



# DEBRIEF

Patron: RADM Neil Ralph AO DSC RAN (RTD)

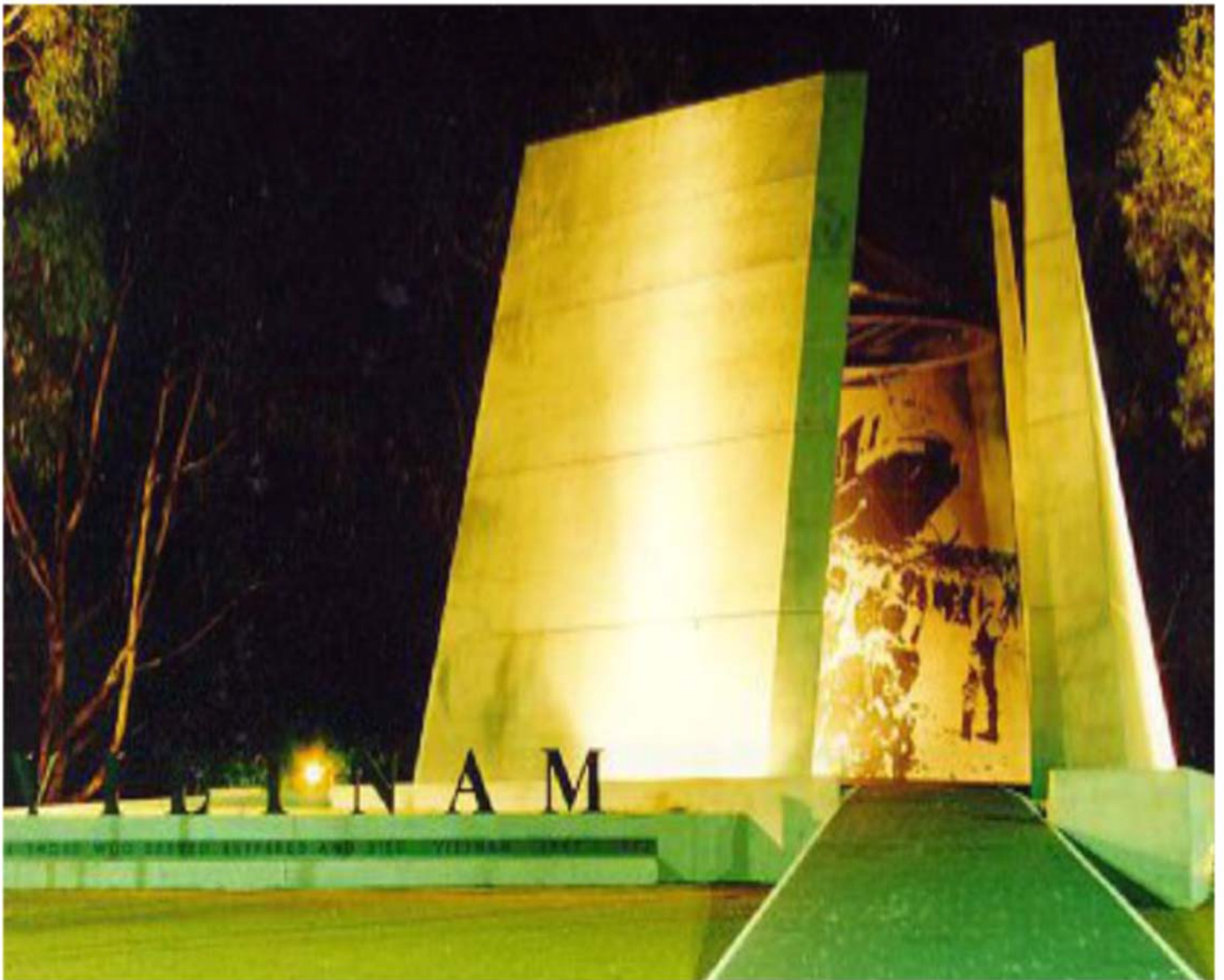
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*HONOUR THE DEAD, But Fight like Hell for the Living*

## NATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT.

As I write this the bushfire crisis has lessened and in some areas at least we have had some rain, when I say lessened I only mean the actual fires, the effects, the damage and the trauma will be with us for a longer time.

The activities of the defence forces in support of the civil authority will have brought back memories for many of our members who, in the past, have been involved in disaster relief both in Australia and overseas.

I have not seen reports of damage to Vietnam veterans properties and that is good news if it is correct, I would encourage everyone to reach out to those we know, particularly in country areas, and identify any needy families that we can support.

I cannot emphasise enough the services provided through the Open Arms counselling service in which the V.V.A.A. was deeply involved in establishing and continues to support.

Congratulations to all those recognised in the recent Australia Day honours list, thank you for your service. To those not yet recognised in this manner, it's not over yet but I don't think you do it for this type of reward?

Applications for renewal of advocates authorisations continue to roll in, remember these need to be renewed annually to ensure both the association and individuals maintain the professional indemnity insurance cover available.

To all those taking up positions as branch and sub branch executives for the first time, welcome to the team and remember there are others with experience willing to help, you simply need to ask.

Ken Foster OAM JP  
National President



### On this road called life

You have to take the good with the bad, smile with the sad, love what you got, and remember what you had. Always forgive, but never forget, learn from your mistakes, but never forget. People change. Things go wrong. But just remember, the ride goes on.



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## KEEPING THE RECORDS

### IF IN DOUBT DO NOT THROW IT OUT!

Mr Kel Robertson, a Canberra based post-graduate student at the University of New South Wales, and an experienced writer, has begun research into the origins and activities of the Association.

The first phase of his project will include an examination of the many Association documents held by the Australian War Memorial and the Australian National Library and, once some university procedures have been completed, interviews with members. Later, there will be a focus on State Branches and Sub-Branches.

Meanwhile, Branches and Sub-Branches are reminded of the importance of storing and maintaining their official records, including and especially newsletters, as the basis of future research by Kel and, in the longer term, other historians.

Kel will make some comments in a future edition of Debrief; at this time any queries should be asked of National Vice-President Max Ball, via email on [maxball@iinet.net.au](mailto:maxball@iinet.net.au).



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**50TH ANNIVERSARY OF OPERATION HAMMERSLEY –SOUTH VIETNAM 1970**

Operation Hammersley was carried out in the Long Hai area of Phuoc Tuy Province from 10 February - 3 March 1970.

The operation began when C Company, 8th Battalion, the Royal Australian Regiment (8RAR) and supporting elements that included a troop of tanks, a troop of armoured personnel carriers and a mortar section, were ordered to secure a quarry site at the foot of the Long Hai Hills.

The Long Hais had been the object of earlier operations and air raids but remained a strong enemy base known to the Viet Cong as the 'Minh Dam Secret Zone'. As the Australians met with early success, Hammersley's scope increased until most of 8RAR became involved. The early stages of fighting were characterised by infantry ambushes carried out by both sides.

While the Australians had the support of armoured vehicles, they were at some disadvantage, facing an enemy able to make use of the shelter offered by the many caves running beneath the Long Hai hills. Hindered by the rugged terrain, the armour was in constant danger from land mines which caused casualties among the infantry and armoured personnel.

When it seemed that the Australians were in a position to drive the enemy from the area, they were ordered to withdraw to make way for a B-52 strike. The strike though accurate, caused few casualties among the enemy who had been made aware of the raid before it took place.

A series of serious mine incidents in the final days of February caused heavy casualties among the Australians, leading some, including officers, to question the wisdom of returning to the Long Hais, especially when it seemed that US and Australian involvement in the war was winding down.

By early March there was growing acceptance that the Australian Task Force did not have the capability to eliminate the enemy in the Long Hais. Twelve Australians were killed and 59 wounded as a result of Operation Hammersley.

The Viet Cong suffered at least 40 fatal casualties, with 25 more believed to have been wounded, although as was the case throughout the war in Vietnam, the number of enemy casualties was almost impossible to accurately determine.

*Editors Note; Commemorative service to be held in Canberra at the Australian Vietnam Forces National Memorial Anzac Parade, Canberra at 10.30am 18 February 2020.*

An extract from the book "Vietnam—Our Stories"

Copies available from [www.wilkinsonpublishing.com.au](http://www.wilkinsonpublishing.com.au)

### **Getting the Bloody Job Done. By Max Speedy**

The RAN Helicopter Flight Vietnam, during its four years (1967 – 72) with the US Army's 135<sup>th</sup> Assault Helicopter Company conducted missions across the length and breadth of III and IV Corps Tactical Zones (CTZ) and into the jungles and mountains of II CTZ as well as the streets and lanes of Saigon city during the Tet Offensive of February 1968. The 135<sup>th</sup> AHC was on standby in February 1969 to assist in the evacuation of the US Embassy in Saigon should it have been required.

Each flying day began at 0430 with aircrew at their allocated aircraft for pre-flight inspections. The standard mission for the 135<sup>th</sup> and all other assault companies was much the same. Every task required ten *Slick* troop carrying UH1-H *Hueys*, four gunships (UH1-C), and the command and control aircraft with its extra radios for the battalion staff in the back directing their troops on the ground. All we really had to know was where the first pick-up of the day was to be, everything after that was "Getting the bloody job done!" the 135<sup>th</sup> AHC refrain.

The aircraft was always flown with a crew of four: two pilots in case one was shot; a crew chief performed the aircraft's first line maintenance and then flew everywhere with the aircraft manning one of its M60s; the gunner maintained the two M60 machine guns with about 3,000 rounds per gun all of which could be used in a couple of arrivals to an LZ.

All LZ insertions were company sized elements of up to 100 men, mainly American or South Vietnamese troops, once we left assisting the Australians at Nui Dat after late 1968.



*Typical Mekong Delta scenery. Landing Zone one minute, Pickup Zone for another LZ somewhere else the next. Hot or cold receptions were just a 50:50 bet.*

If as happened frequently, the operation was across the country to the Cambodian border area, a transit of some 200 miles from our Blackhorse or Bear Cat base, a spare aircraft had to be included. If lucky, it would have a quiet day waiting at some POL (Petrol, Oil, Lubricants) spot near the day's operations. From then on, with up to dozens of company lifts in the day, every pick up and landing zone was always in the lap of the gods. You never knew if the first or any insertion was going to be hot, except perhaps in the notorious Ben Tré or U Minh forest areas where we always counted on a contested arrival.

Once the first troops were on the ground a seemingly quiet LZ could erupt with dozens of the enemy in small spider holes and launching a blistering attack with AK-47s, RPGs and, if we stumbled into a larger formation as occurred, 30 or 50mm machine guns as well: We were then committed to a tough day not only reinforcing the troops already on the ground but also to rescue downed aircrew, MEDEVACs and finally to bring the troops home, late at night out of a hot withdrawal.

Getting the bloody job done, continued

A four to five hour flying day was easy and probably only had three companies of a battalion (three lifts) inserted and withdrawn later. Eight to ten hours were not uncommon and could be the one battalion moved a number of times before going home or one company in contact and with others being inserted in blocking positions (easy) or into a hot LZ (hard). The long days were the worst – up to twelve and fourteen hours always meant a day of enemy contact, troops invariably killed and wounded and aircraft hits if not shot down. These days seemed to always involve our own casualties. There was one subtle difference between American and Australian helicopter tactics – Americans went into the fight, Aussies were generally placed near the fight.

Combat assault flying days were programmed for six or seven days depending on the general tenor of operations and then for a rest, we would be assigned to Direct Combat Support, known better as *Pigs and Rice* or *Hash and Trash*. All ten *Slicks* and often four gunships would be tasked to a variety of small units in remote spots needing resupply of ammunition, personnel or equipment for an outpost under attack. The gunships would usually be in reserve against another company needing back-up. All these missions were fraught with danger and could be more dangerous than a standard combat assault day.

Ready Reaction Force (RRF) involved a normal day's flying operations but instead of returning to our home base, we would go to places like Tay Ninh or Cu Chi in the north near the border, to be ready for the night insertion of a relief force if a beleaguered out-post had been overrun.

Fortunately most flying was by day but our days stretched into night combat assaults making the flying all that much more difficult. As everything the *Slicks* did was in formation, being led to a touch-down in a dark clearing with no lights and virtually no ground references took some getting used to. It was no easier for the *Slick* leader with nine other aircraft nervously following your every move. The option of going around for another go was never countenanced – it had to be first time every time and made the flight leader's role crucial.

In the close and hectic confines of a hot LZ, thumping into the ground was a comparatively minor hazard when the summer dust swirled up and obscured all vision. For all the risks, some amazing work was done at night such as on 20 December 1967, when a late afternoon hot insertion finally led to the troops being extracted with the flight under constant fire for over four hours from midnight into the early morning. Only two aircraft were hit but there were many troop casualties.

Combat damage was mainly small arms fire and most pilots made the most professional landings when shot down. We flew at 1,500 feet when we could so as to stay clear of AK-47 fire but that did not always work. Heavier calibre weapons were different. The RPGs or 50mm fire would take you down with one hit, the resultant arrival with the ground being largely a question of how much damage had been done to the controls or pilots. Our aircraft was simple but provided the bullets did not mesh up in the rotating machinery the Huey could take some incredible punishment and still keep flying.

### **The Final Tally**

It was not always lots of hits and no casualties. The final roll of honour for the 135<sup>th</sup> AHC was 35 killed and far too many injured for an accurate count (over 100). Five RANHFV were killed and 22 wounded (2/3<sup>rds</sup> of our 50 aircrew regularly flying!) in our four years with the 135<sup>th</sup> AHC. In 1968/69, 13 were killed and 25 wounded (including two RANHFV KIA and five WIA), more or less a casualty every ten days or so.

The Huey has become the iconic symbol of the Vietnam War. Of the 7,013 Hueys that went to Vietnam nearly half (3,305) were destroyed and with them 2,177 aircrew killed. Half the aircraft and two thirds of their crews casualties – not good statistics yet we loved the aircraft and were proud to have flown it in the most intense of environments. We were face to face with our enemy on many an occasion, taking hits, being shot down, having the closest of shaves and regular 'there but for the grace of God moments' and still flying the next day to do it all again.

### **On Medals**

While only the aircrew were expected to go into danger, the rest of our personnel did so as well. Maintainers flew out into the field to effect repairs to our aircraft if it would allow that aircraft to keep flying on the day's mission rather than getting a Chinook to lift it home. These same people mounted guard duties on the perimeter each night; they drove stores convoys, and on more than a few occasions were ambushed and fought their way out. Photographers who had only ever taken happy snaps were manning the M60s and flying on combat assaults.



## Getting the bloody job done—continued

The Sick Berth Attendants (Medics) performed amazingly in trauma wards for impossibly long periods during the Tet Offensives of 1968 and 1969. Our Cooks had the best chow halls throughout the Battalion for months on end and flew combat assault missions as gunners. At one stage the 135<sup>th</sup> was down to 17 out of its establishment of 31 aircraft but the maintainers worked miracles (under dreadful working conditions) and the 15 mission aircraft were always available. Such was the demand and the response; if the aircraft could be started, we flew it.



*Maintenance Area at Bear Cat, open air by day and torch lights by night, wet or dry according to season. The maintenance personnel did wonders. We had the aircraft from 0430 every day till our return often as late as midnight when the maintainers did their repairs for the next day.*

It has been said in places that the RANHFV was the most awarded unit of the RAN. By one count that might be but when 18 MIDs were awarded to people at sea “...cheerfully carrying out their duties” while not in combat danger, then an MID for two of our number in the most daring of rescues under conditions some equated to gallantry of the highest order is not equitable. There were plenty of other extraordinary examples; far too many to tell here.

Against this background, some members of the RANHFV canvassed for a Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal hearing which was finally held in October 2017. Not to seek personal entitlements but for a general recognition that everyone in the RANHFV had performed extraordinarily. The Tribunal recommended and the Governor-General on 1 June 2018 signed his approval of the RAN’s second Unit Citation for Gallantry since World War II.

## UNIT CITATION FOR GALLANTRY

**For acts of extraordinary gallantry in action in South Vietnam from October 1967 to June 1971.**

**The Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam, as part of the Experimental Military Unit of the United States Army 135th Assault Helicopter Company, exhibited exceptional and extraordinary gallantry whilst engaged in offensive operations continuously throughout its four-year deployment. This exceptional gallantry was enabled by the efforts of the entire Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam.**

Getting the bloody job done– continued

Citation continues.

**The Flight was a unique unit and every member, regardless of mustering or category, either performed their duties with demonstrable gallantry or were used in roles for which they were not trained and still performed bravely. The administrative and maintenance staff were required to assist in the provision of base security in addition to their normal duties and almost all of the support personnel regularly volunteered to act as aircrew employed as door-gunners and Crew Chiefs. This was in addition to the extremely long maintenance hours required to support the tempo of operations conducted by the Flight. Over the course of the operations in Vietnam, the Flight accumulated a formidable record of operational flight hours and citations for individual gallantry. This has set it apart from other operational units.**

**While exposed to hostile fire and at great personal risk, aircrew flew on average 50 per cent more operational hours per month than other Australian aircrew in comparable roles with other units. Aircrew were constantly engaged by the enemy, faced the danger of booby-trapped landing zones and frequently found themselves fired upon by friendly forces. The personnel who flew with the Flight arguably saw the most intense combat of any Royal Australian Navy personnel in the war. Despite the fact that none of the personnel had previous operational service and none had been under fire, they were courageous in battle, exhibited exceptional and extraordinary gallantry and did so with great skill and heroic dedication in executing a mission far removed from those for which they had been trained. Over the period of the Flight's operations in South Vietnam, five members of the unit died and 22 were wounded in action.**

The extraordinary gallantry, dedication to duty and astonishing record of the Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam conducting tasks far removed from the expectations of Naval service, has forever set it apart from other units. The extraordinary acts of gallantry and heroism consistently displayed by the personnel, combined with their loyal devotion to duty were in keeping with the finest traditions of the Royal Australian Navy and the Australian Defence Force.

Max Speedy was the 2iC of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Contingent (1968/69). As a co-pilot for two months under a US Army Warrant Officer getting combat experience he then became 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon Leader (UH1-H troop lift helicopters) and flight leader of the 10 *Slicks*, ending his tour as Operations Officer and Air Mission Commander of the *Slicks* and Gunships. He flew 1,250 combat hours, was decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross, two Vietnam Crosses of Gallantry, and a dozen US Air Medals. He flew most of the helicopters in Vietnam at the time.



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## AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE RETIREES ASSOCIATION INC.

No. A0108026R

We represent the interests of Defence Force Retirees regarding their Superannuation

### DFRDB UPDATE - JANUARY 2020

Hi All,

In November last year we put the following contention to [Levitt Robinson Solicitors](#) (who mounted a successful appeal on behalf of 300 former trainee marine technicians) and [Barrister Allan Anforth](#) and sought an opinion regarding the potential for a legal challenge:

1. *That the outcomes of the ordinary meaning conveyed by the text of the Commutation and Pension Increases provisions in the DFRDB Act:*
  - a. *Are not consistent with the intent expressed, by the Governments of the day, when the legislation was enacted;*
  - b. *Discriminate against members of the DFRDB scheme; and*
  - c. *Cause inequitable financial detriment to DFRDB beneficiaries, discriminating by age, gender, time of retirement and time of death.*
2. *The use of static expectation of life factors, to determine the proportionate reduction of retirement pay after commutation, has transformed the Commutation arrangement from one that may have been seen to be equitable and even generous in 1973 into one that is manifestly inequitable today.*
3. *The Pension Increases provisions have failed to maintain the relativity of DFRDB pensions because:*
  - a. *Indexation increases are not applied to the full amount of DFRDB pensions paid from the Consolidated Revenue Fund, as they are in other contemporary Commonwealth superannuation schemes;*
  - b. *The Consumer Price Index long ago ceased to be a valid measure of the increase in the cost of living.*

That contention was put in a 74 page brief, prepared by Herb, which provided irrefutable proof of the discriminatory and inequitable outcomes.

The response from Allan Anforth and Stuart Levitt was consistent and unequivocal, in that:

1. The Australian Constitution confers on the Parliament the right to make laws.
2. But while in countries such as the USA a Bill of Rights or equivalent gives its citizens the right to challenge laws which are discriminatory or inequitable, the Australian Constitution affords its citizens no such right, whatsoever.
3. The remedy of bad legislation is a prerogative of the Parliament.
4. Even though we have irrefutable evidence that the DFRDB Act is discriminatory and inequitable, a legal challenge cannot succeed because, at Law, that evidence is inadmissible.

## DFRDB UPDATE JANUARY 2020 Continued

We wish to express our gratitude to Stuart Levin and Allan Anforth for providing their advice pro bono. In particular, to Allan Anforth, who analysed Herb's brief, the Ombudsman's report and [2001] AATA 599 (*Reynolds vs Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits Authority*), in addition to devoting his time to a meeting with Herb in his Canberra chambers.

This is a major disappointment as we incorporated the Australian Defence Force Retirees Association in preparation for a potential legal action and, through a small membership fee to this incorporated Association, to recover some of the costs we have already incurred and are likely to incur in taking this fight back to the politicians, because the remedy of the inequities in the DFRDB scheme can only occur through the amendment of the DFRDB Act. We also submitted the brief we put to Allan Anforth and Stuart Levitt to the Ombudsman's investigation team with an expectation that these concerns, which were outside the Inquiry's terms of reference, would be acknowledged in the Ombudsman's report.

But, as all who have read the Ombudsman's report would know, no such acknowledgement was included.

We consider that acknowledgement to be important and because some of the Ombudsman's findings are based on flawed assumptions and irrelevant modelling, we will request a review of the Ombudsman's decision.

We will shortly make appropriate changes to our web site in respect of our incorporation and after we have received a response from the Ombudsman will advise our approach to the politicians.

We may be disappointed but we are not finished.

Regards,

***Jim and Herb***

***Debrief editors note; see next page for more comment***

Australia's Vietnam War' Website.  
University of New South Wales Canberra  
[Vietnam.unsw.adfa.edu.au](http://Vietnam.unsw.adfa.edu.au)

Comments by Jim Hislop related to DRFDB Update January 2020.

This is not the news we had hoped for but it has cleared the decks (RAN talk) due to the Australian Constitution we have to continue our fight to have the DFRDB Act 1973 amended. This will not be easy as the Government appear to be strongly opposed to recognising the contribution our servicemen/women have made to the freedoms we enjoy as proud Australians. With your support we will continue the fight. We believe we have had excellent legal advice at no cost and this has lead us to develop a plan to continue the fight the details of additional proposed options will be included in our next Update. Although the Ombudsman's report clearly stated that thousands of us had been mislead (lied to) we may as well whistle "Dixie" if we expect the Government to make some offer of restitution. We believe the Ombudsman made a number of assumptions not supported by fact and he does not fully understand the "Military chain of command". For those that have suggested a class action this has been investigated and due to the Australian Constitution none of the major firms will take the case on.

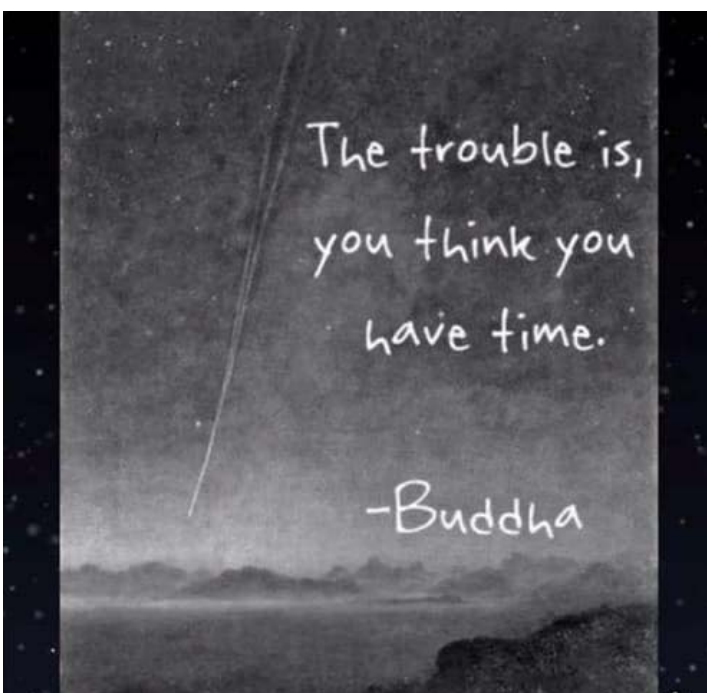
We asked the Ombudsman to reveal which ESO's made formal (written ) submissions to the inquiry but under the Ombudsman's Act this could not be revealed. From our discussions and observing social media it appears that some of the major ESO's did not fight for their members.

We will continue the fight for justice but all ESO's must come on board!

Regards

Jim

In a similar vein the KPMG report into TPI Benefits that was initiated by DVA following submissions by sections of the ex-service community is now available, too large a document to reproduce here but for those interested A copy of the report is on the DVA web site here: <https://www.dva.gov.au/consultation-and-grants/reviews/kpmg-review-tpi-benefits>



HEADACHES

## **Disaster assistance- bushfire crisis**

The impact of the bushfires is being felt across the nation, including by members of the veteran and defence communities. Health and safety is the priority during this time, and we encourage you to listen to the experts on how to be prepared.

The ABC, as the national broadcaster, provides up-to-date information on all alerts and warnings.

Further information is also available on each of the state government websites.

Members of the veteran and defence communities can also access:

- The Australian Government Disaster Recovery Payment – one-off financial assistance to eligible Australians adversely affected by the bushfires. For more information on eligibility, and how to claim, visit the Department of Human Services website or call 180 22 66.
- Defence Service Homes Insurance – to lodge a claim or for assistance please contact 1300 552 662 or visit the Defence Service Homes Insurance website.
- Open Arms counselling support (24/7) – veterans and their families requiring emergency counselling support can call 1800 011 046.
- Crisis payments – a one-off payment to financially assist eligible people following a range of defined circumstances. For information about the crisis payments and eligibility please read Factsheet IS121 - Crisis Payments
- Other assistance – DVA's Veterans' Access Network (VAN) can be contacted on 1800 555 254 to assist with a wide range of issues, including replacement of aids and appliances, ensuring availability of pharmaceuticals, and arranging transportation to medical appointments.
- Veteran's Home Care – assists you to continue living independently by providing a small amount of practical help including safety related home and garden maintenance that can help prevent health and safety hazards around the home. For program clients affected by the fires please contact your service providers or assessment agency. For eligible, affected veterans that need new services or services in a new location contact a VHC Assessment Agency on 1300 550 450.

If any other services or support you receive from the Department are being impacted by the fires, or if you need extra support in requesting these services, you can call 1800 555 254 for assistance.



## OUR ASSOCIATION

### *The Structure—Branches and Sub Branches*

#### **National Congress**

The National Congress is the governing body of the VVAA. The Congress comprises the National Executive, Presidents and one other representative from each State, and Seconded Members. The members of the National Executive and the Seconded Members are non-voting member.

The role of the National congress, which meets once each year, is to consider items of business which are proposed by the State Councils through their links to Sub Branches and individual members, and which set the direction for the organisation over the next twelve months, make such changes to the National Constitution which are considered necessary, and to elect the National Executive.

#### **National Council**

The National Council consists of the National Executive, the State Presidents and Seconded Members. The Executive and Seconded Members are not voting members.

The role of the National Council is to give direction to the National Executive of Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, in accordance with the wishes of the members of the Association delivered through Sub Branch and State Branch and expressed at the annual National Congress. The Council prepares items for discussion at the Congress, and deals with important issues which may arise from time to time throughout the year. It is important in ensuring the VVAA maintains a consistent outlook and direction.

#### **National Executive**

The National Executive consists of the National President, National Secretary, National Treasurer, and two Vice Presidents. Their role is to conduct the day-to-day business of the Association in accordance with the directions and guidance of the National Congress and the National Council. Members seek advice from experts in various fields, including members of the VVAA, and particularly the Seconded Members.

From time to time issues arise which have not been discussed at Congress or Council, and in these cases the guiding principles are that the Executive is to attempt to deliver, on behalf of the Association, outcomes which are not inconsistent with our Constitution and Policy Handbook and which are to the greater good of the Vietnam veteran community in particular and the veteran/ex-service communities in general.

This page is dedicated to promoting and supporting V.V.A.A. Branches and Sub Branches with information.

Branches and Sub Branches are invited to send details and a brief description of your activities, please keep to one page, email to [debrief@vvaa.org.au](mailto:debrief@vvaa.org.au)



# Planning Ahead

A GUIDE TO PUTTING YOUR AFFAIRS IN ORDER

PREPARING FOR AND COPING WITH BEREAVEMENT



Copies can be downloaded from the DVA web site [www.dva.gov.au](http://www.dva.gov.au)

Or from your local VAN office



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## OUR HISTORY

Recent research has identified a loss of records from our associations past.

If there are copies of V.V.A.A. National Congress minutes prior to 1996 please forward to;

[president@vvaa.org.au](mailto:president@vvaa.org.au)

or

[secretary@vvaa.org.au](mailto:secretary@vvaa.org.au)

## YOUR ACTIVITIES REPORTED IN DEBRIEF

States and sub branches are encouraged to contribute reports on their activities, particularly an opportunity to let others know what is happening in your area.

**The Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) commissioned KPMG to examine the TPI Federation's campaign for an increase in the TPI payment.**

KPMG analysed the arguments put forward by the TPI Federation in support of their campaign against the legislative and policy basis for the current TPI payment rate. The same analysis was also conducted on an alternative payment structure proposed by the Disabled Veterans of Australia Network. This included investigation of the overall levels of support available for TPI veterans and consideration of whether any cohorts of the TPI population need greater assistance than others.

KPMG also compared the draft recommendations of the Productivity Commission review *A Better Way to Support Veterans*, released on 11 December 2018, against the TPI Federation's response to the draft Productivity Commission report and their proposed alternative recommendations.

The KPMG Review of TPI Benefits was completed and provided to DVA on 15 November 2019.

A copy of the report is on the DVA web site <https://www.dva.gov.au/consultation-and-grants/reviews/kpmg-review-tpi-benefits>

**FROM V.V.A.A. WESTERN AUSTRALIA**

A link to the audio of a recent radio interview State president Richard Williams re the "Camaraderie" videos.

<https://omny.fm/shows/remember-when-with-harvey-deegan/richard-vietnam-veterans-association>

**PEOPLE WHO WONDER WHETHER THE GLASS IS HALF FULL OR  
HALF EMPTY MISS THE POINT.**

**THE GLASS IS REFILLABLE**





## Events at NVVM 2020

Sat 22 Feb—Australian Army Band performs 'Back to Nam Again'

Sat 4 April—Sisters & Mistery

Sat 25 April - ANZAC DAY Debra Byrne & Dion Hirini

Sat 9 May – Rock Away in May

Saturday 30 May – The Spooky Men's Chorale

Sunday 7 June – Antiques Fair

Sunday 21 June – The City of Melbourne Highland Pipe Band

Sunday 5 July – Locals Free Open Day

Saturday 15 August—Forgotten Heroes

Sunday 16 August—Art Exhibition opening 'Lest We Forget - Vietnam'

Sunday 13 September – Big Boys Toys

Saturday 3 October – Rock Away in Spring

Watch this space for dates and any changes.

National Vietnam Veterans Museum  
25 Veterans Drive, Newhaven, 3925

Enquiries: [sales@vietnamvetsmuseum.org](mailto:sales@vietnamvetsmuseum.org)  
[www.vietnamvetsmuseum.org](http://www.vietnamvetsmuseum.org)



## REUNIONS

# WHAT'S HAPPENING ?

### VETERAN FRIENDLY RETREATS

Future listing of these facilities should be available on the various VVAA State branch web sites and these can be accessed through the web site [www.vvaa.org.au](http://www.vvaa.org.au)



### THE VIETNAMESE MUSEUM- AUSTRALIA



For more information and to see a visual concept of the project go to;  
[www.vietnamesemuseum.com.au](http://www.vietnamesemuseum.com.au)

If you would prefer to have this publication emailed directly to you please forward your email address to the National Secretary at [secretary@vvaa.org.au](mailto:secretary@vvaa.org.au).

## ADVOCACY CORNER.



Advocacy Training and  
Development Program

There have been a number of comments made in the past month or so on the fact that as V.V.A.A. Administrator of the ATDP website Accredited Advocates Register I removed a number of advocates in early January.

The V.V.A.A. Policy is laid out in the associations administration handbook which dictates the administration policies set down by the V.V.A.A. National Council.

The policy to only authorise advocates for a calendar year was based, in part, on the basis we expect our advocates to be members of the V.V.A.A. and membership is an annual renewal process.

If members wish to take advantage of the professional indemnity insurance offered by the association they need to follow a process that is acceptable to our insurers.

The ATDP Administration has also recently directed that nomination for training and recognition of prior learning assessments can only be done by a centrally appointed administrator rather than by regional ESO's as in the past.

I am currently drafting revised application for authorisation as advocates and for training / assessment that will be put to the V.V.A.A. National Council in May for approval.

Anyone having difficulty in accessing this process should contact me as administrator for assistance.

Ken Foster OAM JP

V.V.A.A. Advocates Administrator.

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### HAVE YOUR SAY— LETTERS TO DEBRIEF ARE WELCOME

The subject matter should be generally of interest to Vietnam Veterans and their families. Brief, to the point letters have a better chance of publication. Photographs should be of good colour, quality and subject matter, in jpg or similar format. Text should be submitted in Word format with minimum formatting. Vietnam Veteran writers must identify themselves by name, state, Vietnam Unit and Tour dates. Email: [debrief@vvaa.org.au](mailto:debrief@vvaa.org.au)



ABN 62 437 693 075

## **Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia Far North Coast (NSW) Sub-Branch Inc.**

Affiliated with the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia NSW Branch Inc.

P.O. Box 7350 LISMORE HEIGHTS NSW 2480

Phone: (02) 6624 4486 Fax (02) 6625 2895

E-Mail: [vvaalismore@bigpond.com.au](mailto:vvaalismore@bigpond.com.au)

12 January, 2020

### **MEDIA RELEASE - COMMUNITY NEWS ANNOUNCEMENTS Vietnam Veterans Association Meeting dates for 2020**

Please arrange for the following to be placed in your Community News Announcements;

"Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, New South Wales Branch Inc, Far North Coast Sub-Branch (NSW) Inc., will be holding their next monthly Meeting on **Tuesday 18 February 2020** at the Workers Goonellabah Sports Club, 202 Oliver Ave Goonellabah NSW 2480.

The meeting commences at 11am. Tea and Coffee from 10.30am. Meeting is followed by a social get together. Lunch is available at the club. The venue has access for disabled veterans including those in wheel chairs. New members and visitors are always most welcome

For further information phone **Sheldon Maher 6624 4486** or **Murray Cooper 6624 4750.**"

#### **News Editor Please Note:**

The sub-branch meets at the Workers Goonellabah Sports Club, 202 Oliver Ave Goonellabah NSW 2480 on the third Tuesday of the month. [No meeting in January, December]. The meeting commences at 11am. This venue has access for disabled veterans including those in wheel chairs.

#### **Meeting dates for 2020 are:**

We will be holding our members meetings to commence at 11am on the third **Tuesday** the month on the following dates:

Tuesday 18 February 2020	Tuesday 17 March 2020	Tuesday 21 April 2020
Tuesday 19 May 2020	Tuesday 16 June 2020	Tuesday 21 July 2020
Tuesday 18 August 2020	Tuesday 15 September 2020	
Tuesday 20 October 2020	Tuesday 17 November 2020	

Please note. [No meeting in January and December].

If you should require any further information on our request, please telephone Sheldon Maher on 02 6624 4486 or Murray Cooper on 6624 4750.

  
Cathy Maher  
SECRETARY  
M2/AM/DC



## NATIONAL VIETNAM VETERANS MUSEUM

25 VETERANS DRIVE, NEWHAVEN, PHILLIP ISLAND VIC 3925

[WWW.VIETNAMVETSMUSEUM.ORG.AU](http://WWW.VIETNAMVETSMUSEUM.ORG.AU)

Membership enquiries welcomed



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## THE WAR WIDOWS GUILD OF AUSTRALIA

"We all belong to each other. We all need each other. It is in serving each other and in sacrificing for our common good that we are finding our true life."



A strong part of the Guilds History is the origins of its Logo.

The kookaburra was adopted as the Guilds Logo from its early inception and remains today.

The Kookaburra is also present on all War Widows' Guild Badges.