

**NETWORK**

Defence Force Welfare Association  
Queensland Branch Inc



March 2012 Edition

**HOTLINE**

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Inc**

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**PRESIDENT'S CORNER**

We had a fairly uneventful Christmas and New Year, not like last year but we still have the tail end of the flood and cyclone season to contend with.

I am now doing some reserve time at Combat Support Group at Amberley. My crowning achievement was being able to fit into my uniforms after six or so years retired. My time for DFWA activities has diminished somewhat and I would ask you to be patient if you need something from me. I will get back to you but maybe not as promptly as before.

Some interesting things have happened in the political environment, not the least, being Minister Snowdon's response to the 2010 RSL Submission on Fair Indexation stating that the Review into Military Superannuation (The Podger Report) was not going to be actioned. This is at odds with the Minister's response to two letters from DFWA where he said he was unwilling to take specific recommendations on military super issues because he wanted to treat the report as an entire entity.

In later meetings, Ministerial staffers indicated the report had been shelved, although this was subsequently denied. Now, of course, from the most recent letter to the RSL, it appears the Podger Review recommendations, which have been with the Government since 2007, will no longer be considered. A major MSBS issue from our perspective is the MBL limits. The ADF is the only employee group that continues to have MBL restrictions which prevent further contributions from the Government or member once a defined limit is reached. This effectively means a 28% reduction in a member's package, and those most affected are the ADF members who have given long and loyal service! This issue was fixed for public servants with a stroke of the pen but MSBS military superannuation pensions have been overlooked.

I have had the honour to be part of a team giving Fair Go! presentations. There have been four so far, one at Ipswich, Caboolture, Townsville (I didn't make that one but our VPFNQ did the honours) and Kedron-Wavell. The presentations have been well attended and we are getting the message out. Some of Peter Criss's videos have had over 3000 hits which is good, but it should be better. They are excellent videos, so go to the Fair Go! Website [www.standto.org](http://www.standto.org) and have a look at them. We continue to have problems getting the message into the wider community, and I would ask that you raise the fair indexation issue with all your friends and family so they understand our plight. We send out a link to these videos when they are released, so please forward them far and wide.

Our VP FNQ has been doing great stuff in Cairns. You will find his report later in this Hotline. We have quite a few members in FNQ, so please get in contact with Kel and give him all the support you can.

You will find in this issue a brochure for an entertainment book. We have taken on this as a fund raising activity for DFWA QLD Branch. Each book contains about \$20 000 of value and it is for all areas of Australia. If you order a book, you will not only be making great savings in a wide range of goods and services but you will also be helping to fund the important work of your Branch. If you would like to take advantage of this offer for yourself or as a gift for a family member, please complete the attached form, nominating the area you want, and we will get a book to you as soon as practicable.

Rob Shortridge

## **A few words from the Treasurer and Advocate**

I have just been reminded that I am supposed to supply a few lines to Hotline, so here goes. As the treasurer I should remind (or possibly warn) members that the yearly DFWA Raffle will be coming in the next issue of Camaraderie. This is a one of the few income sources available to us beside annual subscriptions and donations from you the Members.

I am well aware that some of you have asked not to be sent tickets. However I haven't yet mastered the skill to isolate those few; so you will still receive tickets and if you don't want them, just throw them away. No one will think any less of you; we'll still love you all. Nonetheless, a donation in lieu would certainly be welcome. Enough commercials!

As the Advocate I get involved with all types of Welfare problems. I have found from experience that quite a few Veterans and retired Defence personnel are still suffering in silence from medical conditions which very probably were caused by their service. I suggest that if anyone is unsure as what to do, go and talk to the local RSL Welfare section. If, by any chance, you don't like the RSL give me a ring on 0438327210 and I may be able to help you or at least point you in the right direction.

As we are now getting close to Easter and ANZAC day, watch out for the Easter Bunny and have a good ANZAC Day

Wally Buldo

## **Gold Card Holders**

Prior to 1st Aug 2010 DVA did not provide coverage for medical vaccinations for DVA clients travelling overseas, they were seen as privately incurred expenses. As from the 1st Aug 2010 all GOLD CARD holders are eligible for all required vaccinations to be covered by their Gold Card.

Any Gold Card holders who may have incurred costs from 1st August 2010 are entitled to seek reimbursement from DVA. A fact sheet covering this expected to be issued shortly.

*Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few."  
Matthew 9:37"*



## Hello from the Far North of the empire!

*Here we see our worthy Far Northern ambassador pondering border issues while embracing his message stick and looking for a way to grow his next generation of volunteers. He also reports:*

2012 promises to be an interesting and fulfilling year for the DFWA [FNQ]. As I mentioned in my November 2011 Hotline comments we have an agreed set of 'Outcomes' planned for this coming year with a determination to

seek greater media and broader community exposure in the region.

It should be remembered that DFWA has been represented in the Far North by committed individuals who have kept the flag flying and sought to spread the word on the important issues of the day. It is these individuals; these stalwarts who are the base for our actions in the coming years. Our first meeting for the year was on Saturday 4 February at the Cairns RSL. It was well attended for the second meeting of DFWA [FNQ] with double plus three the first meeting i.e. 15 attendees. The attendees were a great bunch of committed individuals who are enthusiastic about the coming year.

It was agreed to:

- a. propose to the Fair Go Campaign (FGC) leadership a national series of actions to highlight the unfair and bloody-minded attitude of our political masters with regard to **FAIR** indexation. The maxim "Loose lips sink ships" applies to the proposal at this time.
- b. continue to focus on both of the major political parties through their local representatives in pressing the issue of **FAIR** indexation.
- c. establish a local newsletter to spread the word throughout the State of Far North Queensland.

Warren Entsch MP, the local federal member gave us a mention in his regular Newsletter. I had written to him on the issue of FAIR indexation and he wrote that he "**was able to provide certainty and clarity in our position.**" Further he wrote that, "**The Coalition remains absolutely committed to delivering fair indexation of DFRDB and DFRB military superannuation pensions.**"

The Shadow Minister for Defence Science, Technology and Personnel, Stuart Robert MP has written separately providing such assurances also. This does not mean however, that we let up the pressure on the Coalition as it has to be held to account for its fumbling of the issue in the past. Further to this political pursuit, I received a reply to my letter, from Sen the Hon Jan McLucas, (ALP) who has her office here in Cairns. A very disappointing response to an issue from the "Government Fact Sheet" which has been well and certainly lambasted – they are consistent if nothing else!

Suffice to say we are alive and kicking in the State of FNQ.

Take care,

Kel Ryan |  
VP [FNQ]

## Editorial

### Helping the Fair Go Campaign

How many have noticed how this organisation has changed its character from the old days of RDFWA? If you haven't you either weren't there or you are asleep could I suggest.

We worked behind the scenes for many years relying on the odd quiet word from our national executives to serving senior officers to get our point across. Harry, or more reverently Commodore Harold John Parker Adams, AM, RAN: our much loved and long serving national president made this an art form both with Russell Hill and with the big house on the other hill in Canberra. What is more, in doing so, he had as much influence as anyone could have at that time. However, that was then and this is now! Times and people have changed.

Politics had become the driving force and concepts like fair and reasonable quickly fell behind causes that score lots of votes. So, it was time for a new way of working. Sadly we lost H while this was happening, but in doing so gained David J. He was and is today's man! We now have a very high profile on all issues relating to ADF and former serving member conditions. Under David Jamison's skilful and strategic leadership we have indeed eclipsed the RSL as the 'go to' people when a TV or radio comment is called for. Amongst David's many successes has been the welding together of ADSO and the broadening of our audience with the Fair Go campaign. Nationally we are the leader in our community and this branch can also be very proud of its contributions to this new status. So, what can we individual members do to help?

You will have seen how much trouble Qld Branch is having in acquiring a new Secretary. This should be a point of embarrassment for the able and articulate amongst us who could well be providing this service and let us hope that one of them comes forward soon. For the rest of us there are still opportunities to contribute.

One way is to be more visible as a member of DFWA. The back page of Hotline displays the apparel we have available to show the world that we are members of this proud organisation. Not a lot of responses at this time, but then old habits die hard. We used to be the silent and invisible behind-the-scenes operators. Well no more! So why not have a good look at what we have to offer? It is all quality merchandise at very sensible prices and even in reasonable taste. If you don't wear traditional shirts and prefer polos, well they are also in the pipeline, so something for everyone.

Another way to help is to look around your community and seek out opportunities to gain new readers for Camaraderie and for Hotline. Medical Centres, physios and all those places that we old soldiers and sailors (and even RAAF types), seem to hang out present opportunities. If you find a likely customer, get their approval to include a copy or two in the reading material in the waiting area. I suggest that you use your own copy first then, if you need more copies, just let us know.

So, there are two ways that you can play your part in what has become a very active and hard-fought campaign. If you have any other ideas, please let us know by phone, email or letter.

Over to you!

## Bio of the Issue

Each issue, we will include a brief bio on one of our key officer bearers in the branch. Rightly, we start with our president!

### DFWA Qld President Rob Shortridge

Rob Shortridge started life in the Royal Australian Air Force in January 1970 as a Cadet Aircrew – Navigator. However, he fairly soon decided that service cockpits and his six foot nineteen did not mix and he became a logistics officer. His first experience of crisis operations was supporting the air bridge to Darwin for Cyclone Tracy relief.

He had his first overseas deployment in 1983 to the Sinai as the Staff Officer Aviation Maintenance in the Multi National Force Headquarters. In the next several years he was promoted to Wing Commander and attended Joint Services Staff College.

From 1999 Rob did support planning for East Timor with HQ Australian Theatre and deployed to East Timor as the Chief of Staff of the National Command Element in 2000. He returned from East Timor in 2001 and led the 84 Wing advance party to Kyrgyzstan to support the International Coalition against Terrorism. In 2003 he deployed to Baghdad as the Deputy Regional Coordinator Baghdad to help re-establish council services to the people of the city of Baghdad. While he was in Baghdad he was promoted to substantive Group Captain.

Rob retired in Feb 2006 after serving 36 years. Since that time he has been working as a contractor with various firms as well as being heavily involved with DFWA. He is also on the Active Reserve and has recently commenced six months of reserve work at HQ Combat Support Group at Amberley.

Rob is married to Claire and has two adult children who won't leave home! His interests are reading, motor bike riding and private flying.

## New Help for Those with Disabilities

One of the many burdens of lifelong disability or frailty is the need for a constant companion or carer. This limits how easily you can leave the house and how much you can enjoy your local area and what it has to offer because of the costs involved. The Qld government has recently introduced **the Companion Card**. It allows an attendant or carer to accompany you on activities and visits to venues in the community, without additional cost. Need for attendant support includes significant assistance with mobility, self-care or learning, where the use of aids does not make the cardholder independent in these activities.

There are quite strict rules for eligibility. In typical government style, there is a sixteen page application form to be completed. This information must then be verified by your service provider or registered health professional. The form may be obtained from the Department of Community Services or downloaded from their website. Details of both are shown below. The Queensland-issued Companion Card is valid for use throughout Australia.

To apply for a card

For any further information, handbooks and lists of participating businesses:

- Phone 13 13 04 (0800 – 1800 Mon to Fri)
- Email: [cardservices@smartservice.qld.gov.au](mailto:cardservices@smartservice.qld.gov.au)
- See website: [www.companioncard.gov.au](http://www.companioncard.gov.au)

## Greenbank to the Rescue

You don't have to be Sherlock Holmes to notice the different presentation of Hotline these days. Clearly, while making it a more attractive document to read, this has increased the cost of our state publication. We are proud and happy to advise that Greenbank RSL sub-branch has given us substantial assistance with the printing of the new form Hotline.

President Rob and the Committee are extremely appreciative of this kindness and offer our sincere thanks to the President and Committee of Greenbank.

## Want to improve your emailing?

Using email is an ongoing learning process and if you don't keep up, you can do damage to yourself and others. There are many people in the world who regard the internet as a way to make money – at others' expense. So, if you use email you need to use it properly and safely. I have thrown up a few tips over the last year and they nearly all come from a former member of ours who now lives in Adelaide. His name is Geoff Cutts. While he lived on Bribie, Geoff founded and built the Bribie Island Seniors Computing Club which continues as a model of excellence for getting seniors into computing. Not always the life of the party he adopted the nickname of Gombi (Grumpy Old Man of Bribie Island), and using this name has written a broad range of very well researched, prepared and written short books on different aspects of the recreational use of computers. This issue I want to again recommend to you his Gombi Guide to Emailing called How-to-email. All of his publications are available free on the Internet so start with this guide which is at: [free.yudu.com/item/details/44643/How-to-Email](http://free.yudu.com/item/details/44643/How-to-Email)

On the other hand if you would like me to just send you the pdf for this book, just email me at [kenrilton@gmail.com](mailto:kenrilton@gmail.com) and use the heading GOMBI and I will email it direct to you. This way I also found out how many of you area really interested in this information.

## Wanted: Secretary, DFWA QLD Branch Inc

**WE NEED YOU**



How would you like to become a key member of the management team of this Branch?

We are seeking the services of an able and committed Branch Secretary. This is a mentally stimulating and hands-on volunteer position that would suit someone with a management or administrative background who enjoys working in a team environment.

The position requires a physical presence in the Office on Fridays and some additional work from home using the internet/email. Rewards are those that come from working with a great bunch of people and making an important contribution to a worthwhile organisation.

**If you are interested please contact Branch President Rob Shortridge on 0412 203 503.**

## A War Story from the Big One!

In the lighter moments of World War II, the story goes that the Spitfire was used in an unorthodox role: bringing beer kegs to the men in Normandy. During the war, a British brewery donated free beer to the troops. After D-Day, supplying the invasion troops in Normandy with vital supplies was already a challenge. Obviously, there was no room for such luxuries as beer. So time for RAF ingenuity! The Spitfire Mk IX was an evolved version of the Spitfire, with pylons under the wings for bombs or tanks. It was discovered that the bomb pylons could also be modified to carry beer kegs. So look closely at the Spitfire pictured and what do you see?



The Spitfire had very little ground clearance with the larger beer kegs.

## Enduring Power of Attorney gives your partner the right to conduct your business - Yeah right!

In the Force Preparation Training prior to deployment, we were always told to make sure that our partners had an enduring power of attorney so they could conduct business on our behalves while we were away (in my case Baghdad and East Timor) so that in the worst case, if we were killed or injured in any way and could not make decisions, they could.

Well, someone needs to tell the service providers. I spent many an interesting minute outside the hotel in Baghdad shouting at the Tax Office who refused to talk to my wife about moneys I supposedly owed them. Naturally, I had no records with me (did they expect me to deploy with my filing cabinet?,) but they would not accept information from my wife – unless I sent them a copy of the enduring power of attorney but it had to come from **me** not my wife. Finally, the Tax Office decided we didn't owe them any money after all. Same problems with telcos.

Conclusion: Yes an enduring power of attorney will enable your partner to conduct your business but be aware there may be a fight. This looks like another job for Super Defence Department!

Rob Shortridge



## DFWA QUEENSLAND BRANCH INC PRODUCT ORDER FORM

DFWA QLD INC Phone: 07 32334480  
 Victoria Barracks Brisbane Fax: 07 32334480  
 ENOGGERA QLD 4051 Email: qldbranch@dfwa.org.au

### Your Order Details

Title.....Initials.....Surname.....

Address.....

Email:.....



Item	Size Code	Quantity	Postage	Unit Price	Total
	S M L XL				
Blue Shirt—Men's Short Sleeve			xxxxxxxx	\$39.95 Incl postage	
Blue Shirt—Women's Short Sleeve			xxxxxxxx	\$39.95 Incl postage	
DFWA Cap with Embroidered Badge	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		\$7.00	\$15.00	
DFWA Lapel Badge	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		\$2.00	\$5.00	
DFWA Tie (Limited Stock)	xxxxxxxxxxxxxxxx		\$2.00	\$10.00	
<b>Shirt Size Code:</b>				Subtotal	\$
Extra Large = XL    Large = L    Medium = M    Small = S				Postage	\$
<b>Shirts with long sleeves and other colours are available on request</b>				<b>Balance Due\$</b>	

### Payment:

Internet Banking/Direct Debit: Bank of QLD BSB 124 076 Account: 10 480 398  
 OR

Enclose Cheque/Money Order: \$..... Signature:.....Date:...../...../.....

### Notes:

**Sizes:** Bisley Shirt sizes are generally one size larger than most other brands. For example, if you normally take a Large size, this would be similar to a Medium in the Bisley shirt range. If in doubt, check the Bisley size at your local retailer.

**Postage:** Shirt prices include postage and handling. If ordering other items with shirts, no additional postage required. If ordering a cap together with a badge and/or tie, cap postage only is required.