



DFWA SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH



INSERT FOR CAMARADERIE MARCH 2015

EDITORIAL

Regeneration

In the Defence Force Welfare Association Monthly Update information below some recent 'wins' by our Association are advised. These results have been achieved through considerable effort and effective lobbying by our National Office led by David Jamison AM, the National President, and the continued hard work of all our volunteers throughout Australia. The DFWA as the lead organisation in the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO) is an effective professional association for serving and ex-serving members of the ADF. We are a powerful voice of the Defence Community. Unfortunately, and frustratingly, present and past members of the ADF cannot rely on our employer, the Commonwealth Government, to always do the right thing, whether it is in terms of remuneration, superannuation, conditions of service, or indexing increases in Disability Support payments and War Widows' pensions to maintain purchasing power. Therefore we need to ensure that the DFWA remains effective and viable. To achieve this we must ensure that our membership is regenerated.

Our South Australia Branch now has 100 effective members (thanks to Peter Jackman who has prepared the Membership Roll). The age profile of our membership indicates that we will cease to be viable unless we enrol new, younger members faster than we lose our elders. 38% of our members hold Life Membership which means that our income, necessary to enable us to pay the costs of doing business, is severely limited. These two facts alone reveal the critical requirement for us to feed in new, younger members to balance the large number of existing members of the Vietnam War era.

If you are already a member, I appeal to you to spread the word about the value of DFWA membership and encourage at least one person to become a member of our Branch. If you know serving members of the ADF, please urge them to join. They may not feel the need for a professional association now, but, as we found out to our cost, representation became essential once we packed our uniforms away. We must not forget our Reserve brothers and sisters. The DFWA represents Reserve members so if you know someone who is a member of the RAN, Army or Air Force Reserves, please urge them to join. Advise them to look up www.dfw.org.au and join.

If you are reading this and are not a member of DFWA, please consider joining. You ask yourself, "What's in it for me?" The answer is a voice on your behalf with government and the ADF, all the way up to the CDF. You don't have to attend meetings, but your membership will help fund our efforts.

Regeneration must be our main focus now and into the future. Some ex-service organisations have a natural shelf life, but the DFWA needs to continue to represent those serving and those who have served. It just needs each and every one of us to make a small effort and encourage at least one person to join. There is an Application form in this 3edition of *Camaraderie*.

John Wilson, President, South Australia Branch

DFWA Monthly Update

As advised to those members with email, the DFWA Monthly Update for Jan/Feb 2015 was quickly followed by some welcome news. Firstly, the federal government announced a decision to increase the ADF Pay to 2.0%. We welcome the government's announcement as it comes after considerable representation on behalf of our serving members by the DFWA together with the ESOs who are members of ADSO. Through the ADSO Stand To campaign, representation by the RSL and of course the Tony Dagger petition on Change.org, as well as numerous letters from members of the ADF, pressure on the government to do the right thing has produced a result.

Secondly the Administrative Appeals Tribunal (AAT) decided against the inappropriate release of personal records of former ADF members still living. David Jamison reported as follows:

"It has been a good few days for both serving and former ADF members with the PM's pay decision plus real and positive ongoing dialogue with the Government on the proposed ADF Super scheme. Now we have a decision by the AAT which should prevent the further inappropriate release to the general public of personal information held by the National Archives about former ADF members.

This particular topic about the privacy of former ADF personnel's sensitive personal information might have been spearheaded by DFWA but I think we can all take satisfaction from the success of our collective work under the ADSO banner that is now producing some good results."

These announcements illustrate how important it is that serving and ex-serving members of the ADF have an effective professional association to lobby on our behalf. The DFWA, together with our ADSO partners, is performing that important role and is winning more and more respect from the government. In particular, the Prime Minister's announcement of the 2% pay increase included these important words, *"This is a modest catch-up, if you like, as well as an acknowledgement of the special compact between the Australian people and those who wear our uniform,"*. The DFWA has been urging the government to consider adopting a Military Covenant or compact which defines the respective responsibilities of ADF members and the community/government. Perhaps this campaign is reflected in the Prime Minister's words.

Correction to Camaraderie Article

In this edition of Camaraderie the article headed *'No Defence Child Care Centres in South Australia. Why is it so?'* on page 11 includes an error in fact.

The fourth paragraph includes the following words at the end, *"At Woodside Army Barracks in the Adelaide Hills, a child care centre is run by parents on a volunteer basis, as is the case at Edinburgh. For single serving parents or for ADF members who are both serving members, volunteering is not an easy option."*

These words were included in error and should have been deleted in the final draft of the article. Parents on these bases do not operate a child care centre. The error should have been picked up in the final review before printing.

DFWA National Executive Meeting (NATEX)

The DFWA National Executive will meet in Adelaide on 19 and 20 May 2015. The DVA has very kindly provided the meeting conference facilities. The NATEX determines policy for the Association and sets strategies for the future. Having NATEX meet in Adelaide is an acknowledgement that the DFWA is back up and running in South Australia.

Veterans' Disability Support Payments and War Widows' Pensions

There has been some recent discussion indicating that the Abbott Government may be considering revising their stated policy to change the basis of indexing Veterans' Disability Support payments and War Widows' Pensions to just inflation. The government's stated intention to cut adjustments in these payments to just the inflation rate (CPI) in 2017 is not only very bad social policy but means that the incomes of our most affected veterans and war widows will not keep pace with the cost of living. This will particularly affect the younger veterans and war widows who, through no fault of their own, will have to rely on Veterans' Disability Support payments and War Widows'

Pensions for many years. We will fight these proposed changes up until the next election or until they are dropped as Coalition policy.

Committee Members

Tony Harding has, unfortunately, been forced to resign his position due to pressure of family business. We thank Tony for his commitment and his help on the Committee.

The members of the Committee who work so hard in your interests are:

Deputy President – Bill Wallace
Senior Vice-President – Laurie Lewis AM
Secretary – Maria Barclay
Treasurer – Ian D Smith
Membership Officer - Peter Jackman
Vice-President Air Force - Lee Bowes

New Members

Welcome Michael Wunderlich (ex-Army).

Donations

Donations are most welcome as we attempt to build up our cash balance. With the price of posting *Camaraderie* at \$1.40 for each member, for example, it doesn't take long for our costs to add up. If you are willing and able to make a donation (tax deductible) please send a cheque to Ian Smith (PO Box 573, Stirling, SA, 5152) or make an online payment to:

Defence Bank: **BSB:** 803-205
 Account No. 20374231
 Account Name: SA Branch DFWA

16 Air Land Regiment Open Day

The Commanding Officer and members of 16 Air Land Regiment, Woodside, are conducting an Open Day on Saturday 28 March 2015 from 10.00 a.m. to 2.00 p.m. Please carry photo identification to present to security prior to entering the base. Backpacks, bags and prams may be inspected prior to entry for the safety and security of yourself and other guests.

Your Branch will be manning a table at the Open Day so please look out for us.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS 2015

Members are reminded that annual subscriptions are due on 1 January each year. Subscription forms have been sent to those members whose payments are now due.