

RSL WODEN VALLEY SUB-BRANCH ENEWS



JULY 2022



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Members,

Welcome to the July newsletter in which you will find a variety of items that should of interest to many of you.

We have continued business as usual for the past month albeit with a few variations to cater for some issues that we are managing as best we can.

The undoubted highlight of my work in the past month was representing the Sub-Branch at the commemoration of the 60th Anniversary of the landing of the AATTV in Saigon on 3rd August 1962. Our member, Ian Gollings was one the original contingent who deployed for what would become a 10-year commitment to the as yet undeclared war in South Vietnam. The Team was the first in and the last out. At the Last Post Ceremony at the AWM on the 3rd, I had the honour of laying a wreath on behalf of the Sub-Branch. My wife, kay, and I then attend a lunch with Team members and their families on Thursday. At the lunch, Major General (Retd) Adrian Clunies-Ross, who was also in the first contingent, welcomed his fellow Team members and guests, and spoke briefly of the Team's contribution to the Vietnam War. Major General Jason Blain, who is Head of Army's Armoured Vehicle Division, provided the Commemorative Address. In one of his operational deployments, MAJGEN Blain commanded Mentoring Task Force 1 in Tarin Kowt in 2010. He spoke of the many lessons that he and his force had learned from the experiences of the AATTV and of the similarities in the way the two training teams had operated and worked with the local military forces despite the gap of nearly 40 years between their respective deployments.

This morning, we hosted the Federal Member for Bean, Mr David Smith, at our Coffee Catch Up. Not surprisingly, some of our members regaled Mr Smith with some of their stories while he gave a good account in his rights of reply. Mr Smith also presented the Sub-Branch with 10 Australian National Flags that we will use during RSL Funeral Tributes. In return, I presented a Mr Smith with a copy of *The Corey Papers* that were compiled from records that former President, Alex Reynolds, had collated as part of his quest to recognise CPL Corey's distinguished service, including the development of *The Corey Room*. In thanking Mr Smith for his visit, I offered him an open invitation to our Sub-Branch where he could engage with our members and learn more of what we do and how he might be able to assist us.

Although the Board decided it was prudent to cancel the July OGM we look forward to a good attendance on the 30 August meeting.

Best wishes to all of you as we see out the latter parts of winter,

Jim Gilchrist

President

Mr. David Smith MP, Member for Bean, presenting the Australian National Flags to Jim Gilchrist President of Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch.



LIBRARY NEWS

By Bill Kelly AM

Slowly but surely, the Library in *The Corey Room* is taking shape. Sorting the 1300 plus books into some form of loose arrangement so that they can be easily accessed and updating the database is well underway. Basically, the books are being sorted into a number of specific categories rather than a typical library Dewey Classification process (by author/alphabetically etc).

Categories sorted so far include books specifically covering Pre-WW1, WW1, WW2, Korea, Malaya, and South Vietnam. A start has also been made on specific areas of interest including POWs, Women's Service and Submarines. There is also an almost complete collection of the Official Histories of WW1 and WW2.

Other categories being worked on include Post-Vietnam, Biographies, SAS, Unit Histories, Medical Services, Peacekeeping, Weapons, Military History/Policy and War Correspondents, as well as books relating specifically to the Navy, Army and Air Force, and Foreign Forces.

Additional bookshelves are being arranged to accommodate the growing number of items being received.

The library is a great resource for our Members and can I encourage you to come to the Sub-Branch and take advantage of it? I'm generally there on Friday mornings for the Coffee CatchUp and will be pleased to show Members what we have available to read and lend.

As mentioned previously, all books are available for short term loan utilising a simple Sign Out/Sign In Register.



THE EDDISON DAY CLUB

“ Although only very few volunteers and members of the Eddison Day Club have over the past few months, at times only two, been coming to the Canberra Irish Club on a Friday for lunch, we had been hoping that more would venture out and attend. The latest wave of COVID-19 infections from the new variants are increasing the cases in the ACT and the states. The Canberra Irish Club has informed us that they have not reported any cases in the last few weeks. We had, a few weeks ago, four of the lunch attendees test positive. Although it is not readily definitive that these cases were infective at the Canberra Irish Club, it has made them and others hesitant to return. As mentioned before, we can't expect to have guest speakers or entertainers come with so few being there in the audience.

Following consultation with several of the now inactive management committee, it is clear that there is not a great prospect of many people returning in the immediate future due to the rapid increase in cases of COVID-19 everywhere. The only solution is at present to keep up the 'phone calls by those members and volunteers, to the small group that they were assigned in March 2020 after the first closure. If we can maintain regular contact with these people, they feel less isolated. There is regular contact by other groups, within the Club, outside of those groups. We also think that it is also important that those who do attend on Friday for lunch do not feel that they have been neglected if there is nobody there to greet them.

The Eddison Day Club is an integral and long-term section of the welfare area of the Woden Valley RSL Sub-Branch and it would be a shame for it to disappear.

Regards

Peter Sutton

Vice President Welfare



Woden Valley Sub Branch





RSL
Australia

MEDIA RELEASE

29 July 2022

For immediate release

RSL Supports Minister's Comments. Calls for More Defence Spending

The Returned & Services League of Australia (RSL) has commended comments by Defence Minister Richard Marles expressing his desire to substantially increase the lethality and strategic strike power of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) within the next five to seven years.

The RSL says Australia's defence spending should immediately rise from the 2.11 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) projected this financial year, to at least 2.5 percent or more.

RSL National President Greg Melick said with current international instability and particularly increased tensions in the Asia Pacific region, Australia should not lose sight of the fact that the nation's defence capabilities are grossly inadequate.

"The increase in defence spending should be just the first step in a major upgrading program," Greg Melick said.

"Australia needs to upgrade its nuclear industry and capabilities to support and enhance the AUKUS submarine program and urgently redevelop local industries to provide the ADF with the necessary logistic reserves including ammunition and spare parts to overcome the supply chain issues clearly demonstrated by the war in Ukraine.

"Australia must also acquire more strategic reserves of fuel, ammunition, and other strategic supplies to provide an adequate safeguard in the event of a defence emergency. It is concerning that such reserves have been allowed to remain at such dangerously low levels. We also encourage the Commonwealth to further work with Australian businesses and industry on supply chain diversification and contingency planning for our key sovereign capabilities.

"Australia must recognise the significantly changing and increasingly unstable international environment and review its defence commitment accordingly.

"Minister Marles has highlighted this. The RSL fully supports his comments and intentions, and urges the Government to act without delay."

The RSL has also called on the Government to end the ADF purchase of uniforms and other apparel from China. Defence spends up to \$14m a year buying service uniforms and ceremonial clothing from China for the Australian Army, Navy, and Air Force.

"It is a time to support local manufacturing, so our service men and women can continue to wear their uniform with pride", Greg Melick said.

The RSL stands as an apolitical patriotic organisation who is looking forward to working with the Government on policies to improve and maintain the security of our proud nation.

ENDS

National Media contact: Tony Harrison – 0417 318 178; tony@wearebright.com.au



The Hon Stephen Jones MP
Assistant Treasurer and Minister for Financial Services

The Hon Matt Keogh MP
Minister for Veterans Affairs' and Defence Personnel

MEDIA RELEASE

25 July 2022

EXPOSURE DRAFT LEGISLATION: TAXATION OF MILITARY SUPERANNUATION BENEFITS

The Albanese Government is introducing legislation to ensure that no veteran pays higher income tax because of the Federal Court decision in *Commissioner of Taxation v Douglas* (the *Douglas* decision). A draft bill, *Treasury Laws Amendment (Measures for a later sitting) Bill 2022: Taxation of military superannuation benefits*, and associated draft explanatory material, have been released for public consultation.

The *Douglas* decision found that certain veterans' invalidity pension payments in the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) and Military Superannuation Benefits (MSB) schemes are superannuation lump sums for income tax purposes rather than superannuation income stream benefits.

The draft legislation confirms the lump sum tax treatment for affected members of the DFRDB and MSB. The Government's approach means that affected veterans in the DFRDB and MSB schemes will not only retain the income tax benefits of the *Douglas* decision but also retain the resulting benefits of changes in their taxable income, such as Family Tax Benefit entitlements and the childcare subsidy.

While the veteran community has broadly welcomed the *Douglas* decision, and many veterans have benefited from the decision, the Government is concerned that a number of veterans are facing higher end of year tax liabilities.

Therefore, the Government will also introduce a non-refundable tax offset to prevent any adverse income tax outcomes for affected veterans in the DFRDB and MSB schemes. This will reverse higher end of year tax liabilities that would have occurred for some of these veterans and enable the ATO and CSC to include the impact of the new offset in determining fortnightly tax withholding, in order to address higher withholding that has occurred due to the *Douglas* decision. This offset will be for those veterans adversely affected by the Court's decision, in MSB and DFRDB schemes that started on or after 20 September 2007, and will apply retrospectively as well as prospectively.

The Government has also decided to extend these changes to Spouse and Children's pensions paid to a spouse or child following the death of a member of a DFRDB or MSB scheme affected by the *Douglas* decision to ensure these beneficiaries are no worse off.

The draft Bill also retrospectively and prospectively reverses the impact of the *Douglas* decision in relation to all schemes other than the invalidity benefits and death benefits for beneficiaries of invalidity pensioners paid from the DFRDB and MSB schemes that commence on or after 20 September 2007. This will ensure that payments in all other schemes that may have been within the wider scope of the Court's decision will continue to be taxed as superannuation income stream benefits, which is consistent with the intent of the current superannuation tax law.

The draft Bill reflects the Government's commitment to ensure veterans are not left worse off due to the *Douglas* decision and that veterans who benefited from the decision retain these outcomes.

Submissions are invited by email to superannuation@treasury.gov.au. More information about the consultation process is available on the Treasury [website](#).

Submissions close on 5 August 2022.

Ends

Media contact: Tom Iggulden (Jones) : 0448 081 191 | tom.iggulden@treasury.gov.au

Stephanie Mathews (Keogh) : 0407 034 485 | stephanie.mathews@defence.gov.au

DVA Deputy Commissioner update

Good afternoon colleagues,

I hope this finds you all keeping safe and well. Provided below are some updates on current activities and key events in August. Some of these, and more, are also available on our Latest news page: [Latest news for veterans | Department of Veterans' Affairs \(dva.gov.au\)](#)

Please share these with your colleagues and members, and as always, get in touch if you have any questions regarding DVA services.

Royal Commission

Public hearings are being held in Hobart, beginning on 2 August 2022. The Royal Commission has also announced it will hold hearings in Darwin from 17 October 2022 and in Wagga Wagga from 28 November 2022. Submissions to the Royal Commission have been extended to 13 October 2023.

The Royal Commission will deliver an interim report by 11 August 2022.

Counselling and support services are available, and a free independent legal advisory service has been established for people who want to engage with the Royal Commission. For more information, visit the [Royal Commission's Support page](#).

Exposure draft legislation: Taxation of military superannuation benefits

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The exposure draft, explanatory materials and more information about the consultation process is available on the [Treasury website](#). Submissions are invited by email to superannuation@treasury.gov.au and close on 5 August 2022.

DVA TV recent videos for promotion

How Chris found balance and a new direction after service – on the [Latest News page](#).

How Veterans Hubs like the Oasis Townsville support serving personnel, veterans and their families – on [YouTube](#)

Meet the Open Arms office team support Victorian veterans and families – on [YouTube](#)

Significant anniversaries

Victory in the Pacific Day

On 15 August 1945, Australia celebrated the end of the Second World War, a day known as Victory in the Pacific (VP) Day.

Sandakan Day

In Malaysia, VP Day is known as Sandakan Memorial Day, commemorating the prisoners of war and local civilians who died during the Japanese occupation of Borneo. The Australian Government is supporting a service at the Sandakan Memorial Park in Malaysia to commemorate this anniversary.

Vietnam Veterans' Day

On 18 August each year, we recognise all those Australians who served in the Vietnam War. Of the almost 60,000 Australians who served in the Vietnam War, 521 were killed and some 3,000 were wounded. More than 15,000 were National Servicemen, and 210 of them never returned home.

This year we also commemorate the 56th anniversary of the Battle of Long Tan, one of the best known fought by Australians in Vietnam. On 18 August 1966, 17 Australians were killed in action and 25 more were wounded, with one succumbing to his injuries nine days later.

The [Long Tan Bursary](#) was also established thanks to the support of Vietnam veterans. Each year, 37 bursaries of up to \$12,000 are awarded to help eligible children and grandchildren of Vietnam veterans pay for their tertiary education. Applications for 2023 bursaries open on 18 August.

Malaya and Borneo Veterans' Day

31 August is Malaya and Borneo Veterans' Day. The Malayan Emergency began in 1948 and lasted until 1960. It was declared after the Malayan Communist Party launched an insurgency against the British colonial government; 39 Australian lives were lost during the Malayan Emergency.

The Indonesian Confrontation began in 1962 and was a small undeclared war fought between the Indonesian and newly federated state of Malaysia. It lasted until 1966. During the Confrontation, 23 Australians lost their lives in the defence of Borneo and the Malay Peninsula.

Stay safe and well,

Victoria

Victoria Benz

Deputy Commissioner, NSW & ACT

Department of Veterans' Affairs

t (02) 9213 7878 | ext 417878 | m 0417 654 347

e Victoria.benz@dva.gov.au



Did you know just 30 minutes of exercise a day can make a huge difference to your physical and mental wellbeing?

Being physically active has many can improve almost every aspect of our health, like:

- 👉 Increasing optimism and self-esteem**
- 👉 Developing better mental wellbeing and social connections**
- 👉 Increasing energy and productivity**

There are plenty of different ways you can stay active. Try swimming, running, walking, dancing, team sports or lifting weights (but not all at the same time!)

Even incidental exercise can make a difference, like parking a little further away, or taking the stairs and getting those steps up.

Find more fit tips here 👉

<https://www.openarms.gov.au/living-well/exercise>





COFFEE CATCH UP EVERY FRIDAY 10-12

Members and guests are welcome to join us for a chat and enjoy freshly brewed coffee & cake with former service mates. Every Friday from 10 to 12 in The Corey Room, Level 2A, of the Grant Cameron Community Centre, 27 Mulley Street, Holder.

Please note that the Eddison Day Club is currently meeting on only a very casual basis for lunch at midday Fridays.



Contact Us

Give us a call for more information or access to our services

**RSL Woden Valley
Sub-Branch
14/27 Mulley Street
HOLDER ACT 2611**

62851931

admin@rslwoden.org.au

Visit us on the web at
www.rslwoden.org.au

Office hours are
9am-3pm Mon-Fri

PS.

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