



RAEME ASSOCIATION – QUEENSLAND

SPANNER NEWS EDITION 4/11 Nov 11

Chairman's Desk – November 2011

This is the last edition of Spanner News for 2011. Where did 2011 go?? November is upon us and your Association continues to be very busy providing services to members, organising functions and trying our best to keep you informed.

On staying informed, may I encourage you to visit our web site and provide observations on the "Comments Page" to our Web Master, Leo Galligan at www.raemeqld.org. Leo is always appreciative of constructive advice and assistance.

As reported last month the "Bridging the Gap" presentations to RAEME units and elements throughout SE Queensland are going very well and continue to attract lots of interest from our younger serving members of all ranks. This program of informing our serving folk on the role the Association, both nationally and regionally, and what it can do for them in the medium to long term, is important to the growth and future of all our Associations.

RACQ Batteries have come on board as a new sponsor. At the end of this newsletter there is an offer for all financial members for a \$25 discount voucher when you purchase a battery from RACQ. Additionally RACQ have sponsored several recently returned veterans to the RAEME Birthday All Ranks Luncheon on the 27 November at the Port Office Hotel, Brisbane.

In addition, RACQ will also sponsor a battery voucher raffle prize for each Spanner Club conducted at Enoggera, Amberley and Oakey in the future. This is a very welcome and generous sponsorship for our members.

The Association have some marvellous sponsors and of particular note is ENZED Brisbane Central, who without hesitation, contributed \$1000.00 in support of our Corps veterans and the RAEME Birthday All

Ranks Luncheon to assist in keeping the costs down. Thanks Jeff, Suzanne Maurice and family.

Speaking of the luncheon, on 27 Nov 11, we still have some vacancies, so come along to meet and support these sponsors.

On your behalf, I would like to thank our retiring COL COMDT-QLD Region, COL Bryce Titcume, for the support he has given the Association over many years. Whilst Bryce has moved on from his representative position, he has agreed to continue as the Patron of the Association. Bryce, thank you from all members of the RAEME Association – Queensland.

Also on your behalf, I wish to welcome our new Hon COL COMDT QLD Region COL Richard Kluckhohn. We will feature him in our next issue of the Spanner News.

Finally, and most importantly, to all members and readers, Merry Christmas and a very happy and joyful New Year.

Raymond G. Norman OAM
Chairman RAQ and National President RAN

Regards,

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FROM THE OUTGOING COL COMDT

I write this with a slight tinge of sadness as it will be my final contribution to the Spanner News as your Colonel Commandant. On 21st October 2011 at the Corps Conference Lieutenant Colonel Richard Kluckhohn took over as the RAEME Colonel Commandant - Queensland. As my swan-song in the appointment I was honoured to chair the Corps Committee Meeting in the absence of Brigadier George Yacoub and perform the duties of Dining President at the Officers Corps Dinner for the same reason. I am also delighted to announce that Brigadier Dave McGahey, CSC, has returned to the fold as the new Representative Colonel Commandant. He is a great stalwart of the Corps and as a past Head of Corps there is no doubt he has a lot to contribute. The other new appointment announced at the Corps Conference was Lieutenant Colonel Tom Reynolds as the new RAEME

Colonel Commandant - New South Wales/Australian Capital Territory.

As I reflect on what is the best part of 8 years in the appointment (I was first appointed 02 February 2004), I cannot help but recall what a truly rewarding experience this appointment has been. I believe this is a direct result of the very high quality RAEME officers and soldiers with whom I have come in contact over that time and probably more significantly, the quality of the members who comprise the RAEME Association - Queensland. My observation is that this Association is the most robust and forward moving of all the RAEME Associations. Each of you has made the job of Colonel Commandant easy because of your support and your commitment to the Corps - I thank you for that. Can I encourage you all to continue with the great work you are doing - in my opinion your efforts truly reflect the practical application of "Arte et Marte".

I would like to take this opportunity to make special mention of a couple of people that have left their mark on me as your Colonel Commandant. First of all your President, Raymond. He is without doubt a real driving force in the Association. His passion for, and commitment to, the Corps in Queensland and indeed nationally is to be admired. Raymond, I have truly valued your support and encouragement - thank you. Next the Editor of this fine publication, Ross Grant. He has been a real mentor and confidant for me over a large number of years - well before I was appointed Colonel Commandant. Ross, thank you for your high quality advice, wisdom and friendship. Finally I want to acknowledge my lovely wife, Erika, whom most of you have had the privilege to meet. Her undying support and understanding of my commitment to this appointment really has made my contribution possible. I can assure you she always wears her "Harry" broach with great pride and rightly considers herself part of the family of RAEME.

In parting as your Colonel Commandant, I want to welcome and commend to you all, Richard Kluckhohn. He has a long association with the Corps and like most ex-apprentices is absolutely passionate about it. He is a most worthy appointee for the Colonel Commandant's position and I wish him all the very best for his tenure in the appointment.

I have been honoured and privileged to be your Colonel Commandant. Thank you for your support and encouragement. I wish each and every one of you all the very best for the future and I look forward to catching up with many of you at the all ranks luncheon on 27 November.

Arte et Marte



Bryce Titcume
RAEME Colonel
Commandant - Queensland



HOC BRIG David Creagh, AM, Farewelling COL COMDT- QLD, COL Bryce Titcume at the Annual Corps Dinner.

REPORT ON RECENT ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS

Corps Conference. The Corps Conference held at Bandiana over the period 19–21 Oct 11, was another outstanding success. The numbers attending were down due to travel restrictions and airline disruption, however those who attended were treated to some excellent presentations and debate, which sets the scene for some significant changes to the way maintenance support will be delivered for both for ground and air equipment over the coming years.

The conference theme "RAEME – Strength in Diversity" was well set by BRIG Greg Bilton, DGDPA, who outlined the broad context and case for changes required to logistic and maintenance regimes of tomorrow. He cited the ongoing restructuring of Army's organisation, new capabilities including equipments to be delivered over the coming decade, which will impact on maintenance support from 1st to 4th Line; and the desire to minimise the growth in maintenance labour in Army units – all significant challenges for senior planners.

Other speakers discussed how those challenges may be met; the sort of training regimes now being put in place

to prepare trade structure development initiatives; the significant initiatives and transformational work emanating from the Defence Logistic Transformation Program (DLTP) and the development process for up-to-date doctrine now becoming available on the Army website, which is updated regularly, to cater for the contingencies of operational service.

Director of Technical Regulation-Army, COL Nick Stanton, advised that changes to the Technical Regulatory Framework were also being considered to mesh with other initiatives. Refreshingly, we heard some very good news about the Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (ASEME) ability to push through increased volumes of tradesmen, which were more than adequately meeting the needs of units both at home and abroad in terms of quality tradesmen, and filling unit vacancies, despite a reasonably high exit rate.

As you would expect, the various celebratory events were all well conducted and attended over the three days – the All Ranks BBQ, the Officers' Annual Dinner and the WOs and SNCOs Annual Dinner. Many long serving officers and senior ranks were formally farewelled.



COL Steve Evans, MAJ Mark Wharton, COL Tony Borg and LTCOL Mick Millar all members of the Association in QLD, farewelling MAJ Wharton.

The Corps Committee also met and considered a range of issues, and in general terms, approved a number of projects to keep the reputation of the Corps 'front and centre' in the minds of our Corps members.

In particular they thanked our Chairman, Ray Norman, for the excellent work he has undertaken with the help of the various regional associations, to establish and organise the new RAEME Associations. It is clear that this initiative has made substantial progress and in the next year the organisational structure and operating

methodology will be cemented. At this stage it is expected that a national vote will be held to select the next national representative, who will sit at the table of the Corps Committee – the current Head Of Corps., BRIG David Creagh, AM, made it clear how much he appreciates the work of the Associations and believes that when their efforts are aligned a little more, they will make an even greater contribution to the Corps. He cited in particular the "Spanner Packs" program which will soon be devolved to another region and emphasized how the emerging project for the next Corps History Book will rely on the support and coordinated efforts of the RAEME National Association.



A Select Band of Brother WOs and SNCOs at the Corps Dinner

BRIG Ross Grant, (Rtd) was confirmed as the project director for the Corps History Project and he delivered a report on the purpose of the project; the method by which he and his team plan to deliver the subject book; the revised business case for the various activities; their costs and the broad time-line for production and publication. A key feature of the project was to make use of available social networking technologies to ease the compilation process and costs. More on that at another time.

Despite the attendances at the conference being down a little, around 150 all ranks, participants were treated to a range of topical presentations and activities. I say "all ranks" because we witnessed the presentation of two RAEME Annual Awards, the Craftsman of the Year (ARA and GRES), to two outstanding soldiers. In addition, we were treated to a wonderful presentation from CPL Lachlan Feeney, from RAEME Aircraft Maintenance School (RAMS), on his recent experiences participating in a substantial "technical mastery program", which the Deputy HOC and CO/CI LTCOL Mick Millar, has put in place. The program amongst other things provides a range of opportunities

for soldiers to undertake deeper maintenance tasks, which have not been available to them in recent times. It also takes advantage of the existing contracts with maintainers at Oakey and in Townsville, to allow soldiers to gain experience on a variety of aircraft types and aircraft sub-systems. It is an imaginative program, which offers considerable potential in developing our aircraft trades persons. When the program is a little more mature, we will provide more information.

I believe we all took away from this year's Conference, a sense that the Corps is in very good shape, is well led, and if the number of key appointments being filled by RAEME officers and Senior Ranks in the near future is any indication; we are in for a wonderful period of growth and prominence over the next few years.



Army Appy Reunion. This activity was held between the period 27-30 Oct 11 in Canberra. A report wasn't available at the time of publishing this issue, but I am hopeful that the convenor, Mr Frank Maloney, can provide one in early 2012.

RAEME Res/CMF Reunion 2011. This year's Reunion was once again held at the Sherwood/Indooroopilly RSL Sub-Branch on 14 August. Approximately 60 people attended including former RAEME, Infantry and Water Transport personnel and their partners. Although the numbers were down on previous functions, most likely due to two reunions of this type now being held, the event was a resounding success.

A special thanks to Ross Gary, and two other Sub-Branch members, George Krishna (ex RAEME) and Mick Rockett (ex Infantry) who volunteered to man the bar for the day. Also of enormous help were wives of the committee members Joy Saxon, Mira Myler, Pam McElwaine and Lyn Parfitt, who looked after the entry, prepared the salads and nibbles and of course helped with the inevitable clean up.

Another activity, which was well received, involved viewing the footage of the 1986 Prince Phillip Banner Parade which was held at Bandiana. Some of the members present saw themselves on the parade, and others who attended, unsuccessfully searched spectators in an effort to catch a glimpse of themselves.

Copies of the DVD are available from John Parfitt for \$10 with all money being donated to the Spanner Pack Project.

The President of the RAEME Association Queensland, Raymond Norman, spoke on how appropriate it was to show this DVD as it is 25 years since the presentation. Ray also advised the Banner will be paraded at a dinner at the RAEME Aircraft Maintenance School (RAMS) Oakey in November. It will also be paraded at the Association's lunch function at the Port Office Hotel in December. These will be historic events for the Corps. Ray also updated the gathering on Operation Spanner Pack and the forming of a National RAEME Association.



Attendees Hanging onto Ray Norman's Words!

During his talk the President of the Reunion Committee, Fred Nielsen, thanked all those who had donated prizes for the raffle including the traditional hand crafted cane, a magnificent hand crafted quilt and two beautiful hand crafted cushions. Fred mentioned a special cane had been made and presented recently to a "fuzzy wuzzy angel" from WW2.

Fred asked for a minutes silence for members who had passed on during the year. Jim Burke, Bill Duncan and George Stubbs. Fred also thanked the Committee for their work and support throughout the year and asked members to consider joining the team as he suggested we required younger people on the Committee to continue the Annual Reunion.

We have had another great reunion with many friendships rekindled and new friendships formed and we look forward to another gathering next year.



**Anita and Wally Buldo with Bette Tompkins
Enjoying the Banner Parade Video**

Mermaid Beach AEME Surf Life Saving Club Prince Philip Miniature Banner and other Presentations. Most will be aware of the background history of the Mermaid Beach AEME Surf Life Saving Club (MBASLSC) from previous Spanner News articles and other documents circulated in recent months.

For those that don't, a brief history will have to suffice here. In 1945, a few AEME members, who had little to do at Bulimba Barracks at the end of WW2, were released by the CO to do some surfing on the Gold Coast. During this period, they established the AEME Surf Life Saving Club. Many years later, the club was gazetted as the Mermaid Beach AEME Surf Life Saving Club, and the Club has retained its connection to the Corps to this time.

Indeed, several of the original AEME members are still members or connected to the MBASLSC.

A number of AEME/RAEME members and units over the last sixty plus years have been trained in life saving skills including the surf lifesaving bronze medallion qualifications. As this piece is being written the RAEME Aircraft Maintenance School (RAMS) and 2/14 LHR RAEME soldiers are negotiating adventure training with the Club.

The Club has invited all members of RAEME nationally to visit the club, use the facilities and organise activities at the Surf Club whilst on holidays from interstate, or on a regular basis, for locals.

In 1976 the RAEME Association Queensland (RAQ) presented a brass plaque to the MBASLSC to rekindle the relationship and to recognise our Corps historic connections.

This plaque has fallen into disrepair and the Club has requested, and the RAQ have agreed, to refurbish the plaque and in addition, provide a large RAEME Badge.

At the recent Corps Committee Conference, a request was made of the Committee to fund the reproduction of a Miniature Prince Philip Banner, like the one shown below. This was approved by the Corps Committee and the Banner, plaque and badge will all be displayed in the recently refurbished Foyer of the MBASLSC Club House.



Prince Philip Banner – Now 25 Years Old

This project is due to be completed November 2011 with all three items to be presented to the MBASLSC at the All Ranks RAEME Birthday Luncheon on 27 November. The HOC will be requested to present the Miniature Prince Phillip Banner to the President of the Surf Club.

69th Anniversary of Kokoda Day. The Kokoda Day service was again well attended by sub-branch members and the general public. President Ron McElwaine introduced the following official guests: Secretary of 39th Bn association (Qld) George Palmer and other 39th Bn Veterans, George Turner, Jim Stillman, Alf Tuck & Bill Bellairs. The President also welcomed Paul Nerau PNG Consul, Alison Stanley Dep. Commissioner for DVA Qld, Mr Terry Meehan President of Queensland RSL, Vic Reading (and Helen) President Brisbane North district of RSL, Brig. Hec McDonald (Ret) former Commander 7 Bde and the soldiers of 2 CER, who recently walked the track with Brig McDonald and Capt. Craig Skipper representing CO 39th Personal Support Bn, based at Randwick in Sydney. Capt Skipper is the Operations Officer of 39 PSB and has had 2 tours of Afghanistan. After all the formalities the President then introduced the guest speaker Repatriation Commissioner MAJGEN Mark Kelly AO DSC (Ret).

MAJGEN Mark Kelly spoke about the 39th Bn and other Australian units deployed to PNG, which was critical strategy for the protection of Australia. He said these men were effectively our last line of defence against the Japanese attempt to capture Port Moresby and push south towards Australia. It was their efforts, their sacrifice and their courage that prevented the Japanese from taking Port Moresby and establishing a base from which to launch further attacks on Australia. The Major General's full speech is available on request from the sub-branch.



Attendees at the Kokoda Day Service – George Palmer, MAJGEN Mark Kelly, BRIG. Hec McDonald (Ret) and Frank Wust of PIB along with some soldiers from 2 CER, who recently walked the Kokoda Track

COMING EVENTS

RAEME 69th Birthday Dinner at the RAEME Aircraft Maintenance School. This important “All Ranks” event will be held on the evening of Friday 25 Nov 11 at the RAEME Aircraft Maintenance School (RAMS) Hangar and will commence at 1800 hours for 1830 hours. The dinner will also celebrate the 25th Anniversary of the presentation of the Prince Phillip Banner, arrangements have been made to display the Banner on the night.

RAEME Birthday Luncheon 27 November – Port Office Hotel Fix Restaurant. As many are aware, planning and coordination of another “All Ranks” RAEME Birthday luncheon for 27th November is well underway. The HOC BRIG David Creagh, AM, his two Deputy HOC, Corps RSM and Association Patron will be attending. The Prince Philip Banner will also be paraded at this event.

Space is limited for this very popular event. If you missed the RSVP for whatever reason and you wish to attend, please contact Ray Norman on 07 5476 6254, as a few seats are still available at the time of writing this Newsletter.

Operation Spanner Pack. The Christmas packs will be dispatched to our Corps Troops on operations before the end of November bringing our total number of packs despatched to 2278 packs. This means we have now provided packs to some 3460 of our Corps members and support staff.

Spanner Pack welcomes a very generous donation from the RAEME Association NSW of \$600. This is very much in the spirit of the RAEME Association (National) role and responsibilities and is very much appreciated. I am sure the soldiers doing it tough will appreciate this contribution. Pictured below is the Spanner Packing Team who completed the September pack in Buderim.



Back Row L to R; Peter Snowdon, Ernie Hartshorn , Gary Sargent, Leo Galligan, Ewan McLeod, WO1 Nick Rees, Front Row L to R MAJ John Moore, Lynell Sargent, Marg McLeod, Raymond Norman

It is clear that the packs are valued and the following letter was received recently from one of our many recipients:

I have just received a spanner pack after arriving in country recently, I must say that I am impressed with the things that are contained within the packs. I am a RAEME Association member (Member # 140) and it is great to see how some of the money that we pay for subscriptions is used. I know that the other boys that have been here for a while appreciated the packs and I have been trying to get a few to become members, in

this regard we will just have to wait and see (I will keep pushing quietly).

At this point I would also like to thank the sponsors that have contributed to the packs - thank you very much for your generosity and support of the troops that are serving overseas, we appreciate it!

Lastly, to the volunteers who make the packs, thank you for your time and support. We cannot forget you guys and gals, as without you these spanner pack would just not happen. THANKS!!

CPL Adrian "Towy" Towart

AWARDS.

Queen's Birthday Honours - OAM. In the last issue we advised of Mr Frank Benfield award of the OAM for his services to the veteran community. For the past 12 years Frank has been a member of the Veterans Review Board and is currently a member of the Prime Minister's Advisory Council, and a member of the Military Compensation Board. Frank has devoted many hours of work towards the service of veteran's through the 161 Recce Association, the Veteran's Review Board and other organisation's with which he has been directly involved.

From the smiles on the faces of Frank and his wife Clare below, it was a very proud moment. Well done Frank.



A proud Frank Benfield and his wife, Clare, at Government House receiving his OAM

Queen's Birthday Honours – CSC. Major Terrence Alexander Johnson, for outstanding achievement as the Staff Officer Grade Two Maintenance Standards Headquarters 16th Aviation Brigade. Terry's citation reads "Major Johnson has consistently displayed considerable professional excellence and outstanding devotion to duty in supporting the 16th Aviation Brigade as the Staff Officer Grade Two Maintenance Standards. His exemplary performance and coordination of a range of operational maintenance agility and flexibility enhancements have provided significant and lasting contributions to the cultural conditions for a very positive future in maintenance support to Army Aviation." Well done to Terry.



MAJ Terry Johnson and his wife, Charmaine, at Government House after his Investiture.

GENERAL DYNAMICS
Land Systems-Australia

The RAEME Associations wishes to once again thank the Northern Golf Club, Glenroy, Melbourne, for their generosity in donating \$2000 towards "Spanner Pack" program.

RAEME Awards for 2011. The following awards were advised at the RAEME Corps Conference:

CFN of the Year ARA	8530044 CFN Bishop	1 Sig Regt
CFN of the Year GRes	8121544 CFN Carr	13 CSSB
Junior Regimental Award-Sub 2 SGT	8230012 CPL Thomas	1 Fd Regt
Regimental Award Sub 2 WO Log	8215825 SGT De Waard	ALTC
Peter Jennings Award - LOBC	8233271 LT Wardill	AAVNTC
Brig Martin Award Sub 4 SGT	8213409 CPL Harrison	8/9 RAR
Richard Harding Award - Sub 4 WO	8272480 SGT Shaw	DFR
CFN of the Year ARA VIC/TAS	8485115 LCPL Bosselmann	2 FSB
CFN of the Year GRes VIC/TAS	8533729 CFN Stonehouse	4 CSSB
CFN of the Year ARA NSW	CFN S	IRR
CFN of the Year ARA West	CFN S	SASR
CFN of the Year ARA Central	8504435 LCPL Gill	16 AD Regt
CFN of the Year Gres Central	8528709 CFN Jackson	9 CSSB
CFN of the Year ARA SQ	8511626 LCPL Gill	9 FSB
CFN of the Year ARA North	8555892 CFN Maher	1 CSSB

VALE

It is with regret that we advise of the following:

- **Jim Greenway** passed away 9 Sep 11. Jim, a Recov Mech, was a member of 4 Fd Regt LAD, SVN 67/68.
- **Craftsman Beau Pridue**, died from injuries sustained in a vehicle accident near the town of Baucau in East Timor, on 15 Sep 11.
- **Laurie O'Dwyer** died in the Swan Hill Hospital 28 Sep 11 of lung cancer.
- **Pete Smith** passed away 29 Sep 11 in the Kalamunda Hospital, WA.
- **John Albert Burdell** (JB) passed away on the 03 Oct 11 of cancer in Ayr. During more than 20 years in the army JB served with 161 (Independent) Recce Wksp, SVN; 162 Recce

Sqn Wksp in Townsville; and 183 Recce Flt Wksp in PNG.

- **Maxwell Thomas Stanbury** passed away on 15 Oct 2011, peacefully, after a long illness. He served with 4 Fd Regt LAD.
- **Myles Frost**, a serving RAEME soldier, lost his 3 year old son, Scott in Oct 11.
- **Ed Haidley** passed away on 25 Oct 11 from cancer. Ed was an 18th Intake Apprentice (Vehicle Mechanic) and served in Vietnam with 1 Fld Regt (RAA) LAD from March 1969 to March 1970.
- **WO1 Maxwell (Max) John PEDERSON (Rtd) (aka THOMPSON)** passed away in Casino Hospital on 30 Oct 11 and who served with Australian Logistics Support Company (1 RAR Gp) 1 Fd Sqn Vietnam.
- **Colonel J S Sinclair, (Rtd)** passed away 2 Nov 11 in Wesley Hospital Brisbane. He died of heart disease and other complications.

COMMUNICATION AND CONTACTS

DVA Factsheet HSV30 Health Care. Exercise Physiology – Information for the veteran community. This extract from a DVA Fact Sheet describes how you can access exercise physiology services. It provides information relating to:

- who is eligible; and
- how to access exercise physiology services.

What is Exercise Physiology? Exercise physiology services include the delivery of clinical exercise interventions to manage chronic disease and the provision of post-acute exercise rehabilitation for people recovering from major injury or illness. Exercise physiology contributes to the management of:

- diabetes;
- cardiovascular disease;
- osteoporosis;
- arthritis;
- cancer; and
- muscular conditions of a chronic nature.

Who is eligible? If you have a Repatriation Health Card – For All Conditions (Gold Card) the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) will pay for your exercise physiology services available through DVA arrangements that meet your clinical needs. If you have a Repatriation Health Card – For Specific Conditions (White Card), DVA will pay for exercise physiology services if provided under DVA

arrangements, that are required because of an accepted war or service caused injury or disease. Where a White Card has been issued for the following DVA will provide treatment for clinical needs related to these conditions:

- malignant cancer,
- pulmonary tuberculosis, or
- post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), or
- anxiety and/or depression whether war caused or not.

How do I get access to this service? You must be referred to an exercise physiologist who is registered with Medicare Australia under the Medicare Scheme. A referral can be issued by one of the following:

- a Local Medical Officer (LMO);
- a General Practitioner;
- a medical specialist;
- a treating doctor in hospital;
- a hospital discharge planner; and
- another exercise physiologist who has previously received a referral.

A referral remains active for twelve months from the date of referral. Referral dates cannot overlap from one twelve month period to the next.

Do I need to pay for treatment? No, your exercise physiologist will bill DVA directly for any care provided to you if the service is provided under DVA arrangements. This represents the full fee for the service provided. If you are billed, do not pay the account, and advise DVA immediately.

Other Factsheets. Other Factsheets related to this topic include:

- Commonwealth and other Allied Veterans: HSV62
- Information for Exercise Physiologists : HIP84
- Repatriation Health Card - For All Conditions (Gold): HSV60
- Repatriation Health Card - For Specific Conditions (White): HSV61
- Transport modes under the Repatriation Transport Scheme: HSV03
- More information. All DVA Factsheets are available from DVA offices, and on the DVA website at:
- www.dva.gov.au .You can phone DVA for the cost of a local call on 133 254 or 1800 555 254 for country callers.

- Use a normal landline phone if you can. Mobile phone calls may cost you more.
- You can send an email to DVA at: generalenquiries@dva.gov.au You can get more help from any DVA office.

“The Viet Cong D445 Battalion – Their Story.” The following was received from Retired Army officer, Ernie Chamberlin, a two tour Vietnam Veteran linguist from the Intelligence Corps, who has written and privately published a “limited edition” book that may be of interest to RAEME Vietnam veterans. Complimentary copies have been provided to several relevant departments and agencies in Canberra (including Chief of the Army, Australian Army History Unit, Department of Veterans’ Affairs, etc), to selected libraries and museums, and to Canungra. He has also placed the text of the book on the Internet as **“free-to-read”** – <http://www.scribd.com/doc/62621973/The-Viet-Cong-D445-Battalion-Their-Story>. Interested readers will probably find it most convenient to access the copy - i.e. for free, on the Internet. The sections probably of most interest to veterans are the Viet Cong’s version of the Battle of Long Tan on 18 August 1966 – at pp.39-48, and 7 RAR’s successful ambush at Ca Thi (near Xuyen Moc) on 31 December 1970, p.79 – just another couple of hours and D445 Battalion would have been “safe” i.e. covered by the 1970/1971 New Year’s ceasefire.

Progress on the Fair Indexation Bill – A Fight for Fair, Just and Equal Indexation. This update from our DFWA Representative, Peter Snowdon, gives our members a broad summary of what the current campaign is about. The DFWA believes the method of indexation, used to keep our superannuation in line with rises in the cost of living and so maintain our living standards, is not fair, just, nor does it provide equity. Consider that in the last 20 years the rises in pensions for politicians, old age pensioners and retired military personnel have diverged dramatically:

Politicians up 150%

Aged Pensions up 145%

Military Super up 75%;

In the last 10 years:

Politicians up 57%

Aged Pensions up 51%

Military Super Up 29%.

These unequal rises in indexation continue. Last year Aged Pensions, indexed by the Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE), the Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index (PBLCI) or the Consumer Price Index (CPI) whichever is the greater, rose by 4.1%, whereas Military Super indexed solely to the CPI rose by only 3.3%.

Why the difference? The MTAWE and the PBLCI as the names imply, are keeping pace with increases in the cost of living, the CPI is not. The CPI is only a measure of the rate of inflation not price rises, which increase the cost of living. So our purchasing power decreases year by year and, unless corrected, it will continue to be eroded.

The DFWA has advised that situation is so bad in some cases a number of retired service personnel have gone to Centrelink seeking financial assistance to make ends meet. An intolerable situation, when we paid 5.5% of our salary into DFRDB to ensure we were comfortable in retirement.

To try and correct this indexation anomaly, a campaign has begun to draw the situation to the attention of politicians, the media, business leaders, in fact anybody of influence, who will listen with a sympathetic ear and who can assist. As part of this endeavour, the Fair Go Campaign has instituted a "Letter Raid" wherein people are encouraged to write registered letters to at least three politicians; Senators and House of Representatives and/or their Local Member; and more, if possible. Emails are easier but they don't work, the recipient can just hit the delete button. It is not too late to do your bit. You are invited to write to at least three politicians and present the case. Be firm and polite in your writing and state the case clearly, but above all, do NOT be offensive, crude or obscene in what you write because you will not help the cause at all. Some draft letters are available on the Fair Go website www.justafairgo.net

Bearing in mind that the lower end of DFRDB Super is a little more than \$22,000 per annum, and the AVERAGE WAGE NOW STANDS AT \$67,000, this is an important campaign for some people. We don't expect any huge increases, but we do expect a fair go, certainly better indexation. There are many DFRB/DFRDB recipients, or their surviving spouses, who are doing it tough on their superannuation "pension." We need to get in touch with anyone who is doing it tough and record your story to help with our campaign. What you need to do is to provide factual information that we can use. We will protect your name, but without personal experience stories, there will be many, including the media, who will continue

to disbelieve our plight. Please get in touch with Peter Snowdon pm.snowdon@bigpond.com or phone 07 3392 3350 in the strictest confidence and he will put you in touch with the Fair Go Team.

The fight for fair indexation is just one of the areas where DFRDB and DFRB recipients are being disadvantaged.

- The payback of commutation which goes on long after the advance is repaid because of out of date life expectation tables. A bit like you have paid your house off but you have to continue to make the mortgage payments.
- Disability pensions. Some increases announced were not paid to Defence pensioners.
- We pay tax on some part of our Super payments because it is "Unfunded", where as Aged pensioners pay no tax, after a certain age.

We must never give up the fight for a "Fair Go".

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I attended the recent Corps Conference with Ray Norman, and we not only enjoyed the conference presentations and discussions, together with the various social obligations that come with the conference, but we were also able to provide detail on our separate responsibilities to the Corps Committee.

Ray reported on the ongoing development of the RAEME Association (National) which has come a long way since he was appointed by HOC BRIG Creagh to facilitate the development process. All can see that the new national focus is almost a reality and Ray received well deserved praise from the Corps Committee for his efforts to date.

For those who may not know, the Corps Committee comprises the Colonels' Commandants from all regions and is chaired by the Representative Colonel Commandant. Other attendees include the HOC and his two DHOC and the members of the HOC Cell. This small and well distributed body does a lot of good work in the management of Corps history, Corps memorabilia and traditions. As well as celebrating Corps achievements. They were also impressed with the Queensland Association's attempts to inform our local serving members of the role of all associations and invite serving members to join an association sooner rather than later.

They were also very supportive of my attempts, somewhat belatedly, to get the RAEME Corps History

Project underway. You will hear more about this in the next few months as I get the planning team together in February to commence the first stage of the project.

There is no doubt the Corps is entering an interesting phase of its history as we head towards our 70th Anniversary, and the challenges to do our work as efficiently as ever in the light of capped work forces and new capabilities entering service in the next 10 years, will test us all. We should all look to our history and reputation for inspiration – that is what the project is about.

Finally, I would like to wish you the compliments of the forthcoming season and trust that 2012 is a great year for you and your families. Please keep your contributions rolling in for 2012.

Regards,
Ross Grant AM
Chairman of the Communications
Committee
ross.grant140@bigpond.com



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New Membership Application Existing Member Member Number (If Known)

Title Given Name Surname PostNoms

Spouse / Partner's Name

Postal Address

Line 1

Line 2

Suburb/Town

State

Postcode

Country

Contact Details

Primary Phone Alternate Phone

Primary Email

Alternate Email

Life Subscription \$100
 Annual Subscription \$10 No of Years Total \$

Payment Methods and Details

EFT: DEFCREDIT BSB: 803-205 Account Number: 20682037 Account Name: RAEME Association Queensland
Member Number 82731 (For other DEFCREDIT Transfers only)
Please add your Surname and word 'Membership' in the reference box
Please email treasurer@raemeqld.org to advise you have transferred the money

Cheque or Money orders made out to 'RAEME Association Queensland'
and send to: The Treasurer
RAEME Association Qld
PO Box 11
CANNON HILL QLD 4170

Office Use Only
Details Entered / Confirmed / Updated
Number Allocated
Receipt Sent
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Date