

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 fourth and final 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 on a range of important topics, including a presentation by Adam Lockyer on the RAN's "Surface Fleet Review", Sir Angus Houston on "ANZUS AUKUS", Thomas Hamer on "Digital Security" and Walter Burroughs on "Australian Commandos in China", together with biographies and book reviews.

It is pleasing to note that we are furthering our aim of improving public awareness and understanding of defence and national security with members across Australia watching the videos of lectures and seminars conducted by State and Territory based Institutes that are loaded on the National website.

Many members have joined the RUSI Special Interest Group on Strategy or are watching the podcasts that are loaded onto the National website on https://www.rusi.au/SIG_S/Strategy.php. These podcasts are attracting much interest internationally as well as in Australia. I strongly encourage you to keep abreast of current strategic issues in the various conflicts around the world by watching these podcasts.

In my last President's column, I advised that the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide was due to deliver its final report on 9 September 2024. The final report contained 122 recommendations in seven volumes addressing a range of issues related to Defence and veteran suicide.

On 2 December 2024, the Government responded to the Royal Commission's final report. The Government agreed or agreed in principle to 104 recommendations, noted 17 recommendations, and did not support one recommendation in part. Implementation of these recommendations will have a significant impact on many aspects on how the ADF goes about its normal business. The Government's response is available on the [DVA website](#).

The National Institute held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 7 October 2024. The draft 2024 AGM Minutes, the Director's Report for 2024 and the Audited Financial Statements for financial year 2023/24 are available on the National website on https://www.rusi.org.au/About_Us.php#Governance.

I would like to congratulate Bill Henman from USI Australian Capital Territory who was appointed Vice President, and Ron Lyons from RUSI New South Wales and Bronson Horan from RUSI South Australia who were appointed as directors on the National Board.

Finally, I wish you and your families a wonderful Christmas and a happy and healthy 2025.

Paul Irving AM, PSM, RFD
National President

