

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

This is my second opportunity to provide a message for our Journal. I restate my belief that the excellent quality of *United Service* is a true highlight of the Institute, and I am committed to ensuring that it continues to both flourish and evolve.



As we slowly emerge into a post COVID-19 world **and** face Australia's more unstable geopolitical environment, it is even more important that we make very considered and strategically relevant decisions that contribute positively to the future of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) both in New South Wales and nationally. Here follows a selection of my ideas on actions we should take.

- We need a very strong and effective RUSI nationally, so that we can effectively relate to and influence our Canberra-based senior politicians and the Australian Defence Force leadership, to support our role of informing debate on defence and security issues.
- The community's acceptance of online communications and activities means that any RUSI activity or publication now can be widely accessible and can reach a global audience.
- We need to clearly differentiate common-interest, national issues from local or regional issues, and then design different communication platforms to serve both aspects. For example, *United Service* could be readily adapted to serve our national interests, leaving more frequent regional media (e.g. state-focused bulletins) to deal with local interests and concerns.
- We could then seek contributors and influence viewpoints from the wider global community **and** still target and serve our local interests and needs.

We need to constantly improve our journal's relevance to Australia's emerging strategic environment. Accordingly, I invite your ideas to assist us meet challenges such as:

- developing and presenting *United Service* so that it becomes a valued resource focused on meeting our *RUSI national interests and needs*;
- reinforcing relationships among the state-based united services institutes – the constituent bodies of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies–Australia – so that they *support and contribute* to the journal, whilst retaining their own effective regional communication systems;
- encouraging defence policy makers to *support* the journal as an asset; and
- encouraging defence industries, university networks and professional groups to *contribute* to the journal as a medium for *contesting and resolving* ideas.

I look forward to finding opportunities for improving *United Service*, and I invite your suggestions and your involvement. Please contact me on mhough5@gmail.com.

Michael Hough