

Australian Peacekeeper

WINTER 2026

MAGAZINE



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We welcome input from members and their personal experiences in each issue.

Email the editor with an initial 300 word draft you feel would be worth fleshing out to be published in a future edition.

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Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people should be aware this publication contains images and names of deceased persons

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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.

The views expressed in the articles are those of the particular author and not those of the Australian Peacekeeper & Peacemaker Veterans' Association. 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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Chairperson's Report



Welcome to the Winter 2026 edition of the Australian Peacekeeper Magazine which has been brought to life by the hard work and dedication of the Editor Karl Patterson, Graphic Designer Gavin Benson and APPVA CEO Rod Henderson.

We sincerely thank all who contributed their time and articles, and hope that you enjoy reading this latest edition.

It has been a busy time since our Winter Magazine, with the Association forging ahead with advocacy at multiple forums on behalf of the Peacekeeper community. Our CEO, Rod, has worked tirelessly to raise the profile of Association and relished the opportunity to represent our interests with various Government and Industry leaders, and to broadcast our message via multiple media interviews.

Exciting times are ahead for the Association. We have been successful in obtaining additional grants and funding for our numerous projects in support of current and veteran peacekeepers. There is also exciting progress on the "A Distant Peace Documentary" which aims to draw a spotlight on the work and experiences of Australian veterans who served in Namibia.

We are one step closer to realising our goals of erecting a monument to ADF Personnel who have died in training; our Return to Namibia project; and our Care Package initiative.

The CEO and I had the honour of attending the Atrium and ANZAC Hall Official Opening at the Australian War Memorial (AWM) on the evening of 23 June. It was a star-studded but solemn affair that showcased the considerable

efforts of AWM Director, Mr Matt Anderson PSM, his team, and the many volunteers that worked tirelessly to honour our veterans past and present.

I would urge you all to visit the new look AWM the next time you're in Canberra.

We also had the opportunity to wander through the newly refurbished Peacekeeping Gallery and exhibition, Australian Peacekeeping: 1947 - today. This edition's cover story, written by Melissa Cadden the Senior Curator in Military Heraldry and Technology, and Dr David Sutton, a Senior Historian in Military History at the AWM, outlines the journey associated with the development of this new permanent exhibition.

They articulate the challenges of telling a story that spans 75 years, four continents, and multiple, often unrelated conflicts. As you wander through the Peacekeeping Gallery you will appreciate the effort and care the team took to ensure that an often overlooked veteran community of Peacekeepers are fully recognised for their significant contributions.

The exhibitions provide a Peacekeeper voice through the sharing of the stories of all Australian Peacekeepers inclusive of the contributions of the Australian Defence Force, Australian Federal and State Police, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and civilian election monitors.

As a final note, we look forward to seeing you at the Peacekeeper Dinner 2026 which is being held at the Australian War Memorial on 12 September. The dinner provides an opportunity to honour the service and sacrifice of Australian Peacekeepers since 1947, and to



DR ALISON KANE CSM

celebrate the opening of the AWM Peacekeeper Galleries.

The dinner has attracted attendance from key Industry and Defence leaders, providing a further opportunity to raise awareness of the achievements, challenges and needs of the Peacekeeper community.

We have already expanded the number of tickets available with the AWM agreeing to provide us additional space in the Atrium. If you have not already purchased your ticket, I urge you to do so now as we are quickly reaching capacity.

I now invite you to explore this latest edition of the Australian Peacekeeper Magazine and I look forward to working with you into the future.

Ali Kaine CSM

Chairperson

**Australian Peacekeeper
and Peacemaker Veterans'
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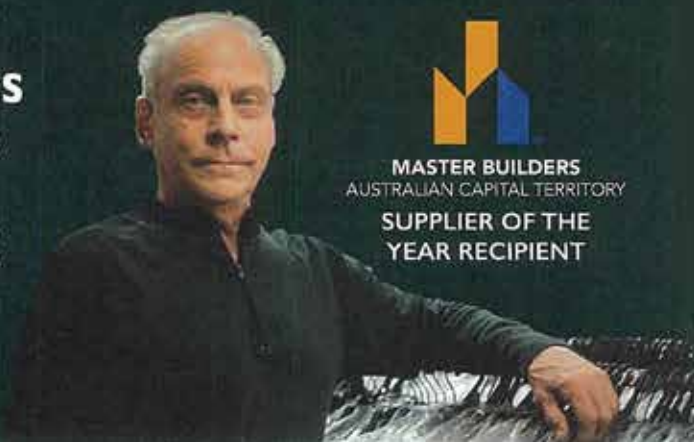
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From the CEO's Desk

Good day everyone. It's hard not to be anything but excited living in Canberra at the moment — I know, you don't hear that often! But a major milestone in national recognition for peacekeeping is now upon us. The newly redeveloped Peacekeeping Galleries at the Australian War Memorial have officially opened, marking a historic step forward in how Australia honours its peacekeepers.

These galleries are the result of determined advocacy from across the veteran community, including several former and current APPVA members. Their persistence has ensured that peacekeeping service is finally recognised with the accuracy, depth, and prominence it has long deserved. A particular acknowledgement goes to Dr David Sutton of the Australian War Memorial, whose leadership as Lead Historian on the Peacekeeper galleries has been outstanding. As an APPVA member himself, Dr Sutton understands peacekeeping and it shows in the quality of the work now on display.

The opening of these new galleries stands as a testament to the commitment of our community and to the significance of the missions we served on. I won't say too much more here; you'll find plenty in the pages ahead. Even better, book a trip down this way and see them for yourself.

Peacekeeper Dinner

Speaking of booking a trip, tickets for our inaugural Peacekeeper Fundraiser Dinner at the Australian War Memorial are almost sold out. We are looking at expanding seating to fit more people in, although I wouldn't wait too long to grab a subsidised member or associate-member ticket. It promises to be a great night.

Advocacy

In recent weeks I've copped a bit of heat online for suggesting that peacekeepers should support all those who served alongside us as part of Australia's whole-of-government response to missions. Our proposal is simple: that the AFP — and potentially the AEC — receive better support through DVA when they deploy alongside military peacekeepers.

Some spirited objections were raised, including claims that I'd be responsible for "cops getting benefits," that veterans would lose entitlements, or that DVA would grind to a halt. None of this is accurate. This is a consultation — an invitation for the veteran community to consider an idea, not a final position or a legislative push.

It would be easy to pull back, lick our wounds, and avoid floating ideas online again. But we won't. We will continue to advocate for what is fair for all peacekeepers, regardless of the uniform worn overseas. Helping others secure appropriate legislative coverage does not mean veterans will miss out on theirs. In the coming months, we will make a representation to DVA through ESORT recommending that the current legislation excluding deployed police be reviewed.

Apart from online discourse I also met with the Minister for Veterans' Affairs in person to outline our concerns about the proposed \$5000 cap on allied health care — a change that has caused understandable frustration across the veteran community. We are working closely with other associations to urge DVA to focus on the small number of healthcare providers rorting the system, rather than blaming veterans for legitimately accessing their entitlements. That's not the only advocacy underway. We have 11 new advocates in training, so in a few months we will be even better placed to assist with claims and wellbeing support.

ADF Deaths in Training Memorial

We are about to step off on raising the initial funds for consultation on what the Australian Military Training Memorial will look like and how it will best represent those who have been killed in training accidents whilst serving in the ADF. We were reminded of this commemorative gap only a few months ago with the tragic passing of WO2 Lachlan Muddle in a parachute training accident.

Unfortunately, training deaths will continue to occur due to the hazardous, high-fidelity training many ADF units conduct but this memorial is not just for those in the special forces or the aircrew who are so heavily represented in the



Rod Henderson

statistics, it is for those who rolled their truck or died from exposure to heat in the training area. For those who deployed on a ship and never saw their home port again. Training deaths will continue to impact all units and we will ensure these members are remembered at a national level — on Anzac Parade. I ask families, veterans, and ADF members who have lost loved ones and mates to please get in contact and help shape something of enduring significance and dignity.

Merchandise

APPVA merch has been selling well, with the polo shirt and caps clear standouts. If you haven't got an association shirt yet, maybe consider a dress shirt for ANZAC Day and represent the peacekeeping community in style. Please allow up to three weeks for delivery if your size is not currently in stock.

General business

We are always looking for dependable people with the ability to give time, passion, and energy to the Association. We have some great new members coming on board that I hope to announce soon. If you've been thinking about getting more involved, I strongly encourage you to check out the positions vacant section or simply reach out to see what can be done.

We've still got a long way to go, but there are exciting times ahead. Please keep sending through your ideas and concerns via email at ceo@peacekeepers.asn.au. I want every member to feel they have a voice in shaping our Association.

Cheers

Rod Henderson
CEO APPVA
Rod.henderson@peacekeepers.asn.au

AWM Peacekeeping Gallery

By Melissa Cadden and David Sutton

About the authors: Melissa Cadden is a Senior Curator in Military Heraldry and Technology and Dr David Sutton is a Senior Historian in Military History at the Memorial. They co-led the development of the Memorial's new permanent exhibition, Australian peacekeeping: 1947 – today.

AI recreation of original image below (inset)



Three of the first four Australian peacekeepers stand in front of an aircraft with Charles Eaton, the then acting Australian Consul-General, in September 1947. (L-R) Commander Henry Chesterman, Charles Eaton, Brigadier Lewis Dyke and Major David Campbell.

On the 14th of September 1947 four Australians – Brigadier Lewis Dyke, Major David Campbell, Commander Henry Chesterman and Squadron Leader Lou Spence – arrived in Yogyakarta.

They were there to monitor a shaky ceasefire between Dutch forces and Indonesian independence fighters in Netherlands East Indies (today's Indonesia) – making them the world's first peacekeepers.

Since then, not a single day has passed without an Australian peacekeeper serving somewhere in the world. At the time of writing earlier this year, Australia has deployed to 68 separate peacekeeping operations in more than 40 countries and disputed zones.

Currently, Australians are deployed as peacekeepers to South Sudan, Korea, and the Middle East. There is no official nominal roll of those who have served as Australian peacekeepers, but Australians have left our shores to serve on a peacekeeping operation on an estimated 60,000 occasions.

Some have served multiple times in multiple operations: we know of one individual who, after his service in Vietnam, embarked on a peacekeeping career that took him to Cyprus, Mozambique, East Timor and Solomon Islands.

Those 60,000 individual deployments have been undertaken by members of all three services but also by members of Australia's state and federal police, civilians working for the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and for numerous other government departments such as the Australian Electoral Commission.

Those deployed have served as military observers, humanitarian deminers, police, elections staff, peace monitors, commanders of major multinational operations, and countless other roles. All were required to achieve a common goal – to assist people in need. They have served both armed and unarmed. Seventeen have made the ultimate sacrifice.

Australia has a long, complex and proud history of peacekeeping. As the lead curator and lead historian on the development of new, expanded peacekeeping galleries at the Australian War Memorial, we faced an exciting opportunity but also a considerable challenge.

Challenges

The history of Australian peacekeeping is not a linear narrative. Unlike the Vietnam War gallery, for example, which tells the story of a single (if complex) conflict confined (largely) to one country over a defined time period, the peacekeeping gallery needs to jump across time and space.

It is a story more than 75 years long that spans four continents and multiple, often unrelated conflicts, each requiring its own unique peacekeeping response. How do you break this complex story down and present it in a coherent narrative for the general museum visitor?

Peacekeeping is a complex craft that is not particularly well-understood. Research conducted in 2019 at the beginning of the project showed that public knowledge of the basics of Australian peacekeeping – where we have done it, why we do it, how we do it, and how long Australia has been doing it – is not widespread.



Squadron Leader Lou Spence

This is as true for some of Australia's more obscure deployments (the 2001–2005 mission to Ethiopia – Eritrea for example) as it is for some of Australia's largest and most ambitious deployments, such as those to Cambodia or Somalia.

Couple that unfamiliarity with a cohort of veterans who often feel that their story has been ignored, and are keen to see their service fully recognised. In this context, as curators and historians we are faced with a difficult conundrum: how do we tell a story that is both *accessible* to a public working with scant prior knowledge and understanding, and also *meaningful* to veterans who know their deployment so intimately, and have often been profoundly affected by their experiences?

What's in a name?

Another issue was what the gallery would be called. We know through consultation with veterans that some feel the term 'peacekeeping' does not accurately reflect their service. Many who served in Somalia, for instance, prefer the term 'peace enforcement', and other operations might more accurately be described as 'peacemaking' or 'peace support'. The Australian Defence Force tends to use the term 'peace operations'. However, knowing that such a term tends to come across as ADF-speak, and that the general public is unlikely to know what it means, we have followed the consensus used in the literature and chosen the umbrella term 'peacekeeping' – noting distinctions such as 'peace enforcement' where they are needed.

Patches, hats and brassards

This leads to the final challenge, and in many ways the most difficult one to overcome. An analysis of the collection at the beginning of the project showed that the Memorial did not hold many objects reflecting the Australian experience of peacekeeping.

Even larger deployments, such as those to Rhodesia or Solomon Islands, had few objects that could accurately depict the key elements of those operations and the experience of the people who were involved. The impact on civilians, or the role played by peacekeepers outside the Australian Defence Force, was also under-represented. There was, we often joked, an abundance of hats and brassards – considerable collection development needed to occur to more accurately represent experiences of peacekeeping and conflict in the gallery.

Solutions

We realised that the best way to present these complex histories to the public is to hear from the people who have lived through them. Since 2019 we have talked

to hundreds of veterans of Australian peacekeeping operations. They have been very generous in giving us their time, in talking through often very difficult and distressing subject matter, and offering new objects, photographs, letters and diaries for the Memorial's National Collection.

It has also been a guiding principle of the gallery to acknowledge that the stories we tell do not begin with Australian boots on the ground. To explain why Australia sends personnel to assist people far from home in the aftermath of war, we need to look at what preceded the deployment. As much as possible our gallery looks at the history of the country and the conflict to which Australians were sent as peacekeepers. We have talked to communities from those countries who now call Australia home. For example, speaking to members of the Rwandan community in Australia has allowed us to ensure that we can tell the story of the country's civil war and genocide with respect, and through the eyes of those who experienced it.

Namibia 1989–1990



The East Timor section of the gallery begins not in 1999, the year of the independence referendum, subsequent violence and the beginning of Australian peacekeeping deployments there, but in 1975 – the year of the Indonesian invasion of East Timor, the beginning of 24 years of occupation and resistance. Similarly, the Cambodia section focuses on Australian operations from the deployment of police to the UN Border Relief Operation in 1989, continuing to the much larger ADF missions that followed. But this gallery also has a section looking at the Cambodians' own experience – not only of the killing fields and life under the Khmer Rouge, but of life in the vast refugee camps that followed.

Building a collection

It was important to begin by searching the Memorial's National Collection for what is already held, and identifying themes for which new collection material was needed. Much-loved objects have returned for display, such as Major General Peter Cosgrove's famous slouch hat from East Timor.

Newer items include bullet-damaged objects from fire fights between Australians and militia during the violent early period of INTERFET. Perhaps the most significant new acquisition is a damaged United Nations Land Rover that struck a mine in Cyprus in 1974, killing New South Wales Police Sergeant Ian Ward and a Turkish Cypriot man, Abdullah Omer, and injuring the other Australian and Cypriot passengers.

The vehicle lay in the mine field for decades after the tragedy, before it was moved to a memorial at the UN base in Nicosia. After careful negotiations, including with the United Nations and Ward's family, we are proud to bring the Land Rover to the Memorial for permanent display. It is the first thing visitors see when they enter the peacekeeping gallery, and a stark reminder that peacekeeping is not easy, nor is it safe, and Australians have made the ultimate sacrifice while serving in the name of peace.

Building a gallery

Visitors will discover a gallery separated into five zones. The first provides a who, what, where, when and why of Australian peacekeeping. Features here include the Land Rover from Cyprus, and a display of uniforms representing some of the many roles performed by Australian peacekeepers – from military observers to police officers, heavily armed infantry, and civilian election monitors – and an eclectic display of objects highlighting the complex and diverse craft of peacekeeping all around the world. Among the objects are land mines collected on de-mining operations, letters home, a fur hat worn by an Australian attached to a Gurkha unit while serving in the former Yugoslavia, and the beret and stethoscope of Major Susan Felsche, who was killed in an aircraft accident in Western Sahara in 1993.

To ensure that every Australian peacekeeping operation, no matter how small, has presence in the gallery, this zone also contains an interactive world map on which visitors can explore every conflict, and every operation, to which Australian peacekeepers have deployed. The map is updatable, should new peacekeeping operations arise.



DR PETER LONDEY

Defining peacekeeping

The United Nations Charter does not actually define what peacekeeping is; it just provides the mechanisms for international dispute resolution that often results in what is called a peacekeeping operation.

We drew on a definition by Dr Peter Londey: an operation counts as peacekeeping when it deals with the effects of a conflict (as opposed to humanitarian and disaster relief operations). It includes a substantial military or police component that is multinational (one country invading another and calling it peacekeeping is not peacekeeping, it is an invasion).

It comprises countries that had not been party to the conflict (an occupying force sent to a country in the aftermath of a war is not a peacekeeping force). It will have rules of engagement and practices in the field to ensure the minimum use of force to achieve its mandate (peacekeeping operations do not aim to create a desert and call it a peace).

The good international citizen

This zone focuses on Australia's largest peacekeeping commitments in the immediate post-Cold War era, when the end of the ideological struggle between the United States and the Soviet Union heralded a new wave of optimism. Gareth Evans, Minister for Foreign Affairs during this period, described Australia's actions as being driven by a desire to be 'a good international citizen'.

That phrase provides the name for this zone, which focusses on Namibia, Somalia, Cambodia and Rwanda. These were all difficult and dangerous operations, and as historian and curator we have worked to give a sense of what Australians did there, and what the experience was like.

Some highlights include a United Nations Land Rover used by Australians in Namibia; a mannequin of a soldier on patrol in Somalia; a reconstruction of a detachment in remote Cambodia, with an Australian operating communications for the UN mission; and a short film in which a survivor of

the Rwandan genocide, and Australian veterans of Operation Tamar, reflect on their experiences.

Australia and the Pacific region

This zone turns its attention to Bougainville and Solomon Islands. These were long-term operations in which Australians worked with partners from across the Pacific to build strong foundations for a lasting peace.

These operations involved a whole-of-government approach to peacekeeping. Australian police and DFAT staff worked alongside Australian defence personnel, and we ensure that the many hands that worked towards building regional security – military, police and civilian – are represented.

The Solomon Islands display, for example, is based on a dynamic timeline – with objects built into it – outlining key events on the long road towards peace. The Bougainville section, which includes objects from the three peacekeeping operations, is framed by a large multi-channel film installation,

East Timor



EAST TIMOR

After the 1999 outbreak of violence in East Timor shocked the world, the Indonesian province became the site of ambitious international peacekeeping operations.

Timor-Leste long path to independence is a story of the bravery and resilience of its people. Despite centuries of foreign rule and oppression, they kept their culture, traditions, and dreams of independence alive.

From 1999 to 2013, Australia was a major contributor to seven multinational peacekeeping led by the United Nations. Timor was served by military, police and civilian personnel.



Dr David Sutton and Melissa Cadden co-led the development of the Memorial's new permanent exhibition, Australian Peacekeeping: 1947 – today. Photo / Karleen Minney

Habitat, by internationally renowned Bougainvillean and Australian artist Taloi Havini.

This film explores the complex histories and legacies of the conflict by weaving together archival footage of mining negotiations, family archives documenting human rights abuses, and scenes of environmental devastation.

East Timor / Timor-Leste

We knew from early discussions that some veterans were frustrated by the focus on the Australian-led INTERFET operation at the expense of all else. INTERFET has a suitable display, but the gallery looks at all Australian involvement, from the 50 unarmed Australian Federal Police present during the worst of the militia violence, to the large but often overlooked return to Timor in 2006 known as Operation Astute.

Above all, the East Timor section gives visitors some sense of the scale of operations there, the horrors faced by the East Timorese people and Australian peacekeepers, and the personal experiences of

being on operation. On display are handmade weapons confiscated from militia who had been terrorising the East Timorese people. A new diorama depicts events during the early days, as international peacekeepers streamed into the ruined streets of Dili.

There are also an M113A1 armoured personnel carrier and a Kiowa helicopter. They represent the significant military might that underpinned the international peacekeeping effort and the significant assets Australia sent to assist.

Reflections / Connections

In the centre of the peacekeeping gallery, both physically and metaphorically at its heart, is a multi-screen film installation exploring the universal experiences of peacekeeping and conflict all around the world.

For this project we recorded interviews with more than two dozen Australian peacekeeping veterans, members of their families, and members of communities affected

by conflict. The film is a reminder of the people behind the objects that we display.

A lasting legacy

The development of the new peacekeeping gallery at the Australian War Memorial has been years in the making, but is well overdue. The previous gallery was simply too small to adequately tell the story of the many thousands of Australians who have given so much in the pursuit of peace; the new gallery helps provide context to this important aspect of Australian service.

The gallery can never claim to be comprehensive – no single museum display could ever be – but it goes a long way to honouring their service and bringing these incredible stories to the public. It has been our privilege and honour to play our small part.

This article first appeared in WM Issue 3, 2026. WM is the official magazine of the Australian War Memorial.



Padre's Ponderings

Fide et Fortitudine By Faith & Courage

King Solomon wrote in the 10th century BC:
"Two are better than one, because they have good reward for their toil"

In combat and in life we see King Solomon's views so often worked out. In many ways the new memorial to Richard Norden VC in Gundagai exemplifies this, where we see Norden assisting his Section Commander to safety.

Recently I heard an account of three peacekeepers who were attacked by an IED on the Israeli-Lebanese border. All were injured however one was still able to carry out the most wounded one and the other peacekeeper was still able to drive and thus they were able to get to safety despite all being wounded.

I have found this also works when the bullets stop and the chaos ends yet the noise may continue in your head. It is times like that that I find taking time to sit down with a mate and share my burden or in listening to theirs that I am able to find soul-peace.

St Paul in his letter to the Galatians, (who were Celts) echoes this sentiment; *"Bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the Law of Christ."*

Christ's law is that we love God and then love others, you will note the focus is on love and away from ourselves. This is different to what our society says which is promote yourself, you come first and do whatever you wish.

This only leads to unhappiness, broken relationships, spiteful words, depression, the list goes on. Far better to come alongside someone who is hurting and say a kind word and see if you can help them.

Once we focus away from ourselves, we find that those issues and problems we thought we had just don't seem to matter anymore. If you see a person today looking a bit down take the effort to give them a kind word and see what the matter with them is, it will make them feel so much better and you, too.

This is what Richard Norden did when he ran out to bring in his mate, this is what we do when sitting down and having a cuppa and a chat with a mate who is finding life's challenges difficult.

Godspeed

Steve Neuhaus

APPVA Chaplain

0403 060 369



Governor-General Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC with the Member for Riverina Michael McCormack MP at the Gundagai Memorial



Richard Norden VC

Memorial Honours Gundagai Hero

A national memorial honouring Private Richard Norden VC and the Australians who fought in the Battle of Coral-Balmoral in Vietnam was unveiled at Carberry Park in Gundagai on May 14.

The memorial stands as a place of remembrance for both the decorated soldier and all those who served in one of the Vietnam War's most significant battles.

Revealed on the anniversary of the Battle of Coral-Balmoral, the memorial features a striking bronze statue depicting Private Norden rescuing his Section Commander, Joe Kelly, under intense enemy fire during fighting in May 1968.

The Battle of Coral-Balmoral was the largest and longest battle fought by Australian forces during the Vietnam War with 26 Australians killed and 109 wounded.

The commemorative service included the unveiling of the completed memorial, a Catafalque Party, the Last Post, the Ode, a minute's silence and a 'Huey' helicopter flypast. Hundreds of family members of Private Norden, Coral-Balmoral veterans, families and members of the public attended.

The Governor-General, Her Excellency the Honourable Sam Mostyn AC, who presided over the ceremony to invest the late Private Norden with the Victoria Cross in Rockhampton in July 2025 attended the Gundagai commemoration and delivered the keynote address.

Ms Mostyn cited Private Norden's courage and selflessness in the heat of battle, his ongoing legacy and the bravery of generations of our service personnel.

Private Norden was just 19 and a rifleman with the 1st Battalion Royal Australian Regiment when his platoon was ambushed by the North Vietnamese Army in May 1968 during the Battle of Fire Support Base Coral some 30 kilometres north-east of Saigon.

Two members of the platoon - his second commander and a forward scout - were wounded and isolated in the initial stages of fighting. Under heavy enemy fire, Private Norden ran into the fray, killing one enemy soldier. Out of ammunition in his own weapon, he used that enemy soldier's firearm to repel the North Vietnamese soldiers and 'half carried, half dragged' the commander back to safety.

Severely wounded himself, Norden then left safety again to go back for the scout, killing an enemy soldier



Pat and Jim McDonnell with Lieutenant Tony Jensen who commanded the 1 RAR Mortar Platoon during the Battle of Coral-Balmoral and whose actions were recognised with the Medal for Gallantry in 2020.

Jim McDonnell fought on the battlefield at Coral and grew up with Richard Norden and his older brother Roger. "Dick was just a down-to-earth ordinary fella," he said. "None of us were heroes, but when it came to your turn to get in and have a go, he was in the position where he went forward and did what he had to do."

who had been using him as a human shield. Having seen the scout was already dead, Private Norden went back to his section to collect grenades, before pressing ahead for a third time to clear the area so his fallen comrade's body could be recovered.

Not only did he save the life of the section commander and secure the return of the scout's body, but his courageous actions caused enemy soldiers to abandon their positions.

The Secretary of the Gundagai RSL sub-Branch, Paul Vercoe, said the memorial delivers long-overdue national recognition to both a local hero and the Australians who fought at Coral-Balmoral.

"From the beginning, our vision was to create more than just a statue. We wanted a memorial that genuinely reflects Gundagai's bond with Private Richard Norden VC and honours the men of Coral-Balmoral whose courage has too often been overlooked in our national story.

"This project has brought together veterans, families, the local council, and community to ensure that when people stand here - whether they knew Richard or are learning his story for the first time - they understand the cost of that service and the character of the man this town is so proud to call its own."

Private Norden died in 1972 from injuries sustained in a motor-cycle accident while serving in ACT Police. Rodger Norden said Gundagai was overflowing with pride for his humble brother. "He was quiet but he was a larrikin," Rodger said. "No matter what he did he always excelled, but he didn't make a big fuss of it, either."

Like many of our heroes, Private Norden didn't like to speak about what went on in the battlefield, having only mentioned it to his brother once in passing before he received the Distinguished Conduct Medal in November 1968.

Now, more than half a century on, all of Australia knows his story, too.



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Welcome back Shane Lavell



SHANE LAVELL

Left: Ken Matthews presents Phil Marshall with the Chief Commissioners Commendation



phrase Phil often used, as he felt at times, that he was "losing the skin off his knuckles"

door knocking, state by state, and not seeing any meaningful results for a long time.

However, eventually RSLs, ESOs, churches, and service clubs began to come on board assisting Everyman's. Allowing old Brew Trucks that have been used out field, often loaded with drinks, snacks and equipped with coffee making machines and fridges, to exchanged with more modern fully equipped vehicles. Having lithium battery systems, and other improved features, providing more sustained capability within remote training locations. Phil blazed a trail that made it possible for Everyman's to move to the next level in support, enabling Everyman's to serve those who are called to serve our Nation and support our near neighbours.

We wish Phil and his wife Jani all the best and every blessing for the future, we are assured that Phil will continue to make an equally valuable contribution supporting others within his next field of ministry.

Further Everyman's Welfare Service updates can be obtained by contacting Everyman's at admin@everymans.org.au to be added to our mailing/emailing list or visiting our Everyman's Welfare Service website.



Everyman's welcomes back Shane Lavell as Chief Commissioner, having initially served with us in a fulltime capacity throughout the 1980s and 90s.

In that time, he was posted to several locations around Australia including Kapooka, Bonegilla, Bandiana and Darwin. Furthermore, he served with the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), attached to the Australian Force Communications Unit who provided communications support to the UN mission in Cambodia during the early 1990s.

Everyman's Welfare Service (EWS) has provided pastoral care and practical welfare support to the Australian Defence Force (ADF) since 1940, via brew trucks visiting field, training and operational locations - providing refreshments, a word of encouragement and a sympathetic ear to ADF members operating in often tough and trying conditions. Our supportive ministry is further extended through our Recreation Centres on military bases, providing a home away from environment, recreational options, hospitality and Christian fellowship. Shane will be mainly based at Simpson Barracks Watsonia in Melbourne supporting the Defence School of Signals, elements of the 4th Brigade and Australian Army Cadets. On a regularly basis he will visit EWS's HQ in Bandiana and meet the rest of the team throughout Australia as time permits.

There are many things about the ministry that never change as we support Defence members both at home and abroad. Shane is able to bring his years of experience back to Everyman's ministry team, while adjusting to the modern Defence environment and culture.

Shane will no doubt find himself tackling new challenges and adjustments, but at the same time being able to share his experiences with a view to making the Everyman's ministry more and more relevant and effective.

Everyman's representatives have honorary Officer status within Defence and wear military uniforms with distinctive embellishments, identifying them as accredited Philanthropic representatives within the ADF. Representatives work within the military context as Full-time or Part-times staff of EWS.

Australian Peacekeepers Magazine also welcomes Shane as Everyman's contributor following on from Ken Matthews and Phil Marshall.

As Chief Commissioner (CCOM) of EWS, Ken was delighted to present Phil with the CCOM's Commendation, which is the highest award in Everyman's, recognising his personal effort and valuable contribution to the ministry.

Phil went door to door around the nation and we remember well the

Burke bestrides State Borders

Matt Burke leads the Anzac Day March in Wodonga

Matt Burke OAM was ever the diplomat bestriding the twin cities of Albury (NSW) and Wodonga (Victoria) on Anzac Day.

Matt is Peacekeepers NSW State Rep and he laid a wreath at the Woodland Grove Cenotaph and led the ANZAC Day March along High Street in Wodonga. The March followed the ANZAC Dawn Service and ANZAC Day Gunfire Breakfast at Wodonga RSL.



Vets vision of Namibia

A group of UNTAG Namibian Veterans including APPVA Company Secretary Mark Horner visited the Australian War Memorial on May 29 to take part in filming of a Namibian Documentary.

The day began at the AWM with the Director Matt Anderson PSM and Senior Historian David Sutton being interviewed by WildBear TV adjacent to the UNTAG Namibia Landrover.

A short stroll down the hill to the Australian Peacekeeping Memorial on Anzac Parade where the annual service was conducted by the United Nations & Overseas Policing Association of Australia (UNOPAA) and attended by many Veterans and dignitaries.

From there lunch was held at Poppys Cafe at the AWM before interviews recommenced in the new Peacekeeping Gallery in and around the UNTAG Landrover.

The final formal part of the day was the Last Post Service conducted by the AWM and UNTAG Namibian



Veterans were acknowledged with wreaths laid by Antonio Gelonesi (Honorary Consul General - Namibia), Michael Borg (President 17 Construction Sqn Association), Lt Gen Ken Gillespie AC, DSC, CSM (2IC CE UNTAG) and Superintendent Jason Brynes APM (Vice President UNOPAA).

Mark reports dinner was held at Olims Bar & Bistro at the Mercure Canberra with beers and good company well into the night.

The Namibian Documentary will be premiered just prior to the Peacekeeping Dinner on the 12 September at the AWM.

Remembering the Peacekeepers



(L-R) James Muddle, LTCOL Harry Jarvie DSC CSC, Scarlett Clifford, Mayor Sarah Ndiaye, John Thurgar, Stephen Williams, Jamie Tanner, Doug Baird OAM, Reverend Geoff Vidal, Phil Skinner.

An eminent group of local residents and special guests joined High School representatives to celebrate International UN Peacekeepers Day at the Mullumbimby Cenotaph in far-north NSW on May 29.

Participants were welcomed by Stephen Williams (Mullumbimby RSL President) and Sarah Ndiaye (Byron Shire Mayor) issued a Welcome to Country. Reverend Geoff Vidal offered Scripture Readings and Prayers while a speech on the significance of the day was given by Year 12 students James Muddle and Scarlett Clifford from Mullumbimby High School.

Doug Baird, father of the late Cameron Baird VC MG, who served as a Peacekeeper in Timor Leste also attended and wreaths were laid by dignitaries, veterans and community members.

Another participant, Fiona Sullivan, added: "There's a magnificent carpet that adorns the wall of the United Nations in New York, a gift

from the people of Iran. Alongside it are the wonderful words of Sa'adi Shirazi, the famous 13th-century Persian poet.

"Human beings are parts of one body,

In creation they are indeed of one nature.

If a body part is afflicted with pain,

Other body parts uneasy will remain.

If you have no sympathy for human pain,

The name of human you shall not retain."

The sentiment of Saadi's poem can be seen to conform to the spirit of the Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on 10 December 1948, of which the first article reads as follows:

"All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood."

Invest in Peace



Australian Bravery Association's John Thurgar SCMBE OAM RFD said UN Peacekeepers Day honours the service and sacrifice of over 4,000 international peacekeepers who have lost their lives in the service of Peace since 1948.

"It highlights their role in protecting civilians, maintaining security, and promoting peace. However, geopolitical tensions, political pressure and funding crises are putting the viability of multilateral peacekeeping in jeopardy," he cautioned. "Over two million uniformed and civilian personnel have served in these missions to maintain international peace and security.

"There are 11 operations remaining active but global peacekeeping missions are in jeopardy. There's over 78,000 personnel currently deployed and that's down 49 per cent since 2016."

The 2026 Focus is Invest in Peace. To those at UN HQ in New York the day emphasises the need for future-focused peacekeeping operations capable of adapting to modern, complex threats.

As reported by Eve Jeffery in the Mullumbimby Echo Newspaper, Mr Thurgar said that, in his opinion, these complex threats do not address the underlying incentives driving many of the world conflicts that the UN tries to act as the honest-broker pursuing peace.

"For as long as volatility enriches the powerful while ordinary people pay the price, escalation will remain a politically useful tool to some nations. As I see it, at the UN HQ level, the real challenge, therefore, is to sever the link between geopolitical instability and private gain.

"UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the United Nations Charter is under 'profound strain' as conflicts multiply worldwide and geopolitical divisions erode the foundations of international law.

"Guterres described the charter as a survival guide for humanity created to ensure that the force of law must prevail over the law of force. He identified seven major threats now endangering the international system and warned we now face the highest number of conflicts since the founding of the United Nations."

Veterans guiding Army Cadets

By Dave McCammon



CAPTAIN (AAC) TREVOR HOGAN

They're learning resilience, teamwork, leadership and life skills in a safe, supportive environment ”



Australian veterans know what it means to serve something bigger than ourselves. Whether we served in peacekeeping missions, combat deployments, or training commands, that sense of purpose, leadership under pressure, and commitment to mates never really leaves us.

For many of us, the transition to civilian life can leave a quiet gap, a longing for that feeling of belonging, of wearing the uniform again, and of making a real difference.

There is a place where many veterans are rediscovering exactly that feeling in the Australian Army Cadets.

Right now, nearly 20,000 young Australians aged 12 to 19 are part of this Army-enabled youth development program. They're learning resilience, teamwork, leadership, and life skills through activities that echo the best of what we experienced in uniform – but in a safe, supportive environment. And they need role models like us.

Take Captain (AAC) Trevor Hogan, for example. Medically discharged from the Australian Army in 2015, Trevor felt that profound loss of identity that so many of us know all too well.

He tried to fill the gap by reconnecting through his local RSL Sub Branch and the State Emergency Service, but it was only when he joined the Australian Army Cadets as an adult volunteer that he found his sense of purpose again.

Today, as a proud Army Cadet Staff member, Trevor is helping lead a new veteran-led initiative to support other ex-serving members to step into volunteer roles continuing to serve by sharing lived experience, leadership, and values with the next generation.

As volunteers, we have the chance to guide young people and help set them on a path to greater things. Many veterans, like Trevor, find a renewed sense of purpose and belonging through this work – that familiar feeling that comes from the core values of Army, the uniform, and knowing we're helping to build resilience in the next generation.

Volunteering comes in all shapes and sizes

You don't need to commit full-time or be available every night of the week. Many veterans begin as Defence Approved Helpers in non-uniformed roles – drivers, cooks, range assistants, or admin support – and later decide to become uniformed Army Cadet Staff (ACS) instructors.

The program is flexible and part-time, and it warmly welcomes veterans from every background and every corner of Australia. The opportunities we offer cadets are broad and exciting:



Flight Sergeant Justin Galbraith, of the RAAF Drone Racing Team, helps Australian Army Cadets fix their drones. Photo / Sapper Alex Brown

Adventure training

Bushwalking, abseiling, navigation, survival skills, and expeditions that build confidence and self-reliance.

Drill and ceremonial

The discipline, pride, and teamwork of marching, parades, and honour guards.

STEM and technology

Including drones, robotics and future-focused skills.

Music

Pipes and drums, bands, and the memorable Army Cadet Tattoo performances that light up community events.

And much more, including marksmanship, first aid, leadership courses, and community service.

Whether you're a former infantry soldier, engineer, logistician, medic, signaller, or peacekeeper, your lived experience is invaluable. Cadets don't need perfect instructors they need authentic ones.

They need people who've been there, who can show them what service really means, and who can pass on the values that made the Australian Army what it is.

The Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans' Association has always stood for continued service. Volunteering with Army Cadets is one of the most direct and rewarding ways to keep contributing to your community, to the next generation, and to the future of the nation we all served.



Cadets preparing for the Drone Racing Championships at Simpson Barracks in Melbourne last month

Ready to answer the call again?

Visit www.armycadets.gov.au/volunteer

Complete an Expression of Interest

Find a unit near you. There are units right across Australia.

You will be welcomed by like-minded veterans and serving staff who understand exactly where you're coming from just as many others have discovered.

The uniform is waiting. The young leaders are waiting. And that sense of purpose you've been missing? It's waiting, too.

Come and show Australia's youth what leadership really looks like. Your service didn't end when you took the uniform off. It just changed form.



Service Beyond the Uniform

Women Veterans and the Transition Journey

By Dr Kate Robinson, Vice Chair, Women Veterans Australia

For many veterans, the transition from military to civilian life is a defining chapter, one that brings both opportunity and challenge.

For women veterans, this transition can be uniquely complex, shaped by service experiences that are often under-recognised and by support systems that have not always kept pace with their growing presence in the Australian Defence Force.

Women have served Australia with distinction across generations, from nursing roles in the World Wars to combat, leadership, and specialist positions in modern operations. Yet despite this long and proud history, their stories have too often remained in the margins.

As a result, the transition experience for women veterans is not only about adjusting to civilian life; it is also about being seen, understood, and supported in ways that reflect their service. One of the most significant challenges women veterans face during transition is identity.

Military service provides a strong sense of purpose, structure, and belonging. When that uniform comes off, many veterans, regardless of gender, experience a loss of identity. However, for women, this can be compounded by a lack of visibility in veteran narratives.

The stereotypical image of a veteran as male can leave women feeling

excluded from the very community they belong to. This can delay help-seeking behaviour and contribute to feelings of isolation. Employment is another key area where the transition experience can diverge.

Women veterans often bring exceptional leadership, adaptability, and problem-solving skills to the civilian workforce. However, translating military experience into civilian language can be difficult, particularly in industries that may not fully understand or value Defence experience.

Additionally, women may face gender biases that persist across broader society, impacting hiring opportunities and career progression. Tailored employment support that recognises both military skills and gender-specific challenges is essential to bridging this gap.

Health and well-being are also critical considerations. While much attention has rightly been given to physical and mental health conditions among veterans, women may experience these differently. For example, experiences of military sexual trauma, gender-based discrimination, or service-related health issues specific to women can influence both the transition process and long-term well-being.

Access to gender-sensitive healthcare and veteran services is vital, yet not always consistently available or well understood. The findings and ongoing work of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide have underscored the complexity of transition and the critical need for tailored, person-centred support.

The Commission has highlighted systemic gaps in how veterans are supported as they leave service,

including the importance of early intervention, continuity of care, and improved coordination between Defence and civilian systems.

Importantly, it has also drawn attention to the distinct experiences of women, reinforcing that a one-size-fits-all approach to transition is insufficient. Family dynamics can further shape the transition journey.

Women veterans are often primary caregivers or play significant roles within their families. Balancing the demands of transition, such as job searching, retraining, or managing health, with family responsibilities can be particularly challenging.

For some, the transition may coincide with a partner's ongoing service, adding another layer of complexity. Support systems that take a holistic view of the veteran, including their family context, are critical in ensuring sustainable outcomes.

Organisations such as Women Veterans Australia are playing a vital role in addressing these gaps. By advocating for recognition, providing peer support, and amplifying the voices of women who have served, they are helping to reshape the transition landscape.

Their work highlights the importance of connection, ensuring that women veterans have access to networks where their experiences are understood and valued. These organisations also contribute to policy discussions, ensuring that lived experience informs the development of more inclusive and effective support systems.

Recognition also plays a powerful role in transition, and initiatives that elevate the stories of women in service are essential. Programs such as the ANZAC Day Schools Awards play an important role in shaping community understanding of military service among younger generations.



THE LAST POST

KEEPING THE ANZAC SPIRIT ALIVE FOR AUSTRALIA'S VETERANS AND THEIR SUPPORTERS

The 2026 theme, Women in Service, is particularly significant, offering an opportunity to highlight the contributions, leadership, and sacrifices of women across Australia's military history. By embedding these narratives in education and commemoration, we not only honour service but also strengthen identity and belonging for current and former women veterans.

The role of leadership, both within veteran organisations and across government and industry, cannot be overstated. Embedding gender-informed approaches into transition

programs, employment initiatives, and healthcare services is not simply a matter of equity; it is a matter of effectiveness.

The insights emerging from the Royal Commission, alongside the advocacy of organisations like Women Veterans Australia, provide a clear roadmap for reform, one that places the veteran, in all their diversity, at the centre of policy and practice.

Transition is not a single event but a process that unfolds over time. For women veterans, this process may involve navigating additional barriers, but it is also marked by resilience, strength, and a continued commitment to service, albeit in new forms.

Many women go on to make significant contributions in their communities, workplaces, and families, drawing on the skills and

values developed during their military careers. As we look to the future, the evolving profile of the veteran community must be matched by equally progressive support systems.

This includes listening to women veterans, investing in research, and ensuring that policies and programs are informed by lived experience. Ultimately, supporting women veterans in transition is about more than addressing challenges; it is about recognising potential.

It is about ensuring that those who have served their country are equipped, empowered, and acknowledged as they continue their journey beyond the uniform. Their service does not end with the transition. In many ways, it is just the beginning of a new chapter, one that deserves our full support and recognition.



RAAF Corporal Samantha Mead (centre) with the aviators she mentored on the Top Chicks program which is a nine-week wellbeing and mentorship course run within the ADF. Photo / Melina Young

Looking At Women Looking At War



BOOK REVIEW

“Makes you want to weep, because what the pages instantly make clear is just how much Amelina had to offer. An anguished attempt to answer the question: when your country is facing an existential threat, what role can the creative artist play?”

Financial Times

When Russia invaded Ukraine on February 24, 2022, Victoria Amelina was busy writing a novel, taking part in the country’s literary scene, and parenting her son.

An award-winning Ukrainian novelist, essayist, poet, and human rights activist, she lived and travelled extensively in the USA and her essays appeared in the Irish Times, Dublin Review of Books and Eurozine.

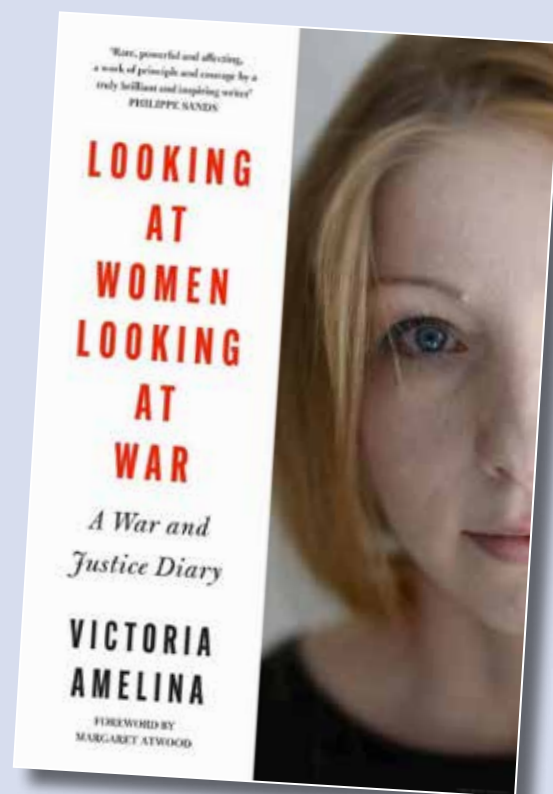
Then she became someone new: a war crimes researcher and the chronicler of extraordinary women like herself who joined the resistance in Ukraine.

These heroines include Evgenia, a prominent lawyer turned soldier, Oleksandra, who documented tens of thousands of war crimes and won a Nobel Peace Prize in 2022, and Yulia, a librarian who helped

uncover the abduction and murder of a children’s book author.

Everyone in Ukraine knew that Amelina was documenting the war. She photographed the ruins of schools and cultural centres; she recorded the testimonies of survivors and eyewitnesses to atrocities. And she slowly turned back into a storyteller, writing what would become *Looking At Women Looking At War*.

On the evening of June 27 in 2023, Amelina and three international writers stopped for dinner in the embattled Donetsk region. When a Russian cruise missile hit the restaurant, Amelina suffered grievous head injuries, and lost consciousness. She died on July 1. She was 37 and left



behind an incredible account of the ravages of war and the cost of resistance.

Honest, intimate, and wry, *Looking At Women Looking At War* is a poet’s powerful look at the courage



of resistance and will be celebrated as a classic.

The book begins during the invasion when Amelina buys her first gun in downtown Lviv. “I’ve heard that everyone is capable of killing and those who say they aren’t just haven’t met the right person yet. An armed stranger entering my country might just be ‘the right person’.”

Amelina wryly observed that Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine had been ‘rescheduled’ since 2014, when it invaded Crimea. Her writing highlights the urgency of Ukraine’s defiance.

The ongoing war has produced a formidable body of frontline writing. Amelina’s is an unfinished notebook salvaged from a life cut short. It looks outward from inside Ukraine’s traumatised civic body, tracing the **concentric circles** of harm that ripple from shattered museum glass showcases to improvised war-crimes dossiers.

The pages vibrate with the ethics of witnessing and it reminds Anglophone readers the fate of Europe is being negotiated not only in summit chambers, but in the quotidian heroism of librarians, drone coders and sleep-starved reporters queuing for generators.

Amelina’s writing resists easy categorisation. Part field notebook, part literary meditation, part forensic brief, her book chronicles Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine through a gendered lens, at once intimate and juridical.

Written between February 2022 and Amelina’s death in July 2023, the diary exposes the moral and mental stakes of documenting violence, while insisting the very act of writing can become a legal intervention.

What emerges is a polyphonic narrative in which the private minutiae of wartime life (brewing coffee, rescuing a restless family dog) cohabit with precise shell-hole measurements.

Central to Amelina’s project is a theory of the double gaze: “Looking At Women Looking At War.” She traces how female lawyers, librarians, archivists and medics occupy (often against their will) the position of both observing subject and vulnerable object.



Victoria Amelina traveling through Kherson Oblast, Ukraine in February 2023.

She reminds her reader that testimony is never angelically disembodied; it emerges from embodied lives marked by exhaustion, fear – and, crucially – ethical resolve.

Against prevailing stereotypes of passive female victimhood, the diary foregrounds the muscular agency with which women contest the war’s gendered division of labour.

Evhenia Zakrevska, a prominent lawyer turned soldier, compiles chains-of-command charts for future tribunals. Oleksandra Matviichuk, who leads the Centre for Civil Liberties documenting tens of thousands of war crimes, tours freshly liberated cities to collect testimonies.

Human rights lawyer Kateryna Rashevskaya drafts amicus briefs – legal documents submitted to a court by someone who is not a

party to the case, but who has a strong interest in the matter – for the International Criminal Court.

These women flit restlessly between “front” and “rear”, refusing geographic and symbolic boundaries alike. Their labour unmasks a politics of conflict in which gender is less a social category than a strategic terrain. The pursuit of justice, in the face of entrenched impunity, forms the diary’s ethical spine.

Amelina is acutely aware the documentary impulse may be nullified by geopolitical realpolitik, that constitutional niceties risk appearing grotesque beside charred apartment blocks. Yet she insists on that precision itself. Names spelled correctly, dates triple-checked, fragments of shrapnel preserved in labelled bags. This constitutes a mode of resistance.



Oleksandra Matviichuk gives her lecture at the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize for 2022. Photo: Javad Parsa / AAP



Multinational members of Operation Render Safe remove a bomb in East New Britain, PNG

Explosives disposed in SW Pacific

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) has worked with regional partners to identify and safely dispose of dangerous World War II explosives in the South West Pacific.

Delivered through Operation RENDER SAFE, the ADF-led multinational activity helps Pacific island countries reduce the ongoing threat of posed by explosive remnants of war (ERW).

In Papua New Guinea, ADF engineers safely disposed of thousands of explosive items in the Gazelle, Kokopo and Rabaul districts alongside the PNG Defence Force and partners from Canada, France, Japan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Conducted from June 1 to June 20, the activity focused on ERW identified during previous operations that pose a potential risk to local communities.

At the request of the Government of Tuvalu, two Royal Australian Navy Huon Class Minehunters, HMAS Yarra and HMAS Diamantina, along with Pacific Support Vessel ADV Reliant, are also deploying to Tuvalu in July to conduct technical reconnaissance of Nanumea Lagoon.



Australian Army Warrant Officer Mitchell Dolan and Captain Adam Ampa'oi deliver orders during Operation Render Safe

This reconnaissance mission builds on survey work conducted in 2022 and support the Government of Tuvalu in planning future disposal activities.

Australian Chief of Joint Operations Vice Admiral Justin Jones said Operation RENDER SAFE is a key contributor to a unified and secure Pacific. "The ADF has worked with Pacific partners to support explosive ordnance disposal under Operation RENDER SAFE for more than 20 years," Jones said.

"During these operations, we work side-by-side our regional partners and local authorities to conduct safe and deliberate identification and disposals of explosive ordnance removing the danger these pose to communities.

"Working together on Pacific-led solutions to Pacific challenges strengthens our combined security capabilities and contributes to maintaining a peaceful, stable and resilient region."

Operation RENDER SAFE

“Working together...contributes to maintaining a peaceful, stable and resilient region.”

Photographer / SGT Andrew Sleeman



Multinational members of Operation Render Safe 26 locate and identify unexploded ordnance in Rabaul, PNG



Australian Army Corporal Nariah Vale prepares to use a Rocket Wrench on a 250lb bomb in East New Britain, PNG



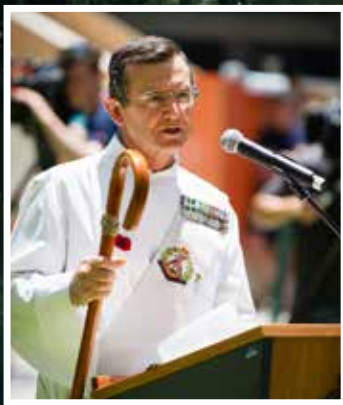
Explosive Ordnance Technician, Australian Army Sergeant Philip Rutherford removes a 250lb bomb from a community in East New Britain, PNG



RAAF Explosive Ordnance Disposal technician Corporal Ryan Stephenson-Baquero prepares to dispose of unexploded ordnance in Kokopo, PNG

Members of Operation Render Safe took time to visit the numerous war museums and memorials around East New Britain, to understand more of the region's rich history. Visits to the Rabaul (Bita Paka) War Cemetery and Yamamoto's bunker proved to be educational and emotional for the multinational contingent.





By Padre Gary Stone OAM



VALE

**MAJOR
JOHN WHITE, DSC**

VIETNAM LEGEND LEAVES A LEGACY



John White was deployed to Vietnam in 1968



Retired Major John White, DSC, a giant of a man in character, service, and moral courage, passed away peacefully on 16 February aged 84.

His story is captivating and this article honours his bravery, his struggle with moral injury, his healing journey and the legacy he leaves to our veteran community.

John graduated from the Royal Military College in 1963 and deployed to Vietnam in 1968 as a young 1 infantry captain with the Australian Army Training Team Vietnam (AATTV). He was tasked with commanding a mobile strike force of Nung mercenaries during the Tet Offensive.

Although he fought many battles, he is best remembered for his extraordinary leadership during the Battle of Ngok Tavak, documented in detail by fellow AATTV veteran Bruce Davies MBE.

Near the Laotian border, John was ordered to lead a blocking force of about 180 troops – his Nungs, a platoon of US Marines, two Australian Warrant Officers and a US Green Beret A Team.

Their mission was to delay the North Vietnamese Second Division. Australian doctrine would have seen such a force withdraw once the enemy arrived in strength, but John received US orders to hold the position until reinforced.

For 12 hours, his position endured intense close combat and was eventually overrun by a North Vietnamese battalion. John repeatedly exposed himself to danger, calling in airstrikes and artillery, organising counterattacks, redistributing ammunition, and encouraging his men.

Despite suffering more than 70 killed and over 70 wounded, he was denied permission to withdraw. At

one point, he negotiated a brief ceasefire to evacuate wounded from both sides before the battle resumed.

Surrounded by an NVA regiment and with only 37 men still able to fight, John again requested permission to withdraw and was again refused. Acting on his own initiative, he called napalm strikes around his position, advanced west through the flames, and led his surviving troops to an improvised landing zone deeper in enemy territory where his men were evacuated by helicopter.

John was the last to board the final aircraft. His decision confounded the enemy, who had prepared a battalion sized ambush on the expected eastern withdrawal route.

Upon returning to the US Regimental base, John was castigated by the US commander for leaving his post – only then learning that no reinforcements had ever been planned. He and his men had been abandoned. His anger, stress and distress were immense.

Although his immediate Australian superiors recommended him for a gallantry award, the overall Australian commander reprimanded him for disobeying orders. John was relocated to another part of Vietnam, where he continued fighting, but he became deeply disillusioned with the conduct and purpose of the war.

He came to believe that Australia and the United States should not have been involved at all.

John had entered RMC intending to be a career soldier, but after Vietnam he lost trust in his superiors and government. Feeling betrayed and unjustly accused, he left the Army carrying both post traumatic stress and profound moral injury – conditions poorly understood at the time.



Major John White with Australian Governor General David Hurley

He later shared that he endured many years of maladaptive behaviour, including suicidal ideation. He was distressed by the impact on his family but did not know how to address it. His wife, brother, and RMC classmates supported him through appeals to have his actions recognised. After 51 years, he finally received the Distinguished Service Cross in 2019.

John also carried deep guilt over being unable to recover the bodies of his fallen soldiers, including 14 US Marines.

When Australians were later permitted to return to Vietnam, he took the initiative to search for their remains. After they were located and exhumed, he accompanied them to the United States, explaining the circumstances of their deaths to their families.

This act of compassion marked the beginning of his healing from moral injury. After receiving his DSC, John's story reached the Veterans Care

Association, and he joined one of our programs at St George's, Rainbow Bay.

Although he had received treatment for PTSD, he was unaware of the emerging scholarship on moral injury and embraced it wholeheartedly.

While PTSD is now widely recognised, Moral Injury remains less understood. It arises from betrayal, shame, guilt, and violations of one's moral code. In my 31 years of ministry and more than 30,000 veteran interviews, moral injury is the most common and painful presentation among traumatised veterans.

PTSD is often treated with medication and cognitive behavioural therapy, but moral injury requires community acceptance and validation, and – most importantly – forgiveness. Forgiving oneself, forgiving others, and receiving forgiveness are essential steps. Healing comes through being affirmed by one's tribe and through restorative acts of compassion.

The lessons from John's life are not confined to Vietnam. Similar moral injuries have emerged among veterans of more recent deployments, including peacekeepers who witnessed the horrors of the Kibeho Massacre in Rwanda as well as the witness to human suffering on many peacekeeping missions.

Soldiers returned carrying not only the effects of trauma but also the burden of witnessing events they could not prevent, decisions they could not control, or actions that conflicted with their deepest values.

*Forgive who
you became to
survive, and
forgive those who
tried but failed to
understand*



John's story reminds us that while the theatres of war and peacekeeping change, the human cost can remain remarkably similar. We can learn from the past by recognising moral injury earlier, responding with compassion, and ensuring today's veterans do not wait decades for understanding and healing.

Moral injury often affects those with strong ethical values who are harmed by the unethical actions of others or by their own perceived failings. One on one therapy may be insufficient; communal affirmation is vital. When we ourselves have erred, restorative service to others can also be a powerful path to healing.

John contributed to our programs for the last five years of his life, sharing his story in person or by video. As his health declined in late 2025, I asked him to write a legacy message for veterans – a "Last Testament".

Some excerpts follow and he begins with a simple but profound directive:

First: Forgive yourself. Forgive who you became to survive, and forgive those who tried but failed to understand. Forgiveness, he wrote, is not excusing wrongdoing but "laying down a burden that's crushing you from the inside."

Second: Find the courage to change. Asking for help is not weakness; it is strength. "The bravest thing I ever did was admit I couldn't do it alone."

Third: Letting go of anger. It is understandable, he wrote, but destructive if left unchecked. Learn your triggers, use the tools available, and seek medical help if needed. Pride will not protect you; help will.

Fourth: Encourage kindness and gratitude. Notice the people who remain by your side and let them know they matter. Gratitude reconnects us to life.

Fifth: Love and be loved. Trauma convinces us we are unworthy, but that is a lie. Share positive emotions. His own marriage survived because he eventually opened up: "I couldn't have done it without her."

John reminded us to laugh. Humour, he said, saved his life more than once.

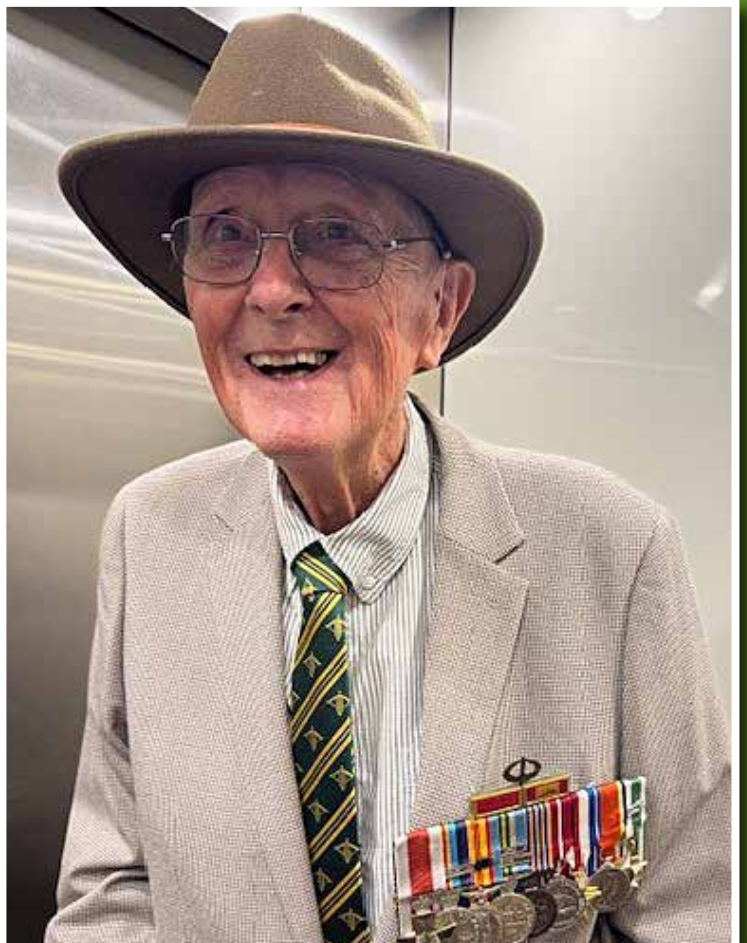
Finally: Consider your legacy – Not only as soldiers but as human beings. Legacy is shaped daily through small choices. One of his sons chose a military career, inspired by service and the promise to protect others.

John's closing reflection is a message of hope: "You are not weak. You are not broken beyond repair. And your story is not over." If he could move from merely surviving to truly living, then others can too.

John White's life was marked by courage, sacrifice, suffering, and ultimately healing. His legacy continues through us, the veterans he has inspired, and the wisdom he has left behind.

For those reading this who recognise the signs of moral injury in themselves, know that healing is possible. Trust us with your story. The best in life is yet to come.

*John reminded
us to laugh.
Humour, he said,
saved his life
more than once*



Major John White always with a smile on the dial in December 2025

Barrett focused on Pacific Bloc

Seeking a global rebalance of law enforcement



“Peacekeeping must become more agile and better tailored to today’s challenges”



Krissy Barrett became the ninth Commissioner of the AFP and the first woman to lead Australia’s federal police force in October last year. She replaced Reece Kershaw and prior to her appointment, she led the agency’s national security efforts as Deputy Commissioner National Security, responsible for monitoring threats to the Australian Government, critical infrastructure and terrorism, as well as the internal integrity and security of the AFP.

Barrett has also led the AFP’s counter terrorism and special investigations capability, responsible for developing strategies and leading operations to combat terrorism offences as well as special investigations to tackle foreign interference and espionage.

Previously, she spent time in Melbourne heading up Southern Command, delivering policing and specialist support for the Victorian and Tasmanian communities, and prior to that held a number of roles across the agency spanning multiple operational areas.

She has over 20 years’ experience in the agency and has represented the AFP and Australia in international forums, including Five Eyes Law Enforcement working groups targeting organised crime threats across the globe.

Krissy Barrett was appointed the first female commissioner of the Australian Federal Police by Prime Minister Anthony Albanese in October 2025. Photo: Mick Tsikas / AAP



*“The people
of the Pacific
do not see our
part of the
world
as small”*

AFP Commissioner Krissy Barrett has used an historic address to the United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit (UNCOPS) in New York to detail a 21st Century-plus model for UN Police Peacekeeping.

In a speech to 140 United Nations member states on July 9, Commissioner Barrett acknowledged the need for a new way forward in the face of global impacts such as economic pressures and an ever-evolving threat landscape.

Excerpts from her address follow:

Under-Secretary-General Lacroix, Ministers, fellow Chiefs of Police, distinguished delegates and friends from across the Pacific.

It is an honour for Australia to host the United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit for the first time, and a proud moment for me as the Australian Federal Police Commissioner to help open this discussion on the future of United Nations policing.

This is an important conversation and one the AFP is proud to lead, given 60 years ago we made our first contribution to UN Police Peacekeeping in Cyprus.

The AFP's role in UN Police Peacekeeping missions is embedded in our history, traditions and DNA. However, we do this with eyes wide open.

It is unjust that the pursuit of peace can lead to death. And, like many other nations, our efforts were not symbolic or without sacrifice.

Our collective fallen are not just names inscribed on walls of remembrance. They are the epitome of men and women who saw service to country greater than oneself.

Today, I acknowledge the sacrifices made by all of those who united for humanity under one uniform.

Our shared quest for security, safety and humanity does not invalidate our collective losses, but it explains why we must strive for it – and for all.

So, before we discuss the future of UN Peacekeeping Missions, I ask you to consider what our world would look like if the blue berets and blue helmets never existed.

And, let's be honest about the world we live in. Conflicts and outward aggression are unlikely to end. All of us live in an uncertain and unpredictable time.

But equally, let's be honest about this institution, which is mandated to uphold international peace and security.

The reputation of the UN is being challenged, and questions are being asked about whether the UN can still deliver on its mandate, given the uncertain and unpredictable world we live in.

Uncertainty and unpredictability does not just come with a human cost – it has a direct financial cost to our economies and our citizens.

This is a reason why UN Police Peacekeeping needs to remain, albeit with reform. The reform

needed is partly because of economics. There are financial pressures felt in every mission and every police-contributing country.

But reform does not mean we need to renege, recant or retreat. The right reform will help protect our shared quest for humanity, security and safety.

If we insulate the core principles we have – and those we will continue to rely on – such as training, human rights, and the protection of civilians, we can do more with less.

Our capital is our shared institutional capital, which has been built over decades through hard-earned expertise.

Spending more does not mean we get better outcomes. Spending our resources and capital more wisely does ensure we get better outcomes. This will become more important as the footprint of UN policing changes.

When I have honest conversations, I always start with this simple question: What is the problem we are trying to solve? I think many of us would agree expensive and endless missions are becoming harder to defend and ultimately fund.

However, leaner should never come at the expense of principles, values and ethics.

We need a new way. I never raise a problem without having a solution – and today, with Pacific Police Chiefs in the room – we propose a new way forward.

But first, I want to give you a sense of Pacific values and ambition and

“The Pacific’s ethos of communal care and shared responsibility is a guiding light”



dispel myths some may hold. The people of the Pacific do not see our part of the world as small.

As custodians of almost 20 per cent of the Earth’s surface, our vast horizon is wide and boundless, matched only by our vision of pride, stewardship and sovereignty.

While our collective world seems smaller every day, the aspiration of Pacific Police Chiefs rightly gets bigger. So, it is right we continue to be ambitious, and be ambitious together as the Pacific family, including Australia.

Because the 22 members of the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police are too many not to be seen. And the Pacific Police Chiefs are too wise not to be heard.

But, at its heart, the people of the Pacific are too important not to be represented on the world stage as the ripple effect of complex criminal threats reverberate throughout the globe and disproportionately affect communities.

Despite the challenges and impacts of illicit drug use, drug trafficking, cybercrime and human trafficking, the Pacific’s ethos of communal care and shared responsibility is a guiding light at a time when it would be easier to be consumed by the darkness of deceit and exploitation.

These are challenging times, but the Pacific, including Australia, looks outwards and not inwards.

Our solutions are not to be smaller.

We want to contribute, not just to protect the region but to also support the rules-based order that has historically protected all of us.

While the true north of the Pacific Island Chiefs is the rhythm of the blue ocean, constant and comforting, we acknowledge the tides are changing – and we must.

Some of the old rules of the 20th Century are no longer sufficient to safeguard individual and global security. And, while shared rules through shared institutions remain sacred, it requires all nations to have a voice.

This is underscored by our reality – the location of the Pacific region stopped being a security buffer a long time ago. The old versions of ourselves – safe from threats because of geography, analogue systems and far away criminals – are consigned to the history books.

I cannot help defend and protect Australians and our sovereignty by only doing my job in Canberra, just like my fellow Pacific Police Chiefs cannot solely do it from Suva, Port Moresby, Apia or Majuro.

Our shared safety and security are anchored to agreed rules, multilateral systems and agencies throughout the globe, and often headquartered on the other side of the world.

But, at this moment, we are at the precipice of history. It is important for this room to remember and reflect on the history we all share.

The Pacific’s unique evolution exemplifies the value of the United Nations and multilateral forums, where decisions are made by countries and not for countries.

From the blue ocean to blue helmets, it started with the journey from independence, where Timor-Leste hosted a decade-long United Nations’ peacekeeping mission.

And, in partnership with Australia and the UN, Timor-Leste forged a national police service from the fragility of peace, a state of equilibrium that can never be taken for granted.

It continued through the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, which is widely regarded as one of the most successful regional peace support operations in modern history, where Australia and other Pacific nations restored law and order together.

The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands also paved the way for the historic Pacific Police Support Group, which started in 2024.

This is where Pacific members under one uniform provide rapidly deployable responders to natural and civil crises in their region.

In 2003, I was a 23-year-old AFP Intelligence Officer when I deployed to Solomon Islands. It helped shape the Commissioner I am today, and it is also guiding how I believe we can improve the fundamentals of UN Police Peacekeeping missions.

Commissioner Barrett addresses
UN Chiefs of Police



The heart of this reform comes back to one of my earlier points – size or influence do not decide ambition.

Last year, the Australian Federal Police and Pacific Police Chiefs delivered the first residential UN-accredited program of its kind to more than 100 Pacific officers and members from Timor-Leste and some of these peacekeepers have already deployed to the UN Mission in South Sudan.

The success rate for the training speaks for itself: A 73 per cent pass rate with more than 40 per cent female representation. This is not a one-off. A second program for a further 50 officers will start on 27 July this year, with another course scheduled for early 2027.

The future for UN Police Peacekeeping is right in front of you. Amid ongoing conversations about the sustainability of UN Police Peacekeeping, Australia was asked by the UN to see if we could create a more sustainable model.

We answered that call, and UN trainers from the AFP, the Pacific and around the globe produced a leaner, more agile training program, which was reduced from months to five weeks.

In just five weeks, they were mission ready. I know it is hard to understand how we could do this so efficiently and without risking the fundamentals. But we did it by ensuring we did not waste a minute, and by building in extra capability such as tech training, English lessons and driver instruction.

This was UN Police Peacekeeping training plus teaching new capability to counter new and ever-evolving threats.

In a world where a majority of crimes are tech enabled, specialist skills are among



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When good neighbours become good friends...Police Chiefs, Ministers and dignitaries from across the Pacific celebrate the first birthday of the Pinkenba Hub in Brisbane.

the greatest tools the UN can develop. Multi-skilled officers can reduce head count and costs.

But this means appropriate resources are matched with the right people, just like some of the best officers Pacific Police Chiefs are putting forward.

I ask that you also commit to offering some of your best officers and specialists, because history shows that when they return home, they are more experienced, well-rounded and better leaders.

The future of UN policing will be done with us – together, here, with the rules and partnerships that favour equality and not domination.

A seat at the table is worth defending and it is worth investing in. The opportunity we have in front of us is a symbiotic one – and one where our future and children throughout the world will be the beneficiaries.

A 21st Century United Nations Police Peacekeeping mission must look very different to the one from last Century. This is the Australian Federal Police and Pacific Police Chiefs offering a 21st Century-plus model – one that is faster, fit for purpose and inclusive.

I will continue to champion this model and take more time to explain in Australia how the UN underpins our collective security. For many in our communities, the UN's contribution to public safety is unknown or invisible.

So, it is incumbent upon us to explain to our citizens that the international rules, relationships and partnerships cemented by the UN allow the AFP to pursue criminals,

evidence, money and intelligence across borders and to protect Australia's way of life.

As Commissioner, these rules will help me further achieve how I will deliver my compact to the Australian people. This compact is centred on protecting vulnerable communities, including our youth, and shielding them from ever-evolving technology that is corrupting their innocence.

While in the United States, I will continue my conversations with responsible tech companies, who can be the digital penicillin of our time. Some have already shown their willingness to have meaningful conversations about how we can better inoculate our kids from tech-enabled crime.

The need for these conversations is urgent because the scale and pace of crime will only become more acute because of artificial intelligence.

The risk is our collective justice systems, mental health systems, education systems and financial systems will become overwhelmed by a grievance generation, especially when victims become perpetrators and perpetrators become victims.

A growing concern of mine, and one shared by a number of other law enforcement agencies, is crime as a service and violence as a service, and how it is disproportionately affecting youth.

Enabled by platforms and technology, this new criminal gig economy has created an underworld after-school job for too many of our kids.

Tech as a facilitator of crime is also very relevant for any UN Police Peacekeeping mission. Time and again, we witness the use of technology fuelling mis and disinformation, further inflaming tensions in nation states and causing conflict.

It will be the rules, frameworks, instruments and partnerships of multilateral forums such as this that will enable us to address these challenges collectively.

More than a decade ago, during its last term on the Security Council, Australia led the first resolution the Security Council had ever dedicated to United Nations policing.

In Australia, we describe ourselves as middle powers making purposeful efforts to contribute to a favourable balance – so no country dominates, and no country is dominated. Alongside our Pacific partners, we argue size is not a determiner of how we help strengthen and invest in multilateral engagements.

It is our commitment to the rules-based order and the understanding that sovereignty is not just the purview of great powers – it is for all.

That is why Australia is seeking a seat on the Security Council for 2029-30 and why we intend to be judged by our values, our history and our commitments.

I want to thank you for coming today and, importantly, I want to acknowledge the Pacific Chiefs who have come here to share their ambition and aspiration with you all.

Thank you.

UN Police Peacekeeping front and centre



Kash Patel and Krissy Barrett flanked by Australian and US Dept Of Justice administrators

Australia hosted the biennial United Nations Chiefs of Police Summit (UNCOPS) for the first time on July 7 & 8 and Commissioner Barrett led the delegation at the UN's premier global forum for international policing cooperations.

In earlier meetings with Donald Trump's FBI Director Kash Patel and NYPC Chief Jessica Tisch, she discussed co-operation on terrorism post-Bondi and elevating Australia's role in international policing.

Commissioner Barrett and FBI Director Kash Patel signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Washington that deepens collaboration to tackle terrorism and transnational crime through shared intelligence, coordinated operations and capability development.

The MoU is one of a series of agreements the Commissioner is signing with law enforcement, defence and private sector agencies during her North American trip to boost Australia's safety.

Commissioner Barrett was joined by three other Pacific nation police

chiefs at the UNCOPS event in New York seeking a global rebalance of law enforcement.

The AFP boasts a long-standing relationship with Pacific police chiefs and played a central role in the Australian-led Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands, however, Beijing's aggressive push to embed security personnel and exert influence over Pacific police forces was headlined by a deal struck between China and Solomon Islands.

The Pacific policing bloc (PACPOL) will give island nation police a greater say at global forums about security and safety matters. A decision will be made by Pacific chiefs of police in October on whether they agree to a new bloc PACPOL.

This will allow them to collectively establish priorities with one voice at global and regional forums.

Commissioner Barrett had attended the Five Eyes Law Enforcement Group meeting in London last month and, apart from meetings with Patel and Tisch, other discussions were held with US drug-

enforcement police and Canadian Mounted Police Commissioner Mike Duheme while a deal was signed with digital payments giant PayPal on sharing information.

Commissioner Barrett detailed how the AFP and Pacific Police Chiefs last year answered a call from the UN to create a more sustainable model of police peacekeeping training, which was delivered in Brisbane at Pinkenba to more than 100 officers from the Pacific and members from Timor-Leste.

"UN trainers from the AFP, the Pacific and around the globe produced a leaner, more agile training program, which was reduced from months to five weeks," Commissioner Barrett said.

"The success rate for the training speaks for itself: A 73 per cent pass rate with more than 40 per cent female representation. This is not a one-off. A second program for a further 50 officers will start on 27 July this year, with another course scheduled for early 2027.

"The future for UN Police Peacekeeping is right in front of you."

UNSCOB: Australia's Involvement

By Graham Rayner



About the author

Graham Rayner is a retired naval architect with an interest in military history. He served for over ten years on the committee convened to build the national memorial to peacekeeping in Canberra. He has previously contributed articles on peacekeeping to *Peacekeeper* and other publications and gives occasional lectures on military history to U3A.

Images are courtesy of UN Image Library except where noted.

Greece 1946–52

The fledgling United Nations became involved in Greece almost as soon as the organisation began its work.

In 1946 the Greek government wrote to the Secretary General asking for help in its internal crisis. Greece was in the throes of a civil war which was

being fuelled by armaments being supplied to communist inspired rebels through neighbouring countries to the north of Greece – Albania, Yugoslavia and Bulgaria.

The Security Council established a commission to investigate the allegations of cross-border

incursions into Greece's northern border, which was confirmed. Thereafter the General Assembly established a special committee to both monitor the border and to find a diplomatic resolution.

The General Assembly also established a Conciliation Committee, headed by the President of the General Assembly, to facilitate dialogue between the four countries.

It is arguable whether the UN had much influence on the outcome of the civil war, although it did put international focus on the cross-border trafficking of arms and support from the eastern bloc, just as the Iron Curtain descended over Europe (Winston Churchill, 5 March 1946).

The civil war ended because of divisions within the rebel forces (not helped by a rift between President Tito of Yugoslavia and Premier Stalin of the Soviet Union) and the success of the Greek national army.

The war had a more devastating effect on Greece and its economy than German occupation in World War 2, and domestic conditions spurred a major increase in emigration, particularly to Australia.

Australia, as a member of both the Security Council and the General Assembly, participated in all three of the UN bodies: the Commission

UN observers from UK (centre) and Mexico (R) with Greek liaison officer (L) at Aghia Paraskevi May 1949.





of Investigation Concerning Greek Frontier Incidents; the United Nations Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB); and the Conciliation Committee in Greece.

Two officers of the Australian Army and at least six Australian diplomats were actively involved, plus support staff.

Although invited to do so, Australia decided not to send military or civilian officers to act as observers on the Greek border, primarily because it did not view the observer group's role as being supportive of the mediation role of UNSCOB.

Domestic strife in Greece

During WW2 Greece was occupied by Italian, German and Bulgarian forces between June 1941 and October 1944. The Greek government went into exile and a puppet government supporting the Axis was installed in its place.

Resistance forces, with various links to Allied powers, developed but they were not very collaborative among themselves and by early 1944 had begun to fight with each other. The Italians left Greece after Italy surrendered to the Allies in late 1943, and Germany and Bulgaria left a year later, leaving a government vacuum with no clear group ready to take control.

The government in exile (in London then Cairo) was in little better state having been riven with internal divisions which overflowed into the Greek military. Britain was asked to help put down the various mutinies which occurred in April 1944.

The government in exile, accompanied by British troops, returned home in October 1944 with a commitment to hold a referendum and for the various resistance and guerilla groups to participate together as a cabinet. The communist groups refused to cooperate, which set the stage for the civil war that was to come.

Commission of Investigation

Even with funding from the USA the Greek government struggled to implement a program to contain and thwart communist ideology from taking prominence. The communist power groups were being funded and armed by Greece's regional communist-led neighbours, and by late 1946 Greece sought the help of the United Nations.

The Greek government wrote to the Secretary General who invited the Security Council to consider the matter. In December 1946 the Council established a Commission of Investigation to "ascertain the facts relating to the alleged border violations along the frontier between Greece, Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia", and to report as soon as possible.

The Commission was composed of representatives of all countries on the Security Council at the time, and representatives of Greece, Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia were invited to assist the Commission in a liaison capacity. Thus Australia, as a temporary member of the Security Council, became a member of the Commission.

Australia's delegation (*pictured*) was led by Mr John Hood then political advisor to the Australian Military Mission in Berlin and later ambassador to the UN, Indonesia, Germany and Israel; supported by Mr Sam Atyeo, a diplomat stationed in Paris; Major General John Chapman, Australia's senior Military Advisor in Washington, and his staff officer Captain Brian Johnstone. A secretary was also provided.

The Commission included similarly sized delegations from Brazil, China, France, Mexico, Netherlands, Pakistan, the UK and the US. The other countries on the Security Council (eastern bloc) did not send delegations but were invited to comment on the Commission's report.

*Australis's
defence services
were re-
structuring for
peace, hence
their reluctance
to provide
officers far from
Australia's
shores.*



Terence Glasheen (R) with Colonel Hodgson in a meeting of the Australian delegation to the UN General Assembly in January 1946

The remit of the Commission included hearing evidence from each of the governments concerned, political prisoners, private individuals and representatives of political parties.

One of the early experiences of the Commission was learning of a large number of executions being undertaken by Greece which so disturbed the members of the Commission that the Commission sought advice from the Security Council on its powers to intercede.

The Council considered the issue and advised the Commission that it could only intercede if the person under death sentence was a material witness needed to support the work of the Commission.

The Commission submitted its report to the Security Council in May 1947. It concluded that Yugoslavia, and to a lesser extent Albania and Bulgaria were supporting the guerilla warfare in Greece.

Furthermore, the large number of violent incidents along the border, exaggerated by all belligerents, gave evidence to the "strained relations between the countries". The report engendered considerable discussion and debate in the Security Council over many meetings but no clear resolution could be reached.

Essentially the USSR vetoed every sensible suggestion, and eventually in September 1947 the Council abandoned its consideration of the issue and passed it to the General Assembly where the USSR did not have power of veto.

UN Special Committee on the Balkans

PHOTO 38 Terence Glasheen (R) with Colonel Hodgson in a meeting of the Australian delegation to the UN General Assembly in January 1946

In October 1947 the General Assembly called on Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to stop furnishing aid to the guerillas and for the governments of all four countries to establish "good neighbourly relations".

To assist the countries towards this goal and to observe compliance with the UN's directions, the General Assembly established a Special Committee comprising representatives of the countries involved in the Commission of Investigation, the UN Special Committee on the Balkans (UNSCOB).

Australia maintained its delegation to UNSCOB as one or two diplomats. At an early meeting of UNSCOB it was decided that military observers would be needed to staff six observation

posts along Greece's northern border, but Australia elected not to provide any. The reasons for not doing so are unclear.

Australia had already provided four military observers to support the UN in Indonesia at about the same time (late 1947) and was initially very reluctant to extend its involvement beyond those four. Australis's three defence services were in a state of turmoil,

re-structuring for peace, and hence it is easy to understand their reluctance to provide officers for service in a mission far from Australia's shores.

Furthermore, Australia believed that the role of the observer group continued to be one of investigation rather than assistance to the mediation role of UNSCOB.

Notwithstanding its lack of provision of military observers, Australia maintained its delegation on UNSCOB for several years. The leader of the delegation was initially Bertram Ballard who left the delegation early, followed by Terence Glasheen who served the delegation for most of 1948 after which Samuel Atyeo became head of the delegation from December 1948.

Several secretaries served the delegation during its term; the longest serving being Elizabeth Grimwade. She later became a diplomat in her own right and served for 25 years in various posts, her last as Acting High Commission for Australia to Cyprus.

Glasheen had a military background. He was a Rhodes Scholar 1938-40 studying law at Oxford University, before being recruited to the Department of External Affairs in mid-1941 just prior to his enlistment in the RAAF.

He was commissioned as a navigator and served in No 239 Squadron RAF operating Mosquito aircraft against German night fighters. His last operational flight ended shortly after take-off in Belgium when it crashed and caught fire.

Although injured himself, Glasheen rescued the unconscious pilot just before the aircraft exploded. He was awarded an MBE for his actions.

After his involvement in UNSCOB Glasheen headed the UN division of the Department of External Affairs before being killed in a vehicle accident in 1950.

Terry Glasheen was an intelligent, thoughtful and diligent character and no doubt was destined for a long and distinguished career in Australia's diplomatic service had he lived. Samuel Atyeo, however, was almost his antithesis. A colourful character, he was an artist who had been brought into the diplomatic service by his long-time friend Dr Herbert Evatt, Australia's Minister for External Affairs.

He enjoyed Evatt's patronage until Evatt's departure from government following the December 1949 elections, after which Atyeo was sacked. Winston Churchill supposedly once called him the world's most foul-mouthed diplomat.

Conciliation

Committee in Greece

UNSCOB had two distinct roles: to help all parties negotiate an understanding on territorial boundaries and to help Greece solve its own internal affairs; and secondly to observe how each of the four countries implemented the directions of the General Assembly.

The Australian delegation voiced its opinion that UNSCOB was focused too much on the monitoring aspect, continuing the investigation function of the earlier Commission of Investigation, without concentrating on mediation.

Twice in its existence UNSCOB paused its mediation role which was taken up by a Conciliation Committee established by the General Assembly, the sole purpose of which was to bring the four parties together to resolve the matter.

The Conciliation Committee was the brainchild of Australia's Dr Evatt, who was President of the General Assembly at the time the committee was created.

The Conciliation Committee included both the President of the General Assembly (initially Dr Evatt) and the Secretary General of the UN (Mr Trygve Lie). The committee had little success. There is no doubt that Dr Evatt's enthusiasm for the United Nations and his eagerness to find solutions led to the formation of the committee, even releasing an overly positive Press Statement shortly after his term as President of the General Assembly ended, which was then corrected by his successor.

Under the influence of Dr Evatt, however, Australia's involvement in UNSCOB, although small, was indicative of the Labor government's strong belief in the necessity of supporting peace and stability in the post-war world.



Herbert 'Doc' Evatt meets with Winston Churchill in 1943

HELPING HOMELESS VETS

Hhe Hancock Prospecting opened its newly refurbished accommodation to house homeless veterans and war heroes on June 24 and the residential complex has been named in honour of Ben Roberts-Smith VC.

The Gina Rinehart-owned company announced the 20 bed property in the Perth coastal suburb of Scarborough had welcomed its first residents as part of the mining magnate's \$200 million commitment to help house homeless veterans.

Mrs Rinehart said she hoped the accommodation would bring comfort to struggling veterans who sacrificed so much for the nation. "Our veterans do not need more committees, or empty words. They need accommodation and people willing to act," Australia's richest woman told the West Australian Newspaper.

"No veteran who has worn our nation's uniform should be left without the dignity of a safe place to sleep, and somewhere to call home. It's a national disgrace that we leave approximately 6,000 veterans to sleep in the streets.

"I hence call on the Albanese Government to immediately open all unused or partly used barracks and other unused or partly used defence accommodations, to enable thousands of homeless veterans to have a place to live.

"It's a national disgrace that we leave approximately 6,000 veterans to sleep in the streets"

"I also call again upon the Albanese Government to urgently recognise that veterans who have served our country, should be able to work as much as they want, simply pay tax on their earnings, without jeopardising their very well-deserved pensions.

"Letting veterans work as much as they may wish has many benefits including letting them achieve their own rentals or homes."

The new properties come on top of Mrs Rinehart's \$10 million Sir Valston Hancock House in South Perth. It's a dedicated complex of refurbished units opened in 2024 offering a short term solution for homeless Veterans to assist them to get back on their feet.



Gina Rinehart

Ben Roberts-Smith Beach House



Mr Roberts-Smith's parents, Len and Sue Roberts-Smith, opened the Scarborough accommodation which will be managed by Veteran Housing Australia. In a statement they were proud to see their son's name attached to a place that would give veterans a safe and welcoming roof over their heads when they need it most.

"Our son has been through so much, and our family knows deeply that the challenges faced by veterans and their loved ones do not end when their service does. In many ways, it just begins.

"For many veterans, the hardest battles come long after they return home, and projects like this show them they have not been forgotten."

Mrs Rinehart said she was proud the accommodation was named after Mr Roberts-Smith who is facing war crime charges related to his deployment in Afghanistan between 2009 and 2012. He has consistently denied the allegations.

"The beach houses are in Scarborough, not far from the



Len And Sue Roberts-Smith

SAS where Ben served and they carry the name of Ben Roberts-Smith," Rinehart said. "He is a West Australian, a former SAS soldier who is looked up to by Australians across our country, and who served our nation with extraordinary courage. He is a hero."



Sir Valston Hancock House



SPONSORSHIP PROPOSAL

**THE AUSTRALIAN PEACEKEEPERS AND
PEACEMAKERS VETERANS' ASSOCIATION
FUNDRAISING DINNER**

DATE: 12 SEPTEMBER 2026

VENUE: THE AUSTRALIAN WAR MEMORIAL CANBERRA



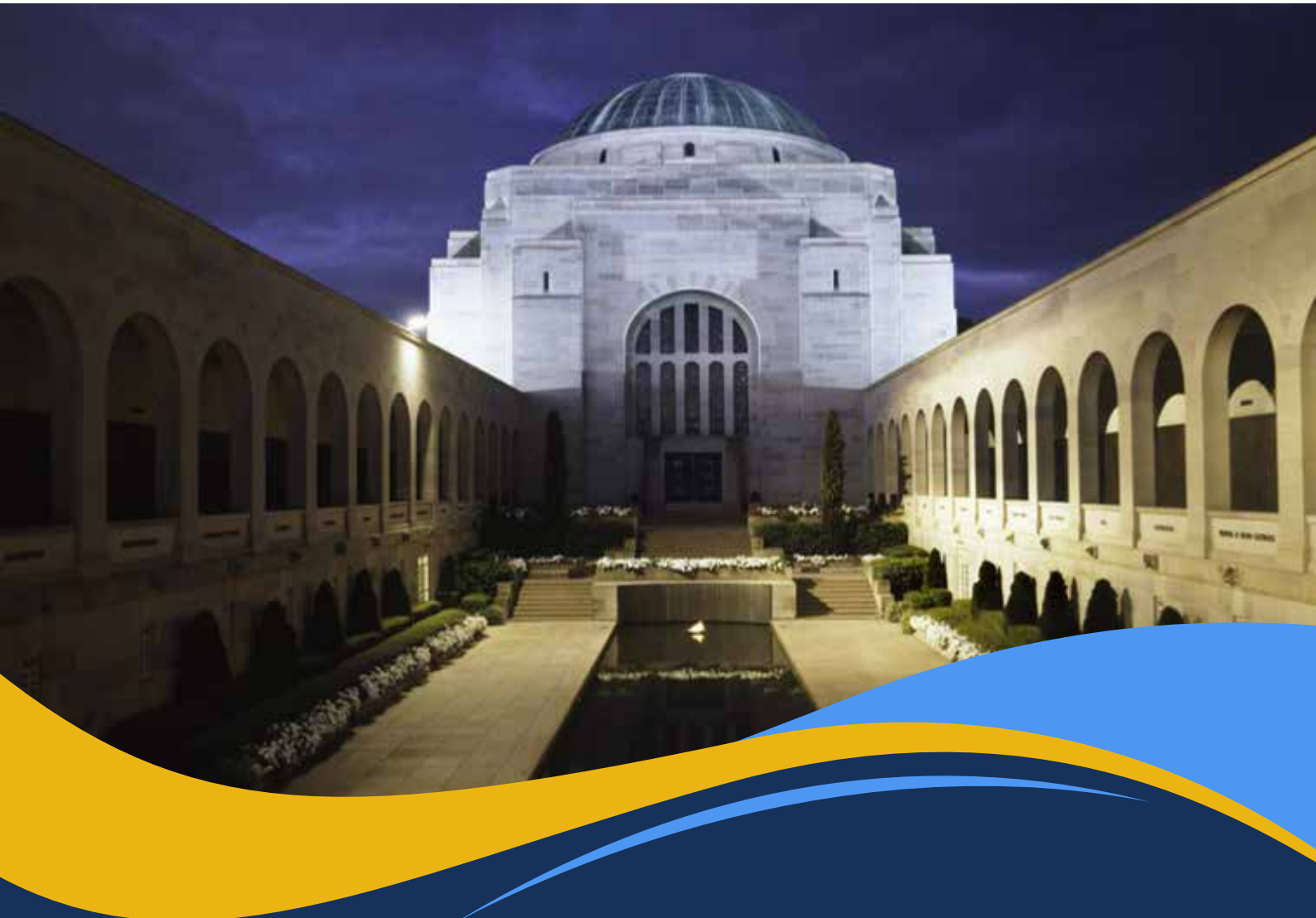
INTRODUCTION

The Australian Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Veterans' Association Ltd (APPVA) is an all-volunteer, non-remunerated veteran support charity that assists Australians who are serving, or have served, in peacekeeping, peacemaking, and humanitarian operations within Australia and overseas.

INVITATION TO PARTNER IN DELIVERING OUR INAUGURAL FUNDRAISING DINNER

This dinner honours the service and sacrifice of Australian peacekeepers through the celebration of the opening of the new Peacekeeper Galleries at the Australian War Memorial. It will be a prestigious event hosted by APPVA, offering sponsors national visibility, premium hospitality, and alignment with a historic commemorative milestone.

Guests will enjoy a three-course meal, complemented by a full range of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. The evening will also feature a selection of auction items, offering additional opportunities to contribute to fundraising efforts supporting the APPVA's ongoing initiatives.





ABOUT THE EVENT

A PLATFORM FOR ENGAGEMENT AND INFLUENCE

The evening will feature a keynote address by **General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK AC (Mil) CVO MC (Retd)**, as well as an address by Mr Matt Anderson PSM, Director of the Australian War Memorial.

The program will also include speeches and attendance by senior government representatives, Defence leadership, and members of the diplomatic corps.

The program will be expertly hosted by **Mr Mark Beretta OAM as Master of Ceremonies**. A curated auction will be conducted throughout the evening, providing additional opportunities to support APPVA's ongoing initiatives.

Please note that guest confirmations can only be finalised within three months of the event. Guest lists are subject to change and may be amended at any time, including on the evening of the event.

EVENT OBJECTIVES

The outcomes of this event will also assist with our programs and nationally significant commemorative activities including:

- **MONUMENT TO ADF PERSONNEL WHO DIED IN TRAINING**
- **PEACEKEEPER RETURN TO COUNTRY PROJECT AND DOCUMENTARY**
- **CARE PACKAGES FOR PEACEKEEPERS**
- **RED EARTH RECOVERY**





SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

TAILORED PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

This event provides an exclusive environment in which to build relationships with senior defence stakeholders and engage alongside eminent national and international leaders, while demonstrating visible support for initiatives of national significance. Our sponsorship tiers have been structured to deliver clear value through strategic brand exposure, curated engagement opportunities, and association with respected programs and commemorative activities.

BRONZE SPONSOR

Table of 10

Quarter-page advertisement in Peacekeeper magazine (electronically cross-published to 85,000 readers of The Last Post)

Announcement across social media of over 20,000 followers

SILVER SPONSOR

The benefits of Bronze plus:

A premium Table of 10.

Program logo inclusion.

Invitation to the APPVA Red Earth Recovery Simpson Desert Crossing Event for one passenger.

Contribution of an article in 2026/27 and a half-page advertisement in Peacekeeper magazine (electronically cross-published to 85,000 readers of The Last Post).

Verbal recognition during the event.

GOLD SPONSOR

The benefits of Silver plus:

Opportunity for a member of your organisation to accompany veterans and the film crew for the Return to Country program.

Contribution of **two** articles in 2026/27 and a full-page advertisement in Peacekeeper magazine.

Free membership for the veterans within your organisation for one year.

Announcement across social media of over 20,000 followers.

PLATINUM SPONSOR

The benefits of Gold plus:

Acknowledgement as the platinum sponsor of the dinner.

Speech opportunity.

Acknowledgement as being the major seed funding contributor for the Monument to ADF Members Killed in Training.

Private guided tour of the Peacekeeper Galleries.

An article per edition in 2026/27 and a full-page advertisement in Peacekeeper magazine.

Logo prominence Banner displayed at event.

Announcement across social media of over 20,000 followers.

5 AVAILABLE
\$5,000 (GST INC)

3 AVAILABLE
\$15,000 (GST INC)

2 AVAILABLE
\$25,000 (GST INC)

1 AVAILABLE
\$50,000 (GST INC)

All donations are tax deductible



WHY SPONSOR US?

THE VALUE OF YOUR SPONSORSHIP

Partnering with the Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans' Association (APPVA) enables organisations to directly support nationally significant commemorative projects and veteran wellbeing initiatives that deliver lasting impact across Australia's defence and peacekeeping community.

● TARGETED EXPOSURE

Sponsorship of the Inaugural Fundraising Dinner contributes to initiatives that honour sacrifice, strengthen connection, and support the wellbeing of serving and former personnel, while providing partners with the opportunity to engage alongside senior defence leaders, government, diplomatic representatives, and corporate stakeholders in a highly curated setting.

● OUR PROJECTS IN MORE DETAIL

Monument to ADF Personnel Who Died in Training

APPVA is delivering a nationally significant memorial to honour Australian Defence Force personnel who have lost their lives while training for operational service. Approved for a prominent position on Anzac Parade in Canberra by the National Capital Authority, this monument will address a longstanding gap in Australia's commemorative landscape.

Peacekeeper Return to Country Program and Documentary

APPVA is developing a Return to Country Program designed to support selected peacekeeping veterans in revisiting the nations where they once served. These journeys are intended to honour service, support personal healing, strengthen understanding of Australia's peacekeeping history, and preserve these experiences through a professionally produced documentary.

Care Packages for Peacekeepers and Family Support

This project is aimed at delivering care packages to currently deployed peacekeepers while also providing home-front support to their families. These packages are designed to bring a tangible sense of connection and comfort to those serving overseas, while reinforcing support for loved ones during their absence.

Red Earth Recovery – Red Centre Wellbeing Expedition

Red Earth Recovery is a structured wellbeing initiative delivered as a professionally facilitated, tagalong 4WD expedition across the Simpson Desert. The Red Centre Wellbeing Expedition brings Australian veterans together in a remote environment to foster peer connection, shared challenge, and supported reflection, strengthening mental health, resilience, and social connection.

Additional information is available on our website using the QR here:





LET'S CONNECT

JOIN US AS A SPONSOR

Your sponsorship strengthens national recognition of peacekeeping service and supports the wellbeing of veterans and families through our initiatives.

PLEASE DIRECT ALL ENQUIRIES THROUGH THE EVENT ORGANISER, NICK WILLIAMS



0428307241



nic.williams@peacekeepers.asn.au



www.peacekeepers.asn.au





APPVA – JOIN NOW

Experience a new generation of veteran organisation that you can comfortably trust as your source of truth and will represent you and all veterans, veteran family members and the wider veteran support network such as the medical community.

We respect the contributions made by participants in modern operations and demonstrate this by appointing young veterans to representational positions.

By uniting like-minded individuals and organisations, including all those who support our community we are transforming the veteran and veteran family landscape for the greater good.

Our promise is to provide an unwavering commitment to all veterans and their families because no veteran or veteran family should ever feel isolated or under represented.

Register here to join Now

<https://peacekeepers.asn.au/membership-levels/>

Australian Peacekeeper MAGAZINE

**Our Spring edition will highlight
Peacekeepers Week**

**Deadlines for contributors and
advertising Friday 14 August**

**Magazines printed and
posted week ending Friday 4
September**



**APPVA acknowledges use of copyright
Department of Defence Imagery
throughout this Magazine**

OUR PURPOSE

To support the transition, health, wellbeing, and integration into society of all participants in past and present operations, and their families, so that they are valued and can attain happiness after service.



The Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans' Association's purpose is to support the integration into society of all participants in past and present operations, and their families, so that they are valued and can attain happiness after service.

Our strategic focus is to:

- To establish a monument dedicated to those members of the ADF killed while in training for operational service
- To return our members to the operation areas in which they served for commemoration and healing
- To celebrate the opening of the new Peacekeeper galleries in the Australian War Memorial with a dinner, second quarter next year.

We care for all Australians who have deployed on Peacekeeping operations be they ADF veterans, DFAT personal, AFP or state police, AEC and we extend our care to first responders and anyone who has deployed in the national interest offshore on operations or onshore to support humanitarian operations. We have fun socially and support families.

rod.henderson@peacekeepers.asn.au
www.peacekeepers.asn.au





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and their families,
every day.



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