



# NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA VIC TAS DIVISION

**NOVEMBER 2023**

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**"Keeping Watch over the Maritime Wellbeing of Australia"**



Dear members

Happy Christmas and New Year to you all from your President LCDR Roger Blythman and Executive Committee.

Just a reminder that you and your partner (or friend) are invited to the Navy League of Australia's Christmas Luncheon on Saturday 9 December 2023.

The cost will be \$50 per person which includes a glass of wine, traditional Christmas mains and alternating desserts of plum pudding or mini pavlovas. The meal is being subsidised by the Division.

Other drinks may be obtained from the bar at your own cost.

**Date: Saturday 9 December 2023**

**Time: 1200-1400**

**Dress: Smart Casual**

**Location: Club Classic Restaurant, 3 Brewer Rd, Brighton East.**

Parking: There is some parking available near the main entrance in the Club Classic circular driveway, otherwise unrestricted parking is available from 12pm in Brewer Rd.

Dietary requirements: Please let me know if you have any dietary issues.

Payment: to Navy League of Australia  
Bendigo Bank BSB 633 000  
Account Number 170992929 (EFT preferred)  
Cheques may be sent to P O Box 314, Bentleigh Vic 3204.

Come and enjoy some Christmas cheer and talk to old friends whilst enjoying a beautiful meal.

RSVP via email and payment by 1 December 2023 as there is a limited number of seats available. For further information please contact Lynda on [nlavictasdiv@gmail.com](mailto:nlavictasdiv@gmail.com)

## PATRON OF THE NAVY LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA VICTORIA TASMANIA DIVISION



We are delighted to advise that the Governor of Victoria, Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Margaret Gardner AC has agreed to be the Patron of the Navy League of Australia Victoria Tasmania Division during her term of office.

## VISITING SHIPS 2024



It is anticipated that there will be several ships coming to Melbourne in 2024 which Navy League members will be able to visit.

As soon as more information comes to hand, we will let you know.

## LONSDALE CUP 3 MARCH 2024



The Lonsdale Cup race is scheduled for Sunday 3 March 2024 at the Royal Victorian Motor Yacht Club. The 'Lonsdale Cup' celebrates the foundation of the Australian Navy on 1<sup>st</sup> March 1901 and honours those Naval Auxiliary Patrol (NAP) sailors who served in this part of Australia as war-time volunteers for Port and Harbour security, as many did in other port areas around the nation from 1939 – 1945.

## CRESWELL ORATION 6 MARCH 2024 – SAVE THE DATE



The Annual Creswell Oration will be held on Wednesday 6 March 2024 at the Waverley RSL in Coleman Parade Glen Waverley, 1200 for 1230. It will follow the same format as in previous years. There will be a two-course meal with a glass of wine.

The Chief of Navy has been contacted to nominate a guest speaker.

Please save the date in your diary. More information will be available shortly.

## FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING OCTOBER 2023



*Attendees at the Federal Council meeting and AGM 21 October 2023*

The Navy League Federal Council meeting was held on 21 October 2023 in Sydney at the State Library. All Divisions were represented with the exception of Western Australia.

The Council was re-elected unanimously with the exception of John Jeremy who retired. All positions were declared vacant. There being no other nominations and on a motion by Graham Harris, the following were elected:

Federal President: Matthew Rowe  
Senior Vice President: Vacant  
Vice President: Mark Schweikert  
Vice President: Roger Blythman

The Victoria Tasmania Division is now heavily represented on the Council, with Senior Vice President LCDR Roger Blythman, Honorary Secretary Ray Gill, Honorary Treasurer Ron Lyon and Minute Secretary Lynda Gilbert.

The Navy League President in his annual report noted in particular the collegiality and ideas sharing. The costs of the Navy Magazine are no longer able to be supported by the NSW Division and will need to be wound back.



The League with careful management will be able to continue its operations indefinitely into the future. The surplus may be put to good use advancing the objectives of the League through scholarships and support of the Navy.



The Navy League ACT Division will start up under the direction of Mark Schweikert. Mark is very focused on revitalizing the League and will build up contacts through Government and the media to influence Government strategy.

Mark has extensive experience in all manner of Defence, security and international matters ranging back to 1991. For 15 years he was one of Defence's most experienced Test & Evaluation strategic plans and policy makers. He also has extensive experience in experimentation. In 2012 he diversified his skill set into local government as a two-term elected Councillor and into regional economic development and board director through his Chairmanship of Regional Development Australia - Southern

Inland. He was elected Deputy Mayor of QPRC in Sept 2018 and stepped down in Sept 2019. He was one of the most active Councillors being Chair of the Economic, Tourism and Traffic committees (to name but a few). He is currently working as a contractor specialising in T&E advice for complex and innovative Defence programmes. He has also recently taken up writing again on contemporary strategic and capability matters. *(Photo & Reference: LinkedIn profile)*

Overall, it was a very positive meeting and we all felt that we had made progress.



The Trafalgar Dinner on the evening of 21 October was a magnificent three course treat. It was held in the Victory Room of the Royal Auto Club which was built in 1901. Simon Reay Atkinson gave a rousing speech on Admiral Nelson which we all enjoyed listening to.

The next Annual conference is planned for 18-19 Oct 2024 in Sydney and observers are welcome.

## FEDERAL COUNCIL MEETING CONTINUED

*Photo of HMAS Adelaide at Garden Island courtesy of Diana Hill taken at night from Sydney Harbour*

Captain Troy Duggan, Commander of HMAS Adelaide, was invited to speak for 15 minutes prior to the Federal Council AGM.

Captain Duggan noted there are 22 ships and 1950 personnel currently at sea. He spoke of the interdependence of the global economy and the need to protect undersea cables, secure shipping lanes and pipelines.

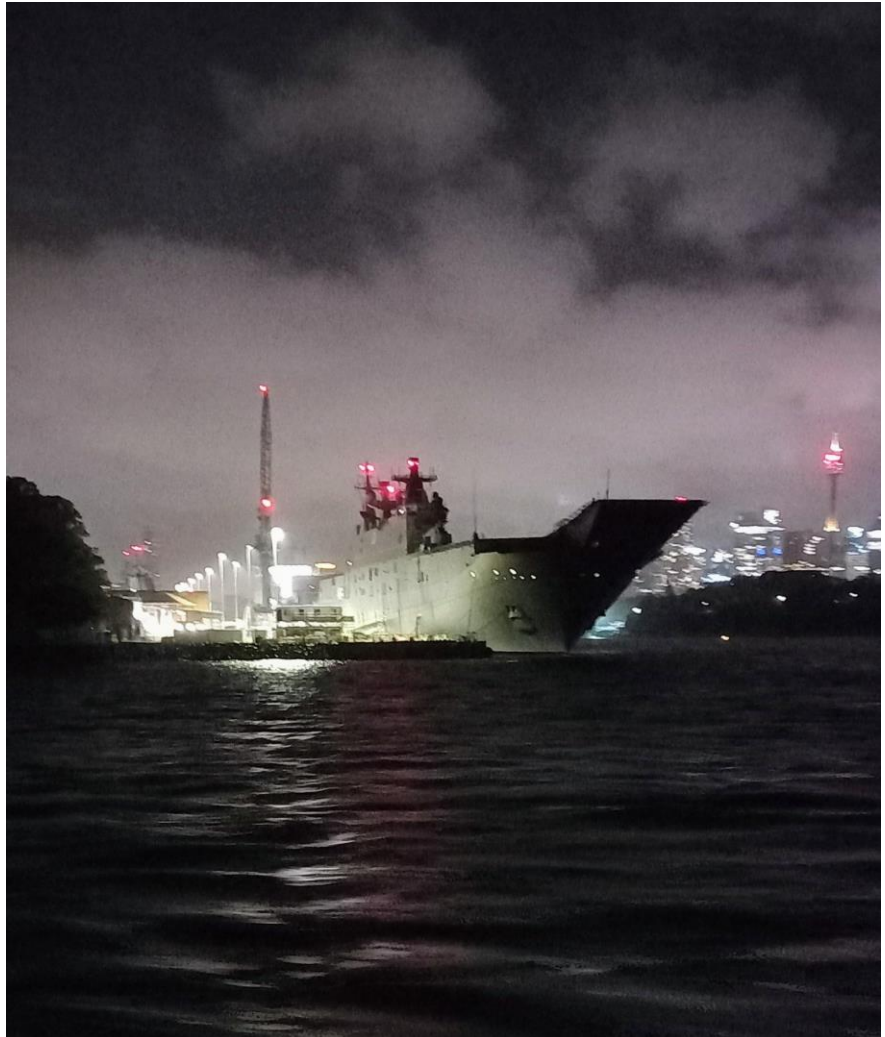
Freedom of the seas is essential for economies to survive. The uncertainty of the last few years has put strain on the strategic environment. The Global World order is not being adhered to in the Indo Pacific region.

The Navy is needed to protect Australia's interests. Captain Duggan spoke of the 3 Ds - Diplomacy, Deterrents & Defence. Australia is no longer an island due to long range missiles.

A Defence Strategic Review will take place in 2024 and every 2 years after that. The Navy needs enhanced lethality and long range strike capability. Nuclear submarines, munitions, development of Northern bases, missiles, sea mines, a highly skilled workforce, key partnerships with our Pacific neighbours, are all under review.

The aim is for a win-win situation - sharing of the oceans, cooperation with Singapore, Malaysia and developing Pacific maritime support with a budget of \$2.1 billion to 2027. Looking ahead, the Navy is aiming to grow to 21,000 personnel. It is very challenging at the moment due to low unemployment which is affecting the Navy's ability to fill vacancies. The Navy will be seamless through the ADF and needs to work with partners and allies to uphold a Rules Based Order.

*Notes taken by Lynda Gilbert*



## SURFACE FLEET REVIEW UPDATE

*Author John Harker, November 2023*

The Surface Review has been handed to government, and it is expected to be released (together with the government's response) in summary form in early 2024. We can presume the government is undertaking a costing of the options, and talking to AUKUS allies, and NZ, and taking some advice from 'industry'.


### **What is happening with 'industry'?**

Industry includes - Navantia, BAE Systems, Babcock, ASC, Lurssen, Fincantieri/US Navy shipbuilders, Austal, Korean shipbuilders. Industry is predicting a few main elements of the review, mainly around a fleet of (relatively) heavily armed corvettes or light frigates, a reconfiguration of the Hunter class, and possibly a Hobart class upgrade. BAE has come out strongly showing a heavily modified Hunter Class frigate packing more punch than the current Hobart configuration. Industry is now putting out press releases describing their offers that they hope will accurately reflect the review proposals. What is clear - there is no shortage of industry options to consider, and, it seems, no shortage of capacity in European shipyards. Industry commentators are currently in a fevered debate over the worthiness of Tier 1 ships versus Tier 2. Information sources include Defence Connect, ASPI, BAE Systems, Navantia, DoD. This debate is set on whether the review will have a greater emphasis on protecting our 'approaches' - near northern waters - littoral/archipelago, or more blue water, further from our shores - ie offensive posturing.

### **Predictions?**

An ideal scenario would have a balanced surface navy, able to project far offshore, and to protect our 'approaches'.

- There will be a reconfiguration of the Hunter class to pack many more VLS cells. Perhaps one tranche (of 3 shipsets) will retain the current planned anti-sub focus, and the two following tranches (x6) will be at Hobart+ levels of offensive capability. These will omit their towed array sonar, and the mission bay on the midships hump behind the funnels, and add 64 VLS cells and Naval Ship Missiles (Anti-ship and ship to shore).
- The three Hobart class will get enhanced lethality, with NSMs and updated CIWS.
- Some or all of the eight 8 ANZACs will get a life extension through to late 2030's, and extra missile launchers and inventory.
- A fleet of 8 corvettes (circa 2,000 tonnes disp) will be commissioned, each with similar lethality to the current Hobart weapon set.
- This combined fleet will, by 2035 comprise circa 20 ships in Tier 1 and 2 categories, resulting in a continuous peacetime availability of approx 13 Tier 1 and 2 ships
- The Arafura class build will be paused and the whole class of 12 ships will have their small 25mm guns upgraded to something more lethal with longer range.
- A massive investment will be made in unmanned technologies, for above, on and below the water deployment.
- An equally massive investment will be made in sea mines and smart sea channel and sensor technologies.



- Navy will reconfigure the standard ship's complement with multi-crewing for the smaller vessels, as is already done with the patrol boat fleet on a 3 crew/2 ship basis. Multi-crewing is already practised in the submarine service. (Multi-crewing permits more time at sea for each vessel, while still providing for appropriate rest and training cycles). This is becoming repetitive – the navy will need to double its sailor headcount by the early 2030's.

A safe prediction: By 2030 - the ADF will have a large inventory of short, medium and long range missiles deployed by sea, air and land forces. Many of these will be made in Australia. Important note on missile technology developments: the Ukraine armed forces have shown how extraordinarily accurate some European sourced anti-ship / surface to surface missiles are – the 'Storm Shadow' has been able to destroy small moving targets at a range beyond 500kms.

Another prediction: nothing will change until another review takes place!



## ANNUAL LUNCHEON – SOUTH AUSTRALIA DIVISION



*Diana Hill, President NLA SA Division*

An invitation was sent to all Divisions inviting them to attend South Australia's Annual Luncheon at the Torrens Parade Ground in Adelaide. Lynda and Ken attended from the Vic Tas Division. It was a very friendly affair with great food (and plenty of it) and interesting guest speakers, LCDR Pieter Scott ANC Flotilla Commander – Torrens Flotilla ANC in SA, Commander Chris Bastian OAM ANC, Director of Youth ANC and Commanding Officer HMAS Encounter, Commander Emma McDonald-Kerr ADC RAN.



Congratulations to the President of the South Australia Division, Diana Hill for a well-organized event and for looking after us so well whilst we were there. Diana took us to Hanhdorf for morning tea and Barristers Block Winery in the Adelaide Hills for an excellent lunch with very nice wine. I would encourage other members to attend Christmas in July 2024. Adelaide is a wonderful city to visit with many attractive parks, buildings and streets waiting to be discovered.