

MAINTENANCE MATTERS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS

EDITION 03 – APRIL 2026 – CURRENT MAINTENANCE MATTERS...BECAUSE MAINTENANCE MATTERS



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Maintenance Matters

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Submissions

Submissions for inclusion in future editions of the Newsletter may be entered online at:

<https://raeme.org.au/index.php/publications/newsletter/article-submission>

Submissions from serving members may also be sent through your Regional Corps Representative for review, collation and on-forwarding.

Disclaimer

This Newsletter is published monthly by the RAEME Association National Network (RNN) for RAEME members, be they serving or otherwise. The views, thoughts, and opinions expressed in this Newsletter belong solely to the author of each article. They do not reflect those of the RNN, ADF or any part of the ADO, the author's employer, the editorial team, any association, committee, or other group or individual.

that defines our work, and the shared identity that connects serving and former-serving members alike will remain essential to our success.

As mentioned by Brigadier Follet in Edition 01, this newsletter will be one of the ways we maintain that connection. It is a place to share achievements, celebrate milestones, reflect on our history, and recognise the contributions of all who wear—or have worn—the RAEME badge. We encourage serving members to stay engaged with the Associations who publish this newsletter, stay connected, and continue strengthening the bonds that make our Corps what it is.

Our future is bright, not because of any single initiative or reform, but because of the people who make up this extraordinary Corps. Thank you for your service, your support, and your ongoing commitment to RAEME and to our Associations. phi

Arte et Marte

Your editorial team

A Message from the Editorial Team

Fellow Corps Members,

The strength of our Corps has always rested on something deeper than structure, trade, or capability. It lives in the character of our people and in the way we come together—across generations, across postings, and across the full breadth of service—to uphold the spirit that has defined RAEME since its formation. As we introduce this third edition of our Corps Association Newsletter, we want to speak directly to that enduring connection, because it remains one of our greatest assets as we look to the future.

Throughout our careers, in every unit, workshop, and headquarters we have served in, the same truth has been unmistakable: RAEME members find each other, support each other, and take pride in being part of something larger than themselves. Whether on operations, in barracks, or in the field, the Corps identity is instantly recognisable—not only in the technical excellence we are known for, but in the humour, resilience, and camaraderie that seem to follow RAEME soldiers wherever we go. It is a culture that welcomes new members, respects those who have gone before us, and binds us together long after our time in uniform has ended.

That connection is not symbolic; it is practical. It strengthens our capability, steadies us in demanding environments, and ensures that knowledge, experience, and values are passed on rather than lost. The coming together of serving and former-serving members is central to this. Our veterans remain custodians of our history and our craft, and their continued involvement enriches the Corps in ways that cannot be replicated through policy or training alone. Likewise, our current generation of RAEME soldiers and officers carry forward the legacy with energy, innovation, and a clear-eyed understanding of the challenges ahead.

As we look to the future of the Corps Associations and the broader Corps, this unity will matter more than ever. The strategic environment is shifting, technology is evolving at pace, and the demands placed on our people continue to grow. RAEME has always adapted, always modernised, and always found a way to deliver. We will do so again—but we will do it best when we draw on the full strength of our Corps family. The humour that keeps us grounded, the professionalism



Cover Image Description

LCPL William 'Bill' Brodbeck, 16 Aviation Support Battalion, carries out an inspection on a CH-47F Chinook engine during a Daily Flight Service.

LCPL Brodbeck is supported through his task with a working-at-heights harness which is connected to the aircraft.

Photo by CFN Luke Hollowood.



AUSTRALIAN ARMY

Head of Corps - Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers

HOC Cell, Latchford Barracks, BONEGILLA, Vic, 3694

Ladies and Gentlemen, Members of the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers community, former staff and soldiers, families, friends, and supporters,

*It is with great pride and a deep sense of custodianship of our Corps' heritage that I write to you as the Commanding Officer of the Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering. In May 2026, we will mark a significant milestone in the history of the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers—the **40th Anniversary of the presentation of the Prince Philip Banner**, originally bestowed upon the Corps on **20 May 1986**.*

The Prince Philip Banner represents excellence in technical mastery, esprit de corps, and unwavering service in support of the Australian Army. For four decades it has stood as a visible symbol of the professionalism and quiet competence that defines RAEME. This anniversary provides us with an important opportunity not only to commemorate the moment itself, but also to reconnect generations of soldiers, tradespeople, officers, and supporters who have contributed to the enduring legacy of our Corps.

*To recognise this occasion, the Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering will host a commemorative event on **Wednesday, 20 May 2026**, at **North Bandiana**, commencing from **1200 hours**. The centrepiece of the day will be a **formal parade beginning at 1400 hours**, conducted in the presence of serving members, veterans, invited guests, and members of the extended RAEME family.*

*In addition to the parade, attendees will have the opportunity to view a **capability display showcasing contemporary RAEME technical skills and platforms**, highlighting how the Corps continues to evolve in support of Army's operational needs. Complementing this will be a **curated selection of museum items**, drawn from across RAEME history, providing tangible links between our past achievements and the soldiers who carry the Banner today.*

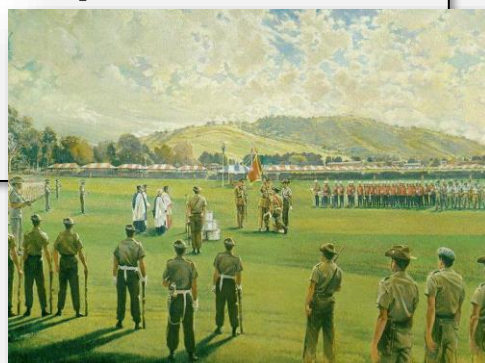
*To assist us in planning a fitting and inclusive commemoration, I respectfully request that you complete the accompanying survey, which includes an **expression of interest in attending the event**. The survey will ask how many people you intend to attend with in your party, whether you were present at the original Banner presentation on **20 May 1986**, and, if so, what role you undertook at that time. This information will help us appropriately acknowledge those who were part of that historic day and ensure event arrangements reflect the expected attendance.*

Your participation—whether as an attendee, a past contributor, or a supporter from afar—is important to us. The strength of RAEME has always rested in its people, and this anniversary offers a rare chance to honour that shared service.

I thank you in advance for your time, your continued interest, and your enduring connection to the Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers.

Arte et Marte

LTCOL Hans Hamilton — Deputy Head of Corps (Ground)



[Click here](#) or scan the QR code to access the survey and advise of your intention to attend



New Chief of Army – Lieutenant General Susan Coyle, AM, CSC, DSM

On 13 April 2026, Defence Media announced the appointment of LTGEN Susan Coyle as the 42nd Chief of Army.



The [Media Release](#) noted:

Lieutenant General Susan Coyle enlisted as a soldier in the Army Reserves in 1987 before completing a Science degree at the Australian Defence Force Academy and graduating from the Royal Military College in 1992 into the Royal Australian Corps of Signals. Appointed Chief of Joint Capabilities Group in July 2024, Lieutenant General Coyle is the Chief of Space and Cyber and Chief of National Support.

Lieutenant General Coyle has worked at the tactical, operational and strategic level in a variety of command, and Army and Joint staff appointments. She has commanded at every rank, including Commander Forces Command, Commander Joint Task Force 633 (CJTF633), Commander 6th Brigade, Commander Task Group Afghanistan and Commanding Officer 17th Signal Regiment. She has seen operational service in Timor-Leste, Solomon Islands, Afghanistan and the Middle East.

Lieutenant General Coyle holds post-graduate qualifications from the United States Army War College, University of New England, and University of Canberra. She is an alumnus of the Harvard Advanced Management Program.

Lieutenant General Coyle was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia as Commander Joint Task Force 633, a

Distinguished Service Medal as Deputy Commander JTF 636 / Commander Task Group Afghanistan on Operation SLIPPER / HIGHROAD, and a Conspicuous Service Cross as Commanding Officer 17th Signal Regiment.

Lieutenant General Coyle is married to Mark, an Engineer in the Army, and together they have three wonderful and mostly charming young adults – Jessica, Susie, and Jack. Her hobbies include attending musical theatre, reading anything and travelling anywhere. Her passion remains supporting veterans and their families through a People First approach. Lieutenant General Coyle is Patron for 42 for 42, ADF Cyber Skills Association and ADF Rugby.

LTGEN Coyle stated:

"I began my service in 1987 as a proud Reserve soldier with the 12/16 Hunter River Lancers. As I prepare to assume this next appointment, I do so with humility, a deep appreciation for the experiences I have been afforded, and an unwavering commitment to steward our people well.

"Like those who have gone before me, I will lead our soldiers and support our families so that Army continues to deliver on Defence's mission.

"In my current role responsible for Space and Cyber, I often say that if you are zero in one domain, you are zero in all. To this appointment, I bring deep experience across three warfighting domains and operational service spanning all five. This breadth of experience provides a strong foundation for the responsibilities of command and the trust placed in me.

"It is an absolute honour to be selected as the 42nd Chief of Army."



ANZAC Day March and Gathering Planning

Whilst the plans for ANZAC Day are still being locked in nation-wide, the following is provided for planning purposes. Individual RAEME Associations or Regional RAEME Representatives should be contacted to confirm final details for each region.

Australian Capital Territory

Canberra



Dawn Service

- Time: 0530h
- Location: AWM Parade Ground

March

- Form up: 0900h on ANZAC Parade. Contingent #TBC
- Step off: 0930h
- Spectators: AWM Parade Ground

Gathering

- Time: ~1100h
- Location: Olim's Hotel "RAEME Room" (inside, near the bar)
- Inclusions: Bar snacks
- Web link: [Click here](#) for more info

New South Wales

Sydney



Dawn Service

- Time: 0420hrs
- Location: Martin Place Sydney

March

- Form up: 0930hrs for 1000hrs in O'Connell Street, Sydney
- Step off: 1020hrs approx

Reunion

- Time: 1130hrs
- Location: Castlereagh Club, 199 Castlereagh St, Sydney
- Dress: As appropriate
- Cost: \$30/head
- RSVP: Entry is by ticket only. Closing date for tickets is 16 Apr 2026.
- Weblink: For details, go to: <https://nsw.raeme.org.au>

Queensland

Brisbane



Dawn Service

- Time: 0428h
- Location: Anzac Square

March

- Form up: 0945h in George St near Charlotte St. Gp 5, Serial 64.
- Step off: 1030h
- Weblink: [Click here](#) for march details

Gathering

- Time: ~1100h
- Location: Port Office Hotel
- Dress: As appropriate
- Cost: \$35 p/p or \$22 p/p for members or serving members if you book before 21 Apr. After 21 Apr or at the door, prices are \$32 p/p for members or \$45 p/p for non-members or guests.
- Inclusions: Buffet lunch and two-drinks
- Weblink: [Click here](#) for more details

Townsville



Dawn Service

- Time: 0520h
- Location: Anzac Park Cenotaph

March

- Pre-march: 0630h at Flynn's Irish Bar
- Form up: 0830h at the Strand Park
- Step off: 0900h

Gathering

- Time: Post-march
- Location: Flynn's Irish Bar. Must bring some form of RAEME insignia for entry, eg tie, badge etc
- Weblink: [Click here](#) for more info

South Australia

Adelaide



Weblink: [Click here](#) for more

Dawn Service

- Time: 0500h
- Location: SA National War Memorial

March

- Form up: 0900h in Pulteney Street. Contingent #12
- Step off: 0930h

Gathering

- Date/Time: Sat 18 Apr from 1130h
- Location: West Adelaide Football Club, 57 Milner Rd, Richmond
- Dress: Neat casual attire
- Cost: Self-funded meals and drinks
- Inclusions: Vast array of raffle prizes
- RSVP: Please confirm attendance ASAP to 0412-021-411or Raeme.SA.Association@gmail.com

Northern Territory

Darwin



Dawn Service

- Time: 0600h
- Location: The Cenotaph

March

- Form up: 0845h on the Esplanade
- Step off: 0900h

Gathering

- Location: Mayberry's Darwin
- Inclusions: Private bar, raffles, two-up
- Weblink: [Click here](#) for more info

Victoria

Melbourne



Dawn Service

- Time: 0530h
- Location: Shrine of Remembrance

March

- Form up: 0830h on Flinders St
- Step off: 0900h
- Weblink: [Click here](#) for more info

Gathering

- Date/Time: From 1200h
- Location: La Di Da, 577 Bourke Street
- Who: All past, present, serving and friends welcome

Albury



Wodonga



Western Australia

Perth



Dawn Service

- Time: 0530h
- Location: Monument Hill. Shuttle Buses from SS&A at 0500h

March

- Form up: 0830h on Macauley Street
- Step off: 0900h
- Service: 1000h at Monument Hill

Gathering

- All Details TBC

Dawn Service

- Time: 0545h
- Location: Woodland Grove Cenotaph on High Street

March

- Form up: 1000h in the top carpark of the RSL
- Step off: 1030h

Gathering

- All Details TBC

RAEME Vigil

- Date: 24 Apr 2026
- Time: From 1900h
- Location: Marri Walk Kings Park Perth
- Weblink: [Click here](#) for more info

Dawn Service

- Time: 0550h
- Location: The State War Memorial

March

- Form up: 0830h on St Georges Tce
- Step off: 0900h
- Weblink: [Click here](#) for more info

Gathering

- Time: ~1000h Post-march
- Location: IBIS Hotel / Rubix Bar & Cafe
- Cost: Free for members
- Inclusions: Food will be available
- Weblink: [Click here](#) for more info

Tasmania

Hobart



Dawn Service

- Time: 0600h
- Location: Cenotaph, Queens Domain

March

- Form up: 0930h at Customs House Hotel
- Step off: 0945h

Gathering

- Date/Time: Post-march
- Location: Hobart Workers (RSL) Club, Elizabeth Stret, Hobart

Launceston



Dawn Service

- Time: 0600h
- Location: The Cenotaph

March

- Form up: 0915h in Charles St
- Step off: 0930h

Gathering

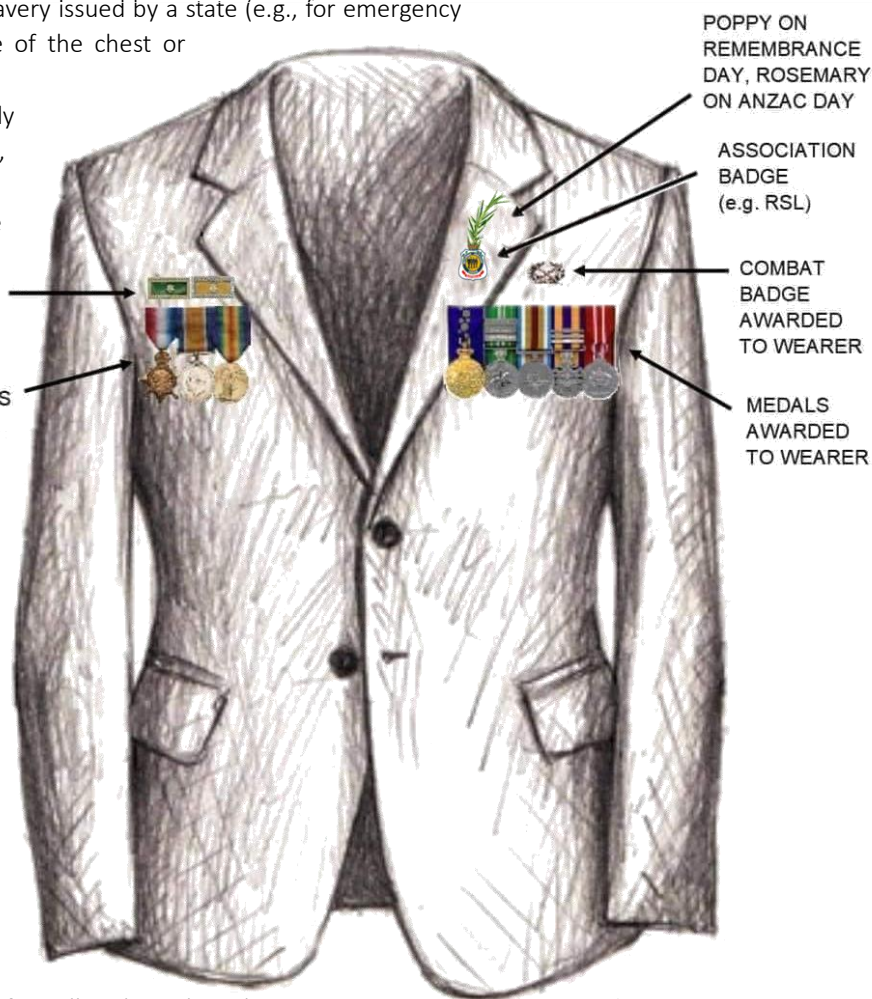
- Date/Time: Post-march
- Location: Launceston RSL, Wellington Street, Launceston

Wearing medals on commemorative occasions

The [Returned and Services League \(RSL\)](#) has provided the following as a general guide, offering suggestions for standardising the wearing of medals on commemorative occasions. It is intended to be a helpful resource, not a strict set of rules.

Placement of medals and badges

- **Medals awarded to the wearer:** These are worn on the left side of the chest or jacket. This includes campaign medals, bravery medals, and service medals.
- **Ancestor's medals:** Medals that were not awarded directly to the wearer, such as family medals, are worn on the right side of the chest or jacket. This indicates that the wearer is not the original recipient.
- **State-issued medals:** Medals for service and bravery issued by a state (e.g., for emergency service personnel) are worn on the right side of the chest or jacket.
- **Association Badge** (e.g., RSL): This badge is usually worn on the left side of the chest or jacket, typically above the medals.
- **Combat Badge:** This badge is also worn on the left side of the chest or jacket.
- **Medals Level:** Medals should be worn in a horizontal line, with the top of the medals positioned at a consistent level. Your coat should be buttoned up to maintain a smart and respectful appearance.



Unit Citations

- **Army and Air Force:** Unit citations are worn on the right side.
- **Navy:** Navy citations are worn on the left, below the medals.

Anzac Day and Remembrance Day symbols

- **Rosemary on Anzac Day:** Rosemary is the traditional symbol of remembrance worn on Anzac Day in Australia. This is because rosemary grows wild on the Gallipoli peninsula, giving it special significance.
- **Poppy on Remembrance Day:** The poppy was formally adopted as the international memorial flower to be worn on 11 November by the Australian Returned Soldiers and Sailors Imperial League (the forerunner to the RSL). RSL Australia continues to uphold this tradition, encouraging the nation to wear a poppy on Remembrance Day.

Corps RSM Update

The following report was extracted from an email provided by the Corps RSM on 14 April 2026. Additional information for serving Corps members may be found on the RSM's page on the Defence Protected Network (Objective number: [fBQ17265966](#)).

Points covering in the RSM's update includes:

- RAEME Corps Email Distribution List
- Master Artificer Nominations
- ECN 222 – Marine Technician
- RMC Graduation Parade
- RAEME Corps Banner 40th Anniversary Parade
- Corps Shop
- Corps Port 2026/27
- Career Management Guidance
- Course Information
- 16 ASB / Aviation

RAEME Corps Email Distribution List

I have created a RAEME Corps Email Distribution List for us all, the contact group is named 'RAEME Corps Members'. The issue with the new list is I had to input all 3658 names individually into the list, some names on the PMKeyS printout I use are not found in the email addresses. If you know of someone now not included please let me know and I will ensure they are added to the list.

Master Artificers Nominations

Before I get into the nominations, I would like to thank a stalwart of the Master Artificers (MA), WO1 Grant O'Leary. Paddy is in his 4th year as the MA for ECN 235 – Material Technician, but as a side-hustle has also been working tirelessly on the previous Corps web page and now the new version [Royal Australian Electrical and Mechanical Engineers | Australian Army](#). (*Defence Network accessible only*)

At the end of 2026 the Corps will be looking for the following MAs, if you are a WO1 or 2 and interested please email me directly (jon.tynan@defence.gov.au) and I will send you a nomination form:

- ECN 412 – Technician Avionics
- ECN 418 – Energy Technician
- ECN 222 – Marine Technician
- ECN 229 – Vehicle Technician
- ECN 226 – Recovery Technician
- ECN 235 – Material Technician

ECN 222 – Marine Technician

The employment specifications have now been released; [Manual of Army Employments page](#) (*Defence network only*). I have also placed a PDF version in the folder where the Corps RSM updates are located. The updates capture the current training being provided to align the requirements of the Project L8710 platforms and form the initial career pathways for the Marine Technicians.

If anyone has any questions regarding the employment specifications of ECN 222 or other trades, please contact wtg.raeme.ecm@resources.defence.gov.au.

RMC Graduation Parade

The first graduation parade for RMC's newest LTs is set for 23 April 2026 at the RMC Golf Club, if you are in Canberra and are able to attend, please come along and help us welcome the LTs to the Corps. The 3 officers being welcomed are:

- LT Skye Arnott Patrick – 7 CSSB
- LT Jemma Elizabeth Gilbert – 7 CSSB
- LT William Patrick Kennedy – ASEME

RAEME Corps Banner 40th Anniversary Parade

With the banner reaching its Ruby Jubilee (40 years) this year, ASEME and the HOC Cell are extremely excited to announce the parade is going ahead at full steam. The parade date is locked in for 20 May 26, being held at North Bandiana (as close to the original location as possible). Current RSM ASEME (WO1 Chris Clifton) has put together a fantastic parade format that pays homage to the original parade whilst allowing the current members of the Corps an opportunity to be wholly involved.

At the completion of the parade, some of RAEME's great treasures will be released from the museum and repository for all to see. This will add some fantastic context for our younger soldiers, at the same time allowing for the older to relive some fantastic memories. The details surrounding invited guests and attendees is still being worked through with SEG, ALTC HQ and ASEME. Once I get more information I will ensure all are notified as early as possible.

Corps Shop – Click here for the [online clothing store](#).

The Corps has been working with Hunter Promotion Products (HPP) for a few years now. For those not aware, 15% of all sales come back to Corps funds.

In continuing this partnership, HPP not just shirts, shorts, etc but hoodies for those long cold days and nights. The link below allows you to order direct from the supplier and have it shipped to your address of choice. Orders close at the end of each month. If wanting to order bulk quantities, please contact Shaun White (via the website) and he will assist with everything.

Corps Port 2026/27

It is my extreme pleasure to announce the 2026 Port Organisers. Army Headquarters placed a fantastic pitch focusing on; 125 years of Army, 40 years of the Corps Banner and the farewells to Chief of Army and RSM Army. I cannot wait to see the final bottle designs and what will be on offer to be purchased.

Career Management Guidance

A general reminder that the SCPT remains the primary method of indicating your preferences to CM-A for Soldiers, NCOs and WOs, and this would be greatly enhanced if an indication of the member's transition is available to CM's here at CM-A. And it also enables the CoC to provide comment.

Corps RSM Update continued

CoC comment (and the CoC may be a RAEME Officer or WO) should remind the soldier/NCO/WO of progression opportunities in line with [MILPERSMAN Part 6 Chapter 1 Posting of Defence Members](#) and [MILPERSMAN Part 2 Chapter 1 Inherent Requirements of Service \(both links Defence network only\)](#) as they remain consistent across the ADF, while providing some context for the Career Manager in line with the aspirant's suitability for their desired outcome. [Army Standing Instruction \(Personnel\) \(ASI\(P\)\), Part 4, Chapter 1](#), 'Career Management' should also be read and understood by anyone providing first level advice. (All links accessible via Defence network only)

We are also on a mission to generate some new blood for want of a better word for CASG and ASEME, where the more recent knowledge from units will enhance the end product, be they tradespeople, or commodities that are in use by the ADF (Land). While not ignoring the risks posed from a capacity to provide an established flow of asset to support maritime Maintenance for the Littoral Manoeuvre function.

Course Information

Course availabilities are available on the Defence Protected Network only. This includes for the following courses:

- Subject 1 CPL Army
- Subject 2 CPL RAEME
- Subject 4 CPL RAEME
- Subject 1 SGT Army
- Subject 2 SGT CSS
- Subject 1 WO Army
- Subject 2 WO CSS

CATW Course Schedules

- ARM ASLAV Turret
- ES ASLAV Cont Sys
- VEH Bushmaster
- ARM M1A2 Turret
- ES M1A2 Cont Sys
- VEH M1A2 Veh Maint
- ARM M113 Turret
- VEH M113 Veh Maint
- VEH M88 Veh Maint
- VEH CEV IIS Veh Maint
- ES CEV IIS Con Sys
- Rheinmetall / 7 CSSB Veh Tech Boxer CRV VT maint
- Hanwha (H-ACE) Rec Tech COA 2 L8116 SP Howitzer
- Hanwha (H-ACE) Weap Tech COA L8116 SP Howitzer
- Hanwha (H-ACE) Elec Tech COA 2 L8116 SP Howitzer

RAEME Aviation

Army Aviation in the Congested Battlefield

The modern battlefield is no longer episodically busy—it is persistently congested, contested, and observed. Congestion is not simply a function of force density; it is driven by continuous overlap of land, air, cyber, space, and information domains; the simultaneous presence of friendly, adversary, civilian, and

automated actors; and the proliferation of sensors, shooters, and autonomous systems. Tactical actions at the lowest levels now generate operational and strategic effects.

Airspace from ground level to several thousand feet is saturated with small UAS, FPV drones, loitering munitions, rotary-wing aircraft, artillery trajectories, electromagnetic effects, and fires. Every echelon influences depth. The traditional separation between “airspace users” and “ground manoeuvre forces” has collapsed—everyone now operates in airspace, whether deliberately or not.

For Army Aviation, this environment demands fundamental adaptation.

Aviation can no longer assume protected access or privileged control of airspace. It must be treated as a manoeuvre capability, subject to the same risk trade-offs as any other combat system. This requires dynamic, time-based airspace control rather than static measures; shared situational awareness across echelons; and acceptance that airspace is contested terrain to be competed for, not allocated by default.

Survivability is increasingly defined by unpredictability. In a saturated sensor environment, predictability is now a greater threat than enemy firepower. Variable routing, non-standard timing, and true mission command are essential. Repetition creates patterns, and patterns are rapidly targeted.

Integration with SUAS is no longer optional. Rotary-wing aviation and UAS cannot operate in parallel silos. Without a shared airspace picture, common and simple control measures, and mutual understanding of constraints, friendly UAS become hazards—or worse, indicators that cue adversary systems onto aviation activity. Integration is fundamentally about coherence, not centralized control.

Congestion forces commanders to confront loss differently. In this environment, zero-loss outcomes are frequently unattainable. Loss must be anticipated, managed, and explained rather than treated as exceptional failure. Commanders require tools to quantify exposure, understand cumulative risk over time, and balance mission effect against morale, readiness, and sustainability. Unchecked loss erodes readiness, fosters hesitancy, and undermines trust in systems and leadership.

Effective airspace control must be adaptive and scalable. There is no single correct echelon for control. Lower echelons require freedom to act rapidly within short decision cycles, while higher echelons need visibility to manage systemic risk. Control must be ratcheted—tightened when risk is high, decentralized when speed and opportunity matter. This is a leadership and culture challenge as much as a technical one.

In Australia, these problems are compounded by the absence of a single institutional champion for UAS integration, decentralized acquisition and employment, and limited doctrine linking SUAS, Army aviation, and joint airspace management. The result is uncoordinated employment, increased airspace and fratricide risk, and missed opportunities for combined effects.

Corps RSM Update continued

Bottom line: In a congested battlefield, freedom of action is fleeting. Army Aviation will remain viable and decisive only if it competes for airspace, integrates fully with ground and UAS elements, operates inside compressed decision windows, and accepts risk deliberately and intelligently. This is not primarily a technology problem—it is a command, integration, and mindset problem.

Thank you to LTCOL Alexandra McDonald (CO 20 REGT RAA) for her insights (some of her feedback has been paraphrased by myself).

Warrant Officer Class One Jon Tynan

RAEME Corps Regimental Sergeant Major

E-Mail: jon.tynan@defence.gov.au

Competition – Design a Perpetual Trophy for the “RAEME Corporal of the Year”

The Corps has perpetual trophies for the following Corps awards:

- **PI Comd / RAEME LT of the Year** – LT Peter Jennings award – Standing Soldier depicting an Engineer
- **Artificer of the Year** – The Corps Patron Saint – St Eligius
- **RAEME SGT of the Year** – The BRIG Martins Award – Anvil with Spanner, Hammer and Lightning Bolt
- **RAEME CFN of the Year (ARA & ARES)** – ARA – The Corps Memorial; ARES – The Corps Badge

There is however a gap in that there is no current trophy for the “RAEME Corporal of the Year” award. To address this, Head of Corps Cell has announced a competition to design one.

Competition details:

- **Who:** All members of the Corps (past & present).
- **Challenge:** Design a perpetual trophy upon which worth recipients of this RAEME CPL-of-the-Year award may have their names inscribed.
- **End Date:** Sunday 07 June 2026.
- **Submissions:** Submissions can be submitted in any visual form to the Treasurer of the Corps Funds, Mr Steve Howells, via email at: steve.howells2@defence.gov.au.
- **Judging:** All submissions will be judged by the Corps Executive Committee. The winner will be announced in July 2026.
- **Prize:** The winner will receive a miniature of their design, as well as a framed Corps print. The runner up will receive a copy of the Corps History book.



How are we doing?

Just to provide a little bit of the background from an editorial perspective, we took this job on with the knowledge that we couldn't succeed without your input. Thankfully, we are starting to see some **member contributions** but we need more to grow, **especially from serving members and workshops**. At present, we have a huge buy-in from the Aviation front but we would like to see more from the land Army elements and the emerging maritime elements. You can find more guidance on submission requirements, including a template for submissions, at: <https://raeme.org.au/index.php/publications/newsletter/article-submission>

In the meanwhile, we are keen to make *Maintenance Matters* succeed. We want to continue to be relevant and interesting for all RAEME readers, regardless of whether they are still serving or not. This is for RAEME in every State or Territory or wherever else in the world we find ourselves.

How would you classify our progress?

Click on the relevant classification to let us know.



Recent Event Reports

The following is a summary of some of the functions that were recently held around the nation to permit RAEME members, families and supporters to share in each-other's company. Some of the following stories were provided and others captured on social media.

26th Intake Apprentices Reunion

A great 55th year reunion of the 26th Army Apprentices was held at the Wodonga RSL on 21 Mar 2026. It was great to catch up with old mates and share many memories.



Cheers the lads who threw it all together from 1 CSSB - CFN Alberts, CFN Hill, CFN Knechtli, CFN Symons, LT Hulland and the ASM. Shout out to Big Red BBQ for catering the event and Beaver Brewery for donating the carton!



NT Spanner Club

The sun came out just in time for the first NT Spanner Club of the year - a great turnout!



1 CER took out the volleyball, 1 CSSB won the carton stretch and the most valuable prize went to the 1 CSSB ASM who won the 20L jerry of diesel in the raffle!

Further to this, 1 CSSB recently celebrated its 29th birthday. Activities included a great rotation of games including Ultimate Frisbee, Tag Football, Longest Kick and good old-fashioned Tug-a-War. Overall, the sports championship winners were the team from 101st Field Workshop Company 🏆



RAV Bandiana Catch-up

Another great turn up for the Wednesday Morning (1st of the month) coffee morning on 01 April. Who knew that by being there, you might get a cuddle.



Melbourne Spanner Club – 09 April 2026

The Melbourne Crew gathering was held on 09 April 2026. With a rather large turn-out of members, things are looking good for planned activities for 2026.



Sunshine Coast Gathering – [Click here for more photos](#)

The first RAEME Sunshine Coast Chapter get-together for the year was held at the Alex Surf Club on 12 Apr 2026, with an outstanding 52 attendees. A few new faces among the many familiar ones helped create a warm and convivial afternoon.



Terry Johnson spoke of the very recent passing of three prominent members of the RAEME family and invited those present to dedicate the afternoon to their memory. Jo Cornelius, Dave French and Gary Boshhammer all passed away in March.



Jo is believed to have been among the first RAEME women posted to a field force unit. Following her discharge, she remained actively involved in “Women in RAEME” gatherings and was in the process of writing a book on the subject. She was an excellent tradesperson and an outstanding human being, taken far too soon at just 55 years of age.



Dave French served a number of years as an Infantry soldier before retraining as an Avionics Technician. Throughout his RAEME career, he dedicated himself to maintaining Army aviation capability. An outstanding soldier and technician, Dave was also a genuinely great bloke. He passed away at 68 years of age. Gary was a 27th intake apprentice Fitter who completed nine years in the ARA before returning to civilian life. A real character and a long-term friend to many, Gary was just 70.

As lunch concluded and refreshments began to warm the soul, the volume in the room steadily increased, making conversation more difficult. While some blamed flat hearing aid batteries, the venue acoustics also played their part. This led to many suggesting a more suitable venue for future gatherings.

Charmaine Johnson once again did a fantastic job—taking photos, organising lucky door prizes, and ensuring everyone was heading in the right direction when needed. Peter Yates and John Dack are actively pursuing an alternative venue for our next RAEME Sunshine Coast gathering, scheduled for 26 July 2026. Further details will be advised in due course.

Thank you to all who attended. By all accounts, it was another highly successful and enjoyable get-together.

Upcoming Events

Planned RAEME gatherings across Australia for the next few months are summarised below. For further details on any events, either click on the link within the listing below or contact the relevant State or Territory Association as required. To provide an update to this list, including any new events or events that have changed, please pass details to the Newsletter editors as follows:

- **Serving members** – Send details through your Senior Regional Representative who will be able to inform the Newsletter Editors to confirm details and on-base access requirements as applicable.
- **Former-serving members** – Send details through your State or Territory Association Representative for on-forwarding to the Newsletter Editors.
- **Other members** – Please send details directly to Newsletter@raeme.org.au or upload them to the submission portal at: <https://raeme.org.au/index.php/publications/newsletter/article-submission>

Note: Significant Events that require considerable advanced planning, including reunions, may be highlighted below

April

Sat 18 th	Adelaide	RAEME-SA ANZAC Day function	West Adelaide Football Club from 1130 for 1200h
Thurs 23 rd	Canberra	RMC Lanyard Presentation	RMC Golf Club from 1800h. RSVPs requested NLT 17 Apr 2026 via email to CAPT Alexander Rogers via email at: Alexander.Rogers1@defence.gov.au
23-25 th	SE-Qld	31 st Intake Apprentices – 50 th Year Reunion	Maroochy RSL
Sat 25 th	Nationwide	ANZAC Day	March & gathering details nationwide are at the start of this edition

May

TBC	Canberra	ASM's Golf Day	RMC Golf Club
Fri 01 st	Canberra	Mixed Lunch	Ainslie Football Club from 1230h
Wed 06 th	Wodonga	Coffee Morning	Wodonga Plant Farm from 1000h
	Brisbane	RAQ Monthly Meeting	Kedron Wavell Services Club from 1730h
Fri 08 th	Melbourne	Monthly Spanner Club	Ladida, 557 Little Bourke St from 1600h
Wed 13 th	Keswick	Army Museum (Keswick) History Week Lunch	See Museum website for details when published
Thurs 14 th	Thirlmere	NSW Committee Meeting & Casual Luncheon	Wollondilly RSL, Thirlmere
Sat 16 th	South Arm	RAT Luncheon	South Arm RSL South Arm
Sun 17 th	Toowoomba	Darling Downs Luncheon	Toowoomba Golf Club from 1200h
Wed 20 th	Bandiana	Prince Philip Banner – 40th Anniversary Parade	North Bandiana from 1200h. Events include parade plus a display of current capability and historical equipment. RSVPs are essential. Click on the event link to provide your expression of interest to attend the parade NLT 30 Apr.
Tues 26 th	Canberra	Mixed Drinks	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club from 1930h

June

Wed 03 rd	Wodonga	Coffee Morning	Wodonga Plant Farm from 1000h
	Adelaide	SA Committee of Management Meeting	Plympton/Glenelg RSL from 1700h
	Brisbane	RAQ Monthly Meeting	Kedron Wavell Services Club from 1730h
Fri 05 th	Canberra	Spanner Club and Sausage Sizzle	RMC Golf Club from 1600h
Sat 06 th	Brisbane	SE Qld Army Apprentices School Reunion 2026	Bulimba Bowls Club from 1100h
Fri 12 th	Melbourne	Monthly Spanner Club	Ladida, 557 Little Bourke Street from 1600-1900h
Sat 13 th	Townsville	RAEME NQ Gathering	1200h Location TBA
Tues 30 th	Canberra	Mixed Drinks	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club from 1930h

July

Wed 01 st	Wodonga	Coffee Morning	Wodonga Plant Farm from 1000h
	Brisbane	RAQ Monthly Meeting	Kedron Wavell Services Club from 1730h
Fri 03 rd	Canberra	Mixed Lunch	Ainslie Football Club from 1230h
Sun 26 th	Ingleburn	NSW Christmas in July Function	Ingleburn RSL Club
	Sunshine Coast	Sunshine Coast Gathering	Alex Surf Club, Alexandra Headland
Tues 28 th	Canberra	Mixed Drinks	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club from 1930h

August

Wed 05 th	Wodonga	Coffee Morning	Wodonga Plant Farm from 1000h
	Brisbane	RAQ Monthly Meeting	Kedron Wavell Services Club from 1730h
Fri 07 th	Canberra	Spanner Club and Sausage Sizzle	RMC Golf Club from 1600h

Fri 15 th – Sun 17 th	Currumbin RSL, Gold Coast	101 Fd Wksp Reunion Weekend	14 August – Catch up from 1700h 15 August – Dinner from 1700h 16 August – Farewells from 1100h Cost \$70 per pers. Contact Michelle Lafferty on 0404-004-775 for more details.
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Sun 16 th	Toowoomba	Darling Downs Luncheon	Toowoomba Golf Club from 1200h
	Ross, Tas	Statewide Luncheon	Man of Ross hotel, Ross
Sat 22 nd	Gold Coast	RAEME Luncheon	Mermaid Beach AEME SLSC from 1200h

Sun 23 rd	SE-Qld	RAEME Reserve Reunion	Indooroopilly Sherwood RSL Club from 1100h
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Tues 25 th	Canberra	Mixed Drinks	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club from 1930h
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September

Tues 01 st	Adelaide	Harry the Horse Luncheon	West Adelaide Football Club from 1200h
Wed 02 nd	Wodonga	Coffee Morning	Wodonga Plant Farm from 1000h
	Adelaide	SA Committee of Management Meeting	Plympton/Glenelg RSL from 1700h
	Brisbane	RAQ Monthly Meeting	Kedron Wavell Services Club from 1730h
Fri 04 th	Canberra	Mixed Lunch	Ainslie Football Club from 1230h

04 th – 06 th	Nungarin WA	Nungarin Veterans Muster	WW2 armoured vehicles on display, bus tour to Merredin Military Museum & local WW2 sites. Camping and accommodation available. For more details, 08-9046-5040 or nungarinheritage@bigpond.com
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Thurs 10 th	Ingleburn	NSW Committee Meeting & Casual Luncheon	Ingleburn RSL Club
Sat 12 th	Maroochydore	RAQ Sunshine Coast Luncheon	Maroochy RSL from 1230h
Tues 29 th	Canberra	Mixed Drinks	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club from 1930h

October

Fri 02 nd	Canberra	Spanner Club and Sausage Sizzle	RMC Golf Club from 1600h
Wed 07 th	Wodonga	Coffee Morning	Wodonga Plant Farm from 1000h
	Brisbane	RAQ Monthly Meeting	Kedron Wavell Services Club from 1730h
Tues 27 th	Canberra	Mixed Drinks	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club from 1930h

November

Wed 04 th	Wodonga	Coffee Morning	Wodonga Plant Farm from 1000h
	Brisbane	RAQ Monthly Meeting	Kedron Wavell Services Club from 1730h
Fri 06 th	Canberra	End-of-Year Dinner	Gyphonns Bar and Caffe
Sun 15 th	Toowoomba	RAQ Darling Downs Luncheon	City Golf Club from 1200h
Sun 22 nd	Sunshine Coast	RAQ Gathering Sunshine Coast	Alexandra Headland Surf Club from 1200h

ASEME in the Field – As reported by ALTC on social media

Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering – Field Training Exercise – Soldier Skills Block | OPERATION WARHORSE

With Alpha Company—alongside Bravo Company (-) acting as OPFOR—now deployed, these images capture the final stages of preparation leading into OPERATION WARHORSE.

In the 36 hours prior to crossing the LD on D-DAY (20 MAR), Soldiers and Aviators conducted intensive lessons and rehearsals to ensure they were fully prepared for the fight.

Weapons, radios, ammunition, rations and water were issued at capacity, with the Company meeting all start state conditions for the clearance of terrain in offensive operations



“If it ain’t raining, it ain’t training!” - Every RSM ever

The Combat Service Support component of the Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Field EX got off to a thundering start this week!

One of the many lessons trainees learnt on EX is the basics of capturing potential enemy combatants, process them in accordance with rules of engagement and Laws of Armed Conflict & Maintain area security for the force



Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering has stepped off into the fight.

On 20 March, OPERATION WARHORSE commenced with forces crossing the LD and launching into a 6-day offensive, clearing from West to East across both close and open terrain.

After engaging enemy forces and gathering vital intelligence through captured mapping and friendly UAS (drones), the battle is set to transition to Defensive Operations — securing the high ground in support of the mission.

ASEME Army and Air Force trainees are working tirelessly under the constant threat of enemy ground and air contact. In a demanding and realistic training environment, they continue to survive — and thrive — in the field.



Padre in the Field

Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering's Padre, CHAP William Fratter, has been out in the field in full support of our troops during OPERATION WARHORSE.

From assisting with shell scrape depth checks using his trusty “Psalm Stick” to boosting morale with an infectious smile (and a timely resupply of Allens lollies), Padre Fratter is helping build a stronger, more resilient fighting force.

Following a Christian field service in the field, our soldiers stepped forward ready for the next fight — strengthened both spiritually and physically.



Pause EX - let's talk drones!

After intermittent harassment by School of Armour's Communications and Surveillance Wing drones, trainees were fascinated to see just how much information can be gathered from hundreds of metres away!

The Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering Field EX- Soldier Skills Block- is familiarising trainees with all things drones. Amidst the solidifying of general field skills, this new facet of the EX encourages trainees to think about the three-dimensional battle space of today, gaining knowledge from the subject matter experts themselves.



Keeping the fight moving!

Whilst trainees at the Soldier Skills Block of the ASEME Field EX battled drones in Puckapunyal, the Combat Service Support component saw trainees problem-solving under fire.

This side of the EX reinforced critical combat behaviours while gaining hands-on experience operating as part of a Forward Repair Team.

From rapid fault diagnosis to getting assets back in the fight, these trainees are proving they're ready to deliver under pressure!



Yes, I told the civil servant that he had spelt guerrilla wrong but he was quite adamant that he doesn't make mistakes.
He wants our diminished army trained in gorilla tactics.

1 Apr 26



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5 ENTRIES
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POC MAJ Kate Thorne

Katelyn.Thorne@defence.gov.au

Defence and Veterans' Service Commissioner Bill passes Parliament

Date: Tuesday, 31 March 2026

From: The Hon Matt Keogh MP, Minister for Veterans' Affairs and Minister for Defence Personnel

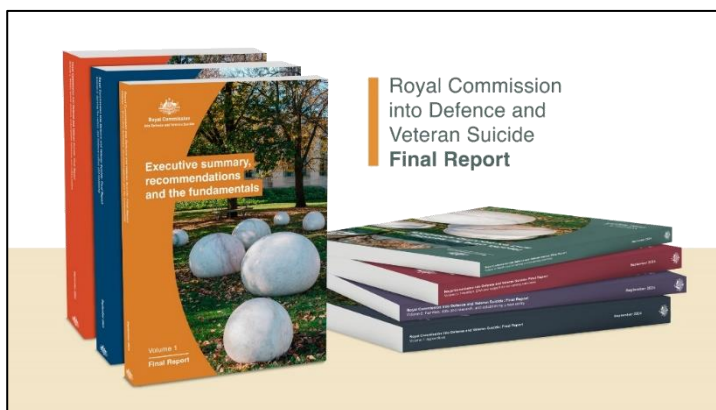
Today marks an important milestone in the Albanese Government's implementation of the recommendations of the [Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide](#).

The Parliament has passed the Defence and Veterans' Service Commissioner Bill 2025 and the Defence and Veterans' Service Commissioner (Consequential and Transitional Provisions) Bill 2025.

This realises the full intent of Recommendation 122 – the recommendation the Royal Commission deemed it's most important- to establish a new statutory entity to oversee system reform across the whole Defence and veteran ecosystem, the Defence and Veteran Service Commission (DVSC).

The Commission is focused on improving suicide prevention and wellbeing outcomes for current and former serving Australian Defence Force members by providing independent oversight and evidence-based advice to the Australian Government and Parliament.

The passage of this legislation is consistent with the Government's commitment to enacting standalone legislation for the Defence and Veterans' Service Commissioner and



Commission, following the swift passage of the enabling legislation in February 2025.

The Bill also reflects the Government's response to the recommendations of the Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee report of 29 August 2025 on the current enabling legislation, including that the Government transitions the DVSC into standalone legislation, the Commissioner is appointed by the Governor-General and that the Commissioner's functions include veterans' families.

The Government's response to the recommendations of the Royal Commission involves the most comprehensive reform ever undertaken to the systems, culture and processes across Defence and the Department of Veterans' Affairs.

DVA News – ANZAC Day Kitbags

[Anzac Day kitbag and commemorative packs now available](#)

12 March 2026

As Anzac Day approaches, many will be considering ways to personally commemorate all those who have and continue to serve our country in wars, conflicts and peace operations.

Our Anzac Day Kitbag and commemorative package is available to support you in commemorating Anzac Day.

Whether you're reflecting in private or planning a local service in your community, our kitbag contains a range of resources you can customise to suit your needs. This includes a recommended order of service with flag protocols, sample speeches, the Ode of Remembrance and music suggestions. These free resources are available for download from the [Anzac Portal](#).

To support Anzac Day commemorative efforts, we have posted a commemorative pack of posters and educational resources to more than 22,000 ex-service organisations, schools, aged care facilities and community groups to help ensure Australians never forget the extraordinary sacrifices of our service men and women.

The commemorative pack includes the 2026 Anzac Day poster, which honours the important role of current-serving members



and veterans of the Australian Defence Force. The poster features a member of the Royal Australian Navy (RAN) with his children after an Anzac Day dawn service in Sydney. The poster acknowledges that for every person who has served, there are families, friends and loved ones who have supported them and endured their own sacrifices.

The pack also contains a second commemorative poster to acknowledge the service and sacrifices of First Nations Australians who served during the Korean War, with more than 60 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men serving between 1950 and 1953.

The commemorative pack includes new education resources, including interactive activities, classroom-ready lessons and worksheets to support teachers and their students learning about service and Australia's military history.

Digital copies of the commemorative pack are accessible from the [Anzac Portal](#). For a physical copy of the posters, please email DVA Education at: education@dva.gov.au.

Bird Dog Crew Chiefs – 161 (Indep) Recce Flt Wksp Svn 1967-68

The following story is an excerpt from Dave Manfield's story entitled: *"Bird Dog Crew Chiefs – 161 (Indep) Recce Flt"*, dated 03 February 2026.

Little is known about the exploits of four RAEME technicians, who served with the 161st (Independent) Reconnaissance Flight Workshop (161 (Indep) Recce Flt Wksp) in South Vietnam (SVN) in 1967-68, who were given training as Crew Chiefs to better support Australian Cessna 180 aircraft, then in service in SVN from 28 Aug 1967 to 15 Mar 1968. These men received training at the US Army's 184th Reconnaissance Aircraft Company (RAC) based at Phu Loi over 4 weeks before being qualified as Bird Dog Crew Chiefs.

Bird Dog Crew Chief training was informative and straight forward as the aircraft technicians were already trained on the unit Cessna 180's. The training involved pre-flight and after flight servicing, ground starts and routine day to day maintenance of the Bird Dog, or Cessna 0-1A aircraft, to give the aircraft its correct name.



Cessna 0-1A

The Bird Dog was a remarkably similar aircraft to the Cessna 180, being fitted with a Continental 6-cylinder engine, two magnetos, a carburettor and a simpler propeller system with a fixed pitch. The Bird Dog engine cowling design made access to the engine quite easy and Bird Dog maintenance was similar to the Cessna 180's. American mechanics were authorised to taxi Bird Dogs around the maintenance area and Corporal Manfield and Craftsman Watson also qualified to taxi them.



Photograph by Bob Livingstone, Amberley, 02/1973

Australian Cessna 180

The four aircraft technicians who qualified as Bird Dog Crew Chiefs were as follows:

- **Corporal Robert James JONES.** "Jim", as he was better known, served in SVN from 8 April 1967 to 12 March 1968 with 161 (Indep) Recce Flt as an aircraft engine fitter. He graduated from the Australian Army Apprentices School as a 13th Intake Vehicle Mechanic. He transferred to 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron in early 1966 and completed the 2nd Aircraft Engine Fitters Course. In early August 1967 he became the first Bird Dog Crew Chief to be trained at Phu Loi. Jim passed away on 26 March 2017.
- **Corporal David Harry SHEARER.** "Clipper", he was known, served in SVN from 14 June 1967 to 10 September 1968 with 161 (Indep) Recce Flt as an airframe fitter. He graduated from the Australian Army Apprentice School as a 17th Intake Fitter and Turner. He transferred to 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron in January 1966 and completed the 3rd Airframe Fitters Course. In November 1967 he became the second Bird Dog Crew Chief to be trained at Phu Loi. Clipper now lives in Brisbane, after a long and successful career with the Australian Maritime Service Authority.
- **Corporal David Michael MANFIELD.** "Speedy", as he was better known, served in SVN from 17 January 1968 to 26 November 1968 with 161 (Indep) Recce Flt as an airframe fitter. He graduated from the Australian Army Apprentice School as a 17th Intake Fitter and Turner. He transferred to 16 Army Light Aircraft Squadron in January 1966 and completed the 3rd Airframe Fitters Course. Speedy now lives in Sydney after a successful and long career in the Queensland Police Service.
- **Craftsman Philip WATSON.** Phil served in SVN from 18 December 1967 to 17 December 1968 and from 6 February 1971 to 7 February 1972 with 161 (Indep) Recce Flt as an aircraft engine fitter. He graduated from the Australian Army Apprentice School as a 18th Intake Vehicle Mechanic. He transferred to 1 Division Army Aviation Regiment Workshop in December 1966 and completed the Engine Fitters Course. Phil now lives in Cairns after rising to the rank of WO1 Artificer Aircraft and has kept busy as an DVA Advocate.

184th Reconnaissance Aircraft Company – Phu Loi

Phu Loi Army Airfield was located north-west of Bien Hoa in Binh Duong Province and about twenty-two kilometres north of Saigon on Route 13. The 184th RAC compound was located at the south-east corner of the base. Major units of the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) and Viet Cong (VC) troops used the area around Phu Loi for pre-TET offensive staging and as a jumping-off point for attacks on Saigon and surrounding U.S. and South Vietnamese Installations. Because of increased ground attacks on the base, the 184th RAC was tasked with building and manning night defensive positions. Over fifty per cent of the company's strength was committed to this task. To protect the aircraft in the event the enemy did penetrate the perimeter, three machine gun positions were set up on the flight line and

the guard was doubled at night. The 184th RAC had 24 Bird Dogs, 28 officers and pilots and 122 enlisted men.



Bird Dog undergoing major service at 184th RAC

During Dave Shearer's time there, he experienced numerous night rocket attacks. Early one morning he was woken by a rocket attack. He went to a nearby bunker which he found was already full of American soldiers. He sat in the bunker doorway with his hands over his head, hoping nothing would land near him. On another night the 184th RAC received incoming rockets and a rocket exploded close to one of the Bird Dog aircraft spraying the full length of the portside fuselage and main frame with shrapnel. The aircraft was written off.



Damaged Bird Dog which crash landed at 184th RAC

During the time Speedy Manfield and Phil Watson trained at Phu Loi, the base was subjected to continuous nightly rocket attacks and sporadic ground assaults. In their first 5 days, the base was subjected to seven separate heavy rocket attacks. The conditions were primitive for all who served in Phi Loi, and during the 1968 TET offensive several 184th RAC personnel were wounded whilst sleeping in huts with wooden floors and sand-bagged walls. Several bunkers positioned around the 184th RAC were above ground structures like Quonset huts but smaller huts were made from corrugated iron with sandbags on top. It certainly did not inspire confidence regarding protection as a direct hit would have destroyed the bunker.

Early on the morning of 18 February 1968 at 0045h, five rockets were fired towards the Phu Loi base camp. Two rounds scored direct hits on the maintenance hangar starting a fire that threatened to destroy the building, ground support equipment and two workshop vans which contained the tools and machinery needed to maintain the aircraft. The mess hall also scored a direct rocket hit and was severely damaged. Three Bird Dog aircraft sustained severe damage.



Bunker at 184th RAC at Phu Loi

Craftsman Watson received his only war wound (a scar on his elbow) when he dived onto a concrete floor after hearing an incoming rocket. This was in the second attack on the first night. Corporal Manfield and Craftsman Watson were not impressed with the bunkers they had been allocated which were used by most of the maintenance crews. On one night rocket attack the 184th RAC orderly room was damaged, causing paper work to be showered over the entire maintenance area – other damage included a Bird Dog which was written-off after receiving 275 shrapnel holes.

On one morning the VC, or NVA, launched a ground attack at the main gate and Corporal Manfield and Craftsman Watson raced down to the main gate to try get involved in the fire fight. They were ordered to go to a nearby bunker where they remained for about one hour until the ground attack was defeated. On another night Corporal Manfield and Craftsman Watson occupied a perimeter bunker and observed the nervous perimeter guards calling for flares to light up an area in front of the bunker which included a cemetery with the Phu Loi township about five hundred metres in the background.

Overall, Corporal Manfield and Craftsman Watson enjoyed their time at the 184th RAC and working on the Bird Dog aircraft in a big carport type shelter which was shaded from the sun but not from any sideways rain.



Part 2 of 8 – Future Maintenance Planning within the 16th Aviation Support Battalion

Introduction

16 ASB provides deep maintenance support to both the 1st and 5th Aviation Regiments through 5 Wksp Coy for the AH-64E Apache and CH-47F Chinook platforms. 5 Wksp Coy also conducts UH-60M Blackhawk maintenance at Oakey in support of aircrew training at the (AAVnTC). Given this model, this article briefly explores the importance of future maintenance planning and the challenges faced by 16 ASB – many of which will be familiar to RAEME personnel across generations.

The Challenge of Forecasting Aircraft Maintenance

Aircraft Deeper Maintenance can take up to three months to complete, depending on the platform and scope of work. This makes it critical to forecast support requirements accurately to ensure technical integrity (fit for purpose, safe to operate and environmentally acceptable) aircraft are available for tasking, and ensure readiness and capability requirements are not compromised.

One of the key challenges is predicting aircraft usage rates. While planning for routine training events is relatively straightforward, the change caused by having 1st Australian Division as the Unit of Action and exercising in a Large-Scale Combat Operations environment, introduces complexity into predicting flying Rates of Effort (ROE). For example, how much notice does the unit receive from operational units? At what tempo are units expected to operate? These variables make it difficult to design a maintenance stagger that outlasts “Jonno” being nominated “Tool of the Week”, or that will be feasible with the logistic challenges faced in the supply chain.

To address this, 16 ASB’s maintenance planning must be resilient and flexible, with built-in surge capacity to accommodate fluctuations in operational demand.

A Proactive Approach to Planning

The unit’s solution lies in a proactive EMEOPS and fleet planning team that maintains close liaison with all AVN REGTs, Brigade Operations staff and aircraft specific project offices. This coordination enables the unit to align emerging maintenance requirements with known demand signals and support limitations.

This process of Integrated Fleet Planning (IFP), enables forecasting of capacity vs demand for an entire fleet of aircraft. The IFP is managed by a planning team which enables them to ensure all maintenance is scheduled to ensure sufficient aircraft are available at any one time to complete planned activities as well as surge for short notice tasks. This process frames an overall plan for separate units to also work towards maintaining overall health of the broader fleet.

Based on recent experience, the planning team strongly encourages all personnel involved in maintenance planning to consult the Defence Continuing Airworthiness Manual (DCAMan), particularly Part 6.

It outlines best practices that comply with Aviation Regulations and are informed by industry standards. Even for those managing Land-based fleets, many of the principles and methodologies are transferable.

Building a Flexible and Responsive Maintenance System

Once a workable plan is established—one that meets support routine requirements and includes a defined ROE to enable surge requirements – the unit schedules tentative maintenance start dates. These dates guide the synchronisation of parts delivery, implementation of modifications, outstanding repairs, engineering support, and personnel allocation to expedite maintenance. Unlike previous arrangements where DM schedules and workforce were contracted externally with limited flexibility, 16 ASB now owns both inputs. This gives the unit the ability to reimagine maintenance support, including rapid workforce scaling across platforms to meet evolving operational needs.

This practice ensures an efficient DM process, meaning the aircraft are put back into the operational units faster, increasing aircraft available for the mission within the fleet.

Strengthening the Workforce with Reservist Integration

With a forecastable workload and increased workforce flexibility, the 16 ASB aims to build a pool of skilled reservists from ECN 411/412 and RAAF specialist trades. Historically, integrating these trades in a reservist capacity has been challenging due to regulatory and training burdens. This often resulted in more time being spent on administration and technical training than actual maintenance delivery.

The unit’s goal is to establish a stable Aviation Centre of Mass over the next few years that enables greater reservist participation. This would offer aeronautical trades skills, enhanced career flexibility and new opportunities to support a capability that has not previously existed in this form. This is a “shameless plug” for our aircraft RAEME tradespersons, which can be exploited, particularly in FNQ, and provide some exposure to an awesome high technology platforms like Apache.

Conclusion

16 ASB is actively implementing resilient teams and streamlined processes to better enable the generation of high levels of aircraft availability for 1 and 5 Avn Regt. As more aircraft are introduced into service, the maintenance demands will inevitably grow. Through the new organisational and operating structure, the unit aims to synchronise all maintenance inputs, including the integration of our much-valued reservist workforce, to ensure agility, responsiveness and while remaining capable of sustaining operational tempo into the future.

CAPT Shannon McGee

EMEOPSO

16 ASB

Part 3 of 8 – 16 Aviation Support Battalion – CH-47F Maintenance Support Troop

Introduction

At the heart of the 16 ASB is its ability to support high ROE required by Army's operational aviation units. In the case of the CH-47F Chinook capability, the CH-47F Maintenance Support Troop (CH-47F MST) is leading the way in demonstrating the value a dedicated ASB can provide.

To ensure these maintenance activities run efficiently, CH-47F MST also relies on a dedicated planning construct and competently assessed and authorised personnel. Central to this is the Integrated Planning Cell (IPC) located within the MST, which provides actionable plans and resourcing to the maintenance managers. Since its implementation, the IPC has significantly improved efficiency through predictive resourcing and adaptive workforce tasking.

This is especially important because at any given time, CH-47F MST supports up to four major maintenance activities. These typically include two large routine services – each lasting eight to ten weeks—and two additional modification programs, such as the ongoing Improved Troop Seating (ITS) upgrade.



Chinook Surrounded by docking station, ready for service to begin

At the centre of the IPC is Hangar Artificer, Warrant Officer Class Two John 'Jimmy' Newton. WO2 Newton has been instrumental in fostering innovation and communication within CH-47F MST. His leadership has enabled seamless coordination between industry maintenance managers and the Army chain of command, ensuring alignment of effort and clarity of purpose.

One of the most forward-leaning initiatives championed by WO2 Newton is the development of an off-aircraft component maintenance capability. This concept aims to establish a type-agnostic maintenance model that allows 16 ASB to support multiple aircraft platforms – including the AH-64E Apache – now entering service. The model separates component-level maintenance from airframe maintenance, enabling aircraft-qualified technicians to remain focused on aircraft servicing. At the same time, it creates opportunities for other personnel – including those not currently aircraft-qualified – to be task-trained and authorised to conduct specific component

maintenance. This includes both army personnel, including reservists, and industry partners.



CH-47F Engine being maintained off aircraft

A trial of this maintenance concept in the fourth quarter of 2024 resulted in a 20% reduction in the duration of a deep maintenance service, validating its potential as a force multiplier. As the capability matures, it will expand to include AH-64E Apache components, further increasing the strategic value of 16 ASB.

This evolving off-aircraft maintenance construct also presents a significant opportunity for the employment of Army Reservists. Many reservists possess valuable technical competencies, either from previous full-time service or civilian employment, which can be leveraged in component-level maintenance roles. By focusing on discrete, task-oriented activities, the model allows for flexible integration of reservists into the workforce without requiring full aircraft qualifications. Reservists can also contribute meaningfully to component servicing and refurbishment, logistics and parts management, quality assurance and documentation, and support to modification programs such as ITS, or future AH-64E upgrades.

This approach not only enhances workforce utilization, but also provides reservists with meaningful, hands-on employment that contributes directly to operational readiness. With the right people in the right roles – full time, industry and reservist alike – CH-47F MST is setting the standard for DM army aviation practices and paving the way for a more agile, scalable and sustainable support model

CAPT William Crain
CH-47F MST COMD
16 ASB

This submission was voted as the best member submission for this edition. Details of the prize will be forwarded to the author



ADF Pay and Conditions News

Changes to Defence Conditions of Service, as extracted from [official notification](#) provided on 19 Mar 2026 include:

Extended medical support after ending CFTS

Members are now eligible for reimbursement of any medical, psychological and dental services they pay for within 4 months of ending continuous full-time service (CFTS) under certain conditions:

- The services couldn't be provided before the member ended CFTS.
- There are exceptional circumstances that allow for the benefit.

Learn more about the benefits available to members [after they transition](#).

Find the updated policy details in [Ch 2 Pt 3 Div 4 of PACMAN](#).

Extended housing benefits after ending service in the Permanent Forces

Members of the Permanent Forces are eligible for housing benefits for up to an extra 4 months after their service has ended if there are exceptional circumstances.

The extension only applies to members who were getting one of the following housing benefits before their service ended:

- They occupied living-in accommodation.
- They lived in a member's choice accommodation.
- They lived in a Service residence.
- They got rent allowance.

Learn more about [additional transition period benefits](#).

This policy information has been moved from Chapter 2 of PACMAN. Find the updated details in [Ch 7 Pt 1 Div 1 of PACMAN](#).

Storage of furniture & effects for remote locn postings

If a member is posted to a remote location, Defence will pay to store the furniture and effects the member doesn't take with them. However, this doesn't apply if the member chooses to stay in living-in accommodation at the remote location.

Learn more about [performing duty in a remote location](#).

Find the updated policy details in [Ch 6 Pt 5 Div 7 of PACMAN](#).

Other information recently updated by Defence

Benefits for you and your pet

Defence has recently provided an update to conditions of service relating to [pet ownership in the ADF](#).

In general, Defence recognises that pets are an important part of many Defence families, and they offer support to help members care for them during postings.

You may keep pets in Service residences or rentals if permitted by the agreement, and you must ensure the property is safe and

Pet relocation if a member dies

If a member dies while posted in Australia, Defence may pay to relocate the member's pet with their family or to their legal caretaker.

Learn more about the [family assistance available if a member dies](#).

Find the updated policy details in [Ch 6 Pt 5 Div 11 of PACMAN](#).

Transfer allowance for members moving within an overseas location

Defence has updated the conditions under which members and their accompanying family are eligible for transfer allowance.

New rates have been added for members moving from living-in accommodation in an overseas posting location to a new residence in the same location.

Learn more about [moving benefits when you're posted overseas](#).

Find the updated policy details in [Ch 14 Pt 3 Div 3 of PACMAN](#).

Club memberships during overseas postings

Defence may pay for club memberships for members and their dependants to help them play sport and keep fit in some overseas posting locations.

The following updates have been made to the approved clubs list:

- Fitness Zone in Beirut, Lebanon, has been added to the list.
- Vanuatu has been removed from the list due to club closure.

Members who were posted to Lebanon between 17 September 2025 and 12 March 2026 are eligible for reimbursement of any club membership costs during that period, up to the benefit amount they would have received had the club been approved during it.

Learn more about [overseas fitness and recreation club memberships](#).

Find the updated policy details in [Ch 15 Pt 8 of PACMAN](#).

compliant with local animal laws. DHA approval is required before acquiring a new pet in a Service residence, and you're responsible for any damage. Landlord or body corporate approval may be needed in rentals.

When relocating, Defence may assist with pet transport and temporary boarding within Australia, while OAT Case Managers provide guidance for overseas moves.

 **The Supreme Misleader** — someone who tells you what policy says, even if it doesn't apply to you.



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The Dinosaur — someone who quotes actual rules that were replaced or updated years ago



The Website Warrior — that person or support agency that refers to guidance or websites instead of policy



The Passive Navigator — someone who says they know policy but they haven't actually read it

If you want to win — and claim every cherry you're entitled to — you need to understand the map. That means YOU need to read and understand PACMAN.

What Is PACMAN?

PACMAN is the definitive source of truth for benefits across the ADF. It covers everything from salaries and allowances to housing, leave, travel, overseas postings and much more.

It's not just for administrators — it's for you. Whether you're a new digger or a seasoned leader, PACMAN helps you understand what you and your subordinates are entitled to, when, and why.

PACMAN is backed by Defence Determinations under the Defence Act 1903. These are legally enforceable instruments which are regularly updated. If it's in PACMAN, it's enforceable.

Cherry-Picking Benefits: What You Might Be Missing

Here are key parts of PACMAN many overlook.



Housing and Rent Allowance

PACMAN Chapter 7 covers housing and meals. Common mistakes are made when applying for Rental Allowance. For example, a website, well-meaning staffer at a support agency or a mis-informed senior may tell you that you “must” have a release clause in your lease to “protect yourself in case you are deployed or posted”. PACMAN says nothing about this requirement. In fact, [PACMAN 7.8.48](#) addresses what happens if you need to leave a property before your lease runs out. Spoiler alert, you still receive full support, at least until you no longer have an obligation under the lease, ie your lease expires or a new tenant is found.

A release clause is required but only if you own a home in a different location that you rent out. [PACMAN 7.2.15](#) requires Defence members who are landlords to include a release clause that will allow them to take possession of their home if they are posted to their home's location or they potentially won't be eligible for housing assistance on arrival. [PACMAN 7.2.16](#) and [7.2.17](#) provides a little additional guidance on this. [PACMAN 7.2.18](#) advises that being posted to a region where your home is rented to DHA has additional risks.

If you receive Rental Allowance and your circumstances change, eg you enter or leave a relationship or you want to have someone else move in, you **MUST** inform DHA. Read [PACMAN Chapter 7, Part 8](#) in detail to understand Rental Allowance.



Leave Benefits

Buying leave. [PACMAN 5-4-5](#) allows you to buy up to 20 days leave provided your balance remains under 50 days. If you buy leave at today's cost, you may use it later when pay rates have risen, hence it may increase in value. Some consider this to be beneficial at discharge.

Selling leave. Whilst you can't "sell" your leave in the same manner that you can buy it, when transition time comes, you can choose to either use your leave or take the money equivalent of it. This isn't as straight forward as it sounds though. If a SERCAT 7 member has 3 months of Long Service Leave (LSL) on transition, they should receive 3 months of salary, regardless of how those days are made up, eg weekends, public holidays etc. If the same member has 25 days of Recreation Leave, they get a bonus as for every 5 days of accrued leave credit, two days of salary and annual allowances paid at the daily rate, hence they should receive 35 day's pay. [PACMAN 5-5-5](#) (LSL) and [5-4-8](#) (Rec Leave) provides more details re this. Read it all to review options relevant to you and your circumstances.

Donating Rec Leave. If two members are part of a dual serving couple, one may be able to donate leave to the other. [PACMAN 5-4-9](#) outlines the conditions but in general, if the “donor” won’t have less than 10 days credit after the transfer, if they aren’t donating purchased leave and if they (or the receiving member) aren’t transitioning in the next 6 months, they can donate leave however the receiving member must provide their boss with a leave plan for approval showing how the donated leave will be used.

Recall from leave. [PACMAN 5-13](#) indicates that a member can be recalled from leave for operational reasons but it also outlines what may be reimbursed for this recall. Reimbursement may include travel costs and the cost of services that could not be used because of the recall. Decision makers must consider if the costs were recoverable in other ways such as through travel insurance but there is no compulsion to hold travel insurance for recall. The reimbursement may cover resident family and recognised other persons who were travelling with the member.

How to Avoid the Ghosts

As all good tradesman know, to do a job well, you need a good toolkit. Whether you're planning a move, applying for leave, or navigating a complex posting, PACMAN is your toolkit.

Here's how to stay ahead of the game:

- **Read PACMAN directly** — not summaries, not hearsay, not outdated PDFs. Check the chapter and clause numbers — they're your map coordinates.
- **Develop a reading plan** — read the core chapters for [pay](#), [allowances](#), [leave](#), [relocations](#), and [housing](#). Then note the linkages in [travel](#), and [clothing](#) (especially [loss or damage](#)). That leads into potential [compensation](#). Then look at areas that may relate to you such as, [family assistance](#), [overseas employment](#), including [short-term duty](#), [long-term duty](#), [relocations](#), or war-like [deployments](#).
- **Get updates** — PACMAN changes regularly. Updates are published online. [Subscribe](#) to PACMAN newsletters today!

Next time someone says “you’re not entitled to that”, ask them what PACMAN clause they are referring to as in this game, if you don’t read the map and avoid the ghosts, you won’t win!

Say 'Cheese'...

RAEME Photographic Competition

We know RAEME members are out there doing incredible work every day—now it's your turn to show it off. We're launching a brand-new RAEME Photography Competition, and we want to see the Corps through your lens.

Whether you're maintaining, recovering, fabricating, diagnosing, testing, or solving the impossible with a bit of RAEME ingenuity, capture the moment and send it in. Action, teamwork, problem-solving, craftsmanship—if it's real RAEME work, we want to see it.

The winner will be on the cover of the December Maintenance Matters.

✔ Photo Requirements

Portrait orientation preferred
The photo should have been taken recently

✔ How to Enter

Submit your photo using the link below:

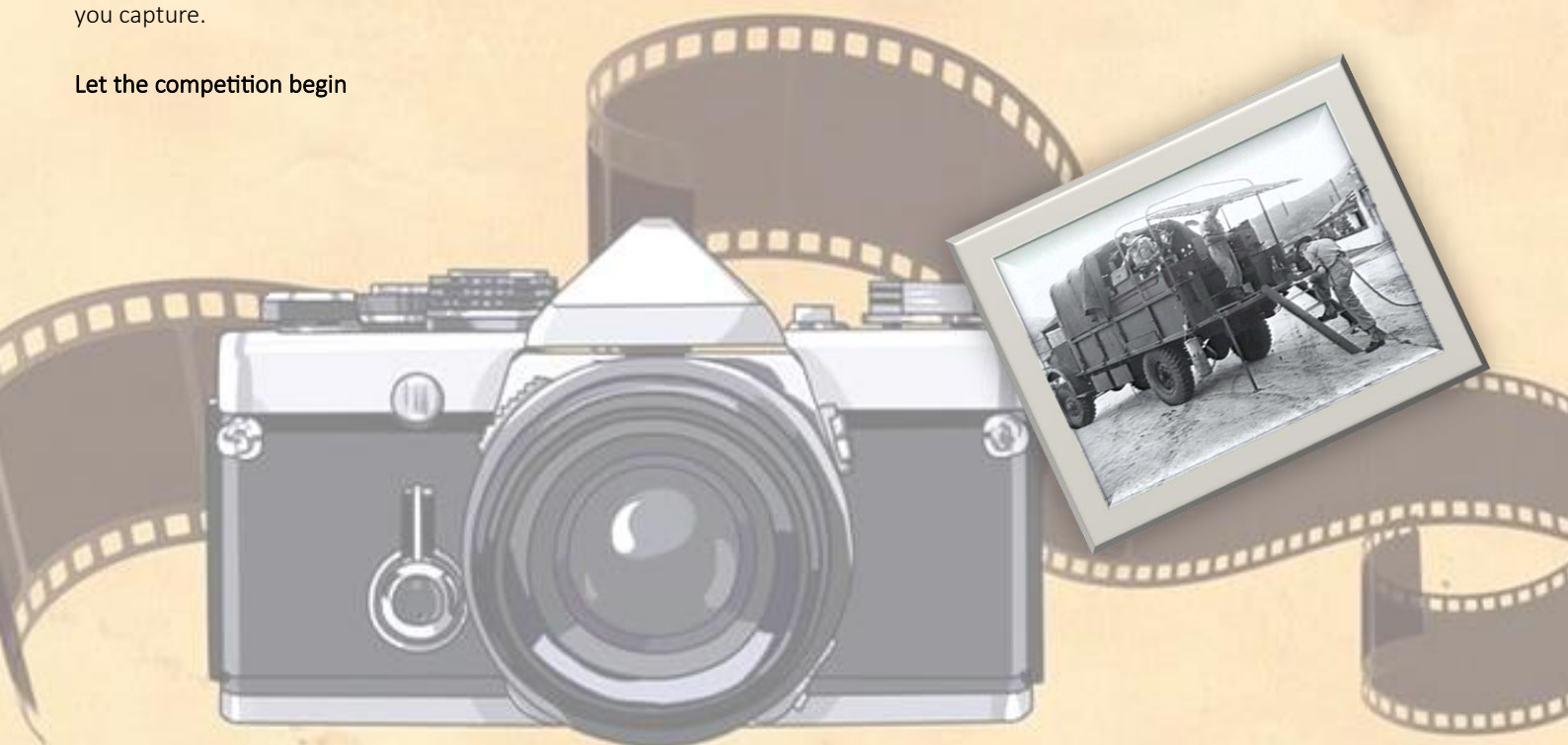
<https://raeme.org.au/index.php/publications/newsletter/article-submission>.

Make sure you include **"Photo Competition Entry"** in the description box so we don't miss it.

Entries close: 05 November 2026

Grab your camera (or your phone), get creative, and show the Corps what RAEME looks like in action. We can't wait to see the moments you capture.

Let the competition begin



Welfare Notices

Vale

Our Corps has lost the following members in recent times. Full details of each member may be found at the [RAEME Vale page](#).

1204060 Garry Peter BOSHAMMER

Garry Boshammer passed away at on Friday 3 April 2026 following a courageous battle with Stage 4 metastatic cancer. Gary was a proud member of the 27th Intake of Army Apprentices (Fitter and Turner) and will be remembered as a respected tradesman, a valued mate, and a true brother of the Corps. His passing is deeply felt by all who served alongside him, and by the wider RAEME family. Rest in Peace



F328051 CFN Joanne Eva CORNELIUS

Jo Cornelius (née Maloney), passed away on 19 March 2026 aged 55. Jo enlisted as a 42nd Intake Electronics Tradesman before transferring to the 43rd Intake and graduating in 1989 as a Mobile Plant Mechanic and Apprentice Sergeant. Joanne served with 2 Base Workshops, 2/3 Field Engineer Regiment, 17 Construction Squadron, and 101 Field Workshops. In 1991, she is believed to have been the first female RAEME tradeswoman posted to a field-force combat engineering regiment. Jo has been an active member of the Corps community working hard to improve conditions for all. She was professional, determined and effortless in her work. Anyone wishing to contribute to the fight against breast cancer can do so in Jo's memory at: <https://nbcf.org.au/donate/>



242848 MAJ John FENTON (Retd)

John passed away on 22 March 2026 aged 87. As a 9th Intake Fitter, John's postings over 20+ years included 4 Base Wksp, Maralinga Nuclear Testing facility, NQ Area Wksp, 101 Fd Wksp, 17 Const Sqn in South Vietnam, 5 Base Wksp and 2 years in London (on exchange with the Rapier Missile Program), plus many others. Upon his retirement he held senior roles at JRA for the 110 Landrover project and as the GM of the Small Arms Factory (ADI) in Lithgow where he oversaw the Steyer Rifle project. For the last 30 years, John was also a very active Veterans Advocate where he helped countless veterans. Rest in Peace, John; your duty is done.

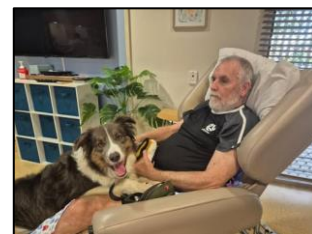


Sick Parade

We have received notification that the following Corps members are facing significant health concerns at the moment.

Jamie CORD

Jamie's wife, Sharon, has recently advised that he is in the late stages of Alzheimer's disease. Jamie is well known to many members from his lengthy service which included he posting as CSM of 101 Fd Wksp back in the day or before that at the Infantry Centre in the late 70s where Sharon was posted as a Cpl Caterer. Jamie is battling this insidious disease in Bundaberg.



Brian "Bung" REARDON

Bung is under the care of the palliative team at The Toowoomba Base Hospital. He's having a lot of trouble with his hernia at the moment which is really annoying him. He's barely sleeping so he tries to get as many naps as he can throughout the day. Other than the hernia issue he is in fairly good spirits. Bung's daughter reports that he is still cracking jokes and is as stubborn as ever.

How to provide welfare notifications

Should you wish to report the passing of a member or the change in health circumstances for you or another Corps member, you can do so by entering all known details on the [RAEME Welfare Notification page](#).



A CALL FROM YOUR NEWSLETTER



"Coo-ee-

*Share your story,
photos or details
about what you
or your workshop
are doing now."*

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