card will be credited), otherwise a cheque will be provided, or
- Re-issue a like article

IMPORTANT NOTES:

The APPVA will take the utmost care in packaging; however, we will not accept any responsibility for goods damaged in transit.

The APPVA will not accept returns where the product or merchandise is ordered specifically for an individual (e.g. Montage, clothing, etc).

All queries for return of merchandise must be received within 30 days from date of purchase and directed to APPVA Merchandise Officer at merchandise@peacekeepers.asn.au. Item returns will be at the discretion of the APPVA Merchandise Officer provided the above criterion is met in the first instance. Please choose carefully as APPVA cannot accept returns due to change of mind.

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