

# Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies – Australia

*Promoting understanding of defence and national security*

## **National President:**

Paul Irving AM, PSM, RFD

## **Company Secretary:**

Lieutenant Colonel John Howells OAM, RFD (Ret'd)

## **National President's Column**

Welcome to the third issue of *United Service* in 2024.

The aim of the Institute is to promote informed debate on, and to improve public awareness and understanding of, defence and national security. We do this in part through publishing scholarly articles in the Institute's National journal, *United Service*.

This issue of *United Service* contains several excellent articles, including a presentation by the Ukrainian Ambassador to Australia on the *War in Ukraine*; papers on *Revitalising Australia's defence industry* and *Industry is our last line of defence*; a thought-provoking paper on *Risk management re-appraisal for AUKUS*; together with some interesting book reviews.

To further our aim of improving public awareness and understanding of defence and national security, we are continuing to enhance our National website by including wherever possible, videos of lectures and seminars conducted by State and Territory based Institutes.

In the last two editions of *United Service*, I invited members to join the RUSI NSW Special Interest Group on Strategy. I am pleased that many members have taken the opportunity to join this Special Interest Group.

There is such a vast amount of material being produced daily within Australia and internationally on the wars in Ukraine and Gaza, plus other hotspots in the Red Sea, New Caledonia etc., that it is difficult to read and analyse all this material. Fortunately, we have some very experienced members of the Special Interest on Strategy who analyse the material and set out their analysis in a clear and precise way via regular podcasts. I strongly encourage you to keep abreast of current strategic issues by watching these podcasts on [https://www.rusi.au/SIG\\_S/Strategy.php](https://www.rusi.au/SIG_S/Strategy.php). The podcasts are attracting much interest internationally as well as in Australia.

In my last President's column, I spoke about the difficulty in the ADF meeting its growth targets as set out in the 2016 Defence White Paper from around 60,000 to 80,000 by 2040. This difficulty is likely to be exacerbated with the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide due to deliver its final report to the Governor General on 9 September 2024, marking the end of its three-year inquiry. The Royal Commission's very moving closing ceremony held on 28 August 2024 is available on the Commission's website. The final report will comprise multiple volumes addressing a diverse range of issues related to Defence and veteran suicide.

Finally, the National Institute will hold its Annual General Meeting on 7 October 2024. Any member of a State and Territory Institute who wishes to nominate as a director of the National Institute should contact the Company Secretary, John Howells, on [john.howells@rusi.au](mailto:john.howells@rusi.au).

**Paul Irving AM, PSM, RFD**  
National President

