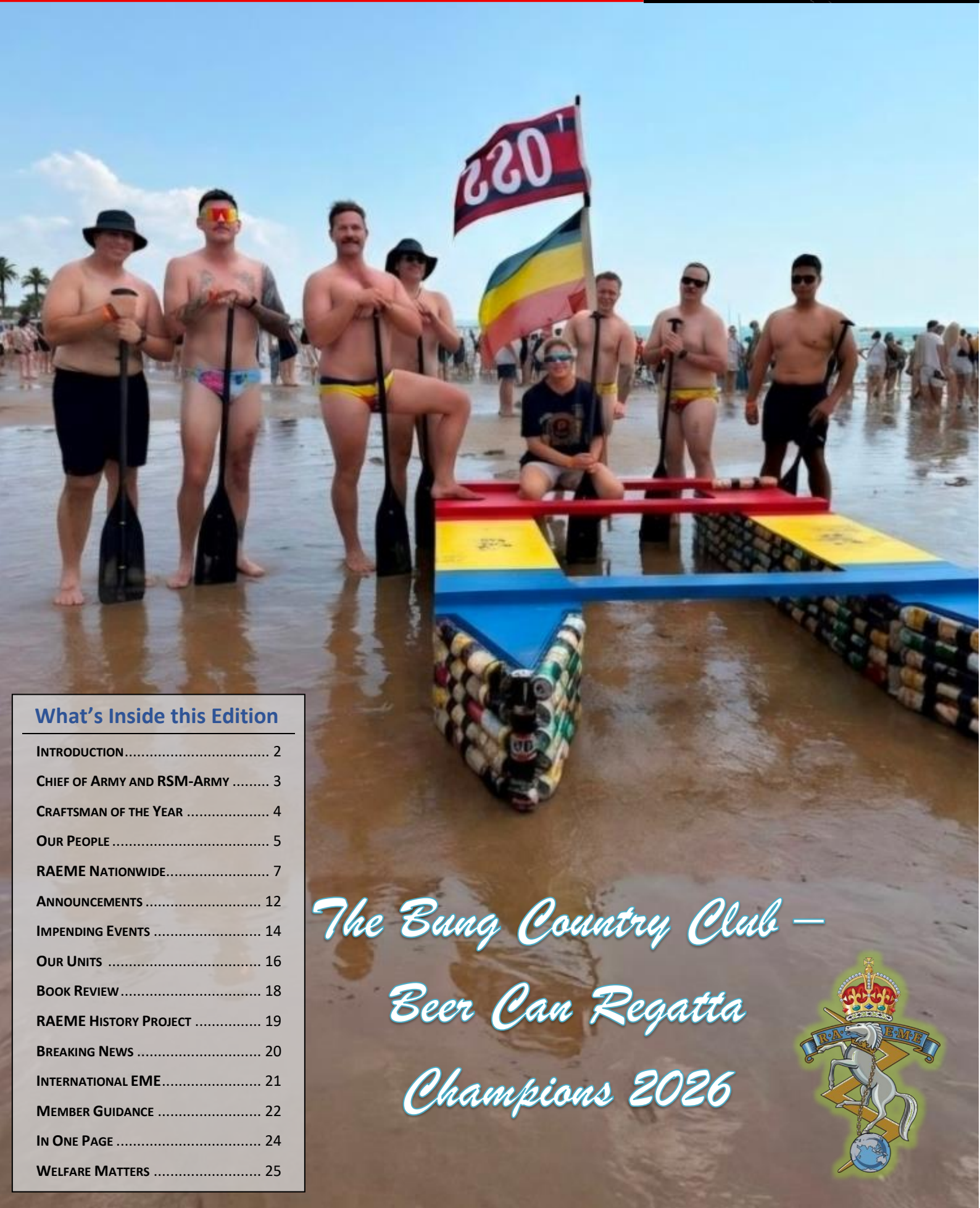


MAINTENANCE MATTERS

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN ELECTRICAL AND MECHANICAL ENGINEERS

EDITION 06 – JULY 2026



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*The Bung Country Club –
Beer Can Regatta
Champions 2026*



INTRODUCTION

Some words from

Colonel Piers Cambridge, ret'd

Colonel Commandant Queensland – RAEME

Welcome to Edition 06 of *Maintenance Matters*. It has been another busy period across the Corps, and this edition captures much of what makes RAEME what it is: Esprit de Corps, technical mastery, focus on outcomes and a Corps that values its people.

I want to draw your attention to two things in this edition that speak to who we are as a Corps.

The first is our Craftsman of the Year Award; the nomination process and guidance is covered in detail in this edition. This award exists to recognise the very best of our junior tradesmen and women — the soldiers who quietly deliver, day in and day out, the technical outcomes that keep our Army Ready. But the award is really a reminder of something more important: that looking after our people, and taking the time to properly recognise their effort, matters. We saw this last month, when the Chief of Army presented Major John Haley with his sixth clasp for 45 years of service, and spoke about the importance of stopping to recognise service. He reminded us of the importance of putting purpose and people, mission and mates, before oneself is one of the values we hold — and that living it, for a lifetime, is worthy of recognition. I'd encourage every leader to make sure that they nominate worthy individuals for the Craftsman of the Year Awards. A well-written nomination is itself a form of recognition, and our people deserve nothing less.

The second thing I want to highlight is who we are as a Corps. RAEME is a highly technical trade, but our real strength has never been any one rank or any one trade working in isolation; it has and will always be our Esprit de Corps. It's all ranks, our technical people, our non-technical people, all working closely together to solve problems and deliver maintenance outcomes — our shared values, beliefs and goals that have forged us together and created our collective identity. That collaboration — that willingness to reach across rank and trade to get the job done — is built on our ability to network. We know each other, we trust each other, and we can rely on one another.

That strength shouldn't stop the day someone leaves the Army. If anything, it matters more once we leave and forge our way back into our communities, our families and begin our next career or life chapter. The relationships we build on the workshop floor, in units, on exercises and on operations are the same relationships that carry us through transition, through finding new work, and through staying connected to an organisation that has shaped our lives. Our Spanner Clubs and the wider RAEME National Network (RNN) exist for exactly this reason — to make sure that the network we build when we are 'In' doesn't end when we are 'Out'. I'd encourage every member, serving or retired, to stay engaged with your local Spanner Club, State RAEME Association and with the RNN. Please don't underestimate the strength and resilience that comes from having a strong, connected network. Remaining connected is one of the most important skills that you can maintain; moreover, it is recognition of our strong camaraderie through our trust-based connections built on shared experiences.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition. Enjoy the read. Arte et Marte



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.

Cover Photo Description

The Champions of the Darwin Beer Can Regatta, 2026 – 1 CER Workshop!

Standing from the left: CFN Burak Calhan, CFN Thomas Englebert, CPL Nathan Carnie, CPL Zac Albrecht, CFN Torren Wanke, CFN Beau Coles (Team Captain), PTE Jake Lomboy. Seated: LT Ashleigh Sitcheff

Photo provided by CPL Nathan Carnie. It was taken by a proud partner of a team member.

The Honourable Lia Finocchiaro, Chief Minister of the NT, Minister for Police, Minister for Fire and Emergency Services, Minister for Defence NT, and Minister for Territory Coordinator presented the prize to the team. She [shared the photos](#) shown with the full report on Page 7.

NEW CHIEF OF ARMY AND RSM-ARMY

The Australian Army welcomed a new senior leadership team during a [Transfer of Authority Parade](#) in Canberra on 8 July 2026.

Lieutenant General Susan Coyle AM CSC DSM assumed command as the **42nd Chief of Army**, succeeding Lieutenant General Simon Stuart AO DSC. At the same ceremony, Warrant Officer Brad Doyle OAM became the **13th Regimental Sergeant Major–Army**, taking over from Warrant Officer Kim Felmingham NSC OAM.

The parade recognised the service of the outgoing Chief of Army and RSM–Army and marked the formal transfer of responsibility for leading Army’s people, culture, preparedness and warfighting capability.



Above Incoming and outgoing Army leaders at the Transfer of Authority Parade in Canberra including handover of the Army Banner and inspecting the troops on parade.



[Lieutenant General Susan Coyle](#) began her military career as an Army Reserve soldier in 1987 before attending the Australian Defence Force Academy and graduating from the Royal Military College–Duntroon in 1992 into the Royal Australian Corps of Signals.

Across almost four decades of service, she has held a wide range of command and senior leadership appointments, including Commanding Officer 17th Signal Regiment, Commander 6th Brigade, Commander Joint Task Force 633, Head Information Warfare, Commander Forces Command and Chief of Joint Capabilities. Her operational experience includes service in Afghanistan, Timor-Leste, Solomon Islands and the broader Middle East region.

Her appointment as Chief of Army is historic, making her the first woman to lead the Australian Army. In her first address in the role, Lieutenant General Coyle described herself as the Army’s next steward and highlighted the enduring importance of its people, profession and preparedness.

Lieutenant General Coyle also reinforced the need for Army to remain ready to fight and win when required as part of an integrated Australian Defence Force, working closely with allies and regional partners.

[Warrant Officer Brad Doyle](#) brings more than 30 years of experience as an infantry soldier. His career has included service in battalions of the Royal Australian Regiment, instructional and career-management roles, and numerous senior Regimental Sergeant Major appointments.



Before joining the Regular Army, Warrant Officer Doyle enlisted into the Army Reserve in 1986, whilst completing an Automotive Mechanic apprenticeship, which provides a welcome connection with the wider RAEME and technical trades community. Having received his trade qualification, he transferred to the Australian Regular Army and joined the Royal Australian Infantry Corps

Warrant Officer Doyle is recognised as a progressive leader who values professional excellence, inclusion, adventure and mateship. Away from Army, he retains his mechanical interests and enjoys working on muscle cars and motorcycles—proof that an appreciation for tools, machinery and keeping equipment moving can remain with a soldier throughout an entire career.

We congratulate both leaders on their appointments and wish Lieutenant General Stuart and Warrant Officer Felmingham well following their distinguished service.

Photographs: Photos courtesy of the Department of Defence. To see more photos from the parade, [click here](#).

CRAFTSMAN OF THE YEAR GUIDANCE

Nominating a soldier for the *RAEME Craftsman of the Year Award* is an opportunity to recognise the very best junior tradesmen and women across the Corps. A strong nomination highlights not only what the individual has achieved, but how they embody the values, standards, and culture of RAEME. The following guide explains how to prepare a high-quality submission that reflects the intent of the award and gives your nominee the best chance of success.

Understand the Purpose of the Award

The award exists to identify and celebrate the most outstanding Craftsman across the Total Workforce. It recognises excellence in two broad areas:

- Trade and regimental achievement
- Investment in Army and Corps culture

Your nomination should show how the individual excels in both.

Demonstrate Trade and Regimental Achievement

Trade capability is more than simply doing the job well. A strong nomination explains how the nominee stands out from others. Consider including:

- Their technical proficiency and reliability
- The volume, complexity, or importance of tasks completed
- How their work improved equipment availability or unit readiness
- Examples of mentoring junior soldiers or sharing trade knowledge
- Evidence of self-development such as civilian study, additional qualifications, or specialist training

Provide scale wherever possible. Instead of writing “high output” or “good trainer” write:

- “Completed over 120 repair tasks during the lead-up to a major exercise which resulted in all required equipment being available. This was consistently ahead of schedule.”
- “Delivered technical coaching to more than 20 junior soldiers on the operation of the XYZ widget which resulted in an enhanced level of equipment operation and understanding of preventative maintenance requirements.”

This gives the selection panel a clear sense of impact.

Show Investment in Army and Corps Culture

This criterion recognises how the nominee contributes to the broader Army community and lives the Army Values. Examples may include:

- Active involvement in the SES, RFS, surf lifesaving, or other community organisations
- Participation in sporting teams, civilian or military, as a player, coach, or organiser
- Volunteer work, charity involvement, or youth mentoring

- Engagement in Corps activities, Spanner Clubs, or unit morale initiatives

Again, provide detail and scale or impact. For example, instead of “member of the SES” or “supports local footy club” write:

- “Active SES volunteer for three years, parading fortnightly and recently deploying on flood-response operations for the local public school following Cyclone Harry.”
- Volunteer coach for the community under-8 touch football team where he trains young players, many of whom have never played before. He encourages participation with safety and with good spirit. He consistently reinforces the need for good sportsmanship.”

This demonstrates commitment, not just affiliation.

Write Strong Assessor and Senior Assessor Comments

Assessor comments should be clear, relevant, and evidence-based. Avoid generic statements. Instead, describe:

- What the soldier did
- Why it mattered
- How it reflects RAEME values

Senior Assessor comments must add value, not simply agree. They should highlight:

- The nominee’s influence on the unit
- Leadership potential
- How their example lifts standards across the team

For example, a senior Assessor may write:

- “Her professionalism and initiative have directly improved workshop culture, with junior soldiers outwardly modelling their behaviour on her example.”
- “Based on clear leadership abilities, I am confident that once mandatory military requirements are met, he has clear potential to perform well at higher ranks.”

Submit a Complete, Well-Structured Nomination

Ensure the nomination form is fully completed, accurate, and submitted on time. A well-written, well-structured submission reflects positively on both the nominee and the unit.

The more effort you put into writing the nomination, the more weight it may have applied to it when being considered for the award.

Our people are our Corps’ strongest assets. We have some of the smartest soldiers in the Army. Let’s recognise those who personally go above and beyond to advance our Corps and Army as well as their community.

For further guidance, review [Corps Instruction 22 – Craftsman of the Year Awards](#). This provides the nomination format, general timeline and requirement for review by Regional RAEME Representatives and Colonels Commandant.

Outstanding Service

On 17 June, at the Army Logistic Soldiers Mess, Bandiana, Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Simon Stuart AO DSC presented Major John Haley with his sixth clasp, **the second Federation Star**, to the Defence Long Service Medal representing 45 years of dedicated service.

After speaking some quiet words to MAJ Haley, he addressed the room and spoke to the importance of stopping to recognise service.

"It is one of our values and it has a specific meaning – it means putting purpose and people, mission and mates before oneself and to do that, effectively for a lifetime, is absolutely worth us coming together to recognise and reflect on," LTGEN Stuart said.

"The range of deployments, the range of teams, the range of jobs [listed in his service history] says a lot about our Army, but it also says a lot about John and his commitment to service, his agility, his flexibility and his dedication."

Please join us in congratulating MAJ Haley and his family on this mammoth achievement and milestone.

Courtesy of [ALTC](#)



Conspicuous Service Medal recipient Warrant Officer (Class One) Daniel Leatham pictured in front of an MIA2 battle tank in Townsville. Picture: Supplied

King's Birthday Honours accolade for meritorious achievement

Soldier wins elite medal for service

Evan Morgan

A former Regimental Artificer Sergeant Major from Townsville-based 2nd Cavalry Regiment didn't think his luck could get any better after winning two meat trays at mess raffle draws – until he received an email from Government House in Canberra.

WO1 Leatham did a double take after he opened the email requesting his acceptance of the CSM.

"It was a bit of a surreal feeling to know it was real," he said.

"Some great colleagues have received honours such as the CSM and I see them as the upper echelon of excellence.

"I just see myself as doing my job and would have never considered myself in their league."

The medal was awarded after a significant

2025 for 2nd Cavalry Regiment, the final year of WO1 Leatham's appointment there, where he maintained the availability of the armoured vehicle fleets while divesting the MIA1 tank, and managed the introduction of the MIA2 main battle tank.



This was in addition to implementing resource projects and contributing to Talisman Sabre, the ADF's largest exercise. WO1 Leatham

paid tribute to everyone in the regiment, with particular mention of the Squadron Artificer Sergeants Major, the Commanding Officer and Officer Commanding for their strong support.

"I would definitely welcome the opportunity to work with them all again in the future. They are all excellent soldiers," he said.

Now serving in maintenance planning in Joint Logistics Command's Joint Logistics Unit-North Queensland, WO1 Leatham continues to support armour maintenance for the 3rd Brigade.

“Some great colleagues have received honours such as the CSM and I see them as the upper echelon of excellence. I just see myself as doing my job and would have never considered myself in their league.”

Warrant Officer Class One Daniel Leatham

Source: The Townsville Bulletin. WO1 Letham's award was also in [Defence Media](#)



Exceptional service recognised with a Command Commendation

CPL Adam Kussrow was recently awarded a Command Commendation by CO 11 CSSB, LTCOL Will Morrison.

Adam was recognised for the Enterprise Resource Program expertise and advice he has provided in his role as the 108 Field Workshop Operations Corporal. The award also acknowledges that Adam has maintained this contribution while balancing career progression courses and other professional development requirements.

Source: Courtesy of Defence media

OUR PEOPLE

The unsung heroes who keep Army moving

While combat units manoeuvred across the Townsville Field Training Area during Exercise Southern Jackaroo, Army recovery mechanics worked behind the scenes to recover damaged and immobilised vehicles.

Operating across difficult terrain and often away from the spotlight, Craftsman Aiden Nydrle, a recovery mechanic attached to 2nd Cavalry Regiment (2 Cav Regt), said recovery mechanics played a critical role in sustaining battlefield mobility and preserving valuable Army capability during large-scale training activities.

"We help maintain the free movement of vehicles across the battlespace, whether that's recovering vehicles that are damaged, defective or bogged," Craftsman Nydrle said.

"By recovering those vehicles quickly, we help keep supply routes open and allow important assets to get back to doing their job."

Craftsman Nydrle said Army recovery differed significantly from civilian towing, with crews focused on preserving capability rather than simply removing damaged vehicles.

"In the civilian world, tow truck operators are often dealing with vehicles that are already total losses," he said.

"For us, many vehicles can still be repaired or returned to service, so there's a lot of planning involved in how we recover them safely without causing further damage."

Corporal Jayden Eva, a recovery mechanic from 2CAV, said recovery crews often worked in difficult weather and unpredictable conditions, with jobs frequently taking them away from the main exercise area for extended periods.

"A lot of what we do goes unnoticed," Corporal Eva said.

"We'll head out, recover what needs recovering, and by the time we get back everyone else is asleep. But if vehicles aren't moving, the exercise doesn't keep moving."

Recovery manager Warrant Officer Class Two (WO2) Anthony Wicks said recovery mechanics worked in technically demanding and high-risk conditions, requiring specialist skills and sound judgement.

"Safety has to come first every time," WO2 Wicks said.

"That focus starts during initial employment training [IET], where soldiers develop the technical skills and judgement required to safely conduct recoveries in demanding environments."

IET spans six months and exposes soldiers to challenging conditions reflective of those they would face in their careers.

"Recovery mechanics need to be confident operating heavy equipment in difficult conditions while ensuring both personnel and vehicles remain protected," WO2 Wicks said.

"Recovery mechanics often work in austere environments, detached from other elements, which means confidence, judgement and teamwork are critical."

Recovery mechanics operate in pairs and continue to undertake additional training throughout their careers.



CPL Jayden Eva, CPL Stephen Peters and CFN Aiden Nydrle conduct vehicle recovery training during Exercise Southern Jackaroo at TFTA, Qld.



CPL Jayden Eva, of 2nd Cavalry Regiment, secures a vehicle during Exercise Southern Jackaroo at Townsville Field Training Area



CFN Aiden Nydrle, of 2nd Cavalry Regiment, guides a vehicle during Exercise Southern Jackaroo at Townsville Field Training Area.



Soldiers from 2nd Cavalry Regiment conduct vehicle recovery training during Exercise Southern Jackaroo at TFTA.

Source: Author CAPT Andrew Page. Photos: PTE William McCormick. Courtesy [Defence Media](#).

RAEME NATIONWIDE

Beer Can Regatta Champions 2026 – 1 CER Workshop!!!

The 1st Combat Engineer Regiment workshop, better known as *The Bung Country Club*, proudly took to the water again this year for the iconic [Darwin Lions Club](#)-led [Beer Can Regatta](#), chasing down previous glory by bringing together a dedicated team of members and supporters. Weeks of collecting cans, many of which were generously emptied by the Workshop, and constructing the vessel in the end paid off as the club launched off the beaches of Darwin with confidence and plenty of RAEME spirit.

Built from hundreds of recycled cans and an abundance of RAEME ingenuity, the Bung Country Club boat quickly became a crowd favourite. The team were dressed in the tri-colours Budgy smugglers and cheered on by enthusiastic supporters lining the shoreline, all proudly yelling ‘UP THE SHOPS!!!’. The crew embraced the fun and friendly competition that makes the Regatta such a beloved Territory tradition.

When the time arrived for the battle of Mindil Beach, the team paddled hard and worked together under Team Captain, CFN Beau “Colesy” Coles. The Bung Country Club crew remained focused and determined to beat everyone especially the Navy team. Beating them was the mission essential task given by the Team Leader LT Sitcheff. Spoiler alert: They did!!

All-out war was waged on the high seas of Mindil; battling rough water, mechanical mishaps and hand-to-hand combat. The Bung was quick to pounce on the Navy team when they found the treasure chest; it was a fight for the ages on the open waters. Stealing both the Navy mascot, Wilson, and the treasure from within the chest before breaking away, a game of hot potato was played to get around the final team that was waiting at the shoreline to steal the treasure from anyone. Our team managed to hide the treasure as a decoy to outsmart the last team standing in our way. The Navy thought they had snatched victory by delivering the treasure chest to the finish line but victory was short lived when it was discovered they had nothing but an empty chest. The Bung then came in to snatch victory right out of their hands securing a memorable win and earning well-deserved bragging rights.

The achievement was celebrated by team members, the NT Chief Minister, The Honourable Lia Finocchiaro MLA (who also provided these photos), and spectators alike, marking a proud moment in the Club’s history.

More than just a win, the Regatta showcased the strength of the 1 CER workshop. Everyone played a part in the success. The victory highlighted the Club’s commitment to community engagement and embracing the RAEME spirit.

The Bung Country Club’s Beer Can Regatta triumph of 2026 will be long remembered as a fantastic day of RAEME teamwork, determination, and unforgettable fun on the water.



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



RAEME NATIONWIDE

Quilts of Valour Presented to Army Apprentices

Michelle Lafferty from Quilts of Valour Australia had organised for a quilt to be presented to Maxwell Brown, who was a 1st Intake Army Apprentice. This was to be done at the Army Apprentices Reunion on 06 June. Sadly, Max passed away a few days before the reunion. Max's family have been contacted, and arrangements have been made to present Max's quilt to the family on 14 August, at the 101 Fd Wksp Reunion at the Gold Coast by Michelle.

On Tuesday 30 June, Michelle and Brian Daley travelled to Macleay Island where we were picked up from the ferry by Cam Willett, a 41st Intake Army Apprentice and taken to the Macleay Island Sailing Club where 4 veterans were among people enjoying morning tea. Macleay Island RSL had organised a Morning Tea with no mention of the surprise to come!!

Michelle presented Beautiful Quilts of Valour to four veterans including Keith Fox, a 2nd Intake Army Apprentice, a vehicle mechanic by trade, Army No. 1/8504. Keith was proudly wearing his RAEME Cap and spoke about his service at the British Atomic Tests at Emu Claypan, South Australia.



RNN Websites temporarily taken offline as cybersecurity precaution

Over a weekend in mid-June, the RNN IT team briefly took the RAEME websites offline as a precaution after a recent security issue was found with the JCE Editor used on some Joomla websites. The JCE Editor is a tool that helps website administrators and authorised users create and edit website content. In simple terms, hackers were trying to trick vulnerable websites into accepting settings that would allow unsafe files to be uploaded. If successful, those files could create a hidden back door into the website. This was not aimed specifically at the RAEME websites but was part of an internet-wide scan, where automated tools look for any website that may be vulnerable. There was also no evidence of any Association or member being compromised in this event due to the prompt work of the RNN IT Team.

It is a lesson for all though to keep your software updated. Well done to our IT team!!

Quilts of Valour Australia

[Quilts of Valour Australia](#)® is a not-for-profit organisation. The quilts are awarded to current-serving Australian Forces personnel, veterans and immediate families touched by their service.

A Short History

Following the tragic loss and injury of Defence personnel in Afghanistan in 2010, a resident of Victoria learnt of the need to reach out to wounded ADF personnel and honour their sacrifice for serving Australia on a combat deployment. It is such a powerful symbol in a traumatic time that it felt an important issue that Australians should be involved. Victorian resident, Helen Comport, learnt how touched an injured soldier was by the warmth of the quilt he was awarded by American Quilters.

Quilts of Valour Australia has volunteer representatives across the country. While it can be more challenging to find presenters in regional and remote areas, they always do their very best to ensure every nominated veteran receives their quilt, regardless of where they live. Our representatives are all volunteers who generously give their time and often cover their own travel expenses. RAEME is well represented amongst the volunteers, with Michelle Lafferty in Townsville, Kim, in Hervey Bay, and Laticia, from Toowoomba. They became involved after witnessing the impact these quilts have on veterans.

Nominations

If you would like to nominate a veteran to receive a quilt, please contact Michelle Lafferty on 0404 004 775 or via email at dmjji@bigpond.com.

Donations

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible. Please [click here](#) for details re how to donate.

RAEME NATIONWIDE

Spanner Club – North Qld



The RAQ North Queensland gathering saw a great turnout on Saturday, 13 June 2026, with approximately 50 Bluebells coming together at the North Shore Tavern.

It was the perfect North Queensland winter's afternoon, sitting at a very comfortable 25 degrees. A few stories were shared over a cold beverage, with some tasty bar snacks helping to make it a relaxed and enjoyable afternoon of Corps camaraderie.



Alison Bird and Ian Joyce



Raffle prize winner Dave Packer!

The Mega Triple Members Draw and raffle prizes were also a highlight of the day, with congratulations going to:

- Wayne Ring, Rod Girvan and Ross Casey – \$100 Members Draw each
- Don Detardinzki – Large RAEME Emblem
- Tank Pontifex – \$100 Bunnings Voucher
- Dave Packer – Allen Key Set, kindly donated by Bob Lauro

The newest North Queensland Committee member, Greg Jones, also had some RAEME merchandise on sale, with a few happy customers heading home well stocked with Corps gear.

A big thank you goes to the staff at the North Shore Tavern for looking after everyone so well.

All the photos are in our [photo gallery](#), thanks to Alison Bird and Tank Pontifex.

ALTC Updates

Chief of Army visit to ASEME

Outgoing Chief of Army, Lieutenant General Simon Stuart AO, DSC and Regimental Sergeant Major – Army, Warrant Officer Kim Felmingham NSC, OAM visited ALTC on 16 June to see the team in action.

Visiting Latchford Barracks, where Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering trainees were honing their trades, the visit showcased the breadth of training delivered across the logistics domain.



This is where soldier skills and trade skills intersect - building capable, adaptable Defence members as part of the Land Domain Training System.



TNI Training

Did you know Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering has hosted 20 graduates of the Bushmaster Maintenance Course from the Indonesian National Armed Forces Peacekeeping Centre (PMPP TNI) since 2022?

Being the third largest contributor to UN Peacekeeping, this training is an extremely important part of supporting PMPP TNI missions.

A visit to ALTC mid-June reaffirmed both countries' commitment to strengthening interoperability and building a more capable, ready force for future operations.



RAEME NATIONWIDE

Bandiana Coffees

The crew in Bandiana had a great turn out to their recent coffee catch-up at the Wodonga Plant Farm.



If you happen to be in Bandiana on the first Wednesday of each month, make sure you visit to join the team.

From Classroom to Crankshafts



LT Zane Teh, a Learning Engineering Officer (LEO) with 16 ASB, manages the technical requirements of battlefield helicopter servicing and repair.

Lieutenant Zane Teh's pathway into the military started while he was still studying at university.

Financial support provided through the Defence University Sponsorship program went towards completing a degree in Aerospace Engineering.

Now a Learning Engineering Officer (LEO) with 16th Aviation Support Battalion at RAAF Base Townsville, he works with a skilled team of technicians servicing rotary-wing platforms like the CH-47F Chinook.

Source: Read the full story, courtesy of [Defence Media](#)

A Clear View in 17 Sustainment Bde



A RAEME soldier repairs a 40M windshield to get the vehicle back in the fight as posted on the [17 Sust Bde Facebook Page](#).

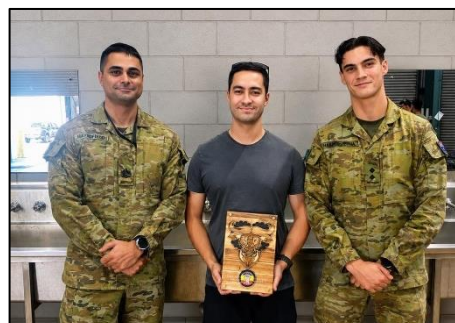
Changing trades

In late June, [1 CSSB](#) farewelled Weapon Technician, CFN Michael Chan as he embarks on an exciting trade change.

CFN Chan is returning to ASEME to undertake training to become a Material Technician, taking on a new challenge and expanding his skills within the Corps.

The Australian Army offers countless opportunities to develop, grow and explore new career pathways. Whether it's mastering your current trade or taking the leap into something new, there are always opportunities to challenge yourself and continue progressing.

The team at 1 CSSB thanked CFN Chan for his contribution to the Battalion and wishes him every success with his training and future career. Good luck!



Spanner Packs Reach Thailand

MAJ Jesse Voyer and his family are currently posted to Bangkok, Thailand, where Jesse is attending the Thailand Command and Staff College. Jesse is expected to remain in Thailand until late 2027 and advised that he may be the only RAEME member currently posted there.

After a short postal adventure, including some tracking issues and a local collection fee of 132 THB, the Spanner Pack made it safely to Jesse in Bangkok. The pack was coordinated by MAJ Tom Cross retd, Spanner Pack Coordinator, and sent on behalf of the RAEME National Network.

Jesse was very appreciative of the support, writing:

"Thank you so much for the Spanner Pack, it's so good to have some Australian snacks again. My wife and daughter were super happy when seeing everything. I am very happy with the Corps merchandise and finally have some stickers to put around."



Deployed? Let us know

If you are currently deployed on operations, posted overseas, undertaking long-term training, or are aware of a fellow RAEME member in such circumstances, please let us know.

You can do so by reaching out to your Association or by emailing the coordinator at: Spannerpack@qld.raeme.org.au

The team will do their best to organise delivery of a Spanner Pack, ensuring our deployed members receive a reminder that the RAEME family stands firmly behind them.

RAEME NATIONWIDE

More from ALTC

Happening now at the NTI Townsville 500!

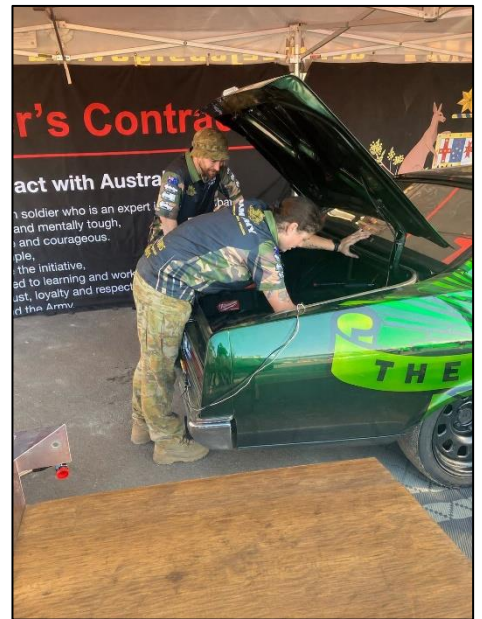
The Army School of Electrical and Mechanical Engineering (ASEME) is hard at work behind the scenes, keeping Project Digger race-ready!

After a supercharger gasket failure during the Pro Burnout competition on opening day, CFN Stehn and CFN Findlay from the Vehicle Technology Wing are replacing the gasket, with CFN Findlay carefully inspecting the manifold before reassembling the supercharger.

Meanwhile, CFN Loata is removing the fuel tank mounting brackets in preparation for a larger, upgraded fuel tank as part of the next stage of Project Digger's upgrades.

It's a great demonstration of the technical expertise, teamwork and problem-solving skills our soldiers develop through their training—keeping Project Digger ready to get back into action.

If you're at the NTI Townsville 500, come and visit the Australian Army display to meet our soldiers and see Army trades in action.



You can find the full report with more photos (or follow ALTC on Facebook) by [clicking here](#).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

RAEME Craftsman Port 2026

We are pleased to announce the official launch of this year's RAEME Craftsman Port (Tawny).

In recognition of significant milestones within the Army and the Corps, Army Headquarters (AHQ) is proud to sponsor this year's release. In collaboration with Chief's Son Distillery, the 2026 Craftsman Series includes both a Port (Tawny) and a Single Malt Whisky, produced by a proudly Australian, veteran-owned business.

The RAEME 2026 Craftsman Release honours significant milestones in the proud history of both the Australian Army and the Corps. The year marks the 125th anniversary of the Australian Army, the 84th anniversary of the Corps, and the 40th anniversary of the Prince Philip Banner.

This commemorative release recognises these important milestones and pays tribute to the dedication, service, and enduring legacy of RAEME soldiers—past and present.

Product Details

- 700ml Craftsman Port (Tawny) – \$60.00
- 700ml Single Malt Whisky – \$87.00
- Postage – \$19 (up to 6 bottles)

PLEASE NOTE – Max purchase of 6 bottles per order, in any combination. Delivery will occur in batches throughout 2026.



Army Museum Bandiana – Now Open to Visitors!

After a year of renovations by the dedicated staff, the [Army Museum in Bandiana](#) has officially reopened to visitors.

This event was formally marked on the Museum's 50th birthday, 03 July 2026.

The Museum is now open on Wednesdays through to Sundays from 0900-1500h daily.

Check out the changes for yourself!



WATCH THIS SPACE 78th Women's Royal Australian Army Corps and Australian Women's Veterans Reunion

12-16 February 2029

Where: Sunshine Coast QLD

A reunion is set for former members and friends of the
Women's Royal Australian Army Corps and Australian
Women's Veterans.

Program Highlights

- 12 February
Meet and Greet with Goodie Bags
- 13 February
Suggested Lunch Excursions
- 14 February
Memorial Service, WRAAC Blessing & Morning Tea
- 15 February
Formal Dinner
- 16 February
Recovery Afternoon

Please reserve these dates. Further details to follow

Email: wraac78threunion@outlook.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS

New Transparency: ADF Conviction Reporting Changes

The Australian Defence Force (ADF) recently introduced a major administrative update regarding how serious service convictions are recorded, tracked, and shared. Starting in December 2025, the ADF began disclosing specific service conviction information to civilian criminal records systems.

This change directly addresses Recommendation 23 of the Royal Commission into Defence and Veteran Suicide (RCDVS). By implementing this policy, the Australian Government is ensuring that serious convictions handed down under the Defence Force Discipline Act 1982 (Cth) (DFDA) flow into civilian criminal histories, meeting community expectations for public safety, accountability, and transparent reporting.

What is Being Disclosed?

The new framework applies strictly to historical and current convictions handed down by superior service tribunals, which include Courts-Martial and Defence Force Magistrates. Convictions will be disclosed to the Australian Criminal Intelligence Commission (ACIC) if they meet any of the following criteria:

- Sexual or sexual-related offences
- Offences involving violence
- "Territory offences" (criminal violations under Commonwealth law that would constitute an offence if committed in the Jervis Bay Territory)
- Any service offence that resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether served wholly or partly).

Importantly, this administrative process does not change the legal status of an individual's conviction, their punishment, or their internal ADF service history. Standard "spent conviction" laws under the Crimes Act 1914 (Cth) will still apply. These records will not be public, but they will appear during authorised background checks required for specific civilian employment sectors—such as healthcare, aged care, childcare, teaching, and firefighting—as well as applications for security clearances or firearms licences. Any disclosed record will explicitly state that it is a "Service Conviction" to distinguish it from a civilian court ruling.



Phased Implementation and Individual Rights

The disclosure process rolled out in a phased approach to manage notifications effectively:

- Phase 1 (December 2025): Focuses on sexual and related offences occurring from 2018 to the present. Affected individuals will have started receiving written notifications starting from October 2025.
- Phase 2 (Early 2026): Progresses to remaining offence categories and older historical convictions that occurred prior to 2018.

All affected current and former personnel will be contacted via their chain of command or last known details. If contacted, individuals will have a specified window to review the proposal and, if desired, formally challenge the decision to disclose. Defence will provide clear decision-making criteria and dedicated support services to assist throughout the process.

Accountability and Online Portals

Alongside these recording updates, Defence continues to support broader institutional transparency by maintaining a public portal of Court-Martial and Defence Force Magistrate outcomes. This repository details the formal findings, charges, and rulings across the Navy, Army, and Air Force, reinforcing public accountability.

Where to find more information

- **ADF Conviction Reporting Process.** For comprehensive details on the new reporting policies and how disclosures are handled, visit the [Defence Military Justice System](#) webpage.
- **Superior Service Tribunal Outcomes.** To view the public ledger tracking recent tribunal findings, charges, and rulings, check the [Defence Tribunal Outcomes](#) webpage.
- **Direct Support.** Personnel with questions regarding their specific service history can call Defence Counsel Services at 1800-563-563 during business hours.

Current and former members are strongly encouraged to ensure their personal contact details held by Defence are up to date to guarantee all relevant correspondence is received. The [Defence Service Centre](#) can provide information on how to request a Service Record to be updated.

IMPENDING EVENTS

Planned RAEME gatherings across Australia for the next few months are summarised below. For further details on any events shown, 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 mbrs:** 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.

July

Sun 26 th	Ingleburn	NSW Christmas in July Luncheon	Ingleburn RSL Club
	Sunshine Coast	Sunshine Coast Gathering	Brightwater Hotel from 1200h
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
Thurs 13 th	Melbourne	Spanner Club	Ladida, 577 Little Bourke St from 1600h

Fri 14 th – Sun 16 th	Curumbin 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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Sat 15 th	Ross, Tas	RATs Statewide Luncheon	Central Highlands Lodge Mienna
Sun 16 th	Toowoomba	Darling Downs Luncheon	Toowoomba Golf Club from 1200h
Tues 18 th	Canberra	RMC Lanyard Presentation	Olim's Hotel – Carlton Room from 1800h.
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
Tues 25 th	Canberra	Mixed Drinks	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club from 1930h

September

Tues 01 st	Adelaide	Harry the Horse Luncheon	West Adelaide Football Club from 1200h
	Wodonga	Coffee Morning	Wodonga Plant Farm from 1000h
Wed 02 nd	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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IMPENDING EVENTS

September continued

Thurs 10 th	Ingleburn	NSW Committee Meeting & Casual Luncheon	Ingleburn RSL Club
	Melbourne	Spanner Club	Ladida, 577 Little Bourke St from 1600h
Sat 12 th	Maroochydore	RAQ Sunshine Coast Luncheon	Maroochy RSL from 1230h
18 th – 20 th	Wodonga	Recovery Reunion 2026	Fri 18th – Day trip to Yackandandah with a dinner that evening Sat 19th – Visit to Recovery Platoon for show and tell, static display and witness some Recovery tasks in Dustbowl followed by social drinks that afternoon. Sun 20th – Breakfast catch-up and goodbyes. POC is Ken Roberts
Sat 19 th	Townsville	RAQ NQ Gathering	The Fairfield, 78 Abbott St, Oonoonba, 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
Thurs 08 th	Melbourne	Spanner Club	Ladida, 577 Little Bourke St from 1600h
12 th – 13 th	Sydney	St Eligius Competition	Details to follow
14 th – 15 th	Holsworthy	Corps Conference – Heavy	Details to follow
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
Thurs 05 th	Melbourne	Spanner Club	Ladida, 577 Little Bourke St from 1600h
Fri 06 th	Canberra	End-of-Year Dinner	Gyphonns Bar and Caffé
Thurs 12 th	Ingleburn	NSW Committee Meeting and Casual Luncheon	Ingleburn RSL Club
Sun 15 th	Toowoomba	RAQ Darling Downs Luncheon	City Golf Club from 1200h
Sun 22 nd	Sunshine Coast	RAQ Gathering Sunshine Coast	Brightwater Hotel from 1200h
Tues 24 th	Canberra	Mixed Drinks	Gungahlin Lakes Golf Club from 1930h
Fri 27 th	Brisbane	Women in RAEME (WIR4)	Details TBC when locked in
	Sunshine Coast	Sunshine Coast Gathering	Brightwater Hotel from 1200h
	Ingleburn	NSW Corps Birthday BBQ	Memorial Gardens, Ingleburn RSL Sub Branch
	Canberra	ACT Corps Birthday Spanner Club	RMC Golf Club from 1600h
	Adelaide	SA Association AGM and Corps Birthday	West Adelaide Football Club 57 Milner Rd Richmond from 1000h for AGM and 1200h for Corps Birthday Celebrations
Sat 28 th	Melbourne	RAEME Birthday Muster – Melbourne	Warragul RSL from 1630h

OUR UNITS

Part 7 of 8 – The 5th Aviation Regiment – Operational Support Squadron

Formation and Employment

As the Army Aviation capability modernises with new platforms like the UH-60M Black Hawk and AH-64E Apache, the CH-47F Chinook sustainment model has already evolved to meet the demands of high-readiness operations. A key enabler of this transformation is the establishment of the Operational Support Squadron (OSS) within 5 Avn Regt – a dedicated sub-unit designed to deliver agile, scalable and integral maintenance and tactical support to CH-47F operations.

OSS operates in close synchronisation with the newly formed 16 ASB – refer to page 1 – which as mentioned, centralises deep maintenance, refuelling, rearming and logistics functions. While 16 ASB provides foundational sustainment across the enterprise, OSS remains focused on delivering responsive, forward-deployed organic support to CH-47F operations, ensuring readiness at the tactical edge.

OSS and Centralised Sustainment

The creation of 16 ASB has allowed aviation regiments to concentrate on operational planning and flying, while deep maintenance and logistics are consolidated under a single command. OSS, as an organic sub-unit of 5 Avn Regt, is purpose-built to maintain operational tempo through line maintenance, technical support, and distributed sustainment.

Importantly, OSS retains the flexibility to operate independently, or in concert with 16 ASB, particularly during periods of sustained operational tempo. This layered model ensures that CH-47F support is both robust and adaptable — with OSS providing the tactical agility with 16 ASB reinforcing when required.

OSS: Tactical Agility and Operational Reach

Currently, OSS delivers line maintenance for the CH-47F Chinook fleet via a Tactical Support Troop (TST), an Electrical Mechanical Engineering Operations (EMEOPS) cell, and an O4-led headquarters. Whether based in Townsville or deployed as part of an Aviation Task Group (ATG) or Aviation Task Unit (TU), OSS retains the ability to sustain independent nodes, enabling concurrent support to multiple mission sets and readiness demands.

This agile model was given considerable attention during development, and was validated during Exercise Talisman Sabre 2025, where:

- OSS generated an O4-led TU to support maintenance for the Aviation Task Group;
- Forward Repair Teams (FRTs) and a command element deployed to Shoalwater Bay Training Area; and
- simultaneously, additional FRTs and a command element supported operations in Townsville Field Training Area (TFTA).

This deployment across multiple locations showcased OSS's agility, resilience and capacity to support high operational tempo across geographically separated nodes. Concurrently, the OSS remained closely integrated with 16 ASB's depth in maintenance and logistics capabilities.

Earlier in 2025, OSS demonstrated its ability to rapidly generate elements to sustain CH-47F rotary-wing operations during the North Queensland flood response. These recovery efforts included the movement of over 150,000 kgs of perishable and non-perishable items for the people of Ingham, and the routine movement of emergency services and ADF personnel.



Chinook forward rotor blade being installed after replacing a Pitch Varying Housing seal. CPL J. Roche & CFN N. Wright operating the gantry crane with blade in the sling.

During Tropical Cyclone Alfred, OSS once again displayed its operational responsiveness and flexibility. Rapidly generating CH-47F Chinook support elements, OSS deployed Forward Repair Teams and logistics support to assist in aerial resupply, evacuation and infrastructure recovery operations across affected regions in South-East Queensland. This deployment highlighted OSS's ability to integrate with emergency response frameworks while maintaining aircraft readiness. The coordination with 16 ASB ensured a depth of maintenance and sustainment support was available throughout the operation, reinforcing the value of centralised support during high-tempo contingencies.



OSS soldiers prepare a CH-47F Chinook helicopter from 5 AVN REGT to depart Townsville in March 2025 to assist the ADF support to Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred.

OUR UNITS

As well as flood and cyclone responses, OSS was tasked to support 5 Avn Regt's deployment to Papua New Guinea for Exercise HELICON LUK 25 and Exercise WANTOK WARRIOR 25. During September and October 2025, OSS provided CH-47F maintenance support to Task Unit BRAHMAN, High Density Altitude training, and joint operations with PNG Defence Force. This support included the force assignment of a TST throughout the deployment, reinforcing OSS's role in enabling expeditionary aviation operations.

Symbolism and Identity: The Emblem of OSS

To reflect its emerging role and ethos, OSS has adopted a bold new emblem inspired by Chrysaor, a figure from Greek mythology, who embodies strength, resilience and the ability to rise from adversity. Born from the blood of Medusa alongside Pegasus, Chrysaor is a symbol of determination and grounded power, complementing Pegasus's airborne grace. This duality reflects OSS's unique position: technically fierce, tactically agile, and deeply integrated into Army Aviation's operational fabric.

At the heart of the emblem is a winged wild boar, airborne and forward-charging, with red eyes and prominent tusks that convey vigilance and readiness. The wings are spread wide, symbolising OSS's aviation integration and its capacity to project support



across distributed operations. The boar's posture — mid-flight and facing forward — reinforces the squadron's forward-leaning posture and operational momentum.

Beneath the central figure, a scroll bears the adapted Latin motto "Arte et Volantes" ("By Skill and Flying"), honouring RAEME heritage while reflecting OSS's aviation-specific mission. The emblem is framed in Desert Sage, a colour chosen to represent the squadron's enduring connection to CH-47F Chinook maintenance and its grounded, reliable and proven capability.

Together, these elements form a bold identity — one that reflects OSS's commitment to excellence, adaptability, and its role in supporting Army Aviation's largest recapitalisation in decades.

Looking Ahead

OSS is set to expand its capability by establishing a TST in Oakey, enabling direct support to 5 Avn Regt's B Sqn's future UH-60M Black Hawk operations. This growth will further enhance OSS's ability to deliver responsive, distributed support across Army's operational footprint.

The 5 Avn Regt OSS – 16 ASB partnership marks a deliberate shift in aircraft sustainment – from fragmented support to a cohesive, integrated model capable of supporting high-readiness operations both at home and abroad. With a new identity forged in myth, and proven in action, OSS is poised to be a cornerstone of the Army Aviation capability in the future.

MAJ Rod Marrant

OC OSS

5 AVN REGT

RAEME pride on display in the 3rd Brigade

Army News Edition 1606 includes an interesting article entitled "Partner forces prepare for war" that speaks to Exercise Southern Jackaroo; an exercise led by 3 Bde with personnel from the United States, Japan, South Korea and Papua New Guinea. The Exercise ran from 29 May – 03 July in Townsville. In this article, a photo is included showing personnel from 3 Bde standing on parade during the opening ceremony of the Exercise. Note the tri-colours flying proudly in the background. **Well done, 3 Bde Spanners!!**



BOOK REVIEW – ESSENTIALS OF LAND WARFARE, VOL 1: THE SOLDIER

[*Essentials of Land Warfare, Volume 1: The Soldier*](#) is far more than a doctrinal reference or a training aid. It is a deliberate, thoughtful, and deeply human exploration of what it means to serve — not only in Service, but in life. This is a guide for every rank, every trade, and every stage of service. It is a book that speaks as powerfully to a recruit on day one as it does to a veteran navigating transition decades later. Its message is simple but profound: service shapes character, and character shapes life.

[The Foreword: A Call to Prepare the Whole Soldier](#)

The Foreword sets a serious and contemporary tone. It acknowledges the strategic environment, and the need for a modern Army to prepare its people not only physically, but mentally and spiritually. **This is not a cosmetic update — it is a recalibration of what the Army expects of its people and what its people should expect of themselves.**

[The Prologue: The Reality of Combat](#)

The reader is plunged into the brutal reality of combat through historical accounts. These scenes remind the reader that the Army's reputation was not built on myth, but on the courage of ordinary Australians who faced extraordinary danger.

[The Battlefield: A Harsh Teacher](#)

The chapter on *The Battlefield* reinforces the message that war is always violent, confusing, and unforgiving, regardless of era or technology. Historical vignettes are presented not as distant stories, but as enduring lessons. This chapter notes that adversity is inevitable, but also manageable through training and purpose.

[Fear: A Universal Experience, Not a Weakness](#)

The chapter on *Fear* is one of the most honest and powerful in the book. It acknowledges that fear is universal on the battlefield, and that responses vary. Some charge forward. Others freeze. Some panic. All are human. This part captures one of the book's central themes: soldiers do not endure hardship alone. They endure it together; strong team bonds, shared hardship, and mutual trust are not just cultural strengths — they are operational necessities.

[Death and Casualties: The Hardest Reality](#)

The chapter on *Death and Casualties* is equally honest. It acknowledges the psychological toll of war and the confronting reality that "war is markedly more gruesome and provocative than most people might imagine." It also emphasises that fear, grief, and anxiety are natural human responses — not weaknesses. This is a critical message for today's Army, and for veterans who may still carry the weight of their experiences.

[Fatigue and Discomfort: The Daily Burdens of Service](#)

The chapters on *Fatigue and Discomfort* reinforce that adversity is not limited to combat. Long operations, harsh climates, lack of sleep, hunger, and physical strain are constant companions. Readers are reminded that hardship is not a failure of planning — it is part of soldiering. But hardship also builds resilience, confidence, and team cohesion.

[The Enemy and the Empty Battlefield](#)

The chapters on *The Enemy* and *The Empty Battlefield* bring the discussion into the modern era. They acknowledge that today's

enemies may be unseen, unpredictable, and technologically sophisticated.

[Killing: The Most Confronting Duty](#)

Perhaps the most confronting chapter is *Killing*. It states plainly:

"As a soldier, you are expected to kill."

But it does not leave the reader there. It explores the moral, psychological, and emotional dimensions of killing, emphasising that resistance to killing is normal and human.

[The Soldier's Ethos: Values That Shape a Life](#)

The chapter on *The Soldier's Ethos* is the moral centre of the book. It outlines the values that define the Australian soldier: courage, initiative, respect, teamwork, and integrity. These values are not just battlefield tools — they are life tools. The book argues that living these values is not optional; it is essential for Army cohesion.

[The Soldier's Fraternity: The Power of Belonging](#)

The chapter on *The Soldier's Fraternity* explores the bonds that form between soldiers — bonds forged in hardship, strengthened in adversity, and sustained across decades. These bonds are the sources of resilience, identity, and purpose. They help soldiers during tough parts of service and the challenges of transition.

[A Soldier for Life: Service Beyond Uniform](#)

The final chapter, *A Soldier for Life*, brings the book's purpose into full view. It argues that soldiering is not just a job; it is a lifelong identity grounded in service, discipline, loyalty, and mateship.

These values do not expire at discharge. They are meant to guide veterans as they enter civilian workplaces, raise families, contribute to communities, and continue serving in new ways.

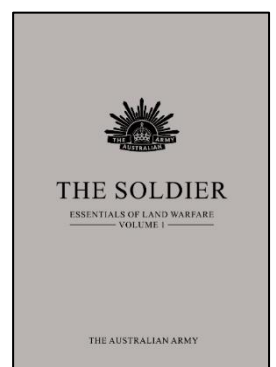
This is where the book becomes more than doctrine. It becomes a companion for life. It reminds readers that the habits, values, and bonds formed in service are not burdens — they are strengths.

[A Guide for Every Stage of Service and Life](#)

Essentials of Land Warfare, Volume 1: The Soldier is not just a handbook. It is a guide to being a soldier, a citizen, and a person of character. It teaches that service is defined by values, actions, and mateship.

This is a book that every soldier should read and understand well.

This is a book that will remind every Veteran that Army values can serve them well in civilian life.



RAEME HISTORY PROJECT

International ACCO Project – Preserving RAEME History in North Queensland

The RAQ recently supported [AEP Engineering's](#) Mick McMillan and his ACCO preservation project through a \$2,500 contribution from the RAQ Community Service Fund. The motion, raised through the North Queensland team, was approved at the recent RAQ monthly meeting and reflects the Association's ongoing commitment to preserving Corps heritage, supporting veteran engagement, and encouraging practical links between serving and former RAEME members.



"I am genuinely humbled by the Association's decision to approve the \$2,500 contribution toward the Mk 4 ACCO preservation project. Please also pass on my sincere thanks to Tank, the North Queensland team, the Executive Committee and the members who supported the motion," Mick said.



The project has already taken a very positive step forward thanks to the significant efforts of RAQ NQ Committee Chair Brian Robb, who spent two weeks working through the vehicle's brakes and engine. When first assessed, the braking system required considerable attention, however, Brian's work to hone the bores and properly sort the system has made a major difference. The vehicle now runs and stops extremely well, giving AEP a rolling, working vehicle, with two additional vehicles available to support the build of one complete and reliable example.

There is still more work to be done, and the next step is to bring a few experienced RAEME heads around the vehicle for a more detailed technical inspection. The aim is to draw on

the knowledge of members who understand these vehicles, identify what remains original, assess what needs attention, and agree on the next priorities for the preservation work. Mick also believes one of the vehicles may have heritage links to 17 Construction Squadron, with a tactical plate in RAEME colours, and further research is being undertaken against records of vehicles deployed to South Vietnam.

AEP's broader plan is to have both 4x4 and 6x6 systems available as practical heritage projects for serving and former RAEME members, veterans, apprentices and interested members of the community. These vehicles provide a valuable opportunity to preserve Corps history while also creating a practical link between generations of tradespeople and soldiers. Importantly, the intent is to have one of the vehicles available for ANZAC Day 2027.

A Saturday morning inspection and working session is being planned. The idea is simple: have a proper look over the project, share knowledge, identify the next jobs, and enjoy some good company. Mick has kindly offered to provide the refreshments and sausages.

Anyone with knowledge of these vehicles, or simply an interest in helping preserve an important part of RAEME history, would be very welcome.

For further information, or to get involved, please contact Mick McMillan at AEP Engineering via phone on 0414-680-154 or via email at: michael.mcmillan@aepengineering.com.au.



BREAKING NEWS

DVA News

DVA Veteran Card Re-Issue

DVA Veteran Cards provide a way for veterans and families of veterans to access concessions, support and services from participating health providers.

From July 2026, DVA will begin re-issuing Veteran Cards as part of a scheduled card re-issue carried out every 6 years.

New look, same Veteran Card

While the re-issued card will look different, the cards will continue to function in the same way. Same entitlements, eligibility, and processes.

There are no changes to the way veterans and health providers use the card.

To assist with identifying specialty cohorts and validating concession eligibility, a version of the Veteran Card - All Conditions (known as a Gold Card) specific to Totally & Permanently Incapacitated (TPI) eligible members will remain. The stamping of speciality cohorts such as War Widow/er, Dependant, and Extreme Disablement Adjustment (EDA) will also remain.

What providers need to know

New Veteran Cards will start being re-issued from July 2026. Due to the scale of the re-issue, some card holders may not receive their new card before their current card's expiry date. All Veteran Cards remain valid, even if they read as expired. Please continue to accept expired Veteran Cards.

Confirm your postal address to make sure your Veteran Card arrives without delay.

To avoid any delays, ensure your postal details are up to date. The easiest way to do this is through [MyService](#), DVA's secure online client portal.

Follow these steps to update your details in MyService:

- sign in via myGov
- select MyService from your linked services

- from the MyService home page, open the section showing your personal information
- follow the prompts to update any details that have changed, including your postal address, contact details, correspondence preferences, or other personal information relevant to your DVA services or payments
- review the information you've entered and submit your changes - this will notify DVA of the change and update your information in MyService.

What you need to know

Some Veteran Card holders may not receive their new card until around October because of the scale of the re-issue.

If your new card arrives after your current card's expiry date, you can keep using your current card until the replacement arrives.

Digital Veteran Card option

If you've ditched the wallet and prefer digital cards, you can download the digital Veteran Card to your myGov app wallet. The digital Veteran Card works the same way as the physical card and provides the same information.

More information about DVA Veteran Cards is available on the [DVA website](#).

How to apply for your Veteran Card

In some cases, if we know you are eligible, we will send you a Veteran Card automatically.

To read more about eligibility and how to get a card, [click here](#).

Alternatively, you can call DVA on 1800 VETERAN (1800 838 372).

More Information

For further information on Veteran Cards visit [Veteran Cards, prior approval and referrals](#) on DVA's website.

New look

Here is how the new Veteran Cards will look:



Make tax time easier by accessing the documents you need

DVA has designed MyService to help you manage your online business with DVA smoothly, including at tax time. In MyService you can access certain 'official letters' for tax and concession purposes. The letters and statements available to you depend on your personal eligibility and entitlements. The available document types can include:

- Statements of payment (e.g. statement of pension)
- Letters for concession (e.g. Veteran Card confirmation)
- Statement of income and assets
- Medicare levy exemption certificate

[Click here](#) for more information.

REME CPL Rhys Calland – Europe's Strongest Man

The following was extracted from UK Ministry of Defence. [Click here](#) for the full story.

Based in Somerset and serving with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (REME), Rhys made history by qualifying for Ultimate Strongman – England's Strongest Man competition, becoming the first serving member of the Armed Forces to compete at this level.



For Rhys, the journey began out of simple boredom with his usual training routine. "I always watched strongman on telly at Christmas as a child" he recalled. "I knew the Army did it, and it was an option."

After ten years of repetitive gym sessions, Rhys was ready for a change.

"I got really bored of doing the same thing for 10 years." "When I tried strongman, I just loved everything about it."

Making his debut in the Ultimate Strongman federation, Rhys placed third among 17 of England's strongest competitors, outperforming seasoned athletes including former national champions and international podium finishers. This achievement earned him a place at England's Strongest Man 2026.

Preparation had been intense. "Training went really well. I tried to keep my personal bests for competition so my body wouldn't feel too tired on the day," he explained.

"There were some events I hadn't really tried before, like the 90kg monster dumbbell, which involved lifting it overhead as many times as possible in a minute. I hadn't quite got to grips with that in training."

Despite the pressure of the unknown, Rhys stayed grounded in what he knew best.

"My favourite event was the atlas stones, which was the last event, so I looked forward to finishing the competition on a high."

Having stepped onto the England's Strongest Man stage, Rhys was still coming to terms with what he had achieved.

"I'm quite a confident person, and strongman is what I do every day."

Looking ahead, qualification for UK's Strongest Man was within reach, but Rhys remained focused on the present.

"I'm proud of getting to England's level. You never know, I might get the chance to go to UK's, but I'm grateful for getting to England's first. But having that many people watch me was different—I just needed to remember the sport wasn't something foreign to me."

Editor's note: On further research, we found that CPL Calland is a Vehicle Mechanic. His strength must make engine changes easy!

RCEME Change of Command

On 23 June 2026, the RCEME Corps conducted a formal handover for the Corps Sergeant Major.

The appointment was transferred from CWO Barrett to CWO Eddy.

The Corps extended its sincere appreciation to CWO Barrett for her exemplary leadership and dedicated service, and proudly welcomes CWO Eddy, expressing full confidence as he assumes this role.

Message from CWO Barrett:

As I hand over the Corps SM responsibilities, I want to give a shout out to the technicians.

Each day you find purpose, you show up to fix our kit, do the job, and lead and mentor those around you. Whether serving in the Army, Navy, RCAF, CANSOF, Training establishments, ADM(Mat), or MPC, you make the Corps what it is!

Thanks for being awesome and continually proud to be a part of the RCEME Corps!



MEMBER GUIDANCE

Pay and Conditions Updates

On 04 June 2026, a new [Determination](#) introduced changes that: improve assistance for members buying or selling a home, offer extra recreation leave credits for members who remain in overseas posting locations during an evacuation, withdraw the Airfield Defence Guard annual proficiency bonus, ensure full payment of location allowances during half-pay recreation leave, extend the Early Access to Rent Allowance Trial, add new benchmark schools for education assistance in Toronto, Canada, add new club membership locations for overseas postings, and revise COVID-19 related removal benefits, commencing 2 July 2026. Below is a breakdown of what's changed and how it may affect you.

Updates to home sale and purchase assistance

Defence offers financial assistance to help you buy and sell a home with the Home Purchase Assistance Scheme (HPAS) and Home Purchase or Sale Expenses Allowance (HPSEA).

You may now get the HPAS one-off payment if you buy a home in either your current or next housing benefit location, or your current family benefit location.

The eligibility criteria for both HPAS and HPSEA are also clearer now, so it's easier for you and your family to understand your benefits and obligations.

Learn more about how [Defence can help you buy or sell a home](#).

Find the updated policy details in [Ch 7 Pt 3 Div1A of PACMAN](#).

Extra recreation leave for members posted overseas during an evacuation

If you're on a long-term posting overseas and choose to stay in a location where dependants have been offered or directed to evacuate from, you'll now get an extra 7 days of recreation leave credits. You'll only get the extra credits if you remain posted to that location and live there for 6 months after the evacuation.

If dependants are allowed to return to the location within those 6 months, the additional recreation leave credits aren't payable.

Find the updated policy details in [Ch 14 Pt 6 Div 1 of PACMAN](#).

Payment of location allowance during recreation leave

If you get a location allowance and take leave at half pay, your location allowance won't be reduced to half rate with your pay.

The location allowances you get for being posted to a remote location in Australia are: ADF district allowance, Port Wakefield allowance, Scherger allowance, and allowances paid for service in Antarctica.

Learn more about [allowances based on your location](#).

Find the updated policy details in [Ch 5 Pt 4 Div 7 of PACMAN](#).

Extension of Early Access to Rent Allowance Trial

The Early Access to Rent Allowance Trial has been extended for another posting cycle. The trial is now open to members who have a posting order for the 2025/26 or 2026/27 cycles.

If you're being posted to a trial location and meet the criteria, you may be able to get your rent allowance approved faster.

Learn more about [how to participate in the trial](#).

Find the updated policy details in [Ch 7 Pt 8 Div 1 of PACMAN](#).

New benchmark schools for overseas education assistance

Education assistance helps you cover any higher costs for your child's education if they accompany you to an overseas posting location. Approved benchmark schools set the standard and expected costs for education in an overseas location, which affects your benefit amount.

New benchmark schools have now been added for Toronto, Canada, due to higher education costs in the region.

Learn more about [education assistance for your child when you're overseas](#).

Find the updated policy details in [Annex 15.6.A of PACMAN](#).

Club memberships during overseas postings

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

The following clubs have been added to the approved clubs list:

- [American Club](#) in Dhaka, Bangladesh
- [Workshop](#), Bohdan Khmelnytsky in Kyiv, Ukraine.

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

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

Temporary COVID-19 removal benefits

During the COVID-19 pandemic, ADF members and their resident families who were posted to new locations faced additional costs and challenges due to movement restrictions. Between 2020 and 2021, Defence introduced temporary benefits to support them with the added costs and pressure of relocating during the pandemic.

As COVID-19 movement restrictions are no longer in place, from 2 July 2026, Defence is removing some of the temporary benefits introduced during that time. If you get your Toll Movement Plan Letter (MPL) before 2 July 2026, you may still get the temporary COVID-19 benefits, even if your move happens after that date. If you get your Toll MPL after 2 July 2026, you won't get the temporary benefits.

In addition to a funded move with [Toll](#), you'll continue to have access to other [benefits if you relocate for a posting of 6 months or more](#).

These changes will be reflected in [Ch 6 Pt 5 Div 2](#) and [Ch 6 Pt 5A Div 2](#) of PACMAN from 2 July 2026.

MEMBER GUIDANCE

Housing contribution amounts are changing on 30 July 2026

If you get subsidised housing through Defence, the contribution amount you pay towards it will change on 30 July 2026 as part of the annual Group Rent Scheme (GRS) adjustment process.

You'll see the new amount reflected in your pay from 13 August 2026.

Why your contribution amount changes each year

Under the GRS, Defence subsidises housing costs at below-market rates to support you and your family during your postings.

Each year, Defence reviews your housing costs, contribution amount and rent ceiling, and adjusts them to reflect changes in the rental market and the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

Types of subsidised housing and housing assistance affected by the GRS include:

- living-in accommodation
- Service residences
- rent allowance.

If you live in one of these types of housing, you usually need to pay a fortnightly contribution towards it. The amount you contribute is based on factors such as your rank, living situation, and type of housing.

If you pay a contribution, the amount will change each year as part of the annual GRS adjustments.

The Group Rent Scheme

Defence subsidises the cost of housing for ADF members through a policy known as the Group Rent Scheme (GRS).

Under the GRS, Defence aims to subsidise 50% of the combined total of housing costs for all members. Member contributions cover the remaining 50%. This is known as the 50/50 split.

Since 2022, members have been paying less than 50% of the combined total of housing costs. To gradually return to the original 50/50 split, Defence has included an additional increase in the annual GRS adjustments since 2024. The additional increase will be included each year until contributions return to the 50/50 split, which is expected to take several years.

Check your new housing contribution amounts

Your fortnightly contribution amounts will be automatically updated on 30 July 2026.

Service residence

If you live in a Service residence, your contribution will increase by an average of 5.61%.

Find out what your [fortnightly contribution amount](#) will be.

Rent allowance

If you get rent allowance, your contribution will increase by an average of 5.61%.

Your rent ceiling, which is the maximum fortnightly amount that Defence pays towards your rent based on your location, is also increasing. This means you may get more rent allowance.

Find out what your [fortnightly contribution and rent ceiling amounts](#) will be.

Living-in accommodation

If you stay in living-in accommodation (LIA), your contribution will increase by 3.8%.

Find out what your [fortnightly contribution amount](#) will be.

Find out more

For more details about the GRS and how it's calculated, visit our [Annual Housing Contribution Adjustments page](#).

To learn more about Defence subsidised housing or housing assistance, go to:

- [types of housing](#)
- [housing assistance and allowances](#).

Join our Movember Team

This year we'll be forming an official RAEME team for Movember. We're inviting all RAEME members—past and present—to get behind the cause.

Why?

Movember is more than growing a moustache; it's about supporting men's health, starting conversations, and looking out for our mates.

Whether you can grow a magnificent mo or not, your participation and support will make a real difference.

How?

More details on how to join the team will be shared shortly. For now, start warming up those upper lips and get ready to help us raise funds.

Team Name?

We don't know. Fill in the blanks where the "M" may stand for Moustache or similar & submit your suggestion by [clicking here](#).

R _____ A _____ E _____ M _____ E _____



IN ONE PAGE – NAVIGATING DVA UNDER THE NEW VETS ACT

Australia's veteran compensation and rehabilitation framework now operates under a single, modernised law — the [Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support \(VETS\) Act](#). This reform replaces the old trio of Acts (VEA, DRCA, and MRCA) with one unified system designed to make claims simpler, faster, and fairer.

What the New System Means

Under the VETS Act, all new claims are assessed through a single process based on the former MRCA model. Veterans who already receive payments or treatment under the Veterans' Entitlements Act 1986 (VEA) or Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation (Defence-related Claims) Act 1988 (DRCA) will continue to do so. However, any new claims lodged from July onward are handled under the new framework.

The aim is straightforward: to remove confusion, reduce delays, and ensure that veterans spend less time navigating bureaucracy and more time accessing the support they've earned.

Key Features of the VETS Act

- One set of rules for all new claims, regardless of when or where you served.
- Simplified definitions for injury, illness, and service connection.
- A single review pathway through the Veterans' Review Board (VRB).
- Grandfathering of existing benefits, meaning no one loses what they already have.
- Improved case management, with a focus on rehabilitation and wellbeing rather than paperwork.

How to Approach DVA Under the New System

The new framework is designed to be more intuitive, but preparation still matters. Veterans who take a few simple steps before lodging a claim or seeking support will find the process smoother and less stressful.

- **Gather Your Records Early.** Start by collecting your service history and medical documentation. The new system still relies on clear evidence linking your condition to service. Having your records ready — including deployment details, incident reports, and medical notes — helps DVA assess your claim efficiently.
- **Clarify What You're Seeking.** Be specific about what you're claiming. Is it a new injury, a worsening condition, or a need for rehabilitation support? The VETS Act uses a single definition of "service-related condition," so clarity helps avoid unnecessary requests for more information.
- **Seek Guidance — But Stay in Control.** You don't need to decide immediately whether to use a paid or volunteer advocate. What matters is understanding the process. Many veterans benefit from an initial conversation with an accredited advocate or ex-service organisation (ESO) to clarify terminology and expectations. Even if you later manage your claim independently, that early advice can prevent common mistakes.
- **Keep Your Own File.** Maintain a personal record of everything you submit — forms, correspondence, and medical evidence. DVA's digital systems are improving, but having your own

copy ensures continuity if staff change or if you need to appeal a decision later.

- **Be Honest and Consistent.** Inconsistencies between statements, medical reports, and service records can slow down claims. Describe your experiences factually and avoid exaggeration. The new system values clarity and accuracy over emotion or volume.
- **Engage Early.** Don't wait until a condition becomes severe before seeking help. Under the VETS Act, early engagement can open access to rehabilitation and treatment options even before a compensation decision is finalised.
- **Lodge Through Official Channels.** Always use official DVA forms or the online portal. Informal submissions or verbal requests can't be tracked. DVA relies on digital workflows, so formal lodgement ensures your claim is properly recorded.
- **Stay Updated.** DVA will continue to release fact sheets and guidance as the system matures. Check www.dva.gov.au/legislationreform for updates and resources. Rules may evolve as implementation progresses, so staying informed helps you make sound decisions.
- **Look After Yourself.** Claiming compensation can be emotionally taxing. If the process feels overwhelming, reach out to Open Arms – Veterans & Families Counselling or your local ESO. The new system aims to reduce stress, but personal support remains essential.

Common Mistakes to Avoid

Even with a streamlined system, veterans can still run into avoidable problems. Here are the most frequent pitfalls:

- **Incomplete evidence.** Missing medical or service documentation remains the top cause of delay.
- **Old advice.** Guidance based on the VEA or DRCA may no longer apply. **Always** check information is current.
- **Ignoring review rights.** If you disagree with a decision, you can request a review through the VRB.
- **Outdated contact details.** DVA correspondence often includes time-sensitive requests — keep your contact details current.
- **Waiting too long.** You can begin gathering documents and understanding your entitlements now; preparation wins.

Final Thoughts

For veterans, the best approach is preparation: gather your records, understand your goals, and engage early. Whether you work with an advocate or handle your claim yourself, the new system is designed to meet you halfway — with clearer rules, faster decisions, and a renewed commitment to fairness.

For official updates and resources, visit www.dva.gov.au or contact your local ex-service organisation or advocate. The legislation may have changed, but the principle remains the same: those who served deserve support that works.

WELFARE MATTERS

Vale

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

1200361 WO1 Victor Edward "Snow" READING retd

Snow passed away on 4 July 2026, aged 83, remembered with great respect across the RAEME and RSL communities; a Vietnam veteran who served as a Corporal with the Royal Australian Infantry Corps and later with 102 Field Workshop, he went on to hold roles including RSM of 3 Base Workshops and instructor at the RAEME Training Centre and Field Wing Bonegilla, earning a reputation as an excellent leader and mentor, and his dedication to veterans was honoured through the naming of the Redcliffe RSL Sub Branch welfare centre in his honour, with a private cremation held on 14 July 2026.



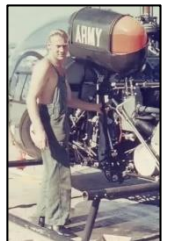
WO1 Kerry George PONTING retd

Kerry passed away on 21 June 2026 after a battle with cancer, aged 71, leaving behind the memory of a respected soldier, tradesman and mate who was deeply loved by his family and fondly remembered by those who served alongside him, including during peacekeeping operations in Namibia in 1989; his funeral service was held at TS Burstow Chapel on 6 July 2026, followed by interment at Drayton & Toowoomba Cemetery and a gathering at Falvey's Stock Hotel where family and friends came together to honour his life — Arte et Marte, rest in peace.



217121 CPL William Charles 'Billy' WRIGHT retd

Billy passed away on 20 June 2026, leaving behind the memory of a proud RAEME member, Vietnam veteran and much-loved Oatley community figure whose service, character and contribution spanned decades. Conscripted in 1966, Billy served first with 1RAR before transferring to RAEME, completing technical training in Albury-Wodonga and later deploying to Vietnam as a CPL Engine Fitter with 161 (Independent) Reconnaissance Flight from January 1970 to January 1971, supporting Sioux helicopters, Pilatus Porters and Cessna 180s and even volunteering for forward air control missions under fire, before returning home to continue serving until 1972.



WO2 Dennis CROWE retd

Dennis passed away on 15 June 2026 following a heart attack, leaving behind the memory of a much-loved mate, soldier, tradesman and proud RAEME member whose career spanned numerous units and appointments including the 5/80 ATET course, 17 Construction Squadron, 1st Armoured Regiment Technical Support, C Squadron 1st Armoured Regiment, MEA, DCPM and finally MEA Fit/Armt & TES(G); those who served alongside him remember Dennis as a true character and an outstanding professional who brought warmth, humour and unwavering mateship to every team he was part of.



2811859 WO2 Daniel FOYEL retd

Dan passed away on 12 June 2026 after a courageous battle with brain cancer, passing peacefully in Albury with his family by his side; Dan will be deeply missed across the RAEME family. He was farewelled on Friday, 19 June 2026 in Wodonga, with a livestream link provided via Conway Funeral Home. Dan's wife Terri warmly asks that anyone who has photos of Dan in uniform consider sharing them, as she has very few and would be grateful for any that can be passed on.



374554 CPL Garry 'Double R' LOVETT

Garry passed away on 14 June 2026, leaving the Norlane RSL community mourning the loss of a much-loved member whose warmth, humour and ever-present mateship made him a cherished part of the club's fabric; affectionately known as "Double R", Garry was a Life Member of the RSL and proudly served 14 years in the Army Reserve, first in Infantry and later with RAEME, and his presence — whether sharing a laugh at the bar, offering support to others, or standing tall on ANZAC Day — will be deeply missed by all who knew him.



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](#)



It's not too late!!

Send your submission for the next edition today.

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publications/newsletter/article-submission](https://raeme.org.au/index.php/publications/newsletter/article-submission)

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