



The Bosun's Call



Vol 16 No 1

Each for All—All for Each

February 2011

DIAMANTINA OFF THE BLOCKS

Diamantina is afloat again as a result of the South Brisbane Dry Dock being flooded by the Brisbane River last week.

Placed in the refurbished dock with the Carpentaria Lightship (CLS2) in May 2006 Diamantina settled down to enjoy the rest of her retirement. When planning Diamantina as a major exhibit in the Queensland Maritime Museum (QMM), Brisbane in 1977, thought was given to cutting a hole below her waterline so that viewers could access the dock floor and gaze at her bottom (possibly find a golden rivet), but in view of the experience with the 1974 flooding of the dock, the QMM Association decided that watertight integrity had to be maintained.

CLS 2 spent much of its time in the Gulf of Carpentaria, on the western approach to Torres Strait, but was last stationed in the Bass Strait oilfields serving as a traffic separator. Retired from service in 1985, it became part of the collection at the Queensland Maritime Museum, where it was on display and accessible with *Diamantina* in the dry dock. Unfortunately the flooding of the dock caused it to capsize and sink last week.

Top Diamantina in the South Brisbane Dry Dock at the Queensland Maritime Museum
Right: Carpentaria Lightship astern of Diamantina



Photos: QMMA

Events coming up

Sunday 30 Jan 2011 Fish 'n' Chips 1700 –1900 CYC grounds
Next meeting followed by the AGM Thursday 3 February 2011
Vikings Football Club Erindale commencing 1330
Sunday 27 Feb Fish 'n' Chips 1700—1900 CYC Grounds



Newsletter of the ACT Section of the
Naval Association of Australia



Printed by The Sports Club Kaleen

Naval Association of Australia ACT Section

Patron The Hon Sir William Deane AC KBE

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President's Note

Welcome to 2011. Our AGM will be held on 3 February and it is important that we have volunteers to fill the Executive positions and to be Committee members.

This is a significant year and marks the 100th Anniversary of the Royal Australian Navy being created from the Australian Commonwealth Navy which was formed on 1 March 1901 when the ships and establishments of the States were transferred to the Commonwealth of Australia. It also marks the NAA's Triennial Conference that will be held in Western Australia in July.

The Section's general meeting locations have settled down now and should provide stability in the future.

The ACT Government thoughts on the Veterans' Committee have not gone any further than what was stated in the December Bosuns Call. Now that Christmas and New Year have passed, some progress on the proposal may become apparent.

Whilst the Queensland floods have affected many of our members, thankfully none have suffered any loss of immediate family. One of our members, Jim O'Connor was very much involved in keeping the old vehicle ferry 'Sir James Holt', now known as "the Island" secure at its mooring on the Brisbane River. Consequently the Navy's Clearance Divers were not given the task of scuttling it to prevent it demolishing bridges on its way down the river had it broken free of its mooring.

Peter Cooke-Russell

Fresh faces, fresh ideas needed for the future, don't stand back and leave everything to somebody else

**Committee meeting
 Vikings Erindale
 1200 Thursday 3 February 2011**

General Meeting Dates and Locations

2011			
3 Feb Erindale AGM		1330	7 Jul Erindale 1330
2 Mar MV Southern Cross	1930	Wed	4 Aug Kaleen Sports Club 1330
7 Apr Kaleen Sports Club		1330	1 Sep Erindale 1330
5 May Erindale		1330	5 Oct MV Southern Cross 1930 Wed
2 Jun Kaleen Sports Club		1330	3 Nov Kaleen Sports Club 1330
			1 Dec Lunch Venue to be advised 1200

NAACT Section Event/Social Diary 2011

30 Jan Fish 'n' Chip Canberra Yacht Club 5.00—7.00 pm approx BYO drinks or buy at the CYC
 27 Feb Fish 'n' Chip Canberra Yacht Club 5.00—7.00 pm approx BYO drinks or buy at the CYC
 10 Jul 100th Anniversary of the Royal Proclamation creating the Royal Australian Navy
 6 Aug HMAS Canberra Memorial Service
 6 Oct Naval Commemoration Service

A proposed programme for 2011 will be presented at the February 2011 meeting.

Alliance of Defence Service Organisations' Submission for the 2011-2012 Budget

Background Information on the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations

The Alliance of Defence Service Organisations was formally constituted in July of 2010. It was formed as result of the constituent organisations desire to work in a more cooperative and coordinated manner.

The membership of the Alliance comprises the Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA), the Naval Association of Australia (NAA), the RAAF Association (RAAFA), The Royal Australian Regiment Association (RARA) and Australian Special Air Services Association (ASASA).

The objective of the Alliance is to provide a stronger voice on issues impacting the conditions and wellbeing of currently serving and former members of the Australian Defence Force.

Underlying Principles for our Submission for the 2011-2012 Budget

Two interconnected principles should guide the Government and form the philosophical context within which decisions on employment conditions for service men and women made. These are the "unique nature of military service" and the need to compensate members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) for that uniqueness in their pay, superannuation, invalidity and death benefits, and other conditions of service. An explanation of what makes service in the ADF unique within the Australian community is attached to this letter.

In the above context the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations believes the following areas outline issues where not only are the above principles ignored but in some instances subject serving and former ADF members to discriminatory treatment at the hands of the Government. These do not constitute the full range of issues for which we seek Government action but we believe they warrant attention in the coming budget.

We therefore submit the following policy proposals relating to the Government's support of serving and former ADF personnel for consideration in the 2011-12 Budget. All of the proposals in this submission have been raised with Ministers in the previous Government.

Proposed Budget Initiatives

Indexation of all Military Superannuation Payments

The present military superannuation payment represents an unacceptable minimal level. Governments must maintain the real value of these payments by adopting an appropriate method of indexation.

Military pensions were originally indexed at CPI to maintain their value relative to national wages. In the last 15-

20 years, national standards of living have increased in real terms, which are not reflected if relying on the CPI. Acknowledging this, in 1997 the then-Government changed the method of indexing the Aged and Service Pensions from CPI to a combination of CPI and Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE) and the present Government further extended this formula to include the "Pensioner and Beneficiaries Living Cost Index" to keep pace with increase in prices and improvements in community living standards.

Military retirement and invalidity pensions now stand out as being more harshly treated than almost every other long-term Commonwealth payment that is subject to regular indexing to maintain its value.

Proposal

We seek the same community standard of indexation, as adopted for the Age and Service pensions to be applied to all components of DFRB/DFRDB/MSBS military superannuation pensions including the total reversionary pension for partners of deceased military superannuation pensioners. The total estimated cost for this initiative for FY 2011-2012 is estimated not to exceed \$ 16M and an additional \$176M over the forward estimate period.

Abolition of MSBS Maximum Benefit Limits (MBL)

MBL's in MSBS are limits on the maximum amount that the military superannuation fund will pay out. They should not to be confused with Reasonable Benefit Limits which limited the amount that could be contributed and accumulated at concessional tax rates. RBL's were abolished in "Better Super" changes but MBL's were not. MBL's include the sum of both Employer and Employee benefits. There are two MBL's;

All pension MBL at which the member **must stop** contributing because the member's total payout has peaked; and

Lower Lump Sum MBL at which the member **may stop** contributing because the member is getting close but is urged to seek specific advice.

The effect of the application of this measure is that many long serving ADF personnel are receiving no retirement income benefit for their final years of service.

The Report of the Review of Military Superannuation recommended that MBLs be scrapped for the MSBS. The combined Ex-Service Organisations response supported that particular recommendation.

Proposal

We seek the immediate removal of MBLs in the MSBS superannuation scheme. The exact number

Vale

Ian (Stan) Deas

25 December 1946 to 20 December 2010

'Lest we Forget'

of MSBS members affected by this initiative is not available to us at this time but is not substantial. The cost in FY 2011-2012 is estimated to be at best a minimal figure with the cost over the forward estimates an equally modest amount.

Adjustment of the Veterans Disability Pension Rates

The Government has stated it understands the impact of rising costs of living and the importance of ensuring that entitlements do not erode in value and is committed to making sure that our disabled war veterans have their pensions adjusted to take account of **"not just of the cost of living but also the standard of living"**.

Analysis undertaken as part of the Harmer Review confirmed that at certain times, the rates of change in the out of pocket living costs experienced by age pensioner households have moved faster than the rate of inflation as measured by the CPI. In 2007 the Parliament recognised this in relation to Veteran Disability Pensioners and provided a "one off" catch up increase and also brought their indexation arrangements into line with the other pensions. The September 2007 Legislative changes to the indexation arrangements for DVA disability pensions have gone some way to ensuring that the veterans' benefits did not suffer further erosion but the failure to adjust the rate of the veterans disability pensions in line with the adjustments made to other government pensions in the 2009/10 Budget, has meant that the relative value of the Veterans' Disability Pensions measured against the other pensions has diminished. The cost to implement this proposal is substantial but we firmly believe that servicemen and women who have suffered injury to their person as a result of their service to the Nation in the ADF deserve fair and compassionate treatment to alleviate the detrimental effects of that service.

Proposal

That all rates for Veterans' Disability Pensions be adjusted by the same increment that was granted at the time for the Single Rate of Service Pension in the 2009 Budget which was by 2.7% increase of MTAW (Male Total Average Weekly Earnings). The projected cost to implement this initiative in FY 2011-2012 is estimated to be in the order of \$164M with an additional estimated \$485M over the forward estimates.

Unfair Balance of Legal Resources at the Administrative Appeals

Veterans, when appealing to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal against the rejection of a claim for compensation (or the Department is appealing against the acceptance of one) are entitled to Legal Aid funding. This funding covers the preparation of the case, one medical report, the appearance of the author of the medical report at the Tribunal to defend it, and a barrister to argue the case before the Tribunal for one day. But more and more cases are not conforming to these limits. More and more cases are lasting two, three and four days and require more than one medical report. However Departmental legal representatives do not operate within these limits and can take as many days as they like. Neither are they limited in the number of medical reports they commission nor the number of medical specialist appearances at the Tribunal hearing. To make matters worse, the best qualified doctors are reluctant to provide reports for veterans because Legal Aid funding does not cover their usual fees. They have no such reluctance to provide reports for the Department which pays the higher fees. To make matters even worse, many law firms simply refuse to take on veterans' cases citing inadequacy of remuneration but exercise no such reluctance in working for the Department which pays higher fees.

Proposal

In the interest of fairness, the Department of Veteran Affairs must restrict itself to employing similar legal resources to those available to the veteran and observe the Model Litigant Rules. In this proposal we are suggesting a rebalancing of financial resources rather than suggesting additional funding to cover this proposal.

Yours Sincerely,

Colonel D K Jamison AM. (Retired)

National President, Defence Force Welfare Association,
on behalf of

The Alliance of Defence Service Organisations.

Annual General Meeting 3 February 2011

**Commencing at about 1400 on completion of the February 2011 General Meeting
at the Vikings Rugby Club Erindale**

Confirmation of the Minutes of the AGM held on
4 February 2010

Business Arising

Reports

Election of President, Vice President, Secretary,
and Treasurer

Election of the Committee

Nominations are required to fill the positions of

the ACT Section and are to be received by the
Secretary no later than 7.30 pm Thursday 27
January 2011

**Members must be financial for 2011 to vote
at the AGM**

See page 7 for Nomination Form

**Peter McNay
Secretary**

RAN HELICOPTER FLIGHT VIETNAM

As the name suggests, the Royal Australian Navy Helicopter Flight Vietnam (RANHFV) was specially formed for service in support of allied forces during the Vietnam War. The new flight was to be integrated with the United States Army 135th Assault Helicopter Company (AHC) flying the ubiquitous Iroquois helicopters in both the utility and gun-ship configurations.

The first contingent of pilots, observers, naval airmen and support staff was assigned to 723 Squadron Naval Air Station (NAS) Nowra in July 1967 under the command of Lieutenant Commander Neil Ralph, RAN. The flight consisted of eight pilots, four observers, four aircrewmembers, twenty-four technical sailors and six support staff comprising of cooks, stewards, writers, medics and storemen.

Following an eight-week period of training the first contingent arrived in Vietnam on 16 October 1967 and was quickly integrated with the 330 personnel of the 135th AHC. As a result of this unique relationship between the RAN and the US Army, the unit was officially designated 'EMU', for Experimental Military Unit. This was fitting, given that the Emu is a native Australian bird, and in some ways comical as the Emu cannot fly.



135th Assault Helicopter Company

The 135th AHC was based at Vung Tau and organised to operate two troop lift ('slick') platoons, each with eleven UH-1Ds, a gunship platoon with eight UH-1Cs, a maintenance platoon with a single UH-1D and a headquarters platoon. Six of the gunships were equipped with mini guns, rockets and machine guns. The remaining two were fitted with the XM-5 40mm grenade launcher system (mounted in a ball turret under the nose of the helicopter) rockets and machine guns.

The role of the 135th AHC was to provide tactical air movement of combat troops, supplies and equipment in air-mobile operations. This included augmentation of army medical services, search and rescue and the provision of a command and control aircraft capability to supported units.

First Operations

Having established their camp, and with a full complement, the 135th AHC became fully operational and flew its first mission on 3 November 1967. By the end of November the company had flown 3182 hours in support of the US Army 9th Infantry and the 1st Australian Task Force based at Nui Dat, Phuoc Tuy province. The usual daily commitment was one UH1H command and control helicopter, four UH1C gunships and ten slicks.

The company's first major operation, *Operation Santa Fe*,

was a lift of 9th Infantry Division troops into northeast Phuoc Tuy in early November 1967. This operation involved more than 80 helicopters from a number of helicopter companies flying in support of a combined allied sweep against the 5th Viet Cong Division. It was also one of the largest operations any RANHFV contingent participated in. *Operation Tiger Coronado* followed and it was during this operation that helicopters of the AHC were first hit by enemy fire.

First Helicopter Shot Down

The first EMU aircraft to be shot down (and the first with an Australian pilot to be hit) was a gunship piloted by Sub Lieutenant Anthony Casadio RAN. This occurred on 19 November 1967. After his gunship was hit by ground fire several times SBLT Casadio force-landed near the enemy. Once on the ground the Viet Cong immediately attacked the helicopter crew. Despite their relative inexperience, the young American soldiers and their Australian Navy captain maintained control of the situation and set up a defensive perimeter using the helicopter's door-mounted M60 machine guns. The M60s combined with the small arms they all carried afforded the crew a degree of self-protection. Meanwhile, LUET John Leek RAN in an accompanying gunship circled overhead until his fuel ran dangerously low and he was forced to leave the scene.

Before SBLT Casadio and his men were rescued by another EMU helicopter, they successfully drove off an unknown number of Viet Cong, killing two of the enemy in the process. A Chinook helicopter later lifted the downed helicopter from the crash site and recovered it back to Vung Tau.

Camp Blackhorse

In December 1967 the company experienced its first night combat operations and LCDR Ralph experienced his first assignment as air mission commander. In late December the company moved from the secure base at Vung Tau to Camp Blackhorse, thirty five miles away and on a main road five miles south of Xuan Loc, Long Khanh province. Blackhorse, in the middle of rubber plantations and jungle was dependent on convoys from Long Binh to bring food, ammunition and fuel to it. It was also dangerously vulnerable to rocket and mortar attack. Its unsealed runways caused it to be extremely dusty in the 'dry' and, conversely, a sea of mud in the 'wet' so that take-offs and landings required more than the usual exercise of caution.

The shift to Blackhorse committed the 135th to the support of more units over a greater area. On January 8, 1968, eight EMU helicopters were hit by enemy ground fire while supporting elements of the 9th Infantry Division's 3/39th Infantry Battalion outside Saigon. On this occasion the insertion and extraction of troops that went on well into the night was led by LEUT B.C. Crawford RAN.

First RAN Sailors Injured

On January 12 1968 the RANHFV suffered its first casualties when Leading Seaman Kevin French and Naval Airman Keith Wardle of the maintenance platoon were injured when the gunship in which they were travelling was forced down in jungle some miles north of Baria, Phuoc Tuy province. The men scrambled clear as the wreck caught fire, detonating ammunition and rockets. A RAAF helicopter from 9 Squadron was soon on the

(Continued on page 6)

scene and the downed aviators were winched from the jungle and evacuated to hospital. LS French soon recovered from this ordeal but AB Wardle suffered very severe injuries necessitating his evacuation to Australia.

The 135th's relationship with 9 Squadron, RAAF, was first established when both units shared the tarmac at Vung Tau, this relationship was further strengthened early in 1968 when 9 Squadron began to replace its UH-1Bs with larger and more powerful UH-1Hs. To help the RAAF Squadron achieve an easy transition it was arranged that a number of its pilots would be attached to the 135th's slick platoons for conversion training. Subsequently, RAAF and RNZAF pilots saw action with the EMUs for several months. It should be noted that RAN pilots also augmented 9 Squadron during its service in Vietnam.

Operations continued throughout January 1968 during which LCDR Ralph and the crew of the command and control helicopter survived three mortar attacks on the ground during a vigorous fire fight between a Viet Cong force and elements of the US 25th Infantry Division at Duc Hoa west of Saigon. Two company gunships were hit by enemy fire and during the widespread Tet offensive of February 1968, the increasing Viet Cong activity in III Corps emphasised the vulnerability of Blackhorse. Skirmishes on the boundaries became frequent and the enemy mining of the road from Long Binh to Baria, via Xuan Loc disrupted supply convoys causing shortages of spare parts.

First EMU Personnel Killed in Action

On February 8, members of an enemy group later assessed as five companies strong attacked EMU aircraft flying in support of the 9th Infantry Division near My Tho. In this action, sniper fire was directed at the ten lift aircraft led by LCDR Pat Vickers. On the third lift in, automatic fire and Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPG) brought down one helicopter that crashed into the jungle. All the US Army crew was killed. SBLT Jeff Dalgleish had a lucky escape in this action when rounds pierced the tail boom of his aircraft and almost severed the tail rotor control cables. He landed the helicopter just as the cables gave way and until he could be lifted out he was protected from further attacks by covering gunships. Forced down nearby was a helicopter piloted by LEUT Crawford that had been hit in the fuel tank. Most of the crew from the two downed aircraft spent the night with 9th Infantry Division troops before being airlifted back to Blackhorse. During the action eight helicopters were hit by ground fire and two were irreparably damaged.

On February 20, EMU helicopters assisted the 1st Australian Task Force in *Operation Clayton*, a cordon and search of the village of Long Dien near Dat Do on Highway 23 in Phuoc Tut province. Two days later LCDR Vickers was fatally wounded while piloting the lead aircraft in a mission to lift out troops of the 18th Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) Division near Xuan Loc. Descending to the pick up zone, his aircraft was hit by enemy fire and LCDR Vickers was wounded. The co-pilot immediately flew the helicopter to Blackhorse, landing on the hospital pad within five minutes. Notwithstanding this prompt action LCDR Vickers died without regaining consciousness.

Enemy Activity at Blackhorse

With the Tet offensive declining, enemy activity decreased around Blackhorse. This however, did not stop

the base from being the target of forty-two enemy mortar rounds in the early hours of March 9. Not all of the missiles exploded, however eight personnel were injured and several buildings sustained minor damage. Enemy mining of Blackhorse-Xuan Loc road continued and Petty Officer O.C. Phillips, the company's construction NCO, escaped injury when a vehicle he was travelling in detonated a mine tearing off one of the vehicle's tracks. An American civilian engineer was killed in this incident.

Ambushes

Early in May, an 18th ARVN Division convoy was ambushed on highway 1 at Dinh Quan north of Xuan Loc. The rapid counter-action of the 'Taipans' (the EMU gunships) and tactical air support helped to kill 200 of the attacking Viet Cong.

On May 18th a flight of ten Hueys put down in a landing zone near Tan An without the usual 'softening up' by artillery and gunships in an attempt to take the Viet Cong by surprise. The experiment proved disastrous. The helicopters settled into the paddy field without opposition but, as their troops began to disembark, they came under intense fire from the Viet Cong who had been waiting, concealed in small 'spider' holes, complete with lids which had rice growing on them. All the aircraft were hit and some of the ARVN troops panicked and refused to get out. After unloading their troops all of the helicopters took off but few made it back to base as most crashed or force-landed on the way. Two helicopters were 'written off' and the remaining eight were badly damaged. Though aircraft were seriously damaged, crew injuries generally were light. One crew remained unscathed in spite of 22 rounds passing through the aircraft while a bullet passed through the windscreen of LEUT Crawford's helicopter, three inches from his head. As this ambush had successfully immobilised most aircraft of this EMU flight, a relief flight was called in to complete the operation.

Jungle Crash

On June 13 LEUT John Leak, LEUT Andy Craig (of RAN detachment, 9 Squadron RAAF), and LAMA Green were injured when a lateral cyclic control rod broke (possibly due to gunfire), sending their helicopter into an uncontrolled spiral dive. It came out of the dive just above the jungle canopy, but still out of control it crashed through the trees coming to rest in a more or less level position. The injured crew extracted themselves from the wreck with the engine of the aircraft screaming and unable to be shut down. After spending some time alone in enemy occupied territory they were later winched to safety by a RAAF MEDEVAC (medical evacuation) helicopter and taken to the 1st Australian Field Hospital at Vung Tau, later being evacuated to Australia.

Aircraft Hit

Six company aircraft were hit on July 25 while bringing troops of the 25th ARVN Division into a landing zone near Ben Luc, southwest of Saigon. Light enemy fire received on the first landing was suppressed by the accompanying gunships. The six aircraft were hit on the second landing by rifle fire from Viet Cong who were well entrenched in 'spider' holes with concrete lids. Six disembarking ARVN soldiers were killed during this insertion. On this occasion the helicopter piloted by LEUT Godfrey received several rounds, but no RAN personnel were injured.

(Continued on page 10)



NAA ACT Section

Nomination Form

2011 Committee Elections

Position

Nominee

Proposer: Name (Block Letters)

Signature

Seconder: Name (Block Letters)

Signature.....

Date:.....

Endorsement by Nominee

Nominations are to be delivered to

The Secretary,
NAA ACT Section

not less than 7 days before the date fixed for the Annual General Meeting to take place; ie by 7.30 pm Thursday 27 January 2011

Subscription and Records Update 2011

Annual Subscription for 2011 \$25.00 (Due now)

Surname.....

Given Names

Signature

Please complete any of the following details if there has been a change in the last 12 months

Preferred Title.....Post Nominals.....

Home Address.....

Town/Suburb.....State/Territory.....

Post Code.....

Telephoner (H)

Fax

Email

Spouse/Partner Given Name

Note

When completed please return this form together with your payment to; The Membership Registrar, either at a General meeting or by post to

3 Peake Place, CURTIN ACT 2605

ACT Section Christmas Buffet

A great relaxing day with an excellent buffet lunch were had by all in Don and Bev Joce's delightful garden on 22 November 2010. The organisation and hard work put in by, Don and Bev, Judith McNay and Sylvia Sinfield were very much appreciated by the crew on watch that day.



Left: Sylvia and Judith issuing the scan with Bev supervising. **Above:** Don and Bev (top left corner) checking the crew for late starters, in front Melba, Tim, Esther and Alex enjoy a light conversation.

Below: Phil and Alex go back for more while Ken and Joe chat at the back.

Bottom Left: Peter, Pat, David Joan, Chic and Merle keep an all round look-out



Reunions

HMAS QUIBERON Reunion 2011

Penrith NSW 7—9 October 2011

Contact Dean Sando 02 4732 3083
Email quiberon2011@optusnet.com.au

RAN Communications Branch Association

Adelaide SA
23 – 26 April 2011

HMAS HOBART Biennial Reunion 2011

Where: Canberra ACT
When: 10 – 13 November 2011

Contact: Mike Taylor on 02 6288 3393 or mbt@netspeed.com.au

Website: <http://www.hmashobartassn.com/reunion.html>

PRIDE OF THE NAVY ANNOUNCED

Australian warship HMAS *Melbourne* which is currently serving in the Middle East, has been recognised as the best ship in the fleet, with the announcement of the 2010 Fleet Proficiency Awards on 10 December 2010.

Melbourne was awarded two of the top prizes, the Gloucester Cup and the Spada Shield for excellence in capability generation, safety, seamanship, reliability and unit level training. *Melbourne* under the command of Commander Michael Harris, RAN, will be presented with her trophies when she returns from her Operation Slipper duties in the New Year.

Commander Australian Fleet, Rear Admiral Steven Gilmore, AM, CSC, RAN who made the announcement, acknowledged the considerable effort made in training over the past twelve months.

"It is with great pride that I acknowledge the hard work and commitment demonstrated by the winning ships' companies," said Rear Admiral Gilmore. The competition for the 2010 awards was extremely strong and required every individual to be dedicated to their respective task. The excellence demonstrated by these ships is world-class, and every member should be justifiably proud."

Melbourne wasn't the only unit to be recognised today, with establishment HMAS Cairns winning the Governors Cup identified as the foremost in shore operations.

Nowra based 816 Squadron, which operates the S70B2 Seahawk helicopters, was awarded the McNichol trophy for being the leading aviation unit, while replenishment ship HMAS *Success* was acknowledged with the Amphibious Afloat Support Group Efficiency Shield.

Armidale Class Patrol Boat crew *Attack Two* took out the Kelly Shield, while former *Mine Hunter Crew One* was awarded the Rushcutter Shield. HMAS *Wewak* was identified as the foremost in its class, taking out the LCH Proficiency Shield, while HMAS *Mermaid* won the Hydrographic Excellence Award and HMAS *Dechaineux* won the Submarine Fighting Proficiency Award.

MALAYA PINGAT MEDAL

Article deleted due to incorrect information being provided by DVA.

SCAMMERS

DVA wishes to alert members of the veteran community that some members have again been contacted by recent scammers.

Several incidents have been reported to DVA in which members of the veteran community have been approached via mail or telephone by individuals claiming to be from private organisations or government agencies offering a range of goods and services, and asking for personal information including banking details.

These approaches are false and DVA feels it is timely to remind members to exercise caution when releasing their personal information.

Veterans, war widows or widowers are encouraged to contact DVA on 133 254 (for metropolitan callers) or 1800 555 254 (for non-metropolitan callers) if they have any concerns or if they feel they have targeted by a scam.

TIP TRAINING

The correct details for the March courses are –

Electronic Tools will now be held on the 1st March 2011 at DVA Woden.

MRCA will be held on the 8, 9th March 2011 at the Statesman's Hotel, Curtin

Five Minute Quizz

1. Iona is a small island off the western coast of which country?
2. What is a blue moon?
3. Informally, what is a bird's supercilium known as?
4. In what year did Czechoslovakia split into the Czech Republic and Slovakia?
5. What name was first given to the Hawaiian Islands by James Cook in the 1770s?
6. What type of food is pecorino?
7. The Canary Islands form an autonomous community belonging to which country?
8. What, beginning with "A", is the one-word anagram of MOON STARER?
9. What colour is on the far left of the Italian flag?
10. The weta species of insect is native to which country?

?
Answers on Page 11

DVA-FUNDED DENTAL SERVICES

DVA recently advised of a review of the arrangements for the provision of DVA-funded dental services. The first phase was implemented on 1 November 2009 and phase two has now been completed resulting in a review of DVA-funded dental implant policy being finalised. The main changes to the dental implant policy are the inclusion of periodontists and oral surgeons to provide the surgical phase of implant treatment, with an increase from one to two single tooth implants every two years, with an increase from a maximum of two to three implants to facilitate the construction of a full lower over-denture.

Today we give a brief overview of the procedures involved when eligible members of the veteran community may be considering osseointegrated dental implant (dental implants) treatment under the DVA arrangements. A dental implant is a titanium metal screw, which is placed into the upper or lower jawbone providing, in effect, an artificial tooth root used to support an artificial tooth or to stabilise and support partial or full dentures. Usually the permanent replacement of a tooth is fitted several months after the implant is put in. Approval for treatment can be complex as applications for dental implants require input from a number of dental and medical providers. This can mean the decision-making process can be lengthy and once DVA has all of the required reports a recommendation will be made and you will be advised in writing. There are two phases for implant treatment, the surgical phase and restorative phase. As DVA has restrictions on what type of provider can submit a dental implant application for both phases of dental implant treatment, you should discuss any issues relating to dental implants with your local dental officer.

You do not have to pay towards the cost of the treatment if your application is clinically necessary and if the treatment meets the DVA dental implant

policy and guidelines. DVA will accept financial responsibility for your dental implant treatment and for the dentures or crowns which attach to the implants. DVA will also pay for modifications to existing dentures to include attachments for implants in them, as the payment by DVA for implant-supported crowns falls outside the normal arrangements for crown and bridgework. This means that the provider must accept the DVA schedule fee for the implant-supported crown and cannot change a co-payment for this.

DVA does not accept financial responsibility for dental implant applications that include sinus lifts; mini implants; block bone grafting or zygomatic implants but, if there are compelling clinical circumstances to warrant the use of the above treatments, the case may be considered by DVA under exceptional circumstances. DVA does not fund dental implant treatment for cosmetic purposes.

Dental implant criteria require the eligible person to have their local medical officer (LMO) or general practitioner (GP) complete a Medical History and Assessment Form. Final consideration will not be made by DVA until the restorative phase, surgical phase and Medical History and Assessment Form is submitted to DVA and then assessed.

When the application for the restorative phase is submitted, DVA will return this form if you are eligible and the treatment meets DVA policy. If, at this stage, you are not eligible or the treatment is outside of DVA guidelines and there are no exceptional circumstances relating to your specific case, DVA will advise you in writing of its decision. If you are eligible you will be required to see a specialist for the surgical phase of treatment (an oral and maxillofacial, oral surgeon, or periodontist). Limits do apply to dental implant treatment as DVA will only fund dental implant treatment for eligible persons who have met all of the clinical and generic criteria required in the DVA dental implant policy and guidelines. If you think you require Dental implants, discuss first with your dental provider who can then contact DVA on your behalf.

RAN HELICOPTER FLIGHT VIETNAM

(Continued from page 6)

August 1968 brought large-scale enemy movements through III Corps, in contrast to June and July, when contact with Viet Cong was infrequent. Blackhorse again attracted attention in the form of mortar attacks in the early hours of August 15, and it became apparent that this was a Viet Cong tactic to keep helicopter gunships grounded while they attacked ARVN outposts at Gia Ray ten miles from the camp. Heavy fighting followed nearer Blackhorse on the 23rd as units of the 18th ARVN Division battled with a large Viet Cong force. The EMUs kept the ARVN units supplied with reinforcements and lifted an ARVN battalion into a blocking position to the rear of the enemy.

Further Casualties

The gunship platoon suffered further casualties on 21 August 1968 when a light fire team was engaged by enemy troops equipped with Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs) near Blackhorse. The lead gunship, captained by SBLT Casadio RAN, flying at tree top level was hit by one of these deadly projectiles and exploded in flames before crashing through trees and exploding. LEUT Dalglish RAN, landed his helicopter quickly in an attempt to rescue the crew, but all had been killed, and the exploding ammunition stopped attempts to extinguish the fire. PO O.C. 'Darky' Phillips of the RANHFV also lost his life in this incident as did WO Hershel Bullock (USA) and Specialist 4 William Fennell (USA). The loss of these aviators was deeply felt within the 135th AHC



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HAPPY BIRTHDAY

A Happy Birthday to you all.

January:

Robert Baron, Michael Burgess, Ken Doolan, James Galpin, Stephen Gilmore, Merle Hare, Dave Manolas, Pat McCabe, John O'Brien, Tim O'Halloran, Daren Penny, Malcolm Ritchie, John Smart and Keith Smith.

February:

David Clinch, Peter Cooke-Russell, John Crawley, Tony Eccleston, William Kemp, Ray Lawton, Jennifer Macklin, Robert McDonnell, Frank Shugg And Greg Sweetapple



The NAA ACT Section is very grateful for the support provided by the Canberra Southern Cross Club

Answers to Five Minute Quiz:
1.Scotland; 2.The second full moon in a calendar month; 3.Eyebrow; 4.1993; 5.Sandwich Islands; 6.Cheese; 7.Spain; 8.Astronomer; Green; 10.New Zealand

NB

**Annual General Meeting will be held
on Thursday 3 February 2011**



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