Operation Render Safe under way in Solomon Islands

HELPING HAND: A search and rescue helicopter hovers above HMAS Diamantina during winching training off the coast of Solomon Islands during Operation Render Safe. Photo: Sgt Hamish Paterson

Stage is set ADF Theatre Project helps personnel share their stories

SAFE FOR ALL

Operation Render Safe under way in Solomon Islands
Dreams come true

Eliza Bavin

AHSV Roek Der and LSISO Cameron Rea are looking forward to their first Antarctic adventure. LS Rea will be the supervisor and driver of Wyatt Ears while AB Dyer will help drive and collect terrestrial data as they sail around Antarctica gathering valuable survey data to use in developing nautical navigational charts and in Australian scientific research.

“I’m really looking forward to completing the work,” AB Dyer said. “It’s a really great crew and a really great ship. The job is important, as it will give mariners the confidence to travel in the region.”

He said it had been exciting waiting to deploy.

“We have been preparing for this trip for a long time, getting the ship ready, and making sure everything is in order. So it’s really exciting the time has finally come to set out,” he said.

“The natural beauty of the environment is something LS Rea is looking forward to experiencing.

“We theoretically have the opportunity to see the aurora australis. It’s the right time of year but it is very weather dependent; so hopefully we are lucky enough to catch it, otherwise I really want to take a photo of a penguin,” he said.
EXPLOSIVE TASK IN SOLOMONS

LEUT Tony White
PERSONNEL from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the US and Solomon Islands are taking part in Operation Render Safe, which started on November 8 and will end on December 7.

Render Safe is an ongoing Australian-led operation to safely dispose of large amounts of explosive remnants of war.

The Australian High Commissioner to Solomon Islands, Matt Anderson, welcomed the task force to Solomon Islands on November 1.

The Combined Joint Task Force 663, (CJTF 663) is working with some of the most skilled explosive ordinance disposal (EOD) technicians in the region.

Commander CJTF 663 CMDR Doug Griffiths said the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) was known as the “gold standard” of EOD across the south-west Pacific region.

Commander CJTF 663 CMDR Doug Griffiths said the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) was known as the “gold standard” of EOD across the south-west Pacific region.

We will be working with people who have grown up living with the threat of explosive remnants of war, but we will also be giving them an important boost in their capacity to make a dent in the huge amount of unexploded ordnance around the national capital and in some of the outlying islands,” CMDR Griffiths said.

Mr Anderson told members of the task force that their contribution was important to the local economy and community.

“You are going to make a real difference working with some extraordinary people,” he said.

“You are returning to the Solomon Islanders land that they can use to grow produce, educate their kids and change their lives.”

Less than 24 hours after the establishment of the operation headquarters in Honiara, the team located and made safe 21 pieces of unexploded WWII ordnance near Honiara International Airport.

CMDR Griffiths was pleased with the seamless cooperation of the combined team.

“The ability to partner with elements of the RSIPF allowed us to share best practices and learn from each other,” he said.

“This year, the RSIPF EOD element has disposed of nearly 11,000 individual pieces of explosive ordnance.”

CMDR Griffiths said HMAS Diamantina, Labuan and Tarakan, would play roles in the month-long operations, including providing opportunities for training with emergency services.

At sea, Labuan worked with local communities on Tulagi Island to identify unexploded ordnance.

The ordnance is a legacy of Tulagi’s WWII role as a Japanese naval refuelling, communications and seaplane reconnaissance base.

The combination of clear water and large number of artefacts makes for good diving in the area but the scale of bombardment during the war means locals have been living with many dangerous unexploded ordnance bombs ever since.

Specialists operating from Labuan worked with high technology remote sensing devices to map the items on the sea floor over the course of the week.

LEUT Tony White
AS THE only domestic violence refuge in Solomon Islands, the Christian Care Centre near Honiara plays an important role in the local community.

This role will now be a little easier thanks to the Navy-led Operation Render Safe.

The centre was established by the Sisters of the Anglican Church of Melanesia 10 years ago as a response to the increase in violence against women.

Since 2004, the centre has been run by the diminutive but formidable Sister Doreen. While she has a reputation for bending the ear of the rich and powerful in support of victims, there is one task that is beyond her – the clearing of unexploded ordnance around the centre.

The centre overlooks Red Beach, immortalised in US Marine history and the scenes of intense fighting during the Guadalcanal campaign in WWII.

Sister Doreen said it was not unusual for women living at the centre to find unexploded bombs while working in the garden or even for children to bring her a decapitated grenade.

Members of the taskforce are also working to refurbish parts of the centre as part of their support to Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade activities and as part of their commitments to White Ribbon Day.

Sister Doreen explained that living with the presence of unexploded ordnance was made more risky by some of the necessities of the Melanesian lifestyle.

The fertile soils and tropical climate mean that a part of daily village life is taken up with the hand clearing of residual under-growth around houses and food gardens.

This has traditionally been assisted by the use of fire and as Sister Doreen puts it, “It is perfectly normal for a six or seven year old to light fires as part of the Melanesian way of life.”

CO Operation Render Safe CMDR Doug Griffiths said the use of fire presented an additional risk to local community members.

“This was brought home to us the day before we first visited Sister Doreen, when an old US shell exploded during a burn off not far from Sister Doreen’s centre,” CMDR Griffiths said.

“We were able to go in and clear a significant number of other shells from that area to reduce risk in future burn offs.

“We are working on many sites across the country clearing unexploded ordnance, but the opportunity to combine our normal work with the good work of Sister Doreen, supporting the victims of domestic violence, is one that we hope will create a lasting legacy of our presence here.”

TOBRUK READY FOR RELIEF WORK IF NEEDED

HMAS Tobruk has been diverted from her current good will tasking in Solomon Islands to Townsville to be available to support relief and recovery efforts if requested by the Philippines Government.

Tobruk is ideally suited to assist given her amphibious heavy lift capability, onboard accommodation and ability to support helicopter and landing craft operations.

The Australian Government will provide a further $20 million and deploy additional ADF logistic support to help the Philippines to respond to Typhoon Hayan, bringing total Australian assistance to more than $30 million.

The additional funds will be used to address serious nutrition, child health and protection needs, purchase emergency foods and provide logistic support and non-food items.

Two Air Force aircraft, a C-17A Globemaster and a C-130 Hercules, deployed to the Philippines on November 13 to assist the relief effort. Both transported Australian doctors, nurses, paramedics, other medical specialists and ADF logistic support staff.

The C-130 transferred the medical personnel and equipment from Cebu to Tacloban.

Defence has assigned an additional C-130 Hercules and stands ready to deploy a second C-17A Globemaster if required.

Providing safe drinking water and power is now critical. The ADF has moved to provide water purification systems and power generators to Tacloban.

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Theatre project hits home

Shelley Dawes

A NEW Australian play called The Long Way Home will explore what it’s like to serve in the ADF and how the lives of servicemen and women change forever as a result of being wounded, injured or becoming ill in service.

The ADF is presenting The Long Way Home in partnership with Sydney Theatre Company, providing an opportunity for Australians to consider the past decade of ADF operations and pay tribute to the sacrifices made by so many in service to our country.

During August and September, 15 servicemen and women, together with ADF support staff, spent five weeks working with Sydney Theatre Company.

As part of a unique rehabilitation and recovery program, the ADF personnel shared their experiences on operations and the events that changed their lives.

Award-winning playwright Daniel Keene has translated their stories into a compelling Australian production.

The participants in the program are a mixture of ranks and have served in Afghanistan, Iraq and East Timor.

Their military service ranges from two to 30 years and they each carry some scars from their experiences, including various physical and psychological wounds.

CDF GEN David Hurley said The Long Way Home presented an exciting opportunity to tell the story of ADF members’ experiences on deployment and on returning home.

“The production will resonate with all service personnel and provide families and the Australian community with a unique insight into our war experiences,” GEN Hurley said.

“The production will also support the rehabilitation and recovery of ADF members who have been wounded, injured or become ill in service.”

“I strongly encourage all ADF members to support their comrades who are bravely sharing their personal experiences.”

According to Director General ADF Theatre Project BRIG Alison Creagh, all servicemen and women and their families will be able relate in some way to the experiences and challenges depicted in the play.

“Everyone returns from operations as a different version of themselves – some are faced with significant changes or challenges as a result of being wounded or injured,” BRIG Creagh said.

As the ADF draws down troops in Afghanistan, the casualties of this war may not be as obvious as they were in the past.

“Many of our wounded, injured and ill ADF personnel have invisible injuries, both physical and psychological,” BRIG Creagh said.

“A passer-by on the street may notice someone with a scar or a limp, but they’re unlikely to think that person may have been wounded in Afghanistan – even less likely when the injury is invisible.”

BRIG Creagh hopes the play will raise awareness within Defence about the importance of ADF personnel talking about their injuries and illnesses and seeking medical attention.

“I hope their bravery and honesty will encourage others who are injured or ill to seek medical assistance,” she said.

“I urge all ADF members to buy a ticket to the play and pay tribute to the sacrifice made by so many.”

Project patron and Victoria Cross recipient CPL Ben Roberts-Smith said by sharing their powerful and moving accounts of war “these courageous servicemen and women will help create and perform a compelling theatre production telling the story of more than a decade of Defence operations”.

Rising to the challenge

LEUT Andrew Ragless

PERSONNEL engaged in a bloody battle at Joint Task Force HQ NORCOM in Darwin to see who could achieve the largest donation in the Defence Blood Challenge.

In mid-October, five members of each service ‘took up arms’ and went head-to-head in filling the first 470ml bag of life-saving blood.

LSCIS Michelle Lakin was the first to complete the donation and said the process was easy.

“I first donated blood a few years ago,” she said.

“In total I have donated about six times. The first donation is always a bit daunting, but to know that you will be saving three lives – it’s worth it.”

She encourages anyone who is able to donate to roll up their sleeves.

“It’s important to donate as there is always a need for blood donations,” LS Lakin said.

“It’s healthy for you to donate blood and it’s good for your body to reproduce blood cells. However, it is not always easy as a lot of Defence personnel have been in zones which won’t let you donate, for example Bali and Peru.”

Then COMMORCOM AIRCQRE Ken Watson also donated and said dedication, commitment and compassion were displayed during the challenge. “And courage,” he said.

“I don’t think any of us enjoy getting a needle in the arm and bleeding out, but the need is great, and we can all be certain that when we give blood we are really making a difference to somebody else’s life, perhaps even saving one.”

Darwin’s Red Cross Blood Service spokesperson, Ernie Rondot, said it was encouraging to witness the enthusiasm and generosity by Top End Defence personnel.

“One in three Australians will need blood in their lifetime and yet only one in 30 Australians donate blood,” Mr Rondot said.

“With that in mind, people can donate every 12 weeks, or for plams as often as every two weeks.

“That’s all we ask for – just four hours a year.

“I think most of us would make that time for a cocktail on a Friday or a round of golf on the weekend. So why not put that time into saving somebody’s life?”

The Defence Blood Challenge runs until November 30. To make your donation, visit www.donateblood.com.au, call 13 14 95 to make an appointment.

LIFE SAVERS: (L-R) LCPL Kylie Pezdirc, WOFF Andrew McCabe, LSCIS Michelle Lakin, Sam of the Red Cross Blood Service, and AIRCQRE Ken Watson participate in the Defence Blood Challenge.

TOUR DATES

The first performance of The Long Way Home will be in Sydney on February 7, with opening night on February 8.

The Sydney season will be followed by a national tour to Darwin, Brisbane, Wollongong, Townsville, Canberra, Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth.

For more information, visit www.sydneytheatre.com.au/longwayhome/tour

We pause to remember...
LEUT Emily Kennedy
NUSHIP Canberra passed Australia’s first LHD harbour acceptance trial on October 9.

The ship moved from its location at BAE Williamstown in Victoria across the bay to Webb Dock to undertake a vehicle load trial of several Army vehicles that will be used on the LHDs including a tank, armoured personnel carrier and light vehicles.

After the “cold move” – where the ship was moved with tugs and not under her own propulsion – the vehicles were driven onto the ship and manoeuvred within the vehicle decks.

They gained access to Canberra via the side ramps, drove around the internal heavy cargo deck, down the “beach” and through the well dock of the ship.

Vehicles that required access to the light vehicle deck used the internal ramp and elevator to move up decks to conduct trials there.

The trials were conducted on schedule.

DMO project trial director LTCOL Christopher West said extensive preparation was the key to success.

“Planning for and execution on this trial event was meticulous and the successful outcome was a product of the exceptional coordination between ship staff, DMO, Army, BAE Systems and the platform designer Navantia,” he said.

“The coming months will see the conduct of critical harbour and sea trials in preparation for the delivery of the ship to Defence.”

Canberra’s engineering officer, CMDR David Walter, said the activity was a good learning opportunity.

“A range of Canberra personnel including personnel from the Amphibious, Executive and Engineering Departments observed both the cold move and the vehicle load trial, which was excellent training value in terms of becoming familiar with the platform in a real-time activity,” CMDR Walter said.

“There was significant training value in Canberra personnel being involved in terms of gaining confidence and seeing how parts of the ship work including the operation of the ships auxiliary and electrical systems, operation of side ramp doors, movement of lines to get the ship off and alongside the wharf, and the movement of vehicles inside the ship.”

The ship will to be taken to sea later this year as scheduled for sea acceptance tests.

CO Canberra CAPT Jonathan Sadleir said tempo was increasing as the project moved closer to the time when Canberra would be brought into service.

“More than 300 ship’s company have now joined the ship and are undertaking a variety of training and preparedness activities ready to embark and operate the ship next year,” CAPT Sadleir said.

“As these milestones are achieved, it certainly becomes more exciting for our personnel as we step closer to bringing this new capability into the Fleet.”
LEUT Joseph McKay

HMAS Success successfully completed her first replenishment at sea as part of sea qualification trials just days after returning to sea.

In flat seas and heavy rain, Success held a steady course in preparation for HMAS Darwin to approach and hook up for the liquid replenishment in the East Australian Exercise Area (EAXA) on October 28.

As Darwin appeared in the damp weather, Success was well prepared to provide her with a quick drink and prove her replenishment rigs.

CO Success CAPT Allison Norris said the first replenishment evolution was a fundamental step in re-establishing Success’ core capability.

“It is exciting for us to be back at sea progressing so rapidly towards full operational capability,” she said.

“The energy around the ship is palpable, and there’s no doubt in my mind that we’re ready for the challenges of unit readiness work-ups and our 2014 program.”

It is not only command that is energised by the return to sea.

“It’s great to be back at sea,” ABML-SC Anthony Say said.

“We all put in a lot of effort to ensure we were ready to sail and now that we are out here we’re really keen to get the job done.”

Navy’s battle tanker sailed from Fleet Base East on October 25 after an extended refit and achieved mariner skills evaluation the next day in the EAXA.

Success has since started her work-ups in preparation for a busy operational program next year.

CDRE takes the reins up north

SBLT Bianca Wise

COMMORCOM AIRCDRE Ken Watson handed over command to CDRE Brenton Smyth in an official ceremony at Larrakeyah Barracks in Darwin on November 5.

The event included a flag ceremony and an AP-3C Orion flypast. It was a fitting farewell for AIRCDRE Watson, who has served 30 years in the Air Force, many as a navigator on board the AP-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft.

CDRE Smyth acknowledged AIRCDRE Watson’s achievements over the past three years, highlighting the former COMMORCOM for his exemplary command efforts.

“It is an enormous privilege and honour to be chosen as COMMORCOM and it is with great pride and humility that I accept the roles and responsibilities from Ken,” CDRE Smyth said.

“I know he will be sorely missed by Defence members and the Darwin community alike.

“At NORCOM we will continue to face many challenges that we must overcome, but reflecting on what has been achieved over the years and the exceptional things that continue to be achieved on a daily basis by this headquarters and all Defence assets in the NORCOM area of responsibility, I know that together we will successfully meet these challenges.”

AIRCDRE Watson will soon be promoted to take up a position within the US Central Command in Tampa, Florida. He will be accompanied on his posting by wife WCDR Desiree Watson and their four children.

“We are off on a new adventure soon, but Darwin will loom large and happily in our life experience,” AIRCDRE Watson said.

“For my family, the time in the Territory has been a unique experience. We have enjoyed all Darwin has to offer and are very appreciative of the warmness of the locals and the commitment of the ADF members who have served with us.

“The performance of the Headquarters, patrol boat and air surveillance crews throughout my three-year tenure has been magnificent.”

CDRE Brenton Smyth and AIRCDRE Ken Watson observe the transfer of flags ceremony during the handover parade at Headquarters Northern Command in Darwin.

On track for Success

On TRIAL: HMAS Success conducts a replenishment at sea with HMAS Darwin. It was Success’ first replenishment at sea since returning to sea in October (below).

Main photo: ABS Richard Cordell

Fleet Base East on October 25, after an extended refit and achieved mariner skills evaluation the next day in the EAXA.

Success has since started her work-ups in preparation for a busy operational program next year.

PROUD MOMENT: CDRE Brenton Smyth and AIRCDRE Ken Watson observe the transfer of flags ceremony during the handover parade at Headquarters Northern Command in Darwin.

SBLT Bianca Wise

ON TRIAL: HMAS Success conducts a replenishment at sea with HMAS Darwin. It was Success’ first replenishment at sea since returning to sea in October (below).
As compared to the purchase rate on low rate credit cards from Commonwealth Bank, Westpac, NAB and ANZ. Information was sourced from www.canstar.com.au on 18 October 2013. Terms and conditions available on request. Fees and charges apply to the use of your Credit Card. Australian Defence Credit Union Limited ABN 48 087 649 741 AFSL No. 237 988 Australian credit licence number 237 988.

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Stories from ship to shore

LSIS Helen Frank

FROM able seaman to captain, women have shared their stories of life in the Navy in a new book celebrating a journey spanning more than three decades. Governor-General Quentin Bryce launched the book Winning at Sea at Bradley’s Head during the International Fleet Review. She said the event was an ideal time to mark the service of women in the Navy.

“As we mark the centenary of the RAN’s fleet arrival in Sydney Harbour, we should register with pride, and if not a little excitement, the advancement of women in this significant aspect of our national life,” she said.

CN VADM Ray Griggs commissioned the book. He believes the steady integration of women into the Navy over the past three decades has brought with it significant challenges, however, some of these have left a skewed public perception of what life is actually like for a woman in the Navy.

In the book, Navy women describe their experiences of life at sea in their own words.

“I think in their accounts there is a more balanced and comprehensive picture of women’s careers in the Navy,” VADM Griggs said.

“While Navy must always have the integrity to acknowledge and learn from mistakes, we must not shy away from describing the Navy’s now long-standing and positive approach to women.”

The book details the history of women in the service since 1985 when changes to the law removed discrimination against women that prevented them from serving at sea.

“The book also highlights the range of operational roles our women have contributed to over the last 23 or so years. Women in combat roles is not a new issue for Navy,” VADM Griggs said.

He said there had been quite a few more senior, some peers and many men and women who had inspired him through his career. Some older and younger and junior to him.

“The best PWO I have ever worked with at sea was a woman, totally capable and professional, who had my total trust in a very challenging operational deployment,” he said.

The book will be circulated widely within Navy and will be sent to recruiting offices and schools. VADM Griggs said by having some of Navy’s women tell their own stories, he hoped everyone in the Navy would be able to have a sense of pride in that achievement.

“I also hope it will provide an objective, unvarnished view of life in the Navy for young women who are considering joining – I believe we have a good story to tell and that our people are the best ones to tell it,” he said.

IN CELEBRATION: Governor-General Quentin Bryce flicks through the pages of the book Winning at Sea with Navy women after the launch at Bradley’s Head during the International Fleet Review.

Photo: LSIS Jo Dilorenzo

Visit with friends comes to an end

Eliza Bavin

NEW Zealand CN RADM Jack Steer thanked RAN personnel for their contribution to the Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN) in various operations while on board HMNZS Wellington in the past year.

RADM Steer spoke to the Australians before they left for Exercise Southern Katipo in Wellington in late October.

PO Khan Kershaw, LEUT Adrian Cooper, PO Nathan Harris and LS Matthew Tyrmackiewicz have been serving in Wellington for the past two months and will return home in December.

A fifth sailor, LS Bradley Cochrane, who recently returned to Australia, has spent the most amount of time working with the RNZN – a total of eight months over two separate deployments.

He said all RAN personnel held real, core billet positions on board the ship.

“We are taking the lead in many areas in our respective departments,” LS Cochrane said.

“We worked very closely with our New Zealand counterparts on numerous RNZN operations including Operations Zodiac, Kauwae, Multus and Southern Katipo.”

The first activity the group did was with Australia, the US and New Zealand, working with dive teams conducting explosive ordnance disposal in Solomon Islands.

“After that, we conducted a number of fishery patrols,” LS Cochrane said.

“It was an interesting and rewarding experience; we were really happy to assist our RNZN friends and to have the opportunity to learn from each other.

“Everyone got along really well. We were fully embedded in the ship’s company and it was a really great experience.”

Wellington is one of the RNZN’s two offshore patrol vessels and is designed to undertake surveillance, supply and support capability over long distances around NZ, the Southern Ocean and into the Pacific.

Wellington operates with a core crew of 35, plus 10 flight crew.

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Network to help ease pain

Sharon Palmer

ABCTL Ruth Scouller might be about to leave the Navy, but she has a message for all ADF personnel struggling with gender issues.

You are not alone.

AB Scouller said the introduction of an anonymous online support network for transgender, intersex and gender-questioning members was a huge step towards ensuring people knew there was support available.

"Being aware of others in the same situation, and connected to those people, helps the transgender community in Defence immeasurably," she said.

"It’s always important to reiterate that transgender members are not alone, that there are others, and that currently we have a growing and very compassionate support network across all ranks, ages and services."

AB Scouller joined the Navy in 2007 and is a cryptologic linguist based in Canberra. She started to transition outside of work in mid-2010 and had her surgery and is moving on three years ago.

"I know I made the right choice, I no longer have to wear a mask and I am comfortable in my own skin," she said. "I went full-time in mid-2012 including name change and presenting at work as female," she said.

"I was in control of my transition the entire way through, there were no leaks about my situation and I could trust the people who knew.

"The last couple of years of my life have by far been the happiest. My entire world has opened up. I know I made the right choice, I no longer have to wear a mask and I am comfortable in my own skin."

She did not experience any dis- crimination or hear any derogatory remarks from her colleagues who she said she had always been open with.

"In the entire time I have been presenting as female in Defence, I have not once experienced any rudeness to my face, which I think is quite commendable," she said.

Having support from family and friends also helped AB Scouller deal with her transition. She said coming out as transgender was the hardest part of the process.

"The first ‘coming out’ conversation is always the hardest and that was with my mum," she said. "I ran my first marathon a fortnight before coming out to her. The marathon was very difficult, but it was nothing in comparison to the angst of revealing myself for the first time to a family member.

"She has been my greatest support and an angel in my life since the day I told her."

She said being in the right place at the right time also helped.

"Old policies on transgender personnel in Defence were being removed at the time of my transition so I feel incredibly lucky," she said.

"If I started transitioning a year or two earlier, it would have been a different story."

She said growing up as a young boy was difficult because she realised something was not quite right but puberty was the most traumatic time.

"By the time I entered my teens the burden of keeping such a massive part of my identity in the closet was becoming traumatic.

"My self-esteem was crushed by the time I was 17. It is a terrible secret to have to carry around.

"It slowly eats away at any pride or respect you have for yourself."

While she said it was an internal battle through her teens in learning to accept her gender identity, she had no qualms in regards to her sexuality.

"Sexuality is about choosing who you want to go to bed with, gender identity is more about choosing who you want to go to bed as."

Her parting message to people having gender identity issues is to talk to someone who understands.

"Transitioning in Defence has worked, so don’t keep it in the closet and bring more harm to yourself. Defence is ready to accept you.

"I will continue my involvement with the transgender group, and am happy to help where I can even after my service."

For more details on the network contact the moderator, Catherine Humphries, at catherine.humphries@defence.gov.au or at cate@cks.com.au.

I know I made the right choice, I no longer have to wear a mask and I am comfortable in my own skin.

ABCTL Ruth Scouller

Photo: LSIS Helen Frank

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speak out

WO2 Andrew Hetherington

NOVEMBER 25 marks the 11th anniversary of White Ribbon Day in Australia. WO Gary Wight, of Navy People Career Management, is volunteering to raise funds and awareness on White Ribbon Day and believes it is a cause every man should support.

“The women in our lives – our mothers, sisters, wives and daughters – deserve every man should support.

“People, including men, should want and strive to achieve?” CMR Schlegel said.

“The ship’s company of Melbourne is proud to bear the city’s namesake and the Melbourne Cup is especially significant for the crew,” CMR Schlegel said.

“It is incredibly important to me for the men in our society to demonstrate our commitment to never excuse or remain silent about violence against women.

“I have sworn to do everything that I can to raise the awareness of this issue and hope that in a small way I can help contribute to a society that is free of violence against women. Isn’t this what all men should want and strive to achieve?”

White Ribbon Day began in Canada after the killing of 14 women at a Montreal university in December 1989, by a male classmate.

In 1999, the United Nations General Assembly declared November 25 as the international day for the elimination of violence against women.

The day is held in more than 50 countries each year to bring awareness to stop violence against women by men.

People, including men, should want and strive to achieve?” CMR Schlegel said.

“The men and women who serve in Melbourne are dedicated and professional and they are proud to carry out their duty to the nation in the Middle East.”

Meanwhile, Navy officers and sailors celebrated Cup Day in grand style at bases around the country and in ships at sea around the globe.

At sea, the ship’s companies of HMAS Diamantina, Suradjan and Larnaca and AUSCDT-4 watched the race in Honiara before resuming the explosive ordnance disposal operation Render Safe.

For more information on when and where events will be held contact your unit equity adviser, orderly room or visit www.whiteribbon.org.au/events

On land, the ‘Kuttabul Kup’ at HMAS Kuttabul, which was co-hosted by NUSHIP Canberra, was one of many fun-filled Cup events conducted at naval bases around the country.

The revery featured mock races, sausage sizzles, raffles and entertainment provided by the “fashions on the field” competitions for the best dressed male and female. Sailors cheered themselves “horse” during the fiercely contested races, in which “jockeys” mounted wooden horses and moved around a track according to the roll of the dice.

The fun and games only ceased at 2.55pm when everyone’s attention turned to the big screen to watch the race.

The ships companies of HMA Ships Albatross, Cairns, Cerberus, Coonawarra, Creswell, Harman, Penguin, Stirling, Waterhen and Watson also celebrated Cup Day in similar fashion.

Getting ready: ABCSO Sam Ryan puts up a poster advertising the Melbourne Cup on board HMAS Melbourne in the MEAO.

Photo: ABIS Jayson Tufrey

Permanent, Course and Transit

Living In Accommodation

From 1 September 2013, DHA started managing bookings for Living In Accommodation (LIA) at the following bases in South Queensland:

› RAAF Base Amberley
› Gallipoli Barracks, Enoggera
› Borneo Barracks, Cabarlah
› Swartz Barracks, Oakey, and
› Kokoda Barracks, Canungra.

Whether you are looking to book LIA for an exercise, a course, a cadet camp, reserve duty, permanent accommodation or individual transit, contact DHA.

North Queensland is next to transition to the DHA LIA Booking and Allocation Service, and includes the following bases:

› HMAS Cairns
› Lavarack Barracks, Townsville, and
› RAAF Base Townsville.

The rest of the country will progressively transition to the DHA LIA Booking and Allocation system by May 2014 ahead of the commencement of the new Base Services Contracts.

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In a long-standing tradition, the ship’s company of HMAS Albatross paraded for inspection during Ceremonial Divisions on November 1.

Personnel were reviewed by reviewing officer ADM Anthony Dalton and CO Albatross CAPT Gordon Andrew. Lady Nannette Smith, widow of the man considered the founding father of the Fleet Air Arm, ADM Sir Victor Smith, was a special guest.

When the then CAPT Smith assumed command of Albatross in 1957 he insisted on the regular parading of Divisions. With its emphasis on immaculate dress, parading of Divisions was a special guest.

CAPT Smith considered the parading of Albatross an excellent way of building morale.

Dallas McMaugh

Lady Smith said a lot had changed since her husband’s tenure, but she remembered him for his insistence on keeping everything “ship-shape and Bristol Fashion” and said he would be pleased to see the way Albatross had developed over the years.

Addressing the 700 personnel and guests, CAPT Andrew said the process of improving and building the capability of Albatross remained a priority.

“The opening of the 170 new accommodation units last month, the upcoming commencement of the new Romeo helicopter facility, the work of the Albatross redevelopment and the helicopter training system projects, and the future development of the Fleet Air Arm Museum in conjunction with the Historic Air Restoration Society are all testament to the ongoing place of Albatross as one of the most important Defence establishments of the Commonwealth,” CAPT Andrew said.

He said another vital development over the years had been the strengthening of Albatross’ role in the local community.

“Through the efforts of many people, our links across the broad spectrum of life in the Shoalhaven – political, cultural, sporting and economic – have been forged and strengthened,” he said.

“These bonds show in many different ways, but given the events of the past few weeks I would particularly like to emphasise the very important relationship between the regional emergency services and Albatross.

“There is nothing more important than the preservation of lives and property, and supporting the agencies, such as the Rural Fire Service, that are charged with that responsibility is a vital role that underscores our place in the community.”

Ceremonial Divisions is also a valuable opportunity for recognising the service of those on parade.

RADM Dalton commended the assembled personnel for their role in supporting the Fleet Air Arm to provide capability to the ADF and also made a number of individual presentations.

These included the Shark 02 awards, which he presented to LSA Corey Wright for best performance in operational flying training, SBLT Brody Marris for best performance in operational flying training, SBLT Cory Wright for best performance in the aviation warfare officer rotary course, LEUT Mark Packer for best performance in the pilot rotary course, LCDR Roger Brook was awarded the Army Commendation Medal for meritorious service on Operation Enduring Freedom.

WOML-SC Hetzel said the second event, mid-year, acknowledged the commissioning of Perth III, the eighth and final Anzac-class frigate.

“A ship which some of the aviation sailors here today will serve in with future ship’s flights,” he said.

“The third event, remembers the war service of Perth II, particularly October 18, 1967, off Chau Khe in North Vietnam when she was struck by Viet Cong rockets while serving on the gun line during the Vietnam War.”

The Jack Staff was dedicated by a survivor of Perth I, John Wood, 91, who was the guest of honour for the Colours Ceremony.

Navy personnel have been serving at RAAF Base Wagga since 1992, when a handful of officers and senior sailors posted in to establish the Fleet Air Arm within the RAAF School of Technical training.

Twenty-one years later, more than 3000 technical sailors have graduated and joined the fleet.

ON PARADE: Personnel from RAAF Base Wagga march in formation during a Colours Ceremony.

Photo: SGT Dave Morley

In finest tradition

SGT Dave Morley

AVIATION trainees at RAAF Base Wagga honoured HMA Ships Perths with a Colours Ceremony on October 18.

In 2009, the RAAF Wagga Senior ADF Officer (SADFO) along with the Navy Wagga staff and trainees became custodians of the Jack Staff from the guided missile destroyer Perth II.

An agreement between CN and CAF gave permission to Navy members post- ed to RAAF Base Wagga to raise the White Ensign on three occasions each year.

WOML-SC Greg Hetzel, Navy administration warrant officer at RAAF School of Technical Training, said each of those occasions marked a significant date in the history of Navy’s three Perths.

“The first, in March each year, coincides with the loss of the first Perth and 459 of her crew during a battle with the Japanese fleet in the Sunda Strait in 1942,” he said.

“Perth I was the guest of honour for the Colours Ceremony.

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ON PARADE: Personnel from RAAF Base Wagga march in formation during a Colours Ceremony.

Photo: SGT Dave Morley

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**Together: RAN Band members stand at attention in front of an MRH-90 and other personnel during HMAS Albatross’ Ceremonial Divisions.**

Photo: ABIS Sarah Williams
After almost six months at sea, HMAS Choules returned to its home port of Garden Island in Sydney, on November 10.

Commodore Ray Griggs said: “The crew, under the leadership of CMdP Sarah Mills, have done an outstanding job in supporting other government departments as part of the operation.”

CMdP Sarah Mills said: “The ship has demonstrated her reliability as a platform and remained a modern, powerful and effective asset for the ADF during our time in Papua New Guinea.”

The crew conduct a number of community engagement activities to assist with maintenance of community buildings,” he said.

During our time in Papua New Guinea, Choules forged relationships with local officials and other Australian Government agencies,” CMdP Mills said. “The ship’s company worked hard with the Department of Immigration and Border Protection efforts to increase the capacity and capability as a platform and remains a modern, powerful and effective asset for the ADF.”

Navy has demonstrated that it has a significant and discrete deployable amphibious force CHAP David Ndramen conducted the ceremony as sailors and serving ADf personnel, to pay our respects to those who served on Operation Landscape. It has been a great adventure.”

The ship’s company will now go on to assist any relief ships to assist in the deployment of scheduled assisted maintenance.
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Gone but not forgotten

The crew of Navy’s first ship lost in WWII met a sad fate, SGT Dave Morley reports.

A

N AUXILIARY minesweeper achieved several ‘firsts’ in 1940, but for all the wrong reasons.

HMAS Goorangai, a former 223-tonne Castle-type steam trawler, was Navy’s first ship lost in WWII, Navy’s first surface ship lost in wartime and Navy’s first surface ship lost with all hands.

She was struck forward of the funnel on the port side and cut in two after a collision with HMA Troopship Duntroon in Port Phillip Bay on the night of November 20, 1940.

She sank in less than a minute taking all crew down with her.

The much bigger and more powerful 10,400-tonne Duntroon was moving at just over 17 knots under brownout conditions on her way to Sydney.

Goorangai was crossing the entrance to Port Phillip Bay from Queenscliff at 8.45pm when the two ships collided.

Her crew were members of the RANR, some of them including the master, Commissioned WO David McGregor, were former crewmen from her days as a trawler.

The remainder of the RANR crew were mainly from Williamstown.

Despite rescue attempts by the unharmed crew of Duntroon and later by Army and Air Force personnel, none could be saved and the bodies of only six of the 24 sailors killed were recovered during salvage operations in the two months after the sinking.

Five of the bodies were identified as that of Ordinary Seaman Austin Carter, 31, Chief Engine Room Artificer Charles Green, 37, AB Norman Farquharson, 21, Stoker 2nd Class Leslie Mainsbridge, 20, and Leading Stoker John Moxey, 38.

Stoker 2nd Class Mainsbridge had only been in the Navy five months to the day he was killed.

Leading Stoker Moxey’s brother AB Alfred Moxey was later killed in HMAS Yarra.

The last body to be recovered could not be identified and he was buried within 24 hours of discovery.

Four bodies, including the unidentified remains, were buried at Williamstown. The fifth was buried at Springvale and the sixth at Cheltenham at the request of their next of kin.

Because the wreck was inside the shipping transit zone, a quick method of clearance and salvage was determined as essential.

Navy decided explosives were the quickest method but the job wasn’t completed until March 1941.

A Court of Marine Inquiry initially found both ships to be at fault.

The person navigating Goorangai was not found to be in default of the Navigation Act at the time whereas the captain of Duntroon was found to be in default in the following ways:

➤ Not maintaining proper lookout.
➤ Failing to watch compass bearing of the other vessel.
➤ Not reducing speed of his ship earlier when approaching a situation which was obviously dangerous.

However, the captain of Duntroon was later exonerated as a supposed poor positioning of side navigation lights aboard Goorangai was identified as the main cause of the accident.

Despite this finding, a Navy assessment considered the obscuration so unlikely that no modifications were recommended for sister ships.

HISTORY


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FIRST TO GO: The auxiliary minesweeper HMAS Goorangai comes in to dock c.1940. Photo: Seapower Centre

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Safety always a winner
Michael Brooke

Two sailors shared the top prize at the 2013 Chief of Navy Awards for Safety Excellence.

LSBM Peter Ramage, of Assault Three, and ABET Samuel Paton, of HMAS Choules, each won $1000 and shared the CMDR Dave Allen Award for developing solutions to reduce the risk of hazards in the workplace.

CN VADM Ray Griggs presented the awards at the RAN Heritage Centre in Sydney on October 31.

The annual awards recognise units, ships, establishments and individuals that have made a positive contribution to Navy safety.

“The Navy Safety Awards, as has been the case over many years, are an opportunity to showcase the exemplary commitment and efforts across Navy to eliminate and manage hazards and risks,” VADM Griggs said.

“Safety is a collective responsibility that is important to us as individuals, for our families and as an essential input to capability. We need to have a strong, robust safety culture to be able to fight and win at sea.”

LS Ramage developed a pro forma for his shipmates to use after he identified a gap in chemical hazard accounting in the Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011.

“I’m delighted I was able to assist the Patrol Boat Group through my training and experience as the command safety adviser at HMA Ships Cerberus,” he said.

VADM Griggs said the award recognised LS Ramage’s superior professionalism and unwavering enthusiasm in maintaining safety standards, which included mentoring hazard chemical management skills to crews within the Patrol Boat Group during off-watch periods to help identify deficiencies.

“Young mentoring also resulted in improvements across the patrol boat community and contributed to standardisation with current policy and guidance,” he said.

Choules’ SWO Brian Collins accepted the award on behalf of joint winners. AB Paton could not attend the ceremony because he was deployed in Choules.

VADM Griggs said the award recognised AB Paton’s proactive contribution towards adapting and implementing the Navy’s working at heights policies and procedures into a workable solution on Choules.

“Showing initiative and professionalism you adopted a centralised approach and devised a single ship register,” he said.

AB Paton created a data bank of identified risk assessments available to all departments.

His streamlined approach led to a reduction in preparation time of working at height permits and risk assessments.

Other category winners included HMA Ships Stuart and Cerberus.

The Engineering Faculty Electrical Training facility at Cerberus received the CN award for the best solution to an identified workplace health and safety issue.

“A significant safety issue was discovered and then rectified by LSMT Benjamin Wright and LSMT Joel Heit, who are the instructors of the Ship’s Electrical Maintainer Course,” VADM Griggs said.

“The identified fault had the potential to cause significant injury had anybody been exposed to an electric shock, as the protection in the system was not adequate to preserve life.”

Stuart’s command team was presented with the CN Leadership Award for injury or disease prevention and management in recognition of the team’s commitment to the continuous improvement of work health and safety over the past 18 months.

Entries from this year’s awards will be nominated for next year’s Defence Safety Awards.

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THE Workplace Remuneration Arrangement (WRA) has delivered a 2.5 per cent pay increase to ADF members effective from November 7.

This increase is the final instalment under the current WRA and will appear in members’ bank accounts and pay slips from pay day November 21.

The rise applies to all regular and reserve salary rates for members up to captain (equivalent).

The increase will also apply to salary-related allowances such as service, flying, seagoing and field allowances.

Director Military Remuneration COL Warwick Austin said Defence remained committed to delivering a competitive employment offer for ADF members “so we continue to attract and retain the right people”.

“The WRA represents one key component of that offer,” he said.

With the current WRA expiring on November 3 next year, work has already begun on developing the next arrangement.

Refurbishment nears end

Michael Brooke

THE refurbishment of HMAS Penguin is nearing completion with the refurbished accommodation blocks and messes reflecting Navy’s ability to maximise resources to breathe new life into an old base.

CO Penguin CMDR Paul Doble said many of the projects had been completed or were nearing completion.

“The $63.5 million facelift announced on Penguin’s 70th anniversary last year has significantly spruced up the Sydney naval base,” he said.

The refurbishment project modernised Penguin in time to accommodate guests at Princess Marina House in time for her to accommodate guests at Princess Marina House during the International Fleet Review.

CMDR Doble said Penguin now boasted the refurbished Sir David Martin Penguin’s new gangway with enhanced security, refurbished accommodation quarters, and modern training facilities for the Divin School and the Submarine and Underwater Medical Unit.

The project also included refurbishment of the entry and gatehouse, as well as Penguin’s famous 137-year-old Lady figurehead, which sailed the Southern Hemispheres seas from 1876-1922 as the figurehead for the Osnag-class sloop HMS Penguin.

The project also includes refurbishment of the decompression chamber facility, waterfront civil works and upgrade of base infrastructure including high-voltage electricity, voice communications, fire and security alarms, fire hydrant and sprinkler water supply, and the natural gas network.

“The project has also reduced Penguin’s environmental footprint through improvements to the potable water, trunk sewerage drainage and stormwater drainage system,” CMDR Doble said.

Work started in December 2011 and is due to be completed next month.
Learning to communicate

Eliza Bavin

Over the past 18 months, New Generation Navy’s Embedded Signature Behaviours (ESB) Team has delivered courses across Australia to help people communicate more effectively.

The Crucial Performance

Conversations Course (CPC) is aimed at line supervisors of leading seamen, petty officer and lieutenant ranks. So far, more than 60 per cent of all leading seamen, petty officers and lieutenants have completed the course.

More than 200 local leaders of mixed ranks have also undertaken CPC facilitator training.

The courses are now travelling to Navy personnel around the world and five CPC facilitators have been posted to the US Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, Florida, where 725SQN is based.

WO Darren Murray, of 725SQN, said such opportunities were hard to come by.

“We obviously can’t go to Fleet Headquarters to take part in the courses, so it is important to have some trained trainers here to pass on the information,” he said.

WO Gary Fuss, of ESB, said the team was always on the lookout for potential leaders.

“We are looking at those people who are keen and eager to instruct others within their units, and believe their influence – leading by example – can make a positive difference to their workplaces,” WO Fuss said.

“If you demonstrate effective communication and interpersonal skills, you will naturally inspire others to do the same even without trying. Good communication skills are contagious.”

Eliza Bavin

The last seven photographers to study at the School of Air Warfare Photographic Training Flight (PTF) at RAAF Base East Sale graduated on October 25.

A parade was held for the six Navy and one Army graduate of the 1/2013 Basic Photographic Course, marking both the end of their training and the closure of the training flight.

 Formal photographic training started during WWII when the Air Force created a photographic flight in Canberra. It moved to East Sale in 1946 and the School of Photgraphy was formed in April 1952.

In 1999 the school was disbanded and became the Photographic Training Flight.

Since then, more than 450 Navy, Army and Air Force photographers have received their training at the school. AB Julianne Cropley said she was proud to be one of the last.

“It’s a sad moment but I’m excited about the life ahead of me,” she said.

“I feel honoured to have met the instructors and to have worked with them.”

The reviewing officer for the parade and OC Air Training Wing, GPCAPT Glen Coy, said training had come a long way over the years from teaching and using wooden cameras to using the latest digital technology. “The Photographic Training Flight closes its doors but retains its purpose,” he said.

The graduates of 1/2013 basic photographic course will be its final legacy.

The way ahead for imagery specialists is being reviewed as part of the wider intelligence branch review under Project Metis.

Category sponsor WOIS Shane Cameron said a decision about the training of future imagery specialists would not be made until the review was complete.

“Along with Project Metis, the closure of the school has created a perfect time for Navy to re-evaluate the capability that is required and to develop the training to achieve that capability,” WO Cameron said.

There are exciting times ahead for imagery specialists as new classes of ship come online.

The two imagery specialists join- ing NUSHIP Canberra in January will fill the first full-time sea positions for photographers since the decommissioning of HMA Ships Cool and Moray in the early 1990s.

“It’s exactly where Navy imagery specialists should be,” WO Cameron said.

“In the future I see us having deployable teams at sea providing a diverse and professional output to enhance Navy’s capability.”

 Imagery specialists will be expected to shoot and produce both stills and video imagery as well as write articles and stories.”

End of an era

LSIS Helen Frank

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A parade was held for the six Navy and one Army graduate of the 1/2013 Basic Photographic Course, marking both the end of their training and the closure of the training flight.

 Formal photographic training started during WWII when the Air Force created a photographic flight in Canberra. It moved to East Sale in 1946 and the School of Photgraphy was formed in April 1952.

In 1999 the school was disbanded and became the Photographic Training Flight.

Since then, more than 450 Navy, Army and Air Force photographers have received their training at the school. AB Julianne Cropley said she was proud to be one of the last.

“It’s a sad moment but I’m excited about the life ahead of me,” she said.

“I feel honoured to have met the instructors and to have worked with them.”

The reviewing officer for the parade and OC Air Training Wing, GPCAPT Glen Coy, said training had come a long way over the years from teaching and using wooden cameras to using the latest digital technology. “The Photographic Training Flight closes its doors but retains its purpose,” he said.

The graduates of 1/2013 basic photographic course will be its final legacy.

The way ahead for imagery specialists is being reviewed as part of the wider intelligence branch review under Project Metis.

Category sponsor WOIS Shane Cameron said a decision about the training of future imagery specialists would not be made until the review was complete.

“Along with Project Metis, the closure of the school has created a perfect time for Navy to re-evaluate the capability that is required and to develop the training to achieve that capability,” WO Cameron said.

There are exciting times ahead for imagery specialists as new classes of ship come online.

The two imagery specialists join- ing NUSHIP Canberra in January will fill the first full-time sea positions for photographers since the decommissioning of HMA Ships Cool and Moray in the early 1990s.

“It’s exactly where Navy imagery specialists should be,” WO Cameron said.

“In the future I see us having deployable teams at sea providing a diverse and professional output to enhance Navy’s capability.”

 Imagery specialists will be expected to shoot and produce both stills and video imagery as well as write articles and stories.”

End of an era

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Employees should check their employer’s salary packaging policy before entering into a contract.
One of the most important safeguards in the military discipline system is the command-based review regime, which reviews all service tribunal proceedings resulting in a conviction.

As soon as practicable after a person is convicted, an automatic review of the proceedings is done by an appointed and competent reviewing authority not involved with the charge or proceedings.

They usually have 30 days to complete the review.

Before starting, the reviewing authority is required to obtain a report on the proceedings from a legal officer.

After the results of the automatic review have been provided, the convicted person has 30 days in which to lodge a petition for a further review of the proceedings.

An application for further review may also be made to the CDF or a Service Chief if it appears there are sufficient grounds for a further review. The reviewing authority can:

- confirm the conviction and/or punishment;
- quash the conviction and/or punishment;
- or substitute the conviction with a different service offence.

After the Trial: Command-based review is an important safeguard to the military discipline system.

Photo: CPL Aaron Curran

The member was accused of making a dishonest travel claim and was charged with an act of indecency without consent. The member pleaded guilty and was found guilty of committing an act of indecency. The member was fined $2200 with $800 to be paid immediately and the remainder to be paid in fortnightly instalments.

Regardless of the review option, a reviewing authority must give written notice of the review to the convicted person and to the relevant summary authority.

If the reviewing authority quashes a conviction and does not order a new trial, then the person is acquitted of the offence.

Where a punishment is quashed, the reviewing authority can substitute another punishment, as long as the new punishment is not more severe than the one originally imposed.

In the case of a court martial or ADF magistrate conviction and punishment being confirmed on review, the convicted person can seek a further review of the matter by the ADF Discipline Appeal Tribunal.

Regardless of the review option, a reviewing authority must give written notice of the review to the convicted person and to the relevant summary authority.

THUMBS UP, THUMBS DOWN

AN ABLE seaman acting as a guide in Sydney during the International Fleet Review was harassed by members of the public who made disparaging comments about the member and the Navy uniform. Coins were also thrown at the sailor.

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A LEADING seaman electronics technician was found to have used synthetic drugs after returning a positive test result for synthetic cannabis.

The member’s service was terminated.

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- has direct links to the College from most suburbs and neighbouring NSW centres

To find out more about Merici College see our website at www.merici.act.edu.au or contact the Enrolment Officer Mr Tony Ryan on 02 6243 4702 or by email: enrolments@merici.act.edu.au

Merici College

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Atoll Transitions Consultant will attend your home to confirm your removal details. They will assess the volume of your household furniture and effects and note any special packing requirements. The Toll Consultant will also advise of your responsibilities and the removalist’s responsibilities during your relocation.

What if I have an operational or extenuating personal reason that dictates I have to move on my preferred uplift date?

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Ensure your insurance

NSW’s bushfires are a stark reminder of the benefits of home insurance, says Australian Securities and Investment Commission chairman Greg Medcraft.

CHOOSING the right insurance for your home and contents will give you an added sense of security and lessen the pain and cost of repairing your home or replacing stolen or damaged goods.

Here are some tips on getting the right cover.

Shop around
Get a few quotes and go through the policies and all their inclusions and exclusions with a fine-tooth comb.

If you have an existing policy you are happy with, see if other insurers can offer the same protection for less.

But do not just think about the cost. Make sure you have the right level of insurance first. Think about the cost second.

If you do need to make a claim, it will be what your policy covers that matters most.

Check your existing policy
Take time to re-evaluate whether your existing policy is still the right fit.
Consider getting a home valuation or revaluation.
Consider and value your contents carefully and do not forget any expensive items.
Make sure you are covered for enough. Many people find out too late that something was not covered.

A cheap policy that does not cover what you need is a waste of time and money.

Take preventative action
If you are contemplating taking a holiday this summer, think about how you will help keep your home secure.
A home security system might help to lower the cost of your home insurance or at least help protect your home.

But be careful that your policy still covers you.
Many insurers will not cover events that occur if your home is unoccupied for more than 60 days. Check your policy.

Also start thinking about the wild weather summer may bring.
If you live in an area prone to natural disasters home and contents insurance is essential. My advice is to check your policy carefully.

The level of cover varies for natural disasters and you might not even be covered.
Reduce your risk by seeing how you can help bushfire or flood-proof your home.

Check the State Emergency Service website in your area for tips on preventing flooding and your local fire service website for bushfire prevention information.

PAY LESS FOR THE POLICY
If you have multiple items you insure such as cars, motorcycles or boats, consider bundling the policies with one insurer.
You can also reduce your insurance premium by agreeing to pay a higher excess if you make a claim.
Other discounts might be available and may apply to your particular circumstances. It doesn’t hurt to ask.

For information and tips about home and contents insurance go to moneysmart.gov.au

FINANCE
Quitting for a better life

A chief petty officer tells LSIS Helen Frank how he quit smoking for his family, fitness and bank balance.

There is nothing like a hit to the hip pocket to make a sailor think twice about his actions.

Four years ago it was this and the birth of his son which made CPOML-SC Chris Harmer, of HMAS Stirling, give up his 15-year, half-a-pack-a-day smoking habit.

“I decided to quit smoking when my son was born as I felt guilty holding him with smoker’s breath,” CPO Harmer said.

“Also felt I was getting behind in my fitness and needed to kick the habit to help improve my overall health.

“It was also becoming a ridiculously expensive habit. The money saved from not smoking could be better used for other things.”

CPO Harmer spoke to his doctor about how best to go about quitting and discussed things like the use of gum and patches.

“In the end I just read a book on quitting smoking by Allen Carr and went cold turkey,” he said.

CPO Harmer said his health got a little worse before it got better, mainly due to weight gain.

“My appetite was good before I quit but afterwards I became an eating machine, putting on around 10kg in five months, even though I was exercising regularly,” he said.

“Through the exercise it became noticeable my lungs were clearing up and feeling better and my endurance with running and other sports was on the increase.”

His smelly, yellow stained fingers and the terrible taste in his mouth after a night out also started to disappear.

After a few weeks he really started to notice the smell of cigarettes on others.

“Still to this day it really stands out but this also is a great deterrent to not take it up again as I never realised how bad I must have smelt until I quit,” CPO Harmer said.

He said after a month or so he seemed to be breathing easier and not wheezy at all.

“My smoker’s cough was starting to die off after about six to eight weeks, which was great.”

With the money he saved from not buying cigarettes CPO Harmer was able to buy a new home entertainment system.

“Now it just makes paying the bills easier,” he said.

To gain assistance to quit smoking, visit a doctor or call the Quit help line, 137 848 or visit www.quitnow.gov.au.

To BREAK THE HABIT: CPO Chris Harmer is a lot happier after quitting his 15-year smoking habit.

Photo: LSIS Bradley Darvill
Workout for a hero

LSIS Helen Frank

CPL Cameron Baird died how he lived – at the front, giving his all without any indecision – so the workout designed in his honour for this year’s Australian Hero Games started with a 600m sprint.

The Hero Games is a CrossFit competition which has been hosted each year by 2 Cdo Regt, Holsworthy, since 2011. Each year the workout is dedicated to a fallen soldier and raises money for the Commando Welfare Trust.

CPL Baird was killed in action in Afghanistan in June.

His fellow commandos remember him as an outstanding Special Forces soldier, exemplifying what it meant to be a commando, an outstanding Special Forces soldier, exemplifying what it meant to be a commando, an outstanding Special Forces soldier, exemplifying what it meant to be a commando.

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Rookies fill gap at nationals

Michael Brooke

A TEAM of keen rookies helped Navy to an impressive performance in the 2013 ADF Football Association Championships in Sydney.

Navy came within a whisker of winning the men’s open title but lost their last match against Air Force 3-0.

Owing to the high operational tempo of the Fleet at present, several key players were unable to be released.

The Navy men’s open team played well beyond their experience level in beating Army 4-0, Defence APS 3-1 and the New Zealand Defence Force 2-0.

Vice President Navy Football Association LEUT Jim Ford said Navy did a great job with the players that were available.

“Navy fielded a team minus six key players, including two national team representatives,” he said.

Navy’s best player was team captain AB Jason Kingdon, of HMAS Stirling, who was voted most valuable player.

ABK Stirling 29, played at centre-half where he was superb in attack and defence, despite playing with a torn groin tendon.

“This is only my third year playing for Navy, but the second time I have won this award,” he said.

“Hopefully we can do better next year, but I’m delighted that so many of us gained selection in the ADFF team.”

ABATA Gary Niemeier, of 723SQN, was voted coach’s player and LSMT Sarah Hickling the players’ player.

ABATA Anna Cernaz the players’ player.

Navy’s best players were CPO Steven Gunne, 3-0 by Army and 1-0 by the New Zealand Defence Force.

Two sailors from AB Stirling, was named coach’s player after the ADF hockey tour of Britain.

He was one of 12 Navy personnel in the Defence Hockey Association squad of 46 ADF men and women that travelled to the UK.

The men lost to British Combined Services 2-1 in a three-test series after wins against four single-service teams in mid-October.

The understrength women’s team lost all three tests against British Combined Services after winning two of its three single-service lead-up games.

Between the lead-up games and the tests, the squad also embarked on a three-day battlefield tour of the Western Front in France and Belgium.

Team manager CPO William McConnell said that was inspiring.

“It is something the men’s ADF hockey team did on its tour there in 2005,” he said.

“Three of us from that tour were also on this tour, and felt that with the breadth of experience and age of the group that visiting the place where our predecessors fell would help bond the squad.

“This it did, with other members being affected by their individual experiences.”

Brits take out hockey tests

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TIGHT SQUEEZE

Navy narrowly misses taking out titles at the ADF football championships

TOUGH TUSSLE: AB Jason Kingdon, left, and LAC Liam Mercer contest the ball on the final day of the Australian Defence Football Federation Carnival held at Cromer Park, Manly, NSW. Photo: ABIS Tom Gibson