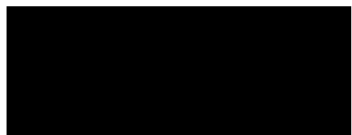




HMAS SYDNEY II
COMMISSION OF INQUIRY
Level 18
Defence Plaza - Sydney
270 Pitts Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000



24 October 08

Dear Mr. Wunderburg

Thank you for your contribution thus far to the HMAS Sydney II Commission of Inquiry. Two further issues have arisen about which you may be able to assist us. They are matters concerning life belts (or life jackets) and identity discs or "dog tags".

The Commission of Inquiry would be assisted by any information you are able to recall concerning life belts or identity discs. It is requested, therefore, that you address the following questions, to the best of your memory:

- (a) When you joined HMAS Sydney were you issued with a personal life vest, or was it the practice that life vests were stowed in lockers or other stowages throughout the ship? *Personal locker.*
- (b) If it was the practice that life vests were personally issued:
 - (i) was it normal practice for each person to write their name on the vest? *yes.*
 - (ii) did you write your name on your life vest? *yes.*
- (c) If not, and life vests were stored in lockers or stowage is throughout the ship, do you recall if anything was written or stencilled on the life vests? *see over page.*
- (d) Do you recall the name of the manufacturer of the life vests? *NO*
- (e) Was it normal practice to wear your life vest while at action stations? *YES*
- (f) Were you personally issued with an identity disc when you first joined the RAN, or at some time thereafter? *AT THE BEGINNING OF WAR.*
- (g) If you were issued with an identity disc:
 - (i) do you recall from what material it was constructed? *ZINK METAL*
 - (ii) what information was inscribed upon it? *NON AUSTINE*
 - (iii) were personnel required to wear their identity disc at all times? *TYPE.*

*NAME, RATE
OFFICIAL NO.
My number was
22269.*

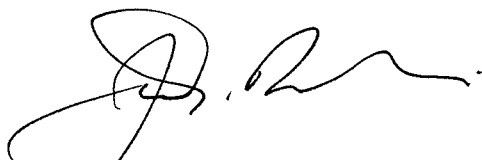
(h) To the best of your knowledge, was it the common practice for all the men to wear their identity discs at all times? *Yes, known as Jaconic sailors,*

"Have you got your meat tag on?"
Any information you are able to recall would be appreciated. We may contact you again in order for you to sign a statutory declaration concerning this information.

Once again, thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely

H. Blundenberg



J. T. Rush RFD QC
Commander RANR
Senior Counsel Assisting
HMAS SYDNEY II Commission of Inquiry

(c) ships life jackets were stowed in lockers on upper Deck. + stenciled with Part of ship (ex) Quarter Deck. (etc).

The personal inflated Vest was worn at all times. Sailors would say affectionately "have you got your "Mac West on"

Trivia

later in the war years it was found that sailors leaving a sinking ship from a high position on the sinking ship were breaking their necks, due to the inflated vest on their chest. in later times the vest were not to be inflated till they were in the sea.

H. Blundenberg.