

Newsletter

September 2025



RSL
Mount Barker
Sub Branch

**They shall grow not old,
As we that are left grow old,
Age shall not weary them,
Nor the years condemn,
At the going down of the sun,
And in the morning,
We will remember them.**



Presidential Ponderings

Greetings once again fellow members. It's hard to believe, but the countdown to Christmas has begun! Time has a way of slipping by—be sure to pause and savour it!

As spring begins to stir and the frost lifts from our mornings, September offers us not only a chance to warm our hands—but to warm our thoughts with reflection.

This is a month steeped in meaning for many of us. With Legacy Week early in September and Battle for Australia Day observed on the first Wednesday, we are reminded that service comes in many forms—not all of them in uniform. There are the families who endure the long months without a loved one, the widows who carry memory with quiet dignity, and the children raised in the shadow of sacrifice, shaped by the strength of legacy. Their service, though unheralded, is no less real.

It's easy to think of the RSL as a place of medals and marches, of ceremonies and commemorations—but it is also, and perhaps more profoundly, a place of quiet service. A place where someone puts the kettle on without being asked. Where a hot meal appears on a cold night. Where someone sits beside you and simply listens. These humble acts—often unseen and unspoken—are the beating heart of our community.

This September, I encourage each of us to honour those quieter battles. Not just the ones fought long ago in distant lands, but those being faced right now—alone, in lounge rooms, in hospital wards, in backyards, and behind closed doors. If you know someone who served—and now finds themselves serving in silence—pick up the phone. Drop by. Invite them in. Remind them they're not forgotten.

Because when we gather, when we reach out and show up for one another, we don't just honour the past—we embody the very spirit and purpose for which the RSL was formed. And that, above all, is service worth remembering.

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LEST WE FORGET

Secretary's Scribbles

As we turn the page into September, there's a renewed sense of energy in the air—spring is waking up the hills, the days are getting longer, and our calendar here at the Sub-Branch is starting to bloom again too. A big thank you to everyone who's been actively participating in our weekly activities. It's been heartening to see familiar faces return and some new ones join us for bingo, coffee, and Friday night dinners. Your presence is what turns routine gatherings into real community.

This month, we pause to acknowledge Battle for Australia Day. It's a time to remember that service comes in many forms—on the front lines, at home, and within families. You'll find more on this inside the newsletter, and we encourage you to take a moment to reflect.

Meanwhile, behind the scenes, the committee continues to chip away at the practical tasks that keep the Sub-Branch humming. Our front office refurbishment plans are progressing, and we're seeking a tenant whose work aligns with veterans' welfare. If you know someone who might be a good fit, we'd love to hear from you.

Looking back— August saw us commemorate Vietnam Veterans' Day at the Mount Barker cenotaph. The service went well with local dignitaries attending and finishing with a short gathering and light lunch back at our building. Also, the recent Bus, Bites, Banter and Bottles excursion was a hit. Many thanks to Roger, from Ambler Touring, for a day of good food, good company, and coastal scenery—just what the doctor ordered.

Finally, a quiet word of thanks to those who lend their time and energy in the smallest of ways—setting up tables and chairs, cleaning up, arranging morning tea, writing minutes, or simply welcoming someone new. Your efforts don't go unnoticed, and they're deeply appreciated.

Stay well, stay connected.

"It has always been easy to hate and destroy. To build and cherish is much more difficult"
~Queen Elizabeth II

Treasurer's Tidbits

As the chill of winter fades and spring begins to stretch its legs, I'm pleased to report that the financial outlook for our Sub-Branch remains strong and steady.

Of course, none of this happens without our behind-the-scenes heroes. You know who you are—the ones arranging tables and chairs, setting tables, taking bins out, and making sure everything just works. You're the heart of this place, and the till thanks you! Now, I can't claim it's all been sunshine and sausage rolls. The one unfortunate event last month? Paying the insurance invoice—whaaaaaaa!! If you've ever watched your bank balance drop faster than a tray of Anzac biscuits off a wobbly table, you'll know the feeling. But alas, it's one of those unavoidable grown-up things—like taxes and losing the TV remote.

Our regular events continue to play a vital role, not just in keeping us connected, but also in providing a dependable stream of income. Tuesday bingo has become a well-oiled machine, humming along with precision and good humour. Wednesday Coffee and Chat remains a favourite spot for catching up and catching your breath, and our Friday Night dinners continue to draw a loyal crowd ready to enjoy good food and better company.

Looking forward, we're excited to welcome the return of our spring sausage sizzles. Our first spring BBQ will take place on Saturday, the 6th of September at Aston Hills—we'd love to see you there. Thank you all for continuing to support the Sub-Branch in so many ways. It's your presence, participation, and good cheer that help make everything we do not only possible, but enjoyable.

What is a Treasurer's biggest fear? *Someone saying, "just round it down" or "close enough".*

Battle for Australia Day— New Day of Remembrance

Observed: First Wednesday in September—Honouring Courage on the Home Front and Beyond.

As September arrives, Australians take a moment to mark an important, though sometimes overlooked, day of remembrance—**Battle for Australia**. It is a solemn yet proud occasion that acknowledges the service and sacrifice of those who defended Australia during a period when our sovereignty was under direct threat.

A day to recognise the **Battle for Australia** was officially declared in 2008 by the Australian Government following years of lobbying by veterans' groups and historians. These advocates believed that the coordinated series of battles and military campaigns fought around our region during 1942 and 1943 amounted to a collective defence of the nation itself—a true “Battle for Australia.” It captures a time when Australia was vulnerable, our cities were bombed, and the war was no longer a distant affair—it had reached our shores.

For many Australians today, it's hard to imagine the fear and uncertainty that gripped the nation in early 1942. Following the rapid expansion of Japanese forces across Southeast Asia, the Fall of Singapore on 15 February 1942 was a devastating blow. More than 15,000 Australian troops were taken prisoner, and our strategic link to British protection was effectively severed. Just four days later, war arrived directly on our doorstep. On 19 February 1942, the Japanese launched a massive aerial assault on Darwin, dropping more bombs than were used at Pearl Harbor. Over 230 people were killed, ships were sunk in the harbour, and infrastructure was destroyed. The northern parts of Australia endured more than 100 bombing raids over the course of the war.

At the same time, Japanese submarines entered Australian waters. In May 1942, they launched a midgeet submarine attack on Sydney Harbour, killing 21 sailors and sending a clear message: nowhere was beyond reach. Australia responded swiftly. With support from Allied forces, our military pushed back in a string of pivotal campaigns—most notably the Battle of the Coral Sea, Kokoda, Milne Bay, and Buna-Gona. These battles, fought in the jungles of Papua New Guinea and the surrounding waters, proved decisive. They marked the beginning of Japan's retreat and changed the course of the war in the Pacific.

The Kokoda Track campaign, in particular, has entered the national consciousness as a symbol of extraordinary endurance, sacrifice, and bravery. Young, often undertrained Australian militia soldiers faced overwhelming odds in the harshest of conditions, yet managed to halt the enemy advance. Their legacy still resonates as an example of courage forged under pressure.

Battle for Australia Day also recognises the home front effort—the civilians who worked tirelessly in factories, on farms, in communications, and civil defence. Women stepped into new roles across society. Citizens endured rationing, blackouts, and the ever-present anxiety of potential invasion. Australia's Merchant Navy played a crucial part in keeping supply lines open, often under direct threat from enemy submarines and aircraft. Their losses were significant, and their service is too often underappreciated.

While many of the veterans of this era are no longer with us, the importance of Battle for Australia Day grows stronger with each passing year. It serves as a reminder of what can happen when nations are caught unprepared, and of the extraordinary resolve that ordinary people can summon when faced with adversity. It also underscores the broader mission of the RSL—to ensure that the sacrifices of our veterans, past and present, are never forgotten. This is not just about commemorating great battles or high-ranking generals. It is about honouring every individual who stepped forward to defend Australia—those who fought, those who served, and those who kept the home fires burning.

At the Mount Barker RSL Sub-Branch, we encourage all members and the wider community to reflect on the meaning of this day. Attend a service if you can, share a story, educate younger generations, or simply take a moment in silence to remember. Our sub-branch will hold a small remembrance ceremony before morning tea (1000 hrs), at the sub-branch on Wednesday, 3 September 2025. Because remembrance is not just a duty—it is a legacy.

Dinner Menu — September



Friday 5th of September

- ✓ Roast Chicken with vegetables and gravy
- ✓ Mango Mousse with tropical fruits



Friday 12th of September

- ✓ Mongolian Beef with broccoli and rice
- ✓ Cheesecake



Friday 19th of September

- ✓ Battered Whiting with salad and chips
- ✓ Chocolate mocha cake



Friday 26th of September (Fellowship)

- ✓ British Ale Night
- ✓ British Beer Tasting and some traditional British Pub fare! Stay tuned for more details!

Members are eligible for a FREE meal during the month of their Birthday!

Cost is: \$22.00 for members
\$22.00 for under 18yrs

\$25.00 for non-members
\$17.00 for children under 12yrs

Bookings are essential. Either in person or call/text **0436 934 286**.
Bookings must be made by 12 noon on the Wednesday prior.

"Happiness is not readymade; it comes from your own actions."

~The Dalai Lama



BINGO at the RSL

- ✓ Every **Tuesday** at the RSL, in the downstairs dining area.
- ✓ Doors open at **12 midday**
- ✓ Eyes down at **1:00pm**
- ✓ 10 games plus a flyer game.
- ✓ Cash Prizes - Lucky Door Prize.
- ✓ We will always endeavour to have a snack available on the day at a very reasonable cost.

Honouring Everyday Service: The Australian Defence Medal

In September 2001, a new recognition was quietly introduced into Australia's honours system—one that would eventually acknowledge the service of hundreds of thousands of current and former Defence personnel. That medal is the **Australian Defence Medal (ADM)**.

Unlike medals awarded for operational deployment or acts of gallantry, the ADM recognises a different kind of contribution: the commitment to serve. It is awarded to members of the **Australian Defence Force** who have completed their initial enlistment period or four years of service—whichever is lesser. It may also be awarded posthumously to those whose service was cut short due to death, injury or illness.

Service Without Spotlight

For many veterans, especially those who served during peacetime, recognition can be hard to come by. Their stories are quieter—often without the backdrop of battlefield action— but they are no less important. The Australian Defence Medal acknowledges that every role, whether in logistics, training, engineering, administration or support, contributes to the strength and preparedness of the Australian Defence Force. For reservists, part-time personnel, and those whose service may have been largely on Australian soil, the medal has provided long-overdue formal appreciation.

A Medal That Says “Thank You”

RSL Mount Barker Sub-Branch has members who proudly wear the Australian Defence Medal. We have members that have served across a range of duties and missions, all deservedly wear the medal with pride. On receipt of this medal, many felt that their service finally mattered. Many recipients were not deployed to a war zone, but they were always ready to do so. This medal says “Thank You” and recognises that their readiness is valued.

Final Thought

The Australian Defence Medal reminds us that **every role in Defence matters**. Whether wielding a rifle or operating a radio, peeling potatoes or flying a jet, the commitment to serve under the Australian flag is worthy of recognition. And this medal—born quietly in September 2001—ensures that recognition is proudly worn by those who earned it.

Eligibility and Applying for the Australian Defence Medal

There are still many ex-Defence members out in the community that may not be aware of their entitlement to be awarded the Australian Defence Medal.

- Qualifying service:
- Four years of service from date of enlistment/appointment, or
 - Enlisted for a fixed period and completed the specified period—whichever is lesser
 - Former members who did not complete a qualifying period may be eligible if they:
 - ✓ died in service
 - ✓ were medically discharged
 - ✓ discharged from service due to a discriminatory Defence policy of the time
 - ✓ discharged from service as a consequence of mistreatment

Applications can be made through the Australian Defence website:

<https://www.defence.gov.au/adf-members-families/honours-awards/application-process>

If you are not sure if you, a family member or friend is eligible for the Australian Defence Medal, or need assistance in applying, make contact with the Secretary. That is what we are here for—and always happy to help!



ADF Operations and Peacekeeping—Part Two

Here we are with the second installment. As you can tell, the ADF has been, and continues to be, involved with numerous Operations and Peacekeeping Missions around the globe. As part of the broader international community, Australia punches well above their weight with regard to our contribution to global security, peacekeeping and humanitarian support.

We start this edition with the most significant deployment since the Vietnam War. Although I have touched on the ADF participation in humanitarian operations, not all have been included here—particularly with regard to domestic operations (like civilian support post Cyclones, floods, and bushfires).

2001-2014	Afghanistan, Pakistan, Persian Gulf, Kuwait, Iraq	Warlike. 9/11 & War on Terror: On 11 September 2001, nearly 5,000 people were killed in terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York. In response, the U.S. declared a global "War on Terror", targeting terrorist groups and their host nations. The attack was linked to Osama Bin Laden, a Saudi exile living in Afghanistan and operating with Al-Qaeda under Taliban protection. The Taliban refused to surrender him, leading to U.S.-led military intervention in Afghanistan, supported by British, German, and Australian (SASR) forces. Bin Laden was eventually killed by U.S. forces in Pakistan on 2 May 2011. ISAF (International Security Assistance Force): Formed in 2001 under a UN mandate after the Bonn Conference, ISAF aimed to create security in Kabul and support Afghanistan's reconstruction. NATO assumed command in 2003, providing leadership stability. ISAF's mission expanded nationwide under UNSCR 1510, conducting security operations, training Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), and supporting governance and development. ISAF ended in 2014, transitioning to NATO's Resolute Support Mission. ADF Deployment & Operations: Over 30,000 Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel served in the Middle East since 2001. Peak deployments included 1,560 in Afghanistan and ~830 in the MEAO. ADF roles included combat, mentoring, reconstruction, logistics, intelligence, aviation (e.g., Chinooks, Hornets, UAVs), and naval support. Key operations included: ✓ Op BASTILLE (Jan–Mar 2003): Pre-combat deployment to support UN disarmament efforts in Iraq; later transitioned to Op FALCONER. ✓ Op SLIPPER: Main ADF deployment in Afghanistan. ✓ Op HIGHROAD: Replaced SLIPPER in 2014, focusing on training/advising ANSF. ✓ Op MANITOU & Op ACCORDION: Covered maritime security and regional support post-2014. Australia held leadership in Uruzgan Province from 2005, especially from 2012 under Combined Team –Uruzgan (CT-U), supporting infrastructure development (e.g., Tarin Kot Base), mentoring, and transition of security to Afghan control. Post-2013, focus shifted to Kabul and Kandahar, with ongoing training and advisory roles. Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) supported with Heron UAVs for ISR missions. Australian Federal Police (AFP): AFP initially deployed 16 officers to support Afghan policing. This grew to 28, with roles in: ✓ ANP training and mentoring (Tarin Kot) ✓ Counter-narcotics and intelligence (Kabul, Kandahar) ✓ Afghan Threat Finance Cell (until 2010) ✓ Afghan Major Crime Task Force (IOCC coordination) AFP Operation Illuminate focused on developing the Afghan National Police's capability to take over security responsibilities. Deceased: 41 Wounded: >260 ADF Personnel.
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2002-2005	East Timor	Warlike. The UN Mission of Support in East Timor (UNMISET) was established by UN Resolution 1272/99 on 25 October 2000 and commenced on 20 May 2002, East Timor's Independence Day. Operation CITADEL replaced Operation TANAGER, supporting post-independence peacekeeping efforts and consolidating gains made under the earlier UN Transitional Administration (UNTAET). Australian combat battalion groups (Ausbatt) were deployed as part of the UNMISET Peacekeeping Force. Non-Warlike. After UNMISET's initial mandate ended on 20 May 2004, the UN extended the mission for two additional six-month periods, concluding in May 2005. Australia continued its support under Operation SPIRE, committing approximately 100 ADF personnel. ADF Deployment Highlights: ✓ Australian Combined Battle Group: Infantry, armour, engineers, signals, military geo-spatial info, logistics, military police, health team, and military working dogs. ✓ Peacekeeping Force HQ: Based in Dili. ✓ Blackhawk Helicopters: Three units based at Moleana. ✓ UN Military Observers: Deployed throughout Timor-Leste. ✓ Australian National Command Element, RAAF, and RAN also provided ongoing support Estimated total ADF deployed: 3,200
2003	Iraq	Warlike. Australia provided one of the four most substantial combat force contingents during the 2003 invasion of Iraq under the operational codename Operation FALCONER. Part of its contingent were among the first forces to enter Iraq after the official "execute" order. The initial Australian force consisted of three Royal Australian Navy ships, 500 special forces soldiers, P-3 Orion maritime patrol aircraft, C-130 Hercules transport aircraft and No. 75 Squadron RAAF (which included 14 F/A-18 Hornet fighters) which was the first combat deployment of Australian aircraft since the Vietnam War. Combat forces committed to Operation FALCONER for the 2003 Invasion were withdrawn during 2003. Australian Forces: Made an important though limited contribution to Coalition operations during the invasion of Iraq. The Australian contribution was also geographically dispersed, with the Australian forces forming part of larger US and British units rather than a concentrated Australian unit. No Australian personnel were killed or taken prisoner during the war. However, one American contractor was killed by small arms fire from the surface, whilst flying onboard an Australian C-130H aircraft. Deployed: Approximately 2,000 personnel including 2 RAN Frigates with a single Seahawk helicopter each, one Amphibious Warfare ship carrying 350 crew and soldiers, including embarked Australian Army LCM-8 landing craft and an anti-aircraft contingent, a Sea King helicopter and a bomb disposal team; Clearance Diving Team Three; Royal Australian Air Force Squadron operating 14 F/A-18 Hornet fighter jets together with 250 command, coordination, support and aircrew personnel; Three C-130H Hercules transport aircraft and 150 support personnel; Two AP-3C Orion maritime patrol aircraft and 150 support personnel; Australian Army – 500-strong special forces task group consisting of: Forward Command Element; Special Forces Task Group attached to Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-West (CJSOTF-W) including: 1 Squadron Group (SASR), Platoon (+), Royal Australian Regiment (Commando), D Troop Incident Response Regiment, Combat Service Support Group; 3 CH-47 Chinooks and support elements; 2 LCM-8 Landing Craft; and about 60 HQ personnel.
2003-2017	Afghanistan	Warlike. The International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) was established following the Bonn Conference (Dec 2001) to support the newly formed Afghan Transitional Authority and create a secure environment in Kabul for reconstruction. This led to a partnership between the Afghan Transitional Authority, UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), and ISAF. NATO took command of ISAF on 11 August 2003. Australia's military contribution to ISAF was deployed under Operation SLIPPER. Australia supported UNAMA, a UN political mission established by UNSC Resolution 1401 (March 2002) to coordinate reconciliation, humanitarian relief, and reconstruction in Afghanistan. ADF deployed under Operation PALATE (Initial ADF contribution) and Operation PALATE II (Ongoing support). Up to 2 ADF officers initially served as military advisers. As of 2014, 5 ADF officers are serving in Kabul and Jalalabad, liaising with all military forces on behalf of UNAMA, under UNSC Resolution 2145 (2014) which renewed and expanded the mission's scope.

2003-2009	Iraq	Warlike. Operation CATALYST, the successor to Operation FALCONER and Operation BASTILLE (under Operation SLIPPER), began in July 2003. It was the ADF's contribution to the US-led Multinational Force effort to develop a secure and stable environment in Iraq, to assist national recovery programs and facilitate the transition to Iraqi self-government. The Government adjusted Australia's military commitment to Iraq after the transition from offensive combat operations to stabilisation and recovery operations. This role then developed into a key security and training role enabling the people of Iraq to take responsibility for their own security. Australian personnel were responsible for training approximately 36,000 members of the Iraqi Army, Navy and Marines, including the conduct of specialist training in logistics support, counter-insurgency operations and maritime interception and interdiction operations in protecting Iraq's vital offshore resources so critical to its economic future. Deployed: Approximately 1000 Servicemen and women from all three services were first deployed to Iraq in 2003 in a range of combat and combat support roles. By February 2007, the number of personnel assigned to Op CATALYST had been raised to 1,575 personnel mainly through increased security and training capabilities. In total more than 20,000 ADF personnel through: Al Muthanna province Battle Group; Dhi Qar province Battle Group; RAN led Iraqi Coastal Defence Force Training Team; RAN Major Fleet Units and embarked flights; AATT – Iraq; combined Communications, Information Systems tactical and Logistics elements; Medical elements; a Joint Task Force Headquarters; personnel embedded in various coalition headquarters; Task Force 158 Fleet Battle Staff; Coalition Air Operations Command personnel; a RAAF P3-C Orion detachment; a RAAF C-130 Hercules detachment; a combat support element providing Air Traffic Control; and Defence civilian advisers. Deceased: 2 ADF
2003-2013	Solomon Islands	Non-Warlike: The Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) was an Australian-led peacekeeping mission involving 15 nations, aimed at restoring peace, law and order, and supporting government functions in the Solomon Islands. It succeeded the International Peace Monitoring Team (Operation PLUMBOB) and was also known as Operation HELPEM FREN. RAMSI officially ended on 30 June 2017 after nearly 14 years. The goals of RAMSI was to: provide Security and Law Enforcement; reform the Justice sector; Economic governance; Government Institutional development. After a 10-year ADF contribution, RAMSI transitioned to a policing-only mission in July 2013, partnering with the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force to build a modern and independent police service. Australia led the mission, providing 95% of the funding. ADF Deployment to OPERATION ANODE / RAMSI: Since 2003, about 7,270 ADF personnel deployed to Operation ANODE, supporting RAMSI for over 10 years. Of these, approximately 2,112 were Australian Army Reservists. Deployment was at the invitation of the Solomon Islands Government to support law and order. The Australian-led Combined Task Force 635 (CTF635) included personnel from New Zealand, Tonga, and Papua New Guinea. Military tasks involved responding to incidents beyond the Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) and Participating Police Force (PPF) capacity, supporting police patrols, and maintaining security post-2006 riots. The AFP led the PPF with 250+ personnel from 15 Pacific nations; Australia provided the largest contingent. Specialist military staff coordinated multi-national efforts and provided communications, IT, and logistics support. ADF support ended on 1 July 2013, with remaining Defence personnel preparing equipment for return, completing withdrawal by 1 August 2013. Deceased: ADF—1; AFP—1

2005-2011	Sudan	Non-Warlike. The latest north-south civil war in Sudan began in 1983 after the breakdown of the 1972 Addis Ababa Agreement. For over two decades, the Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A), the main southern rebel group, fought over resources, power, religion's role in the state, and self-determination. The conflict caused over two million deaths, displaced four million, and forced about 600,000 to flee as refugees. The UN Security Council, through resolution 1590 (2005) on 24 March 2005, authorized the United Nations Mission in Sudan (UNMIS) to support the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) signed by the Government and SPLM on 9 January 2005. UNMIS provided political support, monitored security arrangements, and assisted with governance, recovery, and development. Australia's contribution to the mission was codenamed Operation AZURE. The ADF deployed 17 personnel on rotation. UNMIS tasks included supporting the CPA, facilitating refugee and internally displaced persons' voluntary return, humanitarian aid, assisting mine action, and promoting human rights in Sudan. A referendum on Southern Sudan's status took place as scheduled in January 2011, with 98.83% voting for independence. On 9 July 2011, South Sudan became the world's newest country, marking the end of the six-year peace process. UNMIS's mandate ended on 9 July 2011 after completing the interim period set by the CPA. On 8 July 2011, the Security Council adopted resolution 1996, establishing the United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS) to consolidate peace, security, and development conditions.
2005-2006	Timor Leste	Non-Warlike. Operation CHIRON was the ADF's contribution to the UN Special Political Mission in Timor-Leste, following the end of peacekeeping operations in early 2005. In its place, a UN office was established to support the Timor-Leste Government, with the ADF participating through the Defence Cooperation Program (DCP)—an Australian regional initiative aimed at developing the Timor-Leste Defence Force (F-FDTL) through training, advice, and support. Under Operation CHIRON, the ADF deployed four military advisers as part of a 15-officer multinational team. Activities included: English language instruction; Leadership and junior officer development; Senior staff training in command, planning, logistics, and admin; Communications and equipment training; High-level advisory support on capability, doctrine, budgeting, and coordination. A major ADF contribution was the \$7.5 million construction of a training centre for the F-FDTL at Metinaro.
2006-2013	Timor Leste	Non-Warlike. The Australian-led International Stabilisation Force (ISF) began on 25 May 2006 at the request of the Timor-Leste Government to restore public order and stability. Operation ASTUTE concluded on 25 March 2013 when the final base—the Helicopter Point of Disembarkation—was handed over to Timor-Leste authorities. By June 2006, around 2,600 ADF personnel were deployed across land, sea, and air. Of these, 1,900 ground troops operated in Dili, focusing on suppressing communal and gang violence. Key Australian force elements at the peak of the operation included: Amphibious Landing Ship in Dili Harbour (medical, comms, accommodation, support); 8 Landing Craft Heavy; Infantry Battalion Group; Commando Company Group; 8 Black Hawk helicopters; C-130 Hercules transport aircraft; RAAF Airfield Defence Guards detachment.
2006-2012	Timor Leste	Non-Warlike. The United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste (UNMIT) was established on 25 August 2006 by UN Security Council Resolution 1704 in response to civil unrest. It was the UN's fifth mission in Timor since 1999 and the third since independence in 2002. UNMIT aimed to support the Government in consolidating stability, promoting democratic governance, facilitating political dialogue, national reconciliation, and social cohesion. With personnel from 13 countries, the UNMIT Military Liaison Group monitored the security situation and provided military advice. ADF Contribution: Australia deployed four ADF personnel under codename Operation TOWER—three as Military Liaison Officers (MLOs) in districts outside Dili, and one at UNMIT Headquarters. ADF members also served as staff officers in Dili. ADF MLOs contributed to security reform, including the professional development of the East Timor Defence Force (F-FDTL), through designing and delivering liaison officer training for F-FDTL officers and SNCOs. This work was officially recognised by the Prime Minister and senior F-FDTL leadership, enhancing Australia's reputation and contribution within UNMIT.

2006-Present	Australia	Peacetime. Operation RESOLUTE is the Australian Defence Force contribution to the whole-of-government effort to protect Australia's borders and offshore maritime interests. Operation RESOLUTE covers approximately 10 per cent of the world's surface and includes the Australia's exclusive economic zone, which extends up to 200 nautical miles from the Australian mainland and offshore territories. Christmas, Cocos Keeling, Heard, McDonald, Macquarie, Norfolk and Lord Howe islands also fall within the Operation RESOLUTE boundaries. The Australian Defence Force (ADF) contributes forces under Operation RESOLUTE to Maritime Border Command, a multi-agency taskforce within the Australian Border Force (ABF) which utilises assets to conduct civil maritime security operations. Maritime Border Command protects Australia's maritime domain from security threats, including: illegal maritime arrivals; maritime terrorism; piracy, robbery and violence at sea; compromise to biosecurity; illegal activity in protected areas; illegal exploitation of natural resources; marine pollution; prohibited imports and exports. ADF personnel may be on Operation Resolute, either at sea, in the air or on the land. They work alongside personnel from ABF and other agencies. This number fluctuates depending on how many assets are assigned to the mission at the time. The following ADF elements may be allocated to Operation Resolute: Royal Australian Air Force maritime patrol aircraft to provide aerial surveillance of Australia's north-west and northern approaches. Royal Australian Navy's patrol boats operate daily throughout Australia's maritime areas. Australian Army Regional Force Surveillance Unit patrols which conduct land based security operations. A transit security element made up of Navy and Army personnel who embark in the patrol boats. Large hull vessels as required basis. In addition, ADF units, whilst not assigned to Operation Resolute, also contribute to the overall surveillance and security effort through their presence and regular transits of the area. Deceased: 1 x Sailor Prior to Operation RESOLUTE there were a number individual operations to address similar tasking. They were: Operation DIRK (1997), Operation CRANBERRY (1997-2006), Operation STANHOPE (1998), Operation MISTRAL (1998-2006), Operation TEEBONE (2001), Operation SUTTON (2002), Operation RELEX (2001-2002) and Operation RELEX II (2002-2006),
2006	Fiji	Non-Warlike. Operation QUICKSTEP was the ADF's operation to safeguard Australians and approved foreign nationals in Fiji, following the threat of a military coup. A taskforce was deployed to the South Pacific, prepared to conduct evacuations if needed. Deployed assets included: 1 Landing Platform Amphibious (LPA); 1 Sea King Helicopter; 1 Frigate; 1 Seahawk Helicopter; 1 Replenishment vessel; 1 P-3C Orion aircraft; Multiple C-130 Hercules and Boeing 707s; 4 UH-60 helicopters; Evacuation Handling Teams; SASR and Commando contingents; ~50 medical staff (Level 3 surgical capability); 2 Defence supplementation staff. Deceased: 2 ADF
2006	Tonga	Non-Warlike. Operation QUICKSTEP TONGA was the ADF response to assist the Government of Tonga with the restoration of law and order in Tonga. Around 50 ADF personnel were deployed to Tonga as part of a combined military force that supported the Tongan Security Forces in stabilising the security situation after riots in the city of Nuku'alofa on the 16th November 2006. On the 18th November, approximately 110 soldiers and 44 police officers from Australia and New Zealand arrived to help the local police to establish order. The New Zealand army was in charge of airport security and the police were to protect the High Commission. The Australian contingent provided assistance and relieved the exhausted Tongan police.

2008-2011	Iraq	Warlike. Operation KRUGER was the Australian Defence Force's contribution to the provision of dedicated security and support to the Australian Embassy and its staff operating in Iraq since the conclusion of combat operations in 2003 until mid-2011. Initially deployed under Operation CATALYST, Security Detachment Iraq (SECDET Iraq) transitioned to Operation KRUGER on 1 July 2008 and remained in Baghdad after the ADF's larger commitment to the rehabilitation of Iraq concluded in mid 2009. During the eight years of security operations, the SECDET adjusted its capability to reflect periods of increasing danger or improved security in post-2003 Iraq. SECDET was based on an Australian Army combined arms combat team consisting of an Infantry company group and a troop of Cavalry which operated the Australian Light Armoured (ASLAV) vehicles. Duties included physical security for the Embassy precinct in Baghdad and the close personal protection for key Australian government officials as well as protected transport for travel within Baghdad and other areas of Iraq. In association with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, SECDET gradually scaled back the provision of security and assisted in the transition to a contracted security solution in line with that provided to other Australian diplomatic missions. SECDET was withdrawn in August 2011 after the complete transfer of security responsibilities to the civilian contractor took place in late July 2011 when the operation came to an end. Approximately 80-100 ADF personnel were deployed at any one time.
2008-2013	Iraq	Warlike. The United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI) is a political mission established by the 2003 UN Security Council Resolution 1500 at the request of the Government of Iraq. It has been on the ground ever since, with its role greatly expanded in 2007 with the passage of Resolution 1770. UNAMI is mandated to advise and assist the Government and people of Iraq on a number of fronts. This includes advancing inclusive, political dialogue and national reconciliation, assisting in the electoral process and in the planning for a national census, facilitating regional dialogue between Iraq and its neighbours, and promoting the protection of human rights and judicial and legal reform. More about UNAMI's mandate. The mandate also tasks UNAMI with working with government partners and civil society to coordinate the humanitarian and development efforts of the UN agencies, funds and programmes, under the leadership of the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for development and humanitarian support who is also the Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator in Iraq. While UNAMI itself does not implement or deliver humanitarian and development programmes, it recognizes the critical importance of supporting the partnership and technical cooperation between the Government of Iraq and the 20 UN agencies, funds and programmes operating in the country. Deployed: Since July 2008, the ADF contributed two Army Officers to the UNAMI. The final rotation of the two officers completed their deployment and departed Iraq on 25 November 2013. The ADF deployed a total of 11 Australian military officers under Op RIVERBANK. The officers fulfilled roles as military advisers to the UNAMI.
2008-2011	Darfur	Non-Warlike. Darfur, located in western Sudan, was an independent sultanate until 1916, when it became part of Sudan under Anglo-Egyptian control. Since 2003, the region has faced a humanitarian crisis due to ongoing civil conflict between Sudanese government forces and local populations. The war has led to hundreds of thousands of deaths, and 1.8 million people remain displaced. In 2006, the African Union sent a peacekeeping mission, replaced in 2008 by the joint African Union/UN Hybrid operation in Darfur (UNAMID), the largest peacekeeping mission at the time. Established in 2007 under Security Council resolution 1769, UNAMID's main focus is the protection of civilians. It also works to secure humanitarian aid, monitor agreements, support political processes, and report on issues along Sudan's borders with Chad and the Central African Republic. The ADF supported UN operations in logistics and planning through Operation HEDGEROW, but its personnel stopped being deployed in August 2009 due to visa delays. The operation formally ended in July 2011. The ADF maintained a commitment of up to 9 personnel.

2011-Present	South Sudan	Non-Warlike. The UN Security Council established UNMIS on 24 March 2005 following the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement between the Sudanese government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement, ending a 20-year civil war. UNMIS helped implement the agreement and protect civilians. On 9 July 2011, South Sudan became an independent nation. In response to South Sudan's security challenges, the Security Council created UNMISS on 8 July 2011 (Resolution 1996) to support peace, security, and nation-building in the newly formed Republic of South Sudan. After the 2013 crisis, Resolution 2155 (2014) strengthened UNMISS's mandate, focusing on civilian protection, human rights, and humanitarian assistance. Australia's contribution to UNMIS transitioned to UNMISS under Operation ASLAN, which began on 23 September 2011. An ADF contingent of up to 25 personnel are engaged in key HQ positions, aviation and logistics support roles as well as military liaison officers. Up to 10 AFP officers assist with police training and evaluation programs, and the provision of mentoring for the South Sudan Police Service.
2014-Present	Middle East	Non-Warlike. Operation MANITOU is the ADF contribution to support international efforts to promote maritime security, stability and prosperity in the Middle East Region. The operation is under command of Joint Task Force 633 (JTF633), which is the Australian National HQ in the Middle East Region. The RAN routinely sends a Major Fleet Unit to the Combined Maritime Forces which is composed of 31 nations and has three principle tasks: counter-terrorism and maritime security; counter piracy; Arabian Gulf maritime security. The ADF provides a small staff (up to 16 personnel) that is permanently embedded within the Combined Maritime Forces HQ. The RAN also deploys a liaison officer for the UK Maritime Trade Operations Office and deploys a Major Fleet Unit on a four-month rotation.
2014-2024	Iraq, Syria	Warlike. Established in 2014, Operation OKRA was Australia's commitment to the US-led multinational Combined Joint Task Force – Operation INHERENT RESOLVE, formed to secure a lasting defeat of the violent extremist group Daesh. More than 4,800 ADF personnel deployed to the Middle East as part of Operation OKRA. It included deployments of an Air Task Group, Task Group TAJI, a Special Operations Task Group, and a number of ADF personnel embedded in coalition positions and liaison roles. Operation OKRA tangibly enhanced the Iraqi Security Forces' ability to independently undertake operations against Daesh, enabling Australia and other nations to reduce direct military support.
2014-Present	Bahrain, Qatar, UAE	Non-Warlike. Operation ACCORDION is the provision of a HQ element in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) which supports deployed ADF personnel and assets in the Middle East Region. The mission is to support the sustainment of ADF operations, enable contingency planning and enhance regional relationships in the Middle East Region. HQ personnel assigned to the operation provide support through: communications; admin and logistics; airbase operations; air mobility; movements support; command and control.
2014-Present	Global	Non-Warlike. Initially Operation AUGURY was commenced in Jordan, but is now the ADF global framework in support of efforts to counter terrorism and violent extremist organisation around the world. Defeating terrorism is in Australia's national interest. Terrorists and other violent extremist organisations have perpetrated attacks in Australia and globally. Australia must continue to guard against the spread of violent extremism to the Indo-Pacific region. Specific tasks under Operation Augury will generally not be publicly disclosed for operational security reasons. Response to domestic terrorist threats remains the responsibility of the relevant state/territory Government authorities. Where required, the ADF will support authorities with specialised capabilities which may be employed through the Operation AUGURY. Contributing personnel—42.
2015-2021	Afghanistan	Warlike. From 2001 to 2021, Australia's mission in Afghanistan supported coalition efforts to contain the threat from international terrorism and support the Afghan Government. Operation HIGHROAD commenced in January 2015, when Afghanistan took the lead for its own security, to support the NATO Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan (which replaced the previous NATO-led International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission). Together with coalition partners, the ADF worked alongside the Afghan National Defence and Security Forces as they built their defence security and counter-terrorism forces, to deny terrorist organisations safe havens in which to plan and export terror attacks. Contribution: Around 250 ADF (RAN, ARA, RAAF) and Defence civilians.

ADF Humanitarian support and Surveillance Missions

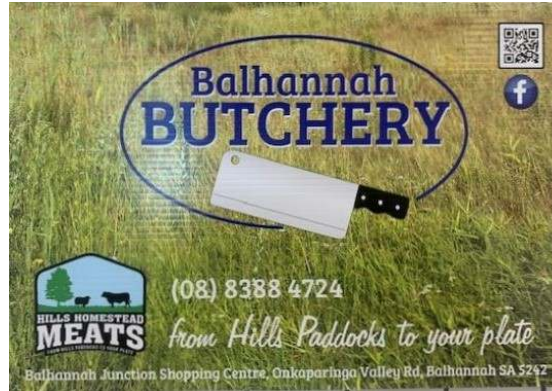
Apart from Operations and Peacekeeping, ADF elements have conducted many humanitarian and surveillance missions outside of Australian Exclusive Economic Zone. Below are probably the most notable and continuing operations. There are many other missions that are conducted from time-to-time for short periods for specific taskings (particularly disaster relief).

1952-Present	Pacific Island Nations	Operation CHRISTMAS DROP is the USAF Pacific Air Forces operation to provide humanitarian support to remote island in the South Pacific. The RAAF was invited to participate and first joined in 2015 and deploys C-130J Hercules aircraft and a detachment of personnel to Guam to fly airdrop missions.
1980-Present	North Indian Ocean, South China Sea, shipping lanes	Operation GATEWAY is the Australian Defence Force contribution to the preservation of regional security and stability in South East Asia. The Australian Defence Force (ADF) provides maritime surveillance patrols in the North Indian Ocean and South China Sea as part of this commitment. Operating out of Royal Malaysian Air Force Base Butterworth, the operation is a key aspect of the Malaysia-Australia Joint Defence Program. Australia's commitment to Operation GATEWAY, including the number of personnel involved, varies periodically with each deployment.
2017–Present	South East Asia	Indo-Pacific Endeavour (IPE) is an annual activity, coordinated by the Australian Defence Force, to strengthen Australia's partnerships across the region through military cooperation, joint training and people-to-people engagement. Launched in 2017, IPE remains a flagship demonstration of Australia's commitment to stability, peace and prosperity, benefiting all nations that call this region home. The 2025 program will involve engagement with countries across South East Asia and the North East Indian Ocean including Bangladesh, Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, the Maldives, the Philippines, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor-Leste and Vietnam. Commander IPE 2025 Brigadier Jennifer Harris will lead the 2025 engagement in the region, coordinating activities across Defence and Australian Government agencies. The 2025 IPE program continues to leverage a flexible model, shifting away from embarked forces. This enables a longer execution window, ensuring IPE is better integrated into the international engagement landscape and allowing for more tailored and nuanced engagements with partner nations. For 2025, the focus will be on human capital and culture including: • English language training • Professional military education • Workforce planning • Unique cultural intersections, such as faith and music. In addition, maritime security and law, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, peace keeping operations and integrating emerging and disruptive technologies will also be the focus.
2018-Present	North Korea shipping lanes	Operation ARGOS is the Australian Defence Forces commitment to the international effort to enforce United Nations Security Council sanctions on North Korea. Enforcing sanctions supports the international community's goal of the complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of North Korea. United Nations Security Council sanctions limit North Korea's imports of refined petroleum and crude oil, and its exports of coal, all of which are facilitated by such transfers. The Australian Defence Force (ADF) contributes via Operation ARGOS by monitoring and deterring illegal ship-to-ship transfers of sanctioned goods. ADF assets that are periodically dedicated to Operation ARGOS for tasking include Royal Australian Naval ships and Royal Australian Air Force maritime patrol aircraft.
2019-Present	Philippines	In support of the Enhanced Defence Cooperation Program with the Philippines, training is conducted between the Australian Defence Force and the Armed Forces of the Philippines under the Joint Australian Training Team – Philippines (JATT-P) program. Defence supports training and education opportunities for personnel from the Armed Forces of the Philippines and middle- to senior-ranked personnel from the Department of National Defense. Training opportunities predominately take the form of formal courses and workshops conducted in the Philippines by ADF mobile training teams. Australia's broad defence engagement with the Philippines is underpinned by the Enhanced Defence Cooperation Program, with key pillars of maritime security and counter-terrorism, in addition to training and education, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, and Gender, Peace and Security.

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DVA—New Resources for Veterans living in Aged Care

The veteran's guide to living in an aged care home is designed to assist and support veterans and families living in an aged care home.

The guide describes the support available for clients and their families through DVA, ex-service organisations and other advocacy services to enable them to live well when living in an aged care home. The focus is on recognition, the importance of lifestyle, accessing clinically needed supports and remaining connected to friends, family and community when living in an aged care facility. The guide and related resources include:

- ✓ information on developing care plans with your aged care provider
- ✓ accessing DVA supports and services that meet the client's needs
- ✓ resources to help aged care staff gain a better understanding of the veteran's or war widow(er)'s life experience
- ✓ a set of recognition products with a poppy motif that DVA clients can choose to display in their residential aged care home.

Designed in collaboration with aged care providers, peak bodies and those with lived experience, the guide is easy to read, informative and tailored specifically for the use of veterans, families and their carers. In addition to the veteran's guide, DVA has also published resources to help residential aged care providers, and their teams better understand the unique needs of DVA clients, and the additional support that may be available to them. The veterans guide will be mailed out to DVA Veteran Gold Card and Veteran White Card Holders living in residential aged care, along with a letter from the Repatriation Commissioner.

Resources available here: <https://www.dva.gov.au/ac>

If you are unable to access the above electronically, let us know and we will arrange to have relevant documentation sent to you.

"Kindness doesn't cost anything.... But its value is immeasurable."

- Anonymous



British Ale Night

Friday — 26 September 2025

Jeff has suggested (and is now organising) an evening of British Ale and Pub fare! The idea is to taste various British Ale's that will be served on 'tasting paddles'. Accompanying the ale, will be some traditional British Pub fare!

- ✓ **Time:** 6:30pm for Ode and then start proceedings.
- ✓ **Where:** Mount Barker RSL .
- ✓ **Cost:** To be advised.
- ✓ **Who:** Members and guests.

Interested?

Please talk to Jeff (or the committee) if you have suggestions or can provide assistance with food preparation.



Tally Ho, old chap.

About the RSL

We are Australia's largest ex-service organisation, founded in 1916 to support veterans and their families. Initially focused on repatriation and medical services for WW1 veterans, the RSL's mission has evolved to address the changing needs of each generation of servicemen and women.

Core Functions:

- Veteran Welfare
- Advocacy
- Commemoration
- Support for Families
- Camaraderie
- Public Education

Membership

We are always looking to bring new members into our group! If you know anyone that may be interested in joining us, please pass them our contact details, or even just give them this newsletter.

No doubt, there are many Veterans out there in the community that have not thought about joining their local RSL. There are many more community members that we would like to invite into our ranks as well. They just need to be aware that we are here!

We are here to provide a place for the Veteran community and members of the community in general to mix, relax and enjoy some like-minded company.

Change of Contact Details

We don't want to lose contact with members. So please let the Secretary know if you change your address, phone or email details.

Dates to Remember

BBQ Fundraiser	Location	Details
Saturday — 6 Sep 2025	Aston Hills Shopping Centre	Meet at the RSL at around 9:00am to prepare and transport equipment to location.
Saturday — 20 Sep 2025	Urban Cellars—ALDI Carpark	

General Meetings	Committee Meetings	Morning Tea and Chat
Tuesday— 2 Sep 2025	Tuesday— 16 Sep 2025	Don't forget that the Sub-Branch hosts a Morning Tea every Wednesday morning at 10:00am. Light refreshments available for a small donation. This is open to everyone, so bring along a friend or neighbour!
Tuesday— 7 Oct 2025	Tuesday— 21 Oct 2025	
Tuesday— 4 Nov 2025	Tuesday— 18 Nov 2025	

Significant Dates	Event	Remarks
1 September 1918	Battle for Mont St Quentin	Australian Forces crossed the Somme River.
3 September	Battle for Australia Day	Honour sacrifices of Australians on the home front.
3 September	Merchant Navy Day	Anniversary of first attack on allied merchant ship (WW2).
14 September	Australian Peacekeepers Day	First Australians deployed for peacekeeping in 1947.
15 September 1940	Battle of Britain Day	Pivotal victory of RAF against German Luftwaffe.
20 September 1999	Arrival of INTERFET in East Timor	Australia led multi-national force to restore peace and security in East Timor.
26 September 1943	Operation JAYWICK	Secret WW2 commando raid of UK and Australian 'Z Special Unit'. Used disguised fishing boat to penetrate Singapore harbour and sink seven Japanese vessels.
29 September 1918	Breaking the Hindenburg Line	Allied forces breach the so-called Hindenburg line, the last line of German defences on the Western Front.