

# *Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies NSW*

*Established 1888*



## **REPORT BY PRESIDENT RUSI NSW TO RUSI NSW ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** **25 OCTOBER 2022**

It is with pleasure that I provide my second report as the President of RUSI NSW, and I again would like to acknowledge and thank all members for the honour of being your President until the 2023 AGM.

As we emerge from the period of tight and rapidly changing COVID restrictions, I again commend all members of the RUSI NSW Board and our members and supporters, for your flexibility and adaptability in responding and coping under ever changing conditions. In my opinion, we (RUSI NSW) have produced a very high-quality series of events and products this Year.

The monthly lecture series in calendar year 2022 was (mainly) focused around a theme of :- *"AUKUS -Its Implications"* and I believe this usage of this clearly identifiable theme enabled us to assemble an impressive range of monthly speakers, and also provides with a strong organizing focus for our annual seminar to be held on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November, with the theme of:- *"AUKUS- 1 Year On"*.

However, I am pleased to acknowledge that we departed when required or appropriate from this theme, for example to explore the implications of some of the new military acquisitions announced by the Government, and our lunchtime lectures on the F35 and Loyal Wingman; and the Armour/Artillery upgrades were very well received.

A rapidly growing feature of considerable value and appeal is the significant growth of our online RUSI NSW presence, and the Board receives monthly and detailed reports from our Board member Theo Fox, on the activities associated with the RUSINSW website and Facebook activities. From this accumulating data set, it is very clear that we have a significant and increasing international interest for our "virtual" RUSI NSW.

Much of this reality is the result of the hard work and active support from our Webmaster and Tech support person LTCOL John Howells OAM RFD (Ret'd) – and we were able to provide each of the monthly lectures as webcasts, except where security implications meant that this option was not feasible for a specific topic.

One feature of our RUSI NSW year was the strong support provided by our Patron (the Governor of NSW) and our Vice Patrons- the RAN Fleet Commander; the Army Forces Commander;

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Commander 2<sup>nd</sup> Division, the RAAF Air Commander, and the CEO Of Thales Australia and New Zealand.

Our Patron, Her Excellency Margaret Beazley AC KC- provided a very thoughtful and challenging commentary as part of her formal opening of the Nov 2022 RUSI NSW annual seminar, and on behalf of all members of RUSI NSW, I express our sincere thanks to our Patron and our Vice Patrons for their significant support they all provide for our Institute.

I am pleased to acknowledge that at the National RUSIDSS-A AGM held earlier in November 2021, one of our most senior RUSI NSW members- MAJGEN Paul Irving AM PSM RFD (Ret'd) - was elected National President- and we both wish Paul well on this important role and thank him for his endless energy and commitment to our Institute exhibited in so many ways.

A related achievement this year was the smooth implementation of the agreement by RUSI National to adopt the NSW Journal **United Service** as the National Journal, and I would also like to acknowledge the excellent work of our new editor of **United Service**- COL Joe Matthews (Ret'd), and on behalf of all members and readers we thank Joe most sincerely for accepting this challenging but extremely worthwhile task AND already maintaining the very high standards of this journal in his 2022/23 publications!

I also want to thank our outgoing Office Manager and Treasurer- -Mr. Graham Brown- who has given us tireless support for the last 7 years, and on behalf of all our members, thank you Graham for your loyalty and dedication.

I would also welcome a range of new Board members and key volunteers- who were elected at our last AGM- Ms. Diana Figgis, Mr. Ian Mitchell and LTCOL Ron Lyons (RFD (Retired) and also our new Honorary Treasurer Mr. Roger Perry OAM, and our new Honorary Office Manager Mr. Greg Stevenson.

Somewhat belatedly, a warm welcome to each of you and I want to acknowledged the significant work and outputs already achieved, as follows:- \* The Launch of our new online Monograph series- (the "Javelin" series) Diana); \* the input into improving our membership and extending the range of membership options (e.g. for our young people) conditions (Jim Braid, Ian Mitchell ,Theo Fox and Lyall Wood).

I acknowledge the strong contributions of Mr. Greg Stevenson- who after joining RUSI NSW stepped forward and took on the role of promoting the sale of our surplus donated books, and

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Greg applied for and was selected as the RUSI NSW honorary Office Manager, and is taking vigorously and effective measures to clarify and improve our office and finance systems, and we both welcome Greg and thank him for his efforts.

On the representational aspects of RUSI NSW we are receiving regular invitations to appear at all relevant NSW celebrations and commemorations, and I wish to thank our senior Vice President - Commodore Mike Flynn RAN (Ret'd) who regularly delegates for me at these ceremonies if they are held in the Sydney CBD.

A particular highlight of this year's program was that we used our 134<sup>th</sup> Birthday occasion in August to recognise and honour our still living Past Presidents, and I commend this Webcast to you as an interesting way of gaining real insights into our extensive and significant history.

One important but sad aspect was the decision by the RUSI NSW Board to provide our members with condolences options so that individual members could provide their respects to the Windsor Royal family on the occasion of the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. RUSINSW established both a physical condolence book option at the Ursula Davidson library and an online condolence signing option and I am pleased to report that both options were used by our members to pay their respects to Her Majesty and her family.

I want to finish by thanking and acknowledging the hard work and strong support of the NSW Board this Year. The RUSI NSW Board is working steadily to implement our agreed strategic plan to 2025, and we have worked steadily to improve our administrative processes, make membership of our Institute more appealing, and develop a quality suite of programs e.g. monthly lectures/ /major seminar/ publications and member visits.

Finally, I commend this Year of Achievement by RUSI NSW to you, and we are increasingly learning how to take advantage of the wonderful venue in which we are now located (i.e. the Anzac Memorial Hyde Park Sydney,) and better utilise the strong networks of support we have created with serving ADF senior officers and Defence Industries in NSW.

In my final year of Presidency, I plan to finish the consolidation of our existing base of activities, and work more vigorously to promote new networks and partnerships with NSW Based Universities and Defence Industries.

I commend to you this President's report

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Sincerely

[SIGNED]

Michael Hough  
President RUSI NSW  
September 2022