

Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies New South Wales

Promoting understanding of defence and national security
since 1888

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President's Column

Welcome to the December 2019 issue of *United Service*, a highly professional journal now in its 72nd year of continuous publication. This issue contains an informative update on the development of the Australian Defence Force's amphibious capability that was tested during Exercise Talisman Sabre 2019. A detailed opinion piece on the amphibious capability sets out important implications for the Australian Defence Force in the future use of this capability in a war-fighting role. I am sure you will enjoy reading this issue.



The Australian Prime Minister stated recently: "We have entered a new era of strategic competition – a not unnatural result of shifting power dynamics, in our modern more multi-polar world and globalised economy."

Australia is an Indo-Pacific nation and our region is the epicentre of that change. Our region is going through the most significant geopolitical change probably since the end of the Second World War. Driven by the pace of this change, a review is underway of Australia's defence readiness and supporting strategic framework, including an update of force structures to meet new and rapidly emerging threats.

In 2020 and beyond, the Royal United Service Institutes (RUSIs) across Australia will have an important role in promoting informed debate on, and enhancing public awareness and understanding of, these important changes in Australia's defence readiness, supporting strategic framework and force structures. This work will be strengthened by the work currently underway to ensure the future of the national body, the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies–Australia.

RUSI NSW recently celebrated its first year in our new permanent home in the Centenary Extension of the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park South, Sydney. The regular interaction with our members, with large numbers of local people, as well as with interstate and international visitors is promoting a better understanding of Australia's current defence and national security issues, as well as raising the profile of RUSI NSW.

During the year, we have spent considerable resources in updating and expanding our *Ursula Davidson Library* through purchases of new books and large donations of books, through the professional repair and rebinding of some of our valuable collection, and through the progressive scanning of our significant collection of maps.

I take this opportunity to wish our members and readers of this issue of *United Service* a wonderful Christmas and a happy and healthy 2020.

Paul Irving