

Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies NSW

Established 1888



DIRECTORS' REPORT TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF RUSI NSW HELD ON 31 OCTOBER 2024

On behalf of the Board of Directors I am pleased to present the Board's report on the operation of the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies NSW (**RUSI NSW**) for the period 31 October 2023 to 29 October 2024.

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors for 2023-24, the term of their appointment and committee responsibilities, is as follows:

Kim Turner	President	2023 - 26	Ex-Officio - all Committees
Michael Hough	Immediate Past President	2023 - 26	Chair - Universities Consortium
Ron Lyons	Vice President	2023 - 26	Chair - Events
Theodora Fox	Vice President	2023 - 26	Chair - Communications
David Toose	Treasurer	2023 - 26	
John Howells	Secretary	2023 - 26	
Jim Braid	Board Member	2021 - 24	Membership
Diana Figgis	Board Member	2021 - 24	Chair - Monographs
Ian Mitchell	Board Member	2021 - 24	Chair - Membership
Chris Skinner	Board Member	2021 - 24	Chair - Innovation
Joe Matthews	Board Member	2023 - 26	Communications
David Deasey	Board Member	2023 - 26	Events

Board Meetings

During the reporting period, the Board met on six occasions, convening for meetings at the Anzac Memorial on 28 November 2023 and thereafter on the last Tuesday of every second month, on 30 January, 26 March, 28 May, 30 July, and 24 September 2024. The Executive Committee and the other Committees met, as required, in the intervening months.

Board Observers

The Board was supported by other members, either appointed by the Board as a member of a committee or serving in other significant operational appointments:

Library:

Paul Irving	Library Manager/President RUSI - Australia
Ken Broadhead	Member Library Committee - Maps
Peter Court	Member Library Committee – new books

Librarians (Part-time): Theodora Fox; Carrol Miller

Office Manager: Alan Smith

Editor *United Service* : Joe Matthews

Webmaster: John Howells

Strategy Special Interest Group (SIG):

David Leece Chair

Ian Wolfe Acting Chair from 13 Nov to 31 Dec 23.

Additional Appointments

Paul Simadas Member Events Committee

Michael Flynn Naval Liaison Officer

Board members Jim Braid, Diana Figgis, Ian Mitchell and Chris Skinner, whose terms expire, retire at this AGM. Jim Braid, Diana Figgis, and Chris Skinner are eligible and have nominated for reappointment. Ian Mitchell will continue as a valued member of the Membership Committee.

Ursula Davidson Library

With the support of volunteers, we have continued to open the library to members of the public and RUSI members five days a week, Monday to Friday.

We purchased and installed a stylish carousel to display our surplus books for sale. Work continued on a comprehensive audit of the library collection by our volunteer librarians, and we provided valuable work experience for several volunteer Library Technicians from Sydney Institute of TAFE whilst they were seeking employment.

Our archival material provides an interesting historical insight into the defence needs of the Colony of NSW that complements our book and map collection. During the reporting period, with the assistance of John Rudd we completed a detailed list of archival material contained in each archival box that will aid researchers in studying NSW's early defence considerations.

90th Anniversary Celebrations

We have also worked with Memorial staff to showcase some of the library's "Research Treasures" to coincide with the Memorial's "90 Treasures" exhibition in November 2024. Our librarians prepared a nine-part series of 90 of the RUSI NSW's most treasured and interesting research items. These reading lists, covering topics such as: *Official Historical Accounts; Unit Histories; Conflicts in Africa; The Anzac Experience; Women in War; Personal Narratives, Diaries and POWs; Australians in the Korean and Vietnam Wars; The Gulf War and Afghanistan; and The Librarian's Picks*; will be collated and published in a booklet, to be made available to visitors.

Other reading lists created to spark the Researcher's imagination: *Understanding the origins of Anzac Day; Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey; Israel, Palestine and Hezbollah; and Ukraine, Russia and the former Eastern Bloc.*

25th Anniversary of INTERFET

To celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Australian led international peace-making force (INTERFET) in Timor-Leste, RUSI NSW, with support from Memorial staff, hung five paintings by Wendy Sharpe in the library. Wendy was the first female artist commissioned by the War Memorial since the Second World War and visited many sites in Timor, where with paint, pencil and etchings, she recorded the faces of locals and events.

Education Programme

We continued to conduct our monthly lecture program in the Auditorium with a range of distinguished speakers.

The year began with a presentation by **Ted Blamey**, talking about his grandfather, **Field Marshal Sir Thomas Blamey**. In February, **Associate Professor Adam Lockyer**, from Macquarie University, addressed us on **Great Power Politics and The Defence Strategic Review**. In March, **Mr. Gavin Henry**, from Thales, spoke about **Undersea Systems**. In April, **Professor Peter Dean**, a member of the 2023 DSR team, discussed **The Defence Strategic Review - One Year On**. In May, there was a special extended event, with the Inspector General of the ADF, **James Gaynor**, and the Deputy G7 Army, Forces Command, **BRIG Sean Parkes**, examining issues around the **Law of Armed Conflict in Australia**. Then, in June, the focus turned to **the War in Ukraine**, with an address by the Ukrainian Ambassador, His Excellency, **Mr Vasyl Myroshnychenko**

The high calibre presentations continued in the second half of the year. In July, **Lincoln Parker** addressed us on **Australian Defence Industry: Enhancing Sovereign Defence Capability - Challenges and Future Prospects**. The second of our extended lunchtime lectures was held in August, examining the outcomes of Australia's surface combatant fleet review, with two preminent speakers: **Jennifer Parker** from the National Security College and **Associate Professor Adam Lockyer** from Macquarie University. In September, we hosted one of our Vice Patrons, **Air Vice-Marshal Glen BRAZ AM, CSC, DSM**, **Air Commander Australia**, who spoke on the Development and Use of UAVs (**Unmanned Aerial Vehicles**).

In October we will have a presentation from one of our members, **Thomas Hamer**, speaking on **Clouded Views – data protection in today's electronic world**, and we will bring our education program to a close in November with the **Sir Hermann Black Memorial Lecture The year in Review** to be delivered by **George Brandis KC**, Australia's 36th Attorney General and former High Commissioner to the United Kingdom.

We are attracting an increased number of ADF serving members at our lectures. Presentations of the monthly lecture program were recorded as podcasts and placed on RUSI NSW's YouTube channel [<https://www.rusinsw.org.au/site/Videos.php>] and website, as well as on the Institute's National website.

Edited versions of selected lecture presentations were published in *United Service*, the national journal for the Royal United Services Institute for Defence and Security Studies–Australia

(RUSI – A) [<https://www.rusinsw.org.au/site/Journals.php>]. *United Service* is distributed across Australia with many of its articles being downloaded across the world.

The Events Committee are to be congratulated for their tremendous effort throughout the year.

Special Interest Group on Strategy

RUSI NSW's Special Interest Group on Strategy, that provides a forum for our members for the detailed study of strategic issues, was active in analysing and commenting on various conflicts around the world. Podcasts on current strategic issues around the world were loaded on our website and YouTube channel [https://www.rusinsw.org.au/SIG_S/Strategy.php], as well as on the National website. These podcasts are attracting significant interest within Australia and overseas.

The Javelin Collection

Our monograph series of original peer-reviewed papers on topics pertaining to defence and security published on our website and on the National website as *The Javelin Collection* continues to grow [<https://www.rusinsw.org.au/site/Monographs.php>]. The 17th monograph, *The Australian Surface Fleet Capability Gap 2024-2034 - an assessment and suggestions for remediation* was published during the reporting period.

Relations with the Anzac Memorial and like-minded organisations.

The working relations between our volunteers, and the staff and volunteers of the Anzac Memorial continues to be very positive and to the benefit of both organisations. RUSI NSW and the Memorial and the Military History Society of New South Wales initiated a collegial sharing and re-posting of social media posts arrangement on Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram and on our monthly newsletter that is proving to be mutually beneficial.

The Family and Friends of the First AIF (FFFAIF) and RUSI NSW have enjoyed a close relationship for many years. In April we took this relationship a step closer by an exchange of corporate memberships which we trust will strengthen and regularise the relationship. All invitations to FFFAIF events are now included in our monthly newsletter and links provided to enable RUSI members to access electronic issues of FFAIF's publications: the DIGGER and COBBER magazines. Likewise, FFFAIF now publicise our events and activities to their members and copies of our monthly e-newsletter is provided to their members. We have also agreed to work with FFFAIF to facilitate the training of undergraduate history teachers to support the introduction of the new Australian History Curriculum into NSW schools in 2027, which places a greater emphasis on the participation of Australians on the Western Front in the Great War 1914-1918.

Navy Prize Giving

We have continued support of the Information Warfare Officers and Naval Intelligence Officer courses conducted at Navy's Information Warfare Faculty and Maritime Intelligence and Information Warfare School at HMAS Watson. We attend each graduation and present the **RUSI Excellence Award**, which is presented to the candidate on the course who demonstrates excellence in junior leadership, who has most contributed to the mission and goals of student learning and to the development and advancement of Information Warfare Officer training; the

candidate who sets the example for others. The prize consists of a Framed RUSI Certificate; One-year Honorary Membership of RUSI NSW; and a \$200 gift voucher, which can be redeemed at the Australian War Memorial.

Membership

In this reporting period, the Membership Committee undertook a detailed and very thorough review of RUSI NSW's membership prior to sending this year's Annual Subscription notices. The Membership Committee has done a great job, and we can now have much greater confidence that our records accurately reflect factual financial membership numbers. RUSI NSW now has more than 350 financial members and is the largest RUSI of any State.

Relationship with National

RUSI NSW continues to support RUSI – Australia and seeks closer reciprocal arrangements with the State RUSI bodies. Together with the other State bodies, we pay an annual capitation fee to help finance national's activities, which now includes the publication of *United Service*. We congratulate Ron Lyons, who was elected to the Board of Directors of RUSI-Australia at its AGM held on 7 October 2024.

Patron and Vice Patrons.

On 3 May 2024 we received advice of the two-year extension of Her Excellency, the Honourable Margaret Beazley AC KC, as the Governor of New South Wales, following the approval of the Premier's recommendation by His Majesty The King. Her Excellency advised she was looking forward to continuing as our Patron until the conclusion of her term.

On behalf of the Board and all the members of RUSI NSW we offered our congratulations on the extended appointment and thanked Her Excellency for continuing as our Patron. We consider ourselves truly fortunate to have Her Excellency as our Patron and we greatly value the generous support, and the genuine interest she has always shown in our activities.

Jeff Connolly, CEO of Thales Australia, stepped down as a Vice Patron. Unlike his predecessor, who was based in Sydney, Jeff lives in Melbourne, finding it difficult to support an organisation that is geographically dislocated from his home and principal place of business and not being able to undertake as active a role in RUSI NSW as he would otherwise wish to do.

Major General Susan Coyle AM, CSC, DSM, Commander Forces Command, stood down as a Vice Patron on her promotion and posting on 1 July. The new Forces Commander, Major General Ana Duncan AM, CSC assumes command in January. Likewise, the Commander 2nd (Australian) Division, will also change over in December. Major General David Thomae AM is to be replaced by Brigadier Matthew Burr AM, former Commander 4th Brigade, on promotion to Major General. We will extend invitations for each to become a Vice Patron.

Appreciation

The Board wishes to express its sincere appreciation to all who have assisted materially in the effective operation of the Board during the reporting period; all our volunteers; all who continue to attend and support our lectures, seminars and participate in other activities.

We thank everyone who has renewed their membership, and the Board wishes to publicly acknowledge the generous donations made by those in a position to give something extra on top of their subscription. A strong membership base is vital to the continuing success of RUSI NSW.

A list of 2024 donors is provided at the conclusion of this report.



Kim Turner RFD
President
14 October 2024

In appreciation,

Major Benefactors:

Maria Myers
Allan Myers
John Leece

List of Donors in 2024:

Alan Abadee	Rod Cooke	Kenneth Myers
Jennifer Adamson (Family)	Ian Crawford	Geoffrey Paton
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