OCEAN WATCH

Operation Solania fights illegal fishing

Pages 9-11

Pilot FLGFF Em Renshaw, from No. 35 Squadron, in a C-27J Spartan before searching for illegal fishing vessels in a section of the Pacific Ocean as part of Operation Solania.

Photo: SGT Christopher Dickson

INSIDE: WHAT ANZAC DAY MEANS TO US – Pages 4-5  CELEBRATING AIR FORCE AT 99 YEARS OLD – Page 7
SGT Max Bree

DEFENCE personnel around Australia swung into action to help stem the spread of coronavirus after Operation COVID-19 Assist was officially announced on April 1. In every state and territory, the ADF contributed to the whole-of-government response to the pandemic.

Personnel knocked on doors with civilian police to undertake welfare checks and monitor people who were self-isolating and assisted with mandatory quarantine measures for those sent to hotels after returning from overseas. Some hit the phones, under the direction of state and territory health departments, to help contact-tracing teams to track confirmed cases of COVID-19.

Defence personnel also supported police at vehicle control points in Western Australia and the Northern Territory. At remote NT border locations, personnel assisted with catering, sustenance and communications. Medical personnel also helped NT police with health screening.

Some personnel helped with the production of surgical masks in Victoria, while others helped Queensland Police protect vulnerable Indigenous communities.

A three-star-led COVID-19 task force is coordinating the ADF and APS support to the whole-of-government response to the COVID-19 crisis, as well as Defence’s internal response to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our people.

Answering the call to help

Updates to Air Force Service Category (SERCAT) 3-5 Conditions of Service showcase enhanced support measures for Reserve service stability and protection of salary in light of COVID-19.

The updates, which came into effect March 28, amend the policy (Defence Determination 2016/19) which governs Conditions of Service. It specifically addresses situations where a member is exposed to COVID-19 in the course of military service, where they are required to isolate following a Defence activity or are unable to work their pattern of Reserve service as a consequence of COVID-19.

Where members fall into one of those scenarios, the policy has introduced a feature called Reserve Service Pay (RSP) that provides subsidised pay.

For Director General Reserves AIRCdre Tony Hindmarsh, these changes are a reflection of the significance of the SERCAT 3-5 workforce.

“Our SERCAT 3-5 workforce is an integral contribution to capability and it was of the utmost importance that we address their service conditions to enable their ongoing valuable contribution to the workforce during COVID-19,” AIRCdre Hindmarsh said.

Changes to PEAP assistance

DEFENCE has made changes to the Partner Employment Assistance Program (PEAP) to help support Defence partners through the COVID-19 pandemic.

PEAP provides up to $1500 to eligible Defence partners for employability initiatives when they relocate on posting, or when their member transitions from the ADF for medical reasons.

“Due to the effects of the COVID-19 health crisis on the employment market, the program guidelines have been amended to suspend certain eligibility criteria,” Deputy Director National Operations, David Cadden, who helps manage the program said.

The PEAP provides up to $1500 to access a range of employment-related initiatives like development of a professional resume or resume coaching, identification of transferrable skills, employment options and job placement advice, job search techniques and strategies and development of an online employment profile.

The funding can also be used to help partners with responding to selection criteria and writing applications, as well as coaching in job interview preparation and presentation. Partners can also access funding for mandatory fees for professional re-registration required under legislation.

Go to the Defence Community Organisation website www.defence.gov.au/dco or by contacting the 24/7 Defence Family Helpline on 1800 624 608.

“In essence, these updates are saying that where SERCAT 3-5 personnel continue to work, remotely or otherwise, they are paid for Reserve Service Days (RSDs) rendered and where they cannot work due to COVID-19, they may be entitled to a Reserve Service Payment (RSP).

“We’ve called on leaders at all levels to help us bring this change into real-time situations for their members and have provided them a framework and measures that enable this,” Director General Personnel AIRCdre Geoff Harland noted the swiftness of the policy changes and how vital they are to enabling support to personnel in a rapidly changing environment.

“Where policies and procedures are no longer fit for purpose, we must adapt them swiftly to meet the changing environment,” AIRCdre Harland said.

“We must continue to remain agile and adaptable to best respond to COVID-19 while maintaining our focus on our people,”

This is one of the measures we have implemented and demonstrates our commitment to the integration of support across our total workforce spectrum through collaboration by Directorate of Personnel Policy in Personnel Branch – Air Force, led by GPCAPT Brock McKinlay, staff in Reserve and Youth Division and Defence People Group to ensure this was achieved.”
COVID-19 pandemic

THE COVID-19 pandemic has forced the 2020 Invictus Games to be postponed until next year. Planning is underway to scope key facilities and resources and confirm a new date.

Team Australia de Mission BRIG Philip Winter said team members were disappointed but for The Hague to deliver a safe, exciting and impactful Games, the wait would be worth it.

"The 2020 Australian team will all be invited to attend the Games in 2021 and I commend their resilience and commitment to training as they continue to prepare for the Games next year," BRIG Winter said.

The 2021 Games will be the fifth time the international games have been held since their inception in 2014. The ADF, Returned and Services League and Veteran Sport Australia will partner to send a combined team of 32 current and former serving ADF members to the Games.

Personnel Psychologist FTLT Barry Woodhouse answers typical questions

- Is it normal to feel anxious about COVID-19?

Absolutely, and remember that anxiety can come across as a wide range of responses. In some people it can look like excessive worrying and feeling added pressure, while others may become irritable, preoccupied, or have difficulty sleeping. There’s no predetermined response and no one-size-fits-all approach to dealing with it, you have to figure out what works for you.

- Do you have any tips on dealing with working from home or in quarantine?

I recommend adding some structure to your working day. Working from home can make it more difficult than usual to switch off from work, so set regular working hours and take your usual breaks. At the end of the day disconnect from all work related accounts to maintain a clear boundary between work and home life. Set up a dedicated workspace if you can manage it. Somewhere away from noise and with adequate lighting. It’s also wise to limit your distractions as much as you can, as this can really limit your ability to concentrate. I schedule blocks of time throughout the day where I allow myself to get some of the little distracting jobs done.

- I'm starting to feel cooped up due to all this social distancing, how should I deal with this?

Maintain a positive outlook. Try to keep yourself busy with activities you enjoy and don’t engage in excessive social media, as you're more likely to be drawn into negative news and unhelpful commentary.

Keep up with your exercise and schedule that regularly throughout the week. It's also important to maintain a healthy diet and not drink too much alcohol and caffeine.

- How important is it to keep in touch with others?

It's crucial to stay connected to your friends and family. At present, we're being asked to distance ourselves from our social supports, yet positive social connections help us in times of stress and are essential for our mental health. Luckily, there has never been a better time to be alive in this respect. The internet make it so much easier to stay in touch.

- Are there some benefits for having time on your own?

You don’t have to be an introvert to be looking forward to some alone time, and opportunity to read a good book. This could be an excellent opportunity to get some of those jobs done around the house, start learning a language online or reconnect with an old friend via Skype. Self-isolation might be challenging but if you approach it with a plan then there is a much better chance something positive can come out of it.

- If I feel like I need to talk to someone, what services are available to me as an ADF member?

I’d recommend the Joint Health Command health and wellbeing portal. A list of services I’d also recommend are: The ADF Mental Health All-hours Support Line (ASL) is a confidential telephone service for ADF members and their families available 24-7 on 1800 628 836 or if calling from overseas +61 2 9425 3878. Open Arms – Veterans and Families Counselling (formerly VVCS) is a national mental health service that provides 24-hour free and confidential counselling, group programs and suicide prevention training for current and ex-serving ADF members, and their family. To get support or find out more, call 1800 011 046 or check their website.

- How do I talk to my kids about this situation?

Dr Michael Catt-Gregg gave some really good advice about talking to kids about the recent bushfire crisis. Be more present with children (spend more time) and allow them to be more dependent on you. Make them feel safe, valued and listened to. Ensure they have some time to play. Younger children often share their thoughts and feelings through non-verbal activities such as painting, toy play and drawing.

For more information on how to talk to your children go to www.raisingchildren.net.au

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Vital to maintain structure

Home PT for a strong sense of purpose

CPL Julia Whitwell

AS AUSTRALIANS are told to stay home during the COVID-19 crisis, the ADF finds itself adapting to new ways of conducting group PT.

But this aspect of service delivery doesn’t have to be neglected, as PTI CPL Luke Douglass, from No. 26 Squadron, explained – there are plenty of exercises members can incorporate into self-isolation.

"People should be concentrating on bodyweight exercises such as squats, press-ups and hip hinges, which are all fundamental movement patterns," CPL Douglass said. "They can be conducted anywhere and are ideal for when people don’t have access to equipment or gyms."

CPL Douglass said even during periods of self-isolation, PT sessions don’t have to be done alone.

"Through the loss of unit PT, we risk missing out on social interaction and that will have an impact on our people," CPL Douglass said.

"I encourage people to get their family to join in with PT at home if they can. We’re interested in preservation of force and family. Even those living on their own can work out on FaceTime with someone else. Put the phone on and get a group chat going.

"Just because social distancing and isolation have come into play, it doesn’t mean social interaction should cease, we just have to use other means. Let’s use social media to be social."

CPL Douglass said a regular exercise routine during self-isolation was equally important to maintain physical and mental health.

"It gives you a sense of purpose and puts structure in your day. Especially doing PT with colleagues via social media," he said.

"When you’re working towards a common goal and going through hardship together, it’s going to make you more resilient than going about it on your own. Everyone’s going through the same problem and it’s going to be easier if we band together."

Resources to help build a PT routine and guide nutrition choices during periods of self-isolation can be found at http://airforcephysicalfitness.org/ AirForcePhysicalTrainingInstructors/ Pages/Health%20Tips/PTPages.aspx

Invictus Games postponed

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Photos: CPL Sebastian Beurich

SGT Max Bree demonstrates an exercise that can be done at home. Photos: CPL Sebastian Beurich
Anzac Day

The sacrifice of a brave family

Lest we forget.

CDF GEN Angus Campbell

E

VERY Anzac Day, we are invited to reflect on the hardship, heroism and sacrifice it takes to keep our country safe and free.

For more than a hundred years, Australians of all backgrounds and beliefs have answered their nation’s call to serve. Some of them have given their lives to that calling. Others carry wounds – seen and unseen – yet remain resolute in their service.

On Anzac Day, as a nation, we thank them for their service. It is a day when we pause to reflect on our shared values.

One of the reasons we serve is for family. I’d like to speak about one Australian family, the Saunders, one of the millions of families affected by war.

Chris Saunders was coaching a Western District football team in the Victorian Football Association when he answered the call. He enlisted in the First Australian Imperial Force as a machine gunner in the Third Division, at the start of World War I. He earned six bob a day, sending most of it home to support his mother and his family, and by his own account lived it up with comrades in France on the remaining shilling.

Chris’ brother, Reginald, also signed up and was killed in France after being awarded the Military Medal in 1918. Chris had three chil-
dren. Two sons, Reginald (named after his brother) and Henry, and an unnamed daughter who tragically died with her mother, Mabel, at birth. Chris was told to give her any two young children he could.

But he didn’t. Instead he and his extended family raised them in the same spirit he had been taught – to face adversity with courage, and to serve.

Many of you may know Chris’ eldest son, Reginald Saunders. Reg was working as a timber cutter in Portland, Victoria, when he answered the call. Reg later said he enlisted in the Second Australian Imperial Force out of pride in the men that went before him, including his own father, and love for his country. The respect he earned from the people of Portland saw him rapidly promoted, eventually to Captain. In 1941, when the Australian 6th Division was evacuated from Greece, Reg and many of the men he served with were left stranded after a shattered retreat. Having to live rough and evade capture for 11 months, Reg made it back to Australia and kept on serving. He fought in New Guinea at the end of World War II and he re-enlisted and fought in the Korean War.

Nearly 70 years later, Reg’s daughter – Glenda Humes – and her family travelled to Greece to thank the family that had kept their father alive. They had sheltered and fed Reg, even though it meant putting their lives at risk. Glenda’s family went on to thank them in person. Reg served with integrity and excellence. Yet each time he returned, he found it tough readjusting to civilian life. Like many who serve, he carried some things with him silently until the end of his life.

Henry Saunders – or Harry, as Reg’s brother was called by his family and mates – could have had the same spectacular career as Reg. He tried to answer the call several times, being six months too young to enlist, until he finally found a doctor that didn’t ask too many questions about his age. Harry served with courage and excellence at point of 9 Platoon, A Company, 2/14th Infantry Battalion. He served in Palestine with the Australian 7th Division, and took part in the liberation of Syria and Lebanon in 1941. He fought on the Kokoda Trail and the assault on the enemy beachhead around Gona. On November 29, 1942, Harry fought alongside his mates in several engagements throughout the day. That afternoon he was making his way towards a Japanese bunker with his comrades when he was shot and killed. His father, Chris, heard that news just days after receiving Harry’s last letter. To me, this is an Australian family that lived the Anzac values upon which we reflect today, and which are chiselled in stone at the Herequisite Memorial – courage, endurance, mateship and sacrifice. Service comes in many forms and from every variety of family that makes up our wonderful country. On behalf of our country, I thank our veterans and share my deep appreciation for their service. I thank the families who have made serving in the Australian Defence Force possible.

Australian families have proven time and again, during the history of our young country, that we can take the good and the bad with grace and courage.

On April 25, I invite everyone to take a moment to pause, as we remember the service and sacrifice of families across this great southern land. Although we may not be able to march together this Anzac day, our veterans and their families are in our thoughts.

Lest we forget.

SGT Don Welsh, Wing, Communication Electronic Technician

What does Anzac Day mean to you?

“Anzac Day for me is about remembering and saying thanks to all the people who have worn the uniform of the Australian Defence Force who have come before me; remembering the sacrifices they have made - uplifting and creating the greatest traditions of the Anzac legend through strength, courage and mateship.”

How will you mark Anzac Day this year?

“This year for Anzac day my family and I will be participating in Operation Performance Drive aims, raising funds for Australian veterans. After that we will be spending the remaining Anzac Day at home – enjoying time with family and grateful for the life we have in Australia because of the sacrifices of the men and women who have come before us. Lest we forget.”

FLTLT Sarah Conway-James, Headquarters Air Warfare Centre, Staff Officer CDR AWC

What does Anzac Day mean to you?

“Anzac Day for me this year will be about reflecting on sacrifice and being thankful to the men and women who have served before me, and what they’ve done to keep our country safe.”

How will you mark Anzac Day this year?

“This year my family will stand at the edge of our driveway and have our own little service in the morning. As my grandma always did, she would make Anzac Day cookies and we will eat the batter before it’s cooked. It was the only time of year we were allowed to do that. Lest we forget.”

WCDR Bill Talbot, Headquarters Air Warfare Centre, Business Planner

What does Anzac Day mean to you?

“Anzac Day this year will be very different from previous years because of the COVID-19 pandemic. I won’t be able to celebrate this day normally by going to the local RSL and participating in activities in my hometown. I will be taking the time to watch the national commemoration ceremony being broadcast from Canberra. Lest we forget.”

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Anzac Day may be marked differently this year but it remains an important time of reflection, especially for those who serve. We asked members what Anzac Day means to them and how they will be observing the day amid COVID-19.

**FLTLT Mitchell Brown, No. 292 Squadron Instructor**

What does Anzac Day mean to you?
“Anzac Day is a day of remembrance. I remember those that have served before us and those I served with in Afghanistan on my first deployment. I especially take some time to remember my brothers that did not return.”

How will you mark Anzac Day this year?
“Due to the unique situation we are in on Anzac Day this year, I’ll be waking up before dawn for a gunfire breakfast then putting on my uniform and walking to the end of my driveway and sharing a minute’s silence with my local community. Lest we forget.”

**CPL Tahlia Thomas, Headquarters Air Warfare Centre, Personnel Capability Specialist**

What does Anzac Day mean to you?
“Anzac Day is a time for me to remember who I am and the country I am proud to be a part of, especially during this uncertain time of COVID-19. We can come together as a nation and fight this battle together.”

How will you mark Anzac Day this year?
“I will be wearing my uniform and stand with my son at the end of my driveway to show my neighbourhood that I’m proud to serve my country while we remember those who have fallen before us. Lest we forget.”

**CPL Nathan McLeod, No. 23 Squadron, Structural Fire Controller**

What does Anzac Day mean to you?
“Anzac Day for me is remembering those service men and women that have come and gone, in particular my grandfather who was a surgeon’s assistant and medic during World War II.”

How will you mark Anzac Day this year?
“This Anzac Day, I’ll be remembering the Anzacs by standing at the end of my driveway at 6am and then coming in for a night shift.”

**FLGOFF Kaitlyn Lyons, No. 1 Combat Communications Squadron Mechatronic and Electrical Engineer**

What does Anzac Day mean to you?
“I don’t have any familial ties to Anzac Day, but as an Australian I think it’s really important to commemorate because of the collaboration that we’ve had with other nations and how much we’re still doing that.”

How will you mark Anzac Day this year?
“At the break of dawn this year for Anzac Day, I’ll be standing outside my door in uniform, with the rest of my neighbours, in silence.”

**CPL Michael Linke, No. 37 Squadron, Loadmaster**

What does Anzac Day mean to you?
“It’s a day to both honour and reflect on those who lost their lives in World War I, and to remind ourselves of the very things that our fellow Australians have fought and died for to preserve.”

How will you mark Anzac Day this year?
“I suspect I’ll be wearing uniform and doing a small ceremony with family in the alleyway behind my house. After that it’s not clear yet, but I’m sure it will be a day spent as close to the enduring Anzac Day traditions as we can get given current conditions.”

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**LAC Jason Reeve, Air Force Band, Trumpet Player**

What does Anzac Day mean to you?
“As a trumpet player with Air Force Band, Anzac Day is always very special as it affords me the opportunity to navigate the sounds and silences of the Last Post – a call that brings us all together to remember those that have gone before us and who have made the ultimate sacrifice.”

How will you mark Anzac Day this year?
“If not called to duty this Anzac Day I have the option of marking the occasion by sounding the Last Post from my front door step along with many other trumpet players who are coming together to do the same this year.”

**ADF bagpiper MUSN Dave Leaders at the Ari Burnu cemetery ahead of the 2017 Anzac Day commemorations in Gallipoli, Turkey. Photo: AB Kayla Hayes**

Air Force member photos: SGT Peter Borys, LACW Jacqueline Forrester, CPL Melina Young, AB Chris Beerens, SGT Christopher Dickson.
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N Air Force’s 99th birthday, three members deployed on Operation Accordion with more than 99 years of combined experience have reflected on how the Air Force has changed during their careers.

FSGT Russell Vine, who is deployed as the Visa Coordination Cell Second in Command, joined the Air Force in 1984 as a clerk medical. Throughout his 36 years in the orderly room, he has witnessed type-writers become computers, filing cabinets become floppy disks and the pay line migrate to PinKeys.

“A to K, L to Z, lining up every fortnight to collect your pay. I was a V

so I was always right down the back waiting for my pay in the envelope,” FSGT Vine said.

Having won a few different uniforms in the past 30-odd years, one stands out to him.

“I miss the ‘drabs’, or tropical dress as it was known,” he said. “In two postings to Butterworth I used to wear the drab shorts, the drab shirt and the long socks.”

SQNLDR John Millar enlisted in 1988 as a direct entry tradesman, posting to No. 5 Squadron at RAAF Fairbairn to work on Iroquois helicopters. In a career spanning 32 years, he has since gone on to instruct recruits, maintain a variety of aircraft and is a former WOFF-AF.

SQNLDR Millar said no single experience stood out because he is the Air Force of tomorrow. “From 1988 to 2020 I’ve seen the Air Force change dramatically thanks to the technological enhancement,” SQNLDR Millar said.

“The greatest thing I do is work with young people. They are smart and they are the Air Force of tomorrow. You see the excitement in their eyes and I know the Air Force is in phenomenal hands.”

FLTLT Michael Truscott joined under the RAFA apprentice scheme in 1983 and was an aircraft technician initially on P-3 Orion and a variety of other roles before commissioning.

After 37 years, FLTLT Truscott is on his first operational deployment in the Middle East, where he works as the Assistant Host Nation Liaison Officer.

He said the opportunity to deploy had been a highlight of his career and he has enjoyed the challenge.

“You find time for a team up and take opportunities as they arise, don’t sit back and wait for other people to do things, and experience as much as you can,” FLTLT Truscott said.

The three celebrated Air Force’s 99th birthday at the main logistics base in the Middle East region, where 600 members are deployed.

With almost a century of service up their collective sleeves, three members share their perspective on how Air Force has evolved over recent decades, CAPT Jarrad Baldwin writes.

O

Baking it a very special event

ACW Kelly O’Brien and LAC Jin Seo, from No. 23 Squadron, with the cake.

“Finding the spare time to finish the cake despite packing down the mess and changing to an in-flight style of catering made things a bit more difficult,” ACW O’Brien said.

“We had to make sure we practised social distancing while decorating the cake, however, the excitement the cake brought to the kitchen was great.”

“Everyone was excited about each step in the process. “Given the current world events, it was great that we still got to finish making the cake,” she said.

With the cake dripping the cakes they had baked and decorated during their cake decorating course, the 99th birthday cake was by far the biggest LAC Seo and ACW O’Brien had ever made.

On April 1, LAC Seo and ACW O’Brien cut the birthday cake up so it could be offered to live-in members who picked up takeaway boxes from the RAAF Base Amberley mess as well as to members working across the base.

“People”.

You can count on us to celebrate

THE team at Air Lift Systems Program Office (ALSPO) at RAAF Base Richmond found a moment to gather within the social distancing rules to celebrate Air Force’s 99th birthday.

ALSPO staff and personnel enjoy birthday cake while observing social distancing rules.

You can count on us to celebrate

THE team at Air Lift Systems Program Office (ALSPO) at RAAF Base Richmond found a moment to gather within the social distancing rules to celebrate Air Force’s 99th birthday.

ALSPO staff and personnel enjoy birthday cake while observing social distancing rules.

Evita Ryan

CANCELLED birthday celebrations couldn’t put a dampener on LAC Jin Seo and ACW Kelly O’Brien’s quest to finish what they’d started months before.

After completing a four-day cake decorating course in late 2019, LAC Seo and ACW O’Brien were given the opportunity to build on their newly acquired skills by designing, baking and decorating a three-tiered chocolate mud cake for the Air Force’s 99th birthday celebrations at RAAF Base Amberley.

Months of design collaboration, hours of baking and careful decorating went into the creation of the cake, the design of which was heavily influenced by the theme for the event: ‘People’.

Baking the base layer and the two tiers of the cake in early March, LAC Seo and ACW O’Brien stored the cake in the mess freezer, only pulling it out two days before commencing the decorating process.

By that stage, the birthday celebrations had been cancelled due to the events being experienced across the country however, LAC Seo and ACW O’Brien were keen to see the task through to the end.

...
**New tech for DST**

DEFENCE Science and Technology (DST) has started the tender process for two new technologies to support its research program. A thermal vacuum chamber will be commissioned at Edinburgh to enable the testing and development of satellite and high-altitude payloads. The chamber can simulate conditions such as extremely low pressures and thermal fluctuations. An industrial polymer 3D printer will be used to rapidly develop prototype hardware to support the research program, including collaborative programs with industry and university partners. The thermal vacuum chamber will support broader space-related research, while the 3D printer will enable the development of advanced materials and non-traditional manufacturing techniques. Defence Industry Minister Melissa Price said the acquisition of the new technologies will enhance Defence’s research and development abilities, with industry partners able to access both capabilities when working directly with Defence.

**Defence site repurposed**

BULIMBA Barracks will be redeveloped for housing in Melbourne, Fremantle and Western Sydney for Navy personnel and warships. Defence location in Melbourne, Fremantle and Western Sydney are for sale and the Commonwealth is at various stages of consultation with local government and developers. Housing Minister Michael Sukkar said the Government was repurposing under-utilised Defence land to increase housing supply.

**In Brief**

Delay to premium increase

DEFENCE Health will delay premium increases by three months to July 1 due to financial stress the COVID-19 pandemic is having on members. Defence Health CEO MAJGEN (retd) Gerard Fogarty said he wants to demonstrate support to members in an uncertain time. “During this difficult time, my commitment is to ensure our members, community and employees are supported,” MAJGEN Fogarty said. Defence Health has also expanded relief for members experiencing financial hardship. It will communicate its COVID-19 Member Support Program to members soon.

**Call for art prize applications**

CURRENT and former ADF personnel are encouraged to enter the Napier Water Art Prize, open from June 7. Run by the Australian War Memorial, the University of Canberra, the Road Home and the Department of Veterans’ Affairs, the prize program is the only one offered to current and former Defence personnel at a national level. It aims to promote artistic excellence, the transformative and healing power of creativity and raise awareness of the experiences and talent of service personnel.

Assistant Director National Collection at the Australian War Memorial CDF GEN Angus Campbell said he is humbled and very appreciative that WOFF-AF Fiona Grasby shaven off LACW Julian’s beautiful locks to empower families facing blood cancer and to accelerate blood cancer research.

“I was humbled and very appreciative that WOFF-AF was able to attend and oversee the shaving of my head,” LACW Julian said.

“I had previously worked with her at 52WG HQ, so when I reached out to her, she was more than happy to participate and support this important cause.”

“The WOFF-AF, along with a few others, were more nervous than I was and a few work colleagues also got a chance to shave chunks off,” LACW Julian said.

LACW Julian – a long-time advocate of the Leukaemia Foundation’s World’s Greatest Shave program – had shaved her head three times since 2007, helping the foundation on the way to realising its bold goal of zero lives lost to blood cancer by 2035.

“While I have not had anyone directly related to me affected by Leukaemia, if my kids or anyone I knew had to go through that it would be heartbreaking,” LACW Julian said.

“Saying ‘I’m shaving my hair off’ is a real conversation starter. It’s surprising how many people are very attached to their hair, especially males,” LACW Julian said.

“Walking down the office hallway that day I could feel the directions of the aircon flow across my head. I also tried to flick my hair away twice when putting my over short on. My daughter didn’t want me to do it initially, now she has to give me my hair as a memento of the time.”

“LACW Julian’s hair has been donated to Sustainable Salons. The long ponytails will go towards making a wig which are then donate to chemotherapy patients or people with Alopecia Areata.”

The official also get used in ocean booms to help filter oils out of the water.

“I always try to donate when others participate,” she said.
The Australian Defence Force has played a key role in the fight against illegal fishing in the Pacific through Operation Solania.

Under the Pacific Island Forum Fisheries Agency’s (FFA) Operation Rai Balang, a C-27J Spartan from No. 35 Squadron and a B300 King Air from No. 32 Squadron and HMAS Maryborough deployed to the South West Pacific to contribute to the multi-national efforts of detecting and deterring illegal, unregulated and unreported (IUU) fishing activity.

The ADF joined air and naval assets from eight FFA countries along with defence partners from the United States and France.

Patrols and surveillance of more than 14 million square kilometres of ocean led to 108 sightings with 24 vessels boarded.

For SQNLDR Rob Crawford the Detachment Commander and C-27J pilot the mission was made easier by the collaboration between squadrons and multi-national agencies.

“Having established rapport and an understanding of shared capabilities through previous Operation Solania missions, we were able to efficiently undertake complementary maritime patrol profiles to generate high range coverage,” SQNLDR Crawford said.

“For the C-27J, this was typically high-level transit to the edge of the economic exclusion zone approximately 200 nautical miles out from the sovereign nation, while the B300 King Air patrolled intermediate ranges and closer to shore.

“Working closely with the FFA air liaison planner, we were able to maximise the efficiency of our search areas.

“Our visible presence in the area goes a long way to help deter potentially unlawful or criminal vessels.”

Intelligence gathered from patrols was fed back directly to the FFA.

The agency’s Surveillance Operations Officer is CMDR Robert Lewis, RAN.

He said the role Australia played in the operation was vital to its success.

“The aerial surveillance intelligence captured by Australia was able to be communicated to surface assets in real time, giving the Pacific Island countries a richer picture of their region and enabling them to target identified vessels of interest to ensure they were compliant with relevant legislation,” CMDR Lewis said.

The FFA has a goal to empower all people from the Pacific Islands, to maximise the economic benefits from their tuna fisheries resources.

It’s an area that comes under significant threat with IUU fishing activity. Director Fisheries Operations Allan Rahari expressed his thanks for the ADF’s contribution.

“For me as a Solomon Islander, I felt proud that the ADF was supporting us in one of our key priorities to support regional operations and our Pacific Island nations,” Mr Rahari said.

Air and naval assets involved in Operation Rai Balang included a United States Navy P-8 Poseidon, United States Coast Guard HC-130, D’entrecasteaux of the French Navy and the United States Coast Guard’s Cutter Sequoia.

Above: From a B300 King Air aircraft, FLTLT Ashley Bell, of No. 32 Squadron, captures imagery of a fishing vessel off the Solomon coast. Right: Pilot SQNLDR Rob Crawford, from No. 35 Squadron, in Solomon Islands.
OPERATION SOLANIA

FLGOFF Malia Naupoto

STUDENTS at Honiara Integrated Primary School, Solomon Islands, received a sporting treat as they were presented with new soccer balls by members of the Operation Solania detachment.

FLGOFF Em Renshaw and LACW Katie Hawkins visited the school, renowned for its Futsal success, providing a boost to its sporting growth and success in a sport they love.

FLGOFF Em Renshaw, top and below, from No. 35 Squadron, inside the flight deck of a C-27J Spartan conducting mission planning. She describes her passion of an Air Force career to the values instilled by her parents.

FLGOFF Malia Naupoto

LEFT: SQNLDR Rob Crawford, of No. 35 Squadron, inside the flight deck of a C-27J Spartan and conducting mission planning. He describes his dream of becoming a leader and professional aviator on the flight deck of a C-27J Spartan.

RIGHT: SQNLDR Rob Crawford reviews a map displaying the location of known fishing vessels during a brief held at the Forum Fisheries Agency, Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre in Honiara. Above: A C-27J Spartan prepares to land at Honiara Airport.

Welcome boost for school’s sporting success

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RIGHT: SQNLDR Rob Crawford reviews a map displaying the location of known fishing vessels during a brief held at the Forum Fisheries Agency, Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre in Honiara. Above: A C-27J Spartan prepares to land at Honiara Airport.
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A decision on a hospital shift set WOFF Vicki Lousick on a new path, FLTLT Robert Cochran writes.

**The rewards of variety**

It was on night shift at Gunnedah District Hospital when WOFF Vicki Lousick decided to pursue the idea of joining the RAAF as a medical assistant. A colleague had come across a magazine ad seeking medics and encouraged her to apply.

“I thought to myself, this could be an interesting path to take, I’ll apply and see if I am successful, that was now over 20 years ago,” WOFF Lousick said.

“My favourite roles have been in Aerial Medical Evacuation (AME). I love the diversity, one day I could be working in the health centre, the next training on a static aircraft, and the next flying to somewhere exotic in the world to bring a patient home for definitive care.”

RAAF medics provide medical support in military health centres and on exercises and deployments, carrying out duties ranging from general nursing to aero medical evacuations from conflict and disaster zones, and providing Defence aid to the civil community.

Born in Armidale, NSW, WOFF Lousick is currently posted to the Operations and Plans Cell at HQ Health Services Wing located at RAAF Base Amberley.

“I enjoy the variety of work, be it supporting planned exercises, operations and activities, or the short-notice-to-move tasks that require rapid planning and deployment,” she said.

“Being able to achieve all unit requests to ensure they meet their CAF preparedness is challenging and requires lots of innovative thinking, but it’s satisfying when you come up with workable solutions.”

Multiple deployments have provided unique opportunities to apply her specialist skills in the field. In Iraq she was embedded in an American hospital dealing with trauma and emergency medicine. In East Timor she consolidated her fixed and rotary wing AME skills while providing care to locals and coalition personnel.

“All of my deployments have had the same theme – providing care to those who are vulnerable in times of need,” WOFF Lousick said.

“Highlights for me have been working as part of a team providing life-saving skills and just being there to lend an ear to patients who needed to talk. These experiences have made me into the person and medic I am today.”

As a member who loves her job, WOFF Lousick recognises that this has much to do with Air Force’s cohesive organisational culture.

“I love the camaraderie – some of my best friendships are with people I have met through Defence,” she said.
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Features

Adrenaline roller-coaster

Clearing mines remains an essential duty, not to mention a complex task like no other, FLTLT Robert Cochran writes.

DEEP in the jungles of Bougainville, WOFF Rodney Amos carefully examines the densely vegetated ground in front of him with an electromagnetic detector and prodding tool.

The Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Technician is clearing a so-called ‘nuisance minefield’ from WWII.

He is on an emotional roller-coaster of fear and excitement. Adrenaline is rushing through his body.

“Our primary task was to clear Allied defensive minefields to the west and east of Torokina,” WOFF Amos said.

For International Mine Awareness Day on April 4, WOFF Amos spent time reflecting on his experiences during Operation Render Safe in 2014.

“Fragments from a number of mines were found throughout the area indicating that many had detonated over the years,” WOFF Amos said.

“This could have been due to animals or fallen trees, but also, very tragically, due to people from nearby villages. We located and destroyed more than 20 live mines.”

Air Force’s mine clearance capability sits proudly within No. 65 Squadron.

Headquartered at RAAF Base Townsville, the unit’s remit is air base recovery (ABR) and its CO, WGCDR Stuart Mattner, is quick to emphasise the necessity of mine clearance in the delivery of ABR.

“ABR effects can be employed to reactivate disused air bases and also repair damaged airfield infrastructure,” WGCDR Mattner said.

“Land mines can inhibit the reactivation of disused airbases and so detecting and clearing those munitions is a crucial part of ABR.”

“Equally, the ability to detect and clear mines placed by an adversary is paramount toward the repair of airfield infrastructure and recommencement of air operations.”

Most of 65SQN’s ABR EOD Technicians, including one of its most experienced members, SGT Shaun Cranfield, are located at Defence Establishment Orchard Hills in the western outskirts of Sydney.

“EOD technicians work hand-in-hand with airfield engineers to provide air base recovery effects,” SGT Cranfield said.

Without a mine clearance capability, Air Force wouldn’t be able to recover airfields across the full spectrum of possible situations and this would limit our ability to project air power!”

Mine clearing is a job for the faint-hearted. Patience, nerves of steel and a methodical approach to work are essential qualities in these courageous operators.

“Mine clearing is slow and considered work, it can take hours to clear a path just a few feet long,” SGT Cranfield said.

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“Mine clearing is slow and considered work, it can take hours to clear a path just a few feet long,” SGT Cranfield said.

WOFF Amos couldn’t agree more and likened mine clearing to a game of chess.

“Each of your moves is planned such that you can ‘corner’ the device and safely destroy it – checkmate! It’s a job like no other in the military, full of fantastic highs and some horrifying lows, but something I am fiercely proud to have been a part of.”

It’s mentally, emotionally and physically demanding, with long days in tough conditions which can range from deserts to jungles, and from mud to snow. And of course there’s the complex explosive device that you’re responsible for detecting and clearing.

“But all that said, the camaraderie and unique nature of the challenge are like nothing else, and it’s why we love what we do.”

WOFF Amos couldn’t agree more and likened mine clearing to a game of chess.

Each of your moves is planned such that you can ‘corner’ the device and safely destroy it – checkmate! It’s a job like no other in the military, full of fantastic highs and some horrifying lows, but something I am fiercely proud to have been a part of.”

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Identity leads to positivity

Indigenous Liaison Officer FLTLT Grace Casey-Maughan loves her role, FLTLT Jessica Aldred writes.

FLTLT Grace Casey-Maughan joined Air Force as an Indigenous Liaison Officer (ILO) to work at the forefront of the RAAF and ADF’s commitment to the Government’s Closing the Gap strategy. FLTLT Casey-Maughan thinks she’s lucky that her role allows her to use and share her diversity every day.

“As an ILO I provide Air Force capability through my Aboriginality. My identity and my connections to community allow me to positively contribute to my workplace and my community,” FLTLT Casey-Maughan said.

“My diversity, among other things, allows me to work towards the Indigenous participation rates benchmarked by CDI. “As Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people we want to close the gap, we want better opportunities, better education, better health care and housing. Air Force’s contribution to society through diversity is the right thing to do.”

FLTLT Casey-Maughan believes our capability comes from diversity of thought, experience and background.

“Be that through your culture, your community, or the place you come from and how you grew up – gender, culture, background, beliefs and experiences can mean new ways of thinking or approaching things,” she said.

“It brings fresh ideas, new opinions and different ways of doing. My diversity as an Aboriginal woman from a rural area differs from the diversity of a non-Indigenous city grown woman. “Different ways viewing the world brings different ways of thinking, problem solving, and working, and through this comes capability.”

Inclusive leadership is key to encouraging this diversity of thought and experiences.

“There needs to be a genuine desire to include and support diverse perspectives and opinions,” FLTLT Casey-Maughan said.

“It means a lot to me that my chain of command reached out to me to ascertain whether or not it was appropriate for them to do an Acknowledgement of Country before each meeting – which it absolutely is. While it may seem small, this act of curiosity and interest made me feel welcome and that my culture is valued.”


A good year...empowered to make a real difference

Indigenous Liaison Officer FLTLT Steven Warrior.

FLTLT Bel Scott

IT’s a milestone for a man making a huge difference in Air Force.

In Indigenous communities, trust is built from maintaining a continuous relationship, which is what the ILO role develops and fosters.

“It is known that our culture is the oldest living culture in the world, having survived severe adversity,” FLTLT Warrior said.

“The ILO network is diverse and we have connected really well. “We are passionate about who we are, our cultures, and provide guidance and support to one another.”

Even during these uncertain times with COVID-19, the ILO network continues to build on engagement initiatives for 2020 and beyond. This will include sporting and leadership programs provided to schools and Indigenous organisations, as well as implementing an awards event to acknowledge efforts of Indigenous military members that are excelling within their roles and units for cultural engagements.

“The inclusiveness and opportunity to represent Aboriginal people is what I enjoy most about my role,” FLTLT Warrior said.

Also having worked across most of the units at RAAF Base Edinburgh, it has really opened my eyes to the opportunities that exist in Air Force. I would encourage my family and friends to consider it as an employer of choice.

“As an officer, I’ve learnt that you have a great responsibility to both your chain of command, your peers and your local community.

“Ideally I would like to become a P-8A pilot, not only to benefit me and my family, but it would influence the local Indigenous kids that if they’re willing to work hard they can achieve anything.”

A mentoring day with FLTLT Steven Warrior.

Technology has helped mark the 50th anniversary of a tragic event, SQNLDR Deanna Nott writes.

Special call of remembrance

Dallas McMaugh

I T WAS a special phone call that brought back memories of one of RAAF Base Amberley’s darkest days. At 4pm on Monday, March 23, a video conference was held to remember the 50th anniversary of the tragic Canberra Bomber A84-205 crash at RAAF Base Amberley. 

No.23 Squadron Association Chaplain, Rev. Robert Heathwood and the family of FLTLT Jacques (Jack) Siffer reflected and remembered the tragic moment when he and FLGOFF Herbert Badower died after Canberra Bomber A84-205 crashed on landing approach to the north of RAAF Base Amberley on March 23, 1970. 

WOFF (retd) George Hatchman, an avid RAAF Amberley historian who served 33 years on two postings at Amberley during his 50-year RAAF career, joined FLTLT Siffer’s daughter Marianne Bastiani on the telephone for a moving “face-to-face” video commemorative service. 

“I recall that day Marianne’s father was lost. She was only one at the time,” said WOFF Hatchman, who noted COVID-19 had prevented Ms Bastiani attending a family anniversary memorial service originally planned to be held at the RAAF Amberley Memorial Gardens. 

“I was a young corporal and 82WG’s T4 Bomboight Specialist carrying out maintenance in one of the 82 Wing igloo hangars when I heard the wail of the base’s crash sirens start up,” WOFF Hatchman said. 

“I rushed out to the tarmac in front of the 1(D) OCU’s flightline hut and saw the pall of dark smoke rise some distance to the north of the airstrip. 

“While gathering my thoughts on the realisation that there were two men in that aircraft, the squadron’s senior engineering officer arrived in the unit’s dark blue Humber Snipe staff car and rushed into the flightline office and gathered all the aircraft’s maintenance documents.” 

WOFF Hatchman said it was one of the ‘darkest days’ he ever experienced while serving in the Air Force. 

“It was like a cloud of sombre reflection prevailed over the base for the following days on the loss of the young aircrew and the impact on squadron members and the lost aircrew’s families,” he said. 

“It was a terribly sad day that one never forgets. “Fifty years on from the devastation of the crash, navigator FLTLT Jacques Georges Marie Siffer is remembered with admiration and gratitude as a beloved husband, father, grandfather and friend alongside pilot FLGOFF Badower.”

Shark 02 fallen honoured

Dallas McMaugh

IN THE close-knit world of Defence aviation, April 2 is a sombre day for many personnel as they remember and reflect on the loss of nine Australian Defence Force personnel who died when Sea King of nine Australian Defence Force remember and reflect on the loss of the young aircrew who died on a humanitarian support mission on the Indonesian island of Nias in 2005.

The Air Force members who died were SQNLDR Paul McCarthy, FLTLT Lynne Rowbotham and SCT Wendy Jones. The Navy members who died were Lieutenant Paul Kimlin, Lieutenant-Commander Matthew Goodall and LS Scott Bennet, all aircrew from No. 817 Squadron at HMAS Albatross, as well as LT Matthew Davey and PO Stephen Slattery.

Two personnel who were seriously injured in the incident but survived were Navy’s LS Shane Warburton and RAAF’s LAC Scott Nichols.

A service is usually held on this day at a memorial located outside the Albatross chapel. The memorial’s location in the home of Navy’s Fleet Air Arm serves as a tangible reminder of the history of service and sacrifice of aviation crews. The memorial also has an enduring connection with the Shark 02 families, who were involved in every stage from design to construction, when the memorial was refurbished and rededicated in 2014.

Because of current physical distancing requirements, personnel and family were unable to gather for the service this year, however, Chaplain Steve Estherby conducted a private memorial ceremony, which has been uploaded to social media platforms. In a sombre and solitary moment, which reflected a wider loss still keenly felt by many personnel, Albatross XO CMDR Nigel Rowan placed a wreath at the memorial on behalf of all those who could not be there.

“This is a place of profound memories,” CMDR Rowan said. “Many still carry the loss of their friends and colleagues in their hearts and minds.”
Help to stay connected

STAYING connected is more important than ever with the current COVID-19 health crisis affecting our everyday life and military families are often impacted more than ever with postings and member absence due to service requirements.

With a range of COVID-19 restrictions in place like physical distancing and non-essential travel measures, Defence Community Organisation (DCO) is looking at new ways to support ADF families and to stay connected online.

“There is support information and resources available to families, accessible through a wide range of online and traditional communication channels,” DCO Director General Paul Way said.

“We’re providing regular updates to support ADF families on the Defence Community Organisation website. Families can also receive DCO updates from DCO area office e-newsletters, the ForceNet Families group and on DCO’s social media channels Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

“I encourage all ADF partners, parents and family members to give the Defence Family Helpline a call on 1800 624 608 if they are looking for information or connection with their local community or just need someone to talk to. Our Helpline staff are available everyday 24/7 to help.”

While Defence’s wide range of social events for families have been postponed for the time being and unable to be held other than in a virtual format, staff were able to physically meet many Air Force families posting into each area at Welcome events held earlier in the year.

More than 8000 ADF members and their families attended the 21 events across Australia welcoming them to their new posting locations across Australia.

Hosted by local Command, together with DCO, the welcome events gave Air Force families a chance to get to know their local community, meet other families and find out about support services in the area.

Air Force families in Sale and Melbourne jumped at the chance to show off their trampolining and rock climbing skills at the Welcome to Sale event at the Jump and Climb, Traralgon and the Welcome to Melbourne event at the Latitude indoor trampoline and rock climbing centre.

Families enjoyed the wide range of entertainment and activities, and gathered information from stall holders at the Welcome to Williamtown event earlier in the year. The event was held before social-distancing guidelines were introduced.

Mr Way encouraged Air Force members and their families to find out more by following DCO on social media, visiting the website www.defence.gov.au/dco or by calling the all-hours Defence Family Helpline on 1800 624 608 for support, advice and connection with the local community.

“We know many partners and families attend our events to meet new people and stay in touch with friends. While face-to-face events are not possible, I encourage partners to stay connected,” he said.

“Partners can now engage with their local Defence community groups online with many of them being quite innovative and developing new ways their local community can stay connected through virtual catch-ups and online activities for families.”

Sophia, 3, and her mum, Helen, feed the baby goats from the Hunter Valley Zoo at DCO’s Welcome to Williamtown event earlier in the year. The event was held before social-distancing guidelines were introduced. Photo: CPL Melina Young

Adelaide families came in record numbers, with almost 2000 members and their families attending the Welcome event at the Adelaide Zoo. Families enjoyed the live entertainment, while the kids were kept busy looking at all the animals while they completed the yellow brick road quiz.

DCO’s Military Support Officer in Adelaide SQNLDR Di Ingham said the event had something for everyone.

“The zoo animals and live entertainment were a big hit with families as well as the 50 stall holders from the local community, who joined us with a range of information about local sports, hobbies and support services,” SQNLDR Ingham said.

Mr Way encouraged Air Force members and their families to find out more by following DCO on social media, visiting the website www.defence.gov.au/dco or by calling the all-hours Defence Family Helpline.

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Regatta, ropes and rivalry

CPL Julia Whitwell

A SPLASH of interservice rivalry fuelled teams on four boats the ADF Sailing Association (ADFSA) entered in the Sydney Harbour Regatta on March 7-8.
A boat to represent each service – competed in four races over the weekend.

ADFSA president WGCDR Sean Ahern said the event was an opportunity for ADF teams to participate in civilian regattas.
"For this regatta, the goal was to get our teamwork smooth and to benchmark our performance against civilian teams," WGCDR Ahern said.
"It’s the only regatta in Sydney where we compete against civilian teams, although within the regatta we still compete for inter-service honours."

The RAAF team came second to Army, with Navy trailing in third place based on non-performance handicap times. The ADF training yacht was the leading ADF yacht in the regatta, coming second overall on corrected performance handicap timings.

Competitor CPL Cheyenne Patena-Edmonds said while the RAAF team didn’t win the regatta, each member achieved what they set out to do.
"At the start of the regatta we individually outlined what we wanted to work on to be able to grow our skill sets," CPL Patena-Edmonds said.
"We all improved on the skills we set out to and our team was really cohesive and energetic – we were never complacent.
Experience was key to doing well in the regatta.
"We didn’t win, but we’re building up our experience. For many of us in our crew, we only started sailing at this same event last year," she said.
"There’s so much to know and I definitely noticed the difference from last year."

Competing for the Navy team in her first yacht race, LEUT Danielle Bevins-Sundvall said she learned a lot.
"It’s the only regatta in Sydney with a new appreciation of the physical demands of sailing and how much skill is required to read the environment and make adjustments to suit the conditions.
"Our skipper could look across the harbour and say ‘there will be a gust of wind in 15 seconds’ even though there was nothing obvious to indicate it and sure enough we would get a gust when he said."

Bustling Air Force makes the big league

CPL Sebastian Beurich

FOR the first time in ADF Rugby League history, an Air Force team has scored back-to-back wins in the interservice tournament.

Held in March before interservice-sport was cancelled, and including the SGT Matthew Locke MG charter match, interservice matches were marked with a strong showing from the men’s team, which won both their games and an increase in women’s participation.

Poor weather made for interesting matches, according to men’s captain SGT Mitch Knowles.
"We didn’t talk too much about it in camp, but on the morning of the first game, against Navy, we talked about what the win would mean to us," SGT Knowles said.
"That game was tough to play and I’m guessing it probably wouldn’t have been too good to watch because there were a lot of dropped balls and a lot of errors due to the conditions.

Against Army was much the same – the weather inhibited our ability to spread the ball wide and use our outside backs.
"The game was definitely fought in the middle of the field and through both games we just had to overcome the other teams through grit, determination and hard work."

When their second player was sent off for 10 minutes during the first game, SGT Knowles thought their shot at making history was gone.
"To the boys’ credit, we managed to hold on and I think Navy only got one late try in at the end, to bring the score back to 8-4."

The women’s side had a sharp jump in numbers this year, after fronting only two players during last year’s tournament.

Captain LACW Karri Thomas said whether the players were fresh to league or had a bit more experience, all of them played hard.
Their eight players combined with the Army team to play against Navy, then with Navy to play against Army.
"Our first game was pretty great but our game against Army was a standout because we were both the underdog teams," LACW Thomas said.
"By the end of it, we’d taken them by surprise and given them a bit more of a run for their money than they were expecting."

LACW Thomas credits the team’s success to the atmosphere created by the players and coaching teams.
"By the first game, you couldn’t even tell most of the girls had only known each other for a few days – it was very friendly, laid back and welcoming," she said.

While the women’s team game against RNZAF later in the year is cancelled, both are planning training a camp before the Kapooka 9s later in the year.
EVEN KEEL

Air Force skills on show at regatta

Page 19

SGT Ross MacDonald takes the wheel for Air Force during the Sydney Harbour Regatta. Photo: CPL Julia Whitwell