

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

*Promoting understanding of defence and national security
since 1888*

Patron: Her Excellency, The Honourable Margaret Beasley,
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President's Column

Welcome to the December 2020 issue of *United Service* which contains papers on declining relations between Europe and the United States under the Trump administration (Dr Gorana Grgić, University of Sydney); the diminution of American power and the need for Australia to develop greater defence self-reliance (Senator Jim Molan); and a look back at the pivotal Battle of the Bismarck Sea in World War II (Lieutenant Colonel Peter Sweeney); plus, seven very interesting book reviews.



We held our RUSI NSW annual general meeting virtually on 24 November 2020, and I was honoured to be elected your President for the next three years in succession to Major General Paul Irving. Paul has done a sterling job over the last four years in overseeing the move of our office and library from Defence Plaza to the Anzac Memorial in Hyde Park, Sydney. His inspiring leadership, detailed planning and exemplary dedication to the task has resulted in a new home of which we can all be extremely proud. On behalf of us all, I thank him most sincerely.

As incoming President, I want to both honour our distinguished past, whilst recognising the rapid and significant changes that are occurring within our geopolitical and societal worlds to which the Institute has to adapt and respond. I look forward to working with our incoming Board to develop and refine a 'futures oriented' RUSI NSW value proposition – one that will make the Institute attractive to both our existing membership and to our future partners.

One of the few positives of the COVID 19 pandemic has been to force us all to work more readily with electronic media, and I am heartened by the growth of interest from around the world in our online activities and programmes.

As your President, I will work very hard with our Board to make RUSI NSW of central value to our members and to our clients and partners. The latter include serving Australian Defence Force members, defence industries, academics and others interested in defence and national security issues.

During 2021, please follow us on social media to keep updated on our monthly programme of lectures and events. I look forward to meeting you at a face-to-face activity ere long.

Finally, and very sadly, I wish to record the recent death of our Vice President, Colonel John Hutcheson MC, aged 92 years. John was a stalwart of the Institute and of our Ursula Davidson Library. He will be sadly missed.

Michael Hough