



Annual CDF/Secretary Environment and Heritage Awards recipients from left to right: Max Harker, Kate Leane (on behalf of Major General Cosson), Commander Steve Cole, Dr Doug Cato, Brigadier Bill Grice and his team, Captain Jeremy Quade (on behalf of Major Colin Bassett). Photo: LSPH Yuri Ramsey

2008 Chief of the Defence and Secretary Environment and Heritage Awards and the winners are...

The annual Chief of the Defence Force / Secretary Environment and Heritage Awards have highlighted the outstanding achievements of individuals, units or working groups who assisted Defence in meeting environmental legislative and policy obligations in the course of Defence's mission to defend Australia and its national interests.

The recipients of the 2008 CDF and Secretary's Environment and Heritage Awards are:

Mr Max Harker, Defence Support Southern Victoria, for excellent commitment and contributions to environmental stewardship at Simpson Barracks

Commander Steve Cole, Navy Headquarters, for excellent commitment and contributions to Defence environmental management

Russell Offices Energy Efficiency Pilot Project Management Group for excellent leadership and contributions to energy conservation

Major Colin Bassett, Officer Commanding 176 Air Dispatch Squadron, for outstanding contributions to environmental management during conduct of Talisman Saber 07

Infrastructure Asset Development Branch for excellent contributions to sustainable development of the Defence estate

Dr Doug Cato, Maritime Operations Division in Defence Science and Technology Organisation, for exceptional leadership and research into the impacts of underwater sound on marine animals which has informed the development of best practice procedures for the Royal Australian Navy.

Navy champion committed to unique environment

As a champion of Defence's environmental agenda, Commander Steve Cole RANR has been recognised for his outstanding contributions and commitment to balancing Navy's unique capability requirements and the many complex environmental challenges it faces daily.

During the past seven years as Navy Environment Manager, CMDR Cole has achieved long-lasting changes in Navy's environmental performance and has been a driving force behind the development of comprehensive environmental policies and procedures. He regularly provides key advice to major exercises, informing exercise planners on environmental obligations and ways to avoid or mitigate potential environmental impacts.

In particular he has been at the forefront of managing the many operational and reputation issues associated with the impact of active sonar on marine mammals, including provision of related Ministerial advice. He has played a key role in implementing marine mammal mitigation measures now adopted by Defence, widely viewed as among the most comprehensive in the world.

CMDR Cole has also shaped key procedures to avoid or mitigate other potential environmental impacts related to waste management at sea, oil pollution, hull fouling, marine pests and ballast water.



LEFT: Commander Steve Cole from Navy Headquarters accepts his award for excellent commitment and contributions to environmental management from Chief of Defence Force Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston and Secretary for Defence Nick Warner.

He has also played a major role in delivering effective Navy-focussed environmental training courses, and developed the Navy Commanding Officers Guide to Environmental Compliance which provides practical guidance to Navy operators at sea and ashore.

He has consistently demonstrated exceptional personal commitment to Defence's environmental performance through lending his support to a wide range of initiatives. A recent example was his participation in the Russell Offices Energy Efficiency Pilot Project, where he took responsibility as an energy champion for Navy and obtained the highest results for energy efficiency in Russell Building 1.

CMDR Cole also plays a key role in managing the very sound environmental reputation currently enjoyed by Navy. He has demonstrated extraordinary commitment and provided an outstanding contribution to Defence's overall environmental management.

Research focuses on sound technology

A Defence scientist responsible for providing expert advice on minimising the impacts of underwater sound on marine animals is a winner of this year's Chief of the Defence Force and Secretary's Environment and Heritage Awards.

Dr Doug Cato, a lead researcher with the Defence Science and Technology Organisation and Adjunct Professor at the University of Sydney, received the award for his exceptional research on management of acoustic disturbance that has led the Royal Australian Navy's mitigation strategies to be internationally recognised as among the world's best.

Dr Cato's research and advice has enabled Navy to continue its vital training activities at sea without significantly impacting on the marine environment.

His work on 'sounds in the ocean' spans several decades, resulting in an advanced understanding of marine mammal acoustics, the effects of noise and their use of sound for communication.

Dr Cato has extensive relationships with scientists in world-leading research institutes which allows him to keep abreast of the latest research and to develop and maintain interaction with environment interest groups and the broader community.

Starting out as a scientist with the RAN, Dr Cato moved across to DSTO when Defence laboratories were amalgamated in the 1970s, but he has been working in the underwater acoustics field since the mid-1960s.

Dr Cato has greatly influenced underwater acoustic research in



LEFT: Dr Doug Cato from Maritime Operations Division in DSTO accepts his award for exceptional leadership and research into the impacts of underwater sound on marine animals from Chief of the Defence Force Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston and Secretary for Defence Nick Warner.

Australia. His legacy is a family of underwater acoustic specialists in Australia, who are all current or former students.

He has been involved in high profile collaborative research projects, particularly through The Technical Cooperation Program with the USA, UK, Canada and New Zealand.

Dr Cato has conducted collaborative research with scientists at key academic institutions including Sydney University, Curtin University, and the University of Queensland in Australia, the University of Saint Andrews in Scotland, and the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, and Massachusetts Institute of Technology in the United States.

He has also interacted with environment and interest groups on a range of projects, including the International Fund for Animal Welfare and the Whale and Dolphin Conservation Society.