

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

I want to recognise both the significance of our journal to the central task of the Institute, which can be paraphrased as “to inform and promote debate about defence-related issues”, and thank and honour the significant editorial team who work under our Journal Editor, Dr David Leece AM PSM RFD ED, and whose names are listed in column 1. The consistently excellent quality of our journal is a true highlight, and in my term as President, I am committed to ensuring that our journal continues to both flourish and evolve.



We have been publishing the journal online and available *gratis* to a global audience since March 2008. Over the last 13 years, the rapid acceptance of online-based activities has led to *United Service* becoming more widely accessible and its papers are now being downloaded by readers on every continent. Global search engines quickly draw the global community's attention to the ideas and issues included in our journal, and we now have the opportunity to seek contributions and viewpoints from a much wider cohort of potential readers and contributors.

The journal, however, faces challenges. We need to improve the journal's **value proposition** to ensure its continuation and growth. We need to ask how we can better develop the journal so that it appeals to *younger* client groups raised on a social-media based (as distinct from a print-based) relationship with publications and ideas; build trust relationships with serving Australian Defence Force members so more of them *contribute* to the journal; better engage with the Department of Defence and the network of defence industries such that they come to *support* the Journal as an asset; and better engage with university and professional groups who can *contribute* to the defence debate.

We also need to ask how we should work with the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies–Australia and its state-based constituent bodies and with our fraternal United Service institutes in the United Kingdom, India and Canada so as to attract both interest and support from these national and international defence networks.

Clearly, we need to maximize the use of current *technologies* and *systems* so *United Service* reaches all who are willing to engage with us. I look forward to the challenges of retaining and improving our journal. I invite your suggestions for improvement and/or your involvement. Please contact me on mhough5@gmail.com.

Michael Hough