



SENSOR

Promoting National Security and Defence

RUSI of SA

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EDITORIAL

As I write the conflict in Syria continues with little chance of a speedy resolution. The interplay between Syria, its closest ally Russia and the remainder of the United Nations Security Council sadly reflects the lack of true and honest negotiation which has been occurring. That is the way it has always been but you would hope that one day we will all get over deals which might direct future benefits to a particular country and get straight to the point of sensible solutions. As with the Arab spring uprisings across North Africa it is only a matter of time before President Assad is toppled. Unfortunately, in the interim, thousands of Syrians will suffer due to his deluded need for power.

Mali has also featured recently as the newest hot spot in what could well be the area of most interest for Australia over the next decade. There are many corrupt and struggling states in Africa, each fertile breeding grounds for aggrieved peoples, whether they be of Islamic faith or of a more mercenary nature. Since the French have taken action in Mali against rebels in the North of that West African country, we have experienced the saga of the Algerian gas plant takeover which resulted in 37 hostages being killed after Algerian troops conducted operations to retake the complex. We may well see more of these soft targets being attacked. What will this mean for international workers, or, more importantly, international investment in developing countries? Heightened security will be a key consideration for all multi-national corporations at present.

Within our more immediate region of influence, almost 100 Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel from ANZAC Company have returned home to Australia now their mission in Timor-Leste as part of the International Stabilisation Force (ISF) is complete.

ANZAC Company, comprised of two-thirds Reservists and one-third Australian Regular Army personnel, has been providing security to Forward Operating Bases in the Dili area, and contributing to the remediation of equipment and bases in Timor-Leste. The ADF is approaching the end of an era. From the days of INTERFET (International Force for East Timor), Australia has contributed troops in Timor-Leste for the past 13 years.

Since ISF security operations ceased on 21 November, Australian and New Zealand forces have initiated plans to drawdown personnel numbers, repatriate equipment, close bases, and return property and buildings to the Government of Timor-Leste. A small core of personnel will remain in Timor-Leste to finalise base remediation and handovers. After more than six years of commitment to Operation ASTUTE, troops started to depart Timor-Leste in late November and the ISF withdrawal will continue through to April 2013. Australia's Defence and Police engagement with Timor-Leste will continue through our Defence Cooperation Program and Australian Federal Police support to Timor-Leste's police forces. Through our aid program, Australia is strongly committed to its partnership with Timor-Leste to provide ongoing assistance to support the Government of Timor-Leste to achieve greater prosperity.

At home, the ADF has been working closely with Emergency Management Australia to provide assistance to the civil community facing catastrophic fire dangers across eastern Australia including Tasmania.

The Naval Air Station Nowra, HMAS ALBATROSS, has been hosting a number of aircraft associated with the bushfire suppression support activities as well as providing aviation fuel and administrative buildings for mission planning. In addition to hosting aircraft, NSW Rural Fire Service and National Parks fixed-wing aircraft have been using the airfield for the transfer of personnel and stores. The ADF has also authorised the use of RAAF bases at Richmond and

Williamstown for refueling and support of aircraft for fire response.

In Tasmania, twenty-three ADF personnel assisted Tasmanian Police in the search and clearance of undamaged buildings in Dunalley, Boomer Bay and Marion Bay in the wake of the Tasmanian bush-fires.

All requests for Defence assistance during a disaster are made by the affected state or territory through Emergency Management Australia.

The decision to allow ADF personnel to march in uniform at the Sydney Mardi Gras in 2013 has been supported by some and criticised by others. Chief of the Defence Force (CDF), General David Hurley, recently wrote to the media in an attempt to explain the rationale for supporting the decision. Below is some of that explanation.

'Modern Australia prides itself on multiculturalism and diversity. It is one of our nation's greatest assets and it is an attribute the Australian Defence Force must strive to harness for the future in an effort to ensure we are a just, inclusive and fair-minded organisation.'

'It is 20 years since Australia lifted the ban on homosexual citizens from serving in the military and five years since a recognised group of Defence personnel first participated in the Mardi Gras parade. These are significant decisions for the organisation that have not degraded the ADF's combat capability, damaged our ability to deliver humanitarian assistance or detracted from our international reputation for

excellence. Yet as is clearly stated in the [Pathway to Change reform program](#), our attitudes toward diversity must change. We must value each and every ADF member. This decision will be a very strong, visible statement that the ADF is open to all Australians.

'Marching in uniform evokes a great sense of pride in the history and traditions of the Australian military. It also carries significant responsibility to honour the uniform and all that it represents. This holds true for all ADF personnel regardless of their cultural, religious or sexual orientation. That is why strict conditions have been established under the guidance of the ADF's Regimental Sergeant Major Ceremonial to ensure those who choose to march in the Mardi Gras parade do so in accordance with individual Service and Defence protocols.'

'While I understand not everyone will agree with this decision, if the Australian Defence Force is to remain a contemporary organisation that reflects the community it serves then change is required.'

Time stands still for nobody. While the ADF is embracing change as described above, we at the Institute will also have to embrace a major change with the recent passing of Colonel Les Thompson AM. A Life Member of RUSI-SA, Les will be missed by us all. Our thoughts are with Les' family at this time. Details of Les' career and contribution are included in this edition of Sensor which I hope you enjoy.

Tim Hanna

Immediate Past President

Defence related web-sites that may be of interest to readers:

The Department of Defence describes Operation ASLAN in South Sudan at <http://www.defence.gov.au/op/southsudan/general.htm> and clarifies an article published by "The Australian" at <http://news.defence.gov.au/2013/01/04/defence-clarifies-articles-in-the-australian/> "Adelaide Now" reports a speech given by Mike Kelly offering advice on peacekeeping at <http://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/breaking-news/australia-offers-advice-on-un-peacekeeping/story-e6frea7l-1226559420184> .

The current Defence magazine is at <http://www.defence.gov.au/defencemagazine/index.html> and the latest DMO Bulletin can be read at http://www.defence.gov.au/dmo/news/dmobulletin/Sep12/DMO_Bulletin_14.pdf.

Monthly Luncheons

Monday 4 February 2013

Speaker: Bill Denny Veterans SA

Topic: *“The Role of Veterans SA and the Centenary of ANZAC”*

Monday 4 March 2013

Speaker: TBA

Topic: TBA

All members are invited to attend our luncheons. Indeed you are encouraged to invite partners, friends and colleagues to join us and, if they like what they see and hear, to nominate them for membership.

The dress code for the luncheon is coat and tie. We assemble in Building 34A, Keswick Barracks, Keswick, at approximately 11.30 am for drinks and good fellowship. Members are asked to be seated by 12.00 noon when our President welcomes members and guests and lunch is served. The cost of the buffet is \$25 for members and \$30 for non-members. Wine and soft drinks will be available for purchase. We also conduct a raffle to help cover expenses. Our caterer has agreed to provide vegetarian meals and sweets for diabetics, but these must be ordered before midday on the Thursday before the lunch.

For those who do not have time to enjoy lunch, but wish to hear the lecture, chairs are provided around the perimeter of the hall. Please be seated before 12.55 pm. The address is of about 30 to 35 minutes duration with 15 minutes for questions, after which coffee or tea is available. We aim to complete the program by 2.00 pm.

Cancellations must be advised to the RUSI-SA Office by midday of the Friday before the lunch. Subsequent cancellations will attract a fee of \$25.

MONTHLY GUEST SPEAKERS - DECEMBER

On Monday 3 December 2012, Dr Pamela Schulz addressed the topic 'Who is Defending Defence? Defence and the Discourse of Disrespect in War and Peace'.



Pamela's main focus of interest is in the way public opinion is formed via the use of language and the way media manipulates language in this regard. In her talk, Pamela focussed on the reporting of issues relating to the Defence Force and its activities. Modern day media directs what should happen and why. Journalists are in charge of public opinion and emerging social media such as Twitter and Facebook also tend to influence public opinion, often based on rumour. There is a tendency to create problems when they are not as bad as it is thought they are.

Pamela illustrated her talk with many examples of reporting of Defence related issues which have the potential to cause significant disrespect of Defence personnel.

Pamela is a volunteer lecturer at the Magill Campus of the University of SA in the School of Communications, International Studies and languages. She is a Sessional and Contract lecturer in Graduate Studies.

Pamela is also the Chair of the Defence Reserves Support Council. For information about this organisation, visit <http://www.defencereservessupport.gov.au>

Pamela's home page is at <http://www.unisanet.unisa.edu.au/staff/homepage.asp?name=pamela.schulz#>

RUSI-SA SPEAKERS FOR 2012



6 February
LCDR Garry Callow, RAN
Cyber Attack



5 March
Mr Michael Miller
Manager Security Resilience,
Air Services Australia
**Security and Emergency
Planning at Australia's Airports**



2 April
AIRCDRE Noel Derwort
Commander Aerospace Operational
Support Group SADFO/FTAA
**Air Force: Current Operations
and Future Developments**



7 May
WGCDCR Jack Frost
**Heron Unmanned Aerial
Vehicles (UAV) Detachment
in Afghanistan**



4 June
COL Andrew McLachlan CSC
**Insights into Australia's
Combat Soldiers from the
Ultimate Battlefield Tourist**



2 July 2012
Ms Heather Dodd
**Nursing on Military
Operations: A Comparison
with Public Hospitals**



30 July
Mr Neil James,
President of the Australian
Defence Association
**Australia's Strategic
Security: Current Strategic
and Political Drivers**



6 August
Professor Sandy McFarlane
Head Centre for Military and
Veterans' Health, University of
Adelaide
**Dealing With Mental Health in the
ADF**



3 September
LTCOL Doug Langrehe
**Current United Nations
Operations in East Africa**



7 October
 Combined function with the SA Mounted
 Rifles Association
 LTCOL Reg Williams (Retd), previous
 OC A Squadron, the 3rd/9th Light Horse
 and previous OC 10th/27th Battalion of
 the Royal Australian Regiment
 CAP Greg Dunthorne, Operations Officer
 at the 7th Battalion RAR



5 November
 CMDR Alan Williams ADC, RAN,
 Commanding Officer, Naval HQ, SA
***Current Naval Operations,
 Highlighting the Many Areas in which
 RAN Personnel Serve in SA***



3 December
 Dr Pamela Schulz
***Who is Defending Defence? Defence
 and the Discourse of Disrespect in
 War and Peace***

VALE COL LESLIE THOMPSON

Colonel Leslie Thompson died peacefully on 20 December 2012 after suffering from a decline in his health in recent months.



Les Thompson joined RUSI-SA in 2002 and became Treasurer about a year later. Most of us remember Les as a highly capable Honorary Treasurer. In this role Les ensured that the financial affairs of the Institute were expertly managed. Les' service as Treasurer has been outstanding. He set up a general ledger and the reporting system that we use today. He, along with our Secretary Elaine Atkinson, implemented a new finance system which will be used by RUSI-SA for many years to come.

However, Les' contribution extended far beyond 'maintaining the books'. He was a keen advocate for and organiser of many social activities including the Winter Carvery and the Sundowner. Who could forget Les' role as Mr Vice at last year's Dining-in Night! Throughout his association with RUSI-SA Les displayed a keen sense of humour to balance his keen intellect and determined manner. For his significant contribution to the Institute, Les was made a Life Member in May of this year.

We extend our deepest sympathies to Les' family.

Les Thompson commenced his building experience with his father in suburban Nedlands, Western Australia, in 1937. After qualifying in Building Construction and Structural engineering at the Perth Technical College and successfully completing the Builders' Registration examinations, the first in Australia in 1941, he continued his involvement, post war, on large suburban housing groups of commercial buildings at Fremantle and the Kwinana refinery, buildings at the University of Western Australia and on high rise buildings in the Perth CBD.

Les had AIF war service with the Royal Australian Engineers and, in 1948, joined the newly established Citizen Military Force, later commanding the 13th Field Squadron and 4th Movement Control Training Group, Royal Australian Engineers.

He went on to become Deputy Commander of the 1st Battalion, the Royal Western Australian Regiment and then commanded the Western Australia University Regiment, the 6th Battalion and the Royal Western Australian Regiment. His final appointment was Commander, Western Command Officer Training Group.

While on a trip around the world in 1946 to 1948, studying building practices, Leslie qualified for membership of the Institute of Building, London (established in 1834) and later became a member of the Australian Institute of Building after its formation in 1951. He served as the President of the Western Australian Chapter from 1960 to 1962 and of the South Australian Chapter from 1983 to 1985. He has been a member of the Institute Council since 1960 and is an Honorary Life Fellow of the Institute. He was awarded the Institute Medal in 2006. Leslie was an active member of the United Services Institute of Western Australia from 1948 until he moved to South Australia in 1973.

The following Eulogy was presented at Les' funeral by Alan Hook, President of the Royal South Australia Regiment Association and a friend of Les.

Les was a member of, and a frequent attender at, the Naval Military and Air Force Club of SA.

I am here to talk of his Military Service and while doing so acknowledge the input of Don Hawking, Martin Thompson of Perth and James Richardson, Military Historian of the Royal West Australia Regiment.

Colonel Leslie Thompson, AM, RFD, ED., WW2 Veteran Engineer, Civil Engineer, Dedicated Military Historian, Senior Army Reserve Officer and true Australian, was born in Perth on 16 August 1920, schooled in Sydney and returned to WA to become an Army Engineer, enlisting in the AIF on the 25 August 1941 at the age of 21.

He saw service across Australia in WA, NT and Queensland where he recalled traveling in troop trains and sleeping on hard wooden floors, before postings to Madang and Bougainville during WW2. He served on Army Engineering projects until the end of hostilities.

Leaving the Royal Australian Engineers in December, 1945, he became a Civil Engineer with the University of WA, at the same time serving in the CMF in engineer units for some time, before being posted to Deputy Commander of the First Battalion, Royal Western Australia Regiment, Battle Group in 1960, when the Infantry Battalions in each state, were combined into single State Regiments. 1 RWAR was then a huge infantry unit of some 1200 officers and men.

In 1965, when Army policy decreed more changes, 1 RWAR was reformed into two battalions. Now promoted to Lieutenant Colonel, Les was appointed to be the first Commanding Officer

of the new Second Battalion of RWAR.

At this time ex-service pressure brought back the traditional Western Australian battalion numerals and 2 RWAR became 16 RWAR, in 1966. A few years later and promotion to Colonel, he was appointed as Commander of the Officer and Staff Training Group in Western Command, preparing officers and soldiers for promotion to the various serving units of the Army Reserve.

Civil work appointments and personal commitments saw him move to South Australia and his involvement with the Australian Institute of Building where he held positions on the executive for many years before failing health curtailed his ability to travel. For his services to the building industry and his country he was made a Member of the Order of Australia, to be added to his Reserve Forces Decoration and the Efficiency Decoration, both for his long and distinguished Military Service.

His keen interest in Military History, especially the Regimental Colours of Australia's Infantry Units from First Settlement to the present day, saw him travel the length and breadth of our country following up reports of evidence of long lost Colours or Banners being located in out of the way locations in outback country towns which were formerly connected with past militia units of our early military history.

Always loyal to the units of his service in WA he would always travel to attend the Regimental Dinners and other special occasions when they occurred each year even when confined to having to use two crutches to get around.

Australia has lost a true and faithful son and a loyal Australian in the real meaning of the word.