



Pen over Sword

*The newsletter of the
Australian Army Public Relations Service*

July 2015 edition



Message from the Head of Corps

COL Jeffery Squire

As we mark our 21st year as AAPRS, we are faced with significant challenges and opportunity, both in the Army and Joint Military Public Affairs environments. The next 18 months will be a critical period that will determine the future shape of the AAPRS capability in Army and our contribution to the future Joint Military Public Affairs (MPA) capability.

For the first time in my experience we have Army actively engaging their force modernisation mechanisms to critically examine and define the PA capability that Army actually requires, and, from this point, design and implement a structure that is able to deliver that effect and be sustainable.

As LTCOL Barlow expands on below, the AAPRS presentation to the Army Employment Category Management Stakeholder Steering Group (ASSG) on 26 May was successful in gaining agreement that the future AAPRS will see ECN 312 Photographer and ECN 342 Reporter combined into a single ECN – Operator Military Public Affairs. The presentation also revealed a requirement for Army to review its Public Affairs Capability more broadly and, importantly, to ensure this consideration is conducted in the context of Army's contribution to joint capability and the wider Defence public affairs community. So, we actually came out of the ASSG presentation with more questions to answer than we went in with. Although there is much work ahead, the key opportunity here is that Army as a whole is engaged in this process. While we must accept that we will not control the final design and implementation, there will be positive change that recognises the critical function that AAPRS provides to Army.

Noting that AAPRS continues to provide the core of the Joint MPA capability, we are on the cusp of a significant opportunity, driven by the VCDF, VADM Ray Griggs. Those of you who know the VCDF would understand his passion and priority for communicating the ADF story. VCDF has directed that a formal review of the Joint Military Public Affairs Capability is conducted between now and mid 2016. As an indicator of his drive, VCDF has engaged retired Major General Mick Crane to oversee the review and COL Mike Goodyer as the review director. LTCOL Mike Harris will support the review as the Military Public Affairs Subject Matter Expert. We have worked to align the terms of reference for this review with the work required by Army to ensure efficiency when we can. I expect that both lines of work will impact on you all as they progress. Please ensure that your contribution is frank and fearless, we must make the most of this significant period of opportunity.

To all who were able to attend the Cops Conference this year, thank you for your contribution to a successful day that was marked by robust discussion – exactly what our conferences need to provide. Thank again to MAJ Mulholland and the 1 JPAU team for pulling the activity together.

We are also engaged with Army HQ to identify a more robust and structured way forward for the management of the AAPRS Reserve capability within Army. We remain hindered by the history of most AAPRS Reserve positions reporting to DGPA in a now, long outdated Defence public affairs structure. While we have made significant steps in moving Reserve positions into the Army group, there is more work to be done to ensure that the capability is managed and tasked effectively by Army. Director Army Communications, Rebecca

Constance is working with COFS AHQ on this. I will ensure that the role and function of the AAPRS Senior Reserve Advisory Group is considered in this work – stand by for an update in the next newsletter.

For those of you who were not aware, the note from LTCOL Mike Harris below provides a clear outline of a challenge that is greater than any facing the Corps. Our thoughts are with Mike, Kim and his girls. Mike will stay engaged with us as he can, specifically with the Joint MPA capability review. Mike has also handed his DHOC responsibilities to LTCOL Barlow. Mike has done an outstanding job as DHOC and I look forward to his continuing contribution to AAPRS. Thank you Mike – we are all with you.

So, at 21, AAPRS is at a critical point in our history. We must approach the next 18 months with open minds and a positive outlook. The machinery of the Army and Joint Capability structures are focussed on taking the MPA function forward, we must be on board for this journey.

Message from the Deputy Heads of Corps

LTCOL Mike Harris (outgoing)

As some of you may be aware, my Dad was diagnosed with Bowel Cancer in 2009 and since then my two brothers and sister have taken the precaution of a colonoscopy, even though this form of cancer is not usually genetic in its origins. In 2011, whilst deployed to the Middle East, my Dad succumbed to cancer. On return from deployment it was time for my second colonoscopy and I was expecting a good result. The surgeon had other news for me and I was quickly scheduled for surgery to remove a T1 cancerous lesion, the smallest, detectable stage of cancer. The surgery was successful and a follow on colonoscopy and CT scan in 2012 gave me the 'all clear'.

A couple of months ago, I was experiencing some discomfort in my lower back. I thought it was my lifestyle and age. After a particularly bad game of golf (my usual form) I decided to access the free Defence medical system. An ultra-sound then CT scan later and the Doctor had some serious news – a large mass was occupying my liver. An MRI and PET scan, referrals to a Bariatric Surgeon, Cardio-Thoracic specialist and then Oncologist have mapped the way ahead: six–twelve months of chemotherapy and surgery.

For serving full-time members, the great benefit of having a major health condition has been the support provided by the Defence medical services and the almost immediate access to clinical specialists. From the General Practitioner to the Rehabilitation Manager, and even across to DVA which has a form and application process to cover serving and ex-serving members for cancer treatment, there has not been an occasion where my wife and I have had to ask for anything. We are very grateful for this support.

The way ahead will be challenging and the size of the cancer is not insignificant. However, we are well provided for and the real gift has been the early medical intervention. So, as I pass the Deputy Head of Corps cudgel to LTCOL Haydn Barlow, my message to you all is: 'listen to your body!'

LTCOL Haydn Barlow (incoming)

Thank you to LTCOL Mike Harris, from whom I assume the role of DHOC, for his unquestionable commitment to our future. I aim to follow Mike's lead and focus my efforts on strengthening the Corps' foundations. Right now, I see several changes and opportunities that will impact on these foundations for the better.

First the change. As you will read throughout this newsletter, we are engaged with Army to modernise the Corps. What began as an ECN

review has developed into a major first principles examination of who we are, what we do, how we train and where we operate. CAPT Jillian Gaze is leading this effort on behalf of COL Squire and is doing an excellent job. A few days after the Corps Conference she presented our initial findings in which we recommended the merger of the photographer and military reporter traders. As Army's plans team listened to the pitch it became obvious that our situation called for a more comprehensive approach to modernisation. They instructed us to widen the scope of the review, consider every possible force structure and training permutation and return for a second round of hearings at the end of the year.

Our journey towards modernisation will not be easy and we will be challenged to justify principles we consider sacred or obvious. But this is the best approach to secure a relevant AAPRS capability. That we are even engaged with the Army modernisation team on such a matter – and all the weight that comes with that organisation – is a major step forward. They will ensure our recommendations are sound and sustainable. So what does this mean for you as a Corps member? It is honestly too early to tell, and some of the initiatives that we were looking to advance a few months ago will now need to wait for the process to run its course. But rest assured we will engage widely and keep your interests central to our considerations. I will provide an update on subsequent steps in the next newsletter.

Several other opportunities will arise separate to the modernisation path that we must also seize. As an example, LTCOL Mike Harris, who later in the newsletter writes about his recent visit to the US Defence Information School, has for several years agitated for a deepened relationship with DINFOS and has taken important steps towards achieving this. I hope to continue Mike's great work here. LTCOL Jason Logue has made similar inroads with the

US Information Operations community. Ultimately we are seeking regular access and funding to partner institutions that offer best practice learning opportunities for our high performing members. This is not an easy thing to secure, but I am committed to giving it a go.

Finally I would like to talk about major exercises and operations. As you should know, Military Information Effects Branch (which COL Squire and myself belong to) recently held a selection board for upcoming operational positions in the Middle East. DGMI selected the next PAOs to deploy and identified priority PAOs for subsequent rotations. We will run through this process again in October, meaning even if you did not nominate last time, or were not selected, you are welcome to try again. As personal situations change several new opportunities may arise.

For those that have been identified for deployment, MIE Branch will work with you to ensure you are prepared. But you should also be active in preparing yourself for deployment. As an example, the senior leadership group is increasingly turning to social media as an important arm of their communication efforts. They will expect their PAOs to be experts in this field, and frankly, if you are not on the way to becoming one, you should consider doing so right away. While the effectiveness of social media in certain operational situations can and should be questioned, it should be done so from an informed position. Your future commanders will absolutely expect this of you.

Another opportunity to keep your eye on is the development of Australia's amphibious capability. This month 1 Div will commence a new "sea" series of exercises designed to test the capability and the headquarters functions associated with it. We will invest in these exercises now to ensure an information effects culture is embedded within the capability from the beginning.

Message from the Colonel Commandant

COL John Weiland



I was again kindly invited to attend the biennial Corps Conference held in May. There appears to be the possibility of good news for a change regarding the future of the Corps. If successful, Colonel Jeff Squire and his team will be able to ensure Army has the public relations capability it needs.

On the subject of our photographers, they have recently received Canon cameras to replace their Nikons in line with the current news-gathering industry standard. 1 JPAU is also expecting new state-of-the-art digital high definition video cameras.

Although we are still the smallest Corps in the Army, I can confidently state that our expertise and professionalism is exponentially increasing with the hopeful increase in our staffing and receipt of new equipment. Overall, we are in

good hands with highly motivated Regular and Reserve Officers and NCOs. As a Corps, we have never had as many members and have never been as well-equipped as we are at present.

On a sad note, I learned of the recent death of Peter Ward, following a long illness. Peter was a former National Service Sergeant photographer and Vietnam veteran. He was a gifted photographer, both in the army and in the print media, winning a Walkley Award. He was also a talented amateur boxer and it was said that if he wasn't called up for National Service, he was a favourite to have been selected to represent Australia in the Olympic Games.

Along with COL Squire and the rest of the AARPS, I wish LTCOL Mike Harris all the best for his treatment and look forward to his ongoing engagement with the Corps.

Incorrigible former reporter, Captain Brian Swift, is currently hospitalised in Brisbane due to an ongoing heart condition and we hope that Swiftly has a speedy recovery. Last but not least, former photographer WO II Craig Murphy, continues on the sick list but is making a slow recovery.

Call for Papers

A number of journals are currently calling for papers on topics of interest to AARPS members:

- NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence:
<http://www.mountainrunner.us/blog/2015/7/call-for-papers-defence-strategic-communications>
- Media, Culture and Society:
<http://www.warandmedia.org/call-for-proposals-the-media-and-the-military/>

2015 AAPRS Corps Conference

The 2015 AAPRS Corps Conference was held at the 1 JPAU premises in Canberra on 21 May 2015.

Around 40 AAPRS members gathered for a full program of presentations and discussions on the current and future state of the Corps.

Opened by Head of Corps COL Jeff Squire, the conference kicked off with an overview of the operational and administrative challenges and opportunities facing the Corps in the short term. He also noted that the First Principles Review of Defence, the Force Structure Review and reform of the communications function across Defence may have some impact on the Corps. COL Squire noted that a new appreciation by senior leaders of the role of communications provided an opportunity for the AAPRS.

LTCOL Logue provided an update on information operations doctrine and practice, providing valuable insights into how the information operations aspects of ADF operations were being managed as an integral part of mission planning and execution.

While the conference was held at 1JPAU, many of its personnel were absent on operations or supporting a range of exercises and activities both in Australia and around the globe. MAJ Linden provided a status report of unit activity, noting that 2015 had proved to be a very busy year for the JPAU, but further noting that most years are incredibly high tempo for the small but dedicated tri-service team. MAJ Linden will be replaced in 2016 by MAJ Doug McGuire, with WO2 Neil Ruskin to remain as SM.

Director of Army Communications, Ms Rebecca Constance, discussed Army's communication strategy, which is focused on building the brand



of Army with the public. A key focus for all Army communication should be around the brand, culture and reputation.

MAJ Nichols provided stimulating and challenging insights into the challenges for Military Public Affairs (MPA) Officers in Army formations. She described the tension that exists between single-Service and joint MPA requirements and made some suggestions about how this tension could be addressed as we prepare the Corps for the future.

Outgoing Deputy HOC, LTCOL Mike Harris, discussed the challenges of trying to create a timely strategic narrative for ADF operations when the environment is unstable and guidance is unclear in the start-up stages of operations. He also spoke of the need to synchronise all information effects related to operations, both across Defence and across government and coalition partners. He also stressed the need for the MPA capability to develop performance methodologies that enable us to demonstrate to senior leaders and

government the value MPA brings to Defence and to national security.

Mr David Edlington gave a presentation about the evolution of the service newspapers and how his team is looking to use social media and emerging technologies to facilitate the reach of the newspapers across the Army and the other services while meeting the information requirements of all readers from our more senior members through to the most junior.

CAPT Gaze previewed a presentation she and COL Squire were making to Army HQ, where the structure of the Corps, particularly the photographer/videographer capability was being examined by Army with a view to rationalising the two ECNs into one, providing greater flexibility and career options for our NCOs. The Conference closed with some words of wisdom from the COL COMDT, who was

ebullient about the future of the Corps. He noted the hard work of the people in the room and those deployed in support of Army operations and exercises around the world. He also noted the Acknowledgement of WO2 Barry Buckley's beautiful handwork on the AAPRS emblem that was presented to the JPAU (which you can see in the below group mug shot).

The conference was followed by an informal and very amusing dinner at that famous Canberra establishment, The Kingo.

Thanks to the organisers of the Corps Conference for a very informative program. Lessons identified in the post-activity review will be applied to the planning and execution of the next conference, which is due to be held in 2017.



Still smiling after a full day of presentations and discussion – most of the conference attendees, as photographed by 1JPAU Business Manager, Mr Phil Collins (thanks Phil).

New Chief of Army

After four years as the Army's Chief, Lieutenant General David Morrison AO has passed command to Lieutenant General Angus Campbell, DSC, AM.

Lieutenant General Campbell has served as the Commander of the Joint Agency Task Force for Operation Sovereign Borders, overseen operations in the Middle East as Commander Joint Task Force 633 and commanded on operations in Timor-Leste.

Lieutenant General Campbell took command officially of the Australian Army at 12:01am, Saturday, 16 May 2015.



Chief of Army handover parade, 15 May 15

Defence and Social Media

The Department of Defence and Army have increased their social media presence, with new Twitter handles (including @DeptDefence and @AustralianArmy) and Facebook pages.

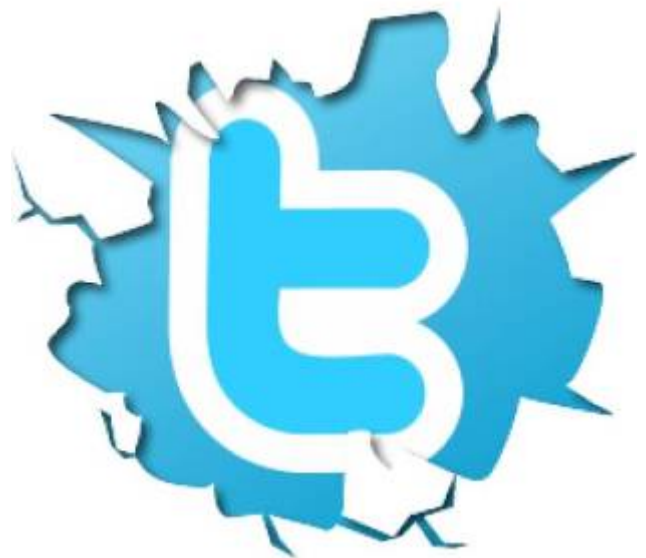
MAJ Simone Heyer manages the Army's Twitter and Facebook sites, while following an internal restructure within Corporate Communication Branch (MECC Division), MAJ Dan O'Mara assumed the role of Defence Social Media Manager.

Dan's team's responsibilities include (but are not limited to): operation of the Defence Twitter feed; maintenance of content calendars and scheduling for departmental social media; management and maintenance of a Defence Social Media Site Register; completing outstanding recommendations from the Hudson Review of Social Media and Defence; contributing to development of strategy and policy around Defence social media; developing campaigns and training plans for social media; coordinating Defence Social Media Working Group meetings.

Dan would like to hear from any AAPRS members with social media experience, advice or suggestions in this area.

You can reach Dan via Twitter (@DeptDefence) or via email (dan.omara@defence.gov.au).

You can also follow the Army on Facebook: www.facebook.com/TheAustralianArmy



AAPRS imagery



1st Joint Public Affairs Unit Update

MAJ Chris Linden, WO2 Neil Ruskin

For the first time in many years, the unit was not called out to deploy photographers or a Military Camera Team at short notice over the Christmas period. This gave the majority of the unit a genuine break during a planned unit stand down, which worked well, following a trial the previous year. The team needed a decent break to reconnect with family and friends following a very busy 2014.

We maintained an online team throughout the stand down and were well supported by RAAF 28 Squadron who provided a reserve team for the first time, allowing the maximum number of personnel to take a break without worry of a recall.

Unit personnel were deployed overseas during stand down, maintaining our long-term contribution to Op HIGHROAD (FLT LT Moroney, CPL Fabre and SGT Vance) and a further rotation in support of the new Op OKRA/HIGHROAD (SGT Hack and CPL Carter) – following the initial deployment of staff in late 2014.

After the Christmas/New Year break we welcomed new march-ins – CAPT Platz, WO2 Ruskin, PO Berry and CPL Duncan – and commenced a month-long unit training block which, quite literally, was the calm before the storm, in a cycle of operations we see year after year!

In late February deployed an MCT with attachments in the wake of Tropical Cyclone Marcia to Central QLD (CAPTs Platz, Rickey, SGT Davis, CPL Doran, CPL Cotton and LSIS Brown) to support 3 Brigade's Emergency Response Force. This deployment marked the first time 1JPAU personnel were delegated local clearance and release for social media by HQJOC which worked very well – allowing locally shot and edited vision released as social media clips for example.



Almost immediately in March we deployed an MCT to Operation Pacific Assist in Vanuatu (CAPT Richardson then CAPT Platz and SGT Paterson) in the wake of Tropical Cyclone Pam to provide immediate support to the ADF response team, then the JTF based on HMAS *Tobruk*.

In these Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Relief tasks the unit again showed its ability to deploy to a 'green-fields' environment and provide high quality information, imagery as well as concurrently supporting media engagement. The unit is refining its lessons learned from these, and earlier, HADR tasks by beefing up our expeditionary capabilities – allowing us to operate unsupported for up to 72 hours if needed (thereby aligning us with the force elements we support) with our own sustainment and communication bearers.

CAPT Richardson's good work in Vanuatu was followed up with assignment to Task Group Taji mission specific training and subsequent deployment to Iraq with the Task Group. He will return at the end of the year.

The unit again provided support, with augmentation of PAOs, to ceremonial taskings for Centenary of Anzac in April, while also deploying a MCT (FLT LT Phillips, PO Berry and CPL Cotton) to the Middle East for a near four month tour.

The unit has operated with a number of tri-service officer vacancies which has put pressure on the staff and team leaders, seeing 'the few'

bear a heavy burden with multiple back to back tasks. To offset the tasks we've been well supported by attachments, in particular CAPT Chris Rickey.

June and July saw the unit commence its planning and build up for the biennial exercise Talisman Sabre, from where the SM and I write this report. So far the unit has had its usual mix of ups and downs (we wonder if lessons learned are every learned!) but overall has seen the unit members do excellent work and impress the US PA team and CJOPS. This period also saw CPL Bickerton and CPL Carter deploy to the Middle East to commence their rotations with TG Taji and JTF633, respectively. We also welcome ABIS Badior, filling out our RAN phot manning for the first time in 12 months.

The remainder of 2015 will be busy for the team. We will plan for and deploy the Joint Information Bureau (Light) into a contingency exercise— giving us the opportunity to further

refine our JIB SOPs. We will also march-in three new officers – CAPTs Rosendahl and McDermott and FLTLT Webster – much to the relief of the other officers.

Thanks to all who have supported the unit so far in 2015 and all the best for the remainder of the year.



Performance appraisal reports (PARs)

PARs are essential for members to Members must ensure they have three consecutive PARs, particularly if under consideration for promotion.

DI(A) PERS 116–16, Performance appraisal reporting, requires performance appraisals for specialist officers and other ranks Army members to include technical reporting piece – if unclear seek guidance from your chain of command, or for ARES Officers, from your local Corps Consultant. For further information, see the DI and/or visit the relevant career management intranet site.

The PAR dates for 2015 for officers are:

RANK	REPORT DATE	To DOCM/DRCOM
LT	1 Sep	1 Oct
CAPT	15 Sep	15 Oct
MAJ	30 Sep	30 Oct
LTCOL	1 Oct	1 Nov
COL	1 OCT	1 Nov

The PAR dates for 2015 for NCO and other ranks are:

RANK	REPORT DATE	To SCMA/SCRMA
W02	1 AUG	14 AUG
SSGT	1 AUG	1 SEP
SGT	1 AUG	1 SEP
CPL	1 SEP	14 SEP
LCPL	1 OCT	Not Required

Vote for an AAPRS regimental tie design



Current and ex-serving personnel are asked to vote on a regimental tie design. The colours agreed by Head of Corps and COL Commandant are the Corps green and gold, with Army red.

The tie could be worn on appropriate occasions such as Anzac Day, Remembrance Day and Corps birthday. Please email Corps SM (neil.ruskin@defence.gov.au) NLT **31 Aug** with your preferred version (A – thick stripe, B – thin stripe).

The casting vote will sit with Head of Corps if required. The favoured design will be advised to the AAPRS Association and 1JPAU Facebook pages and a call for orders and payment placed to ensure the ties can be manufactured and despatched in time for Remembrance Day 2015 and Anzac Day 2016.

May the Force Be with You! CAPT Avital Terkowski

Did you ever want to access your Corps information on your tablet while sitting on the couch at home? Do you want to get templates on-the-go on your smart phone? What about catching up with your ADF mates that you haven't seen for years?



We have established an 'Australian Army Public Relations Service' group on ForceNet, a secure e-portal that provides access to Defence services and information online outside of the DRN.

With ForceNet approved by Defence for use up to For-Official-

Use-Only (FOUO), we will be providing information and resources to help you in your everyday work and admin needs.

On top of helping you stay up-to-date with the latest activity happening in your Unit and Corps, ForceNet also allows Reservists to search for work or indicate availability to work. You can also search for a Reservist with suitable skills to help fill a capability gap.

Join ForceNet with three easy steps:

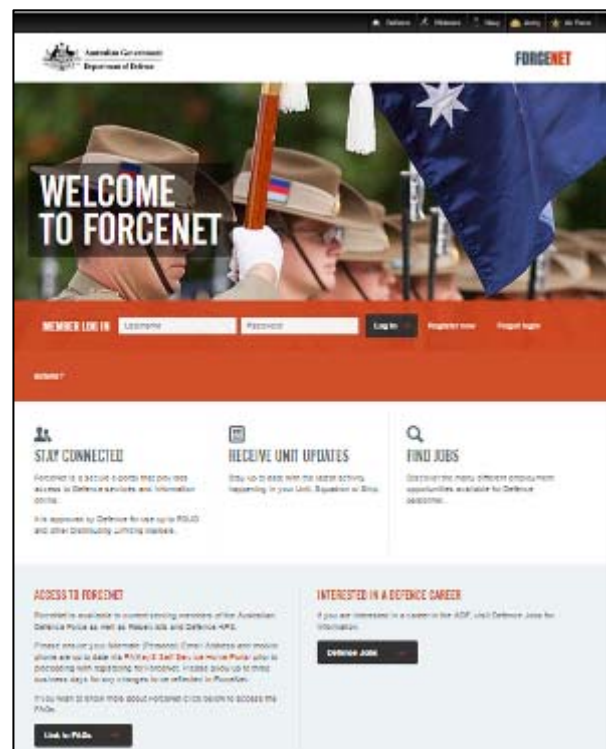
Step 1: Ensure your Alternate (Personal) Email Address and mobile phone number are up to date in PMKeyS Self Service Home Portal prior to proceeding with registering for ForceNet. This email address and mobile phone number are required to facilitate the registration process and to communicate with you once registered.

Step 2: Go to <https://www.forcenet.gov.au>

Once you identify yourself, you will be sent a username and instructions on how to set your password. You will then be able to log in and start using ForceNet straight away.

Step 3: Search for the 'Australian Army Public Relations Service' group. Request to join. It's that simple!

Since the start of the year, ForceNet's community has been growing at 5 per cent each fortnight, from around 6000 to more than 10,000 users as of 1 July 2015. This now constitutes approximately 10 per cent of the Australian Defence Force, allowing command-driven messaging and workforce opportunities to reach a broader audience of Defence personnel.



Anzac Day Centenary



Member Milestones

- Haydn Barlow was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel in January this year.
- James Wackett will be promoted to Lieutenant Colonel on 1 January 2016.
- MAJ Chris Linden was selected to attend Australian Command & Staff College in 2016.
- Felicity Hamblin and Jay Ellul were promoted to Major in Jan 2015.
- CAPT Anna Rosendahl was appointed to the ARA and marched into 1JPAU in July.
- Lucy Saaroni was commissioned into the ARES as a Captain in May 2015 and is posted to 4 BDE.
- Nathan Booth is expected to be commissioned into the ARES as a Captain in July 2015 and will be posted to 5 BDE.

If you have recently celebrated a milestone, please email lorraine.mulholland1@defence.gov.au to have it included in the next newsletter.

Senior Reserve Advisory Group and Corps Consultants

In 2014, Head of Corps, COL Jeff Squire, created the Senior Reserve Advisory Group (SRAG).

The Group comprises HOC, DHOC, the COL COMDT, the O5 Corps Consultants (as listed in Figure 1) and SM Corps. Secretariat is provided by the SO (Res) to HOC.

The purpose of the SRAG is to:

- provision of AAPRS technical and career support to the Career Advisory Group; and
- provision of senior specialist officer assessment for the revised AE359 Army

Officer Performance Appraisal Report (PAR) for all AAPRS Reserve officers.

In supporting selection of personnel for commissioning into the AAPRS, Corps Consultants to base their advice to the AAPRS career advisers on the officer employment criteria as outlined in the Employment Specification to ensure that only appropriately skilled, experienced and qualified people are recruited into the Corps.

Regions	Rank/Name
Vic/Tas	LTCOL Phil Pyke
SA/WA	LTCOL Sandra Turner
QLD/NT	LTCOL Brendan Maxwell
ACT/NSW	LTCOL Christopher Holcroft

Figure 1. Current AAPRS Corps Consultants.



The AAPRS Association

All AAPRS members, past and present are invited to join the Australian Army Public Relations Service Association. Visit the website for more information: <http://penoversword.army/>

New RSM-A

Chief of Army has announced that Warrant Officer Class 1 Don Spinks, OAM has been selected as the 10th Regimental Sergeant Major of the Army, with effect 11 Jul 15.

WO1 Spinks was selected from a group of Army's most experienced and distinguished soldiers. He brings vast experience and knowledge to Army's senior soldier appointment, having held appointments that include RSM 2 Cav Regt, RSM 1st Brigade and Command Sergeant Major Forces Command. In his announcement signal, CA congratulated WO1 Spinks on this significant achievement.

Strategic communication conference provides insights into future challenges

LTCOL Michael Harris

Defence is applying the policy that overseas travel is a privilege and not a right. As such, I was honoured to win approval to travel to Washington DC in May this year to deliver a paper on the lessons learned from the search for Malaysia Airlines flight MH370. The *quid pro quo* of attending the 6th Annual National Strategic Communication Summit involved a day-visit to the Defense Information School (DINFOS) at Fort Meade to present to their student body and to discuss with the Commandant the possibility of establishing formal academic linkages between the two Defence organisations.

The conduct of the 6th Annual National Strategic Communication Summit in Washington DC drew a record 108 participants from 11 nations including US, Russia, UAE, United Kingdom, China, and Taiwan representing corporations, government and the military with a focus on forward planning to meeting strategic communication objectives. The two day summit involved a series of presentations, a panel discussion, roundtable discussions and an after-dinner short talk. As an attendee, I presented a brief on the lessons learned from managing the communications involved with the search for MH370, delivered an after-dinner summary of the day's proceedings to a select group of 'Thought Leaders' at the Director-level in government and industry. Finally, I chaired a crisis communication roundtable discussion with considerable insight provided on the Ferguson Riots by a consultant and comments from the Chinese government, US Marines and Canadian 4th Division representatives.

The Director of Public Affairs, United States Air Force, Brigadier General Kathleen Cook, briefed on the Air Force's Strategic Communication campaign: 'The Right Team, the Right Training and the Right Target' which holds the objective

of converting air power critics into air power champions. Using the recent humanitarian assistance mission in Nepal, Brig.Gen Cook detailed that USAF used social media to reach more than 1 million people and 36,000 likes from one imagery post. In discussing the need for appropriate training, Brig.Gen Cook said: "We can't rely on a small group of people to carry the water when it comes to communication. We must empower all levels with the ability to engage". In focusing attention on the strategy behind the communication, Brig.Gen Cook said "If you aren't shooting at the right target, even the best process will ultimately fail."

NASA Communications briefed that the agency had changed its operational model and brought the agency's communications into alignment with its strategic goals and organizational outputs. NASA identified six communication priorities and has planned these within a campaign underpinned by an integrated social media strategy with a 15-year aim of launching a manned-mission to Mars.

I met with the Commanding Officer of the Joint Public Affairs Support Element (JPASE) – a unit that bears remarkable semblance to 1JPAU as a high readiness, short notice to move capability involving four, four-man capability bricks that are deployable in support of Department of Defense directed activities, anywhere in the world. JPASE is deployed to undertake imagery and information gathering tasks in support of direct media engagement, as well as in support of crises and complex issues management tasks requiring Military Public Affairs support. The Commanding Officer JPASE advised that he and a team of up to eight would be available to visit Australia to participate in an information sharing activity. There is a long list of US military personnel who want to visit Australia it seems!

Back to the presentations. According to a briefing from LinkedIn, social media strategies need to be conscious of the types of audiences that engage with each platform. LinkedIn's Content Marketing manager, Jaime Pham described the ability to reach strategic influencers and stakeholders using the ability of the social media platform that holds a higher level of credibility and penetration than other outlets. With 3.2m opinion leaders on LinkedIn, Pham contended that LinkedIn puts a face on to the message that is then used to generate meaningful conversations. By empowering employees to engage proactively in social media, their combined connections are, on average, ten times larger than other platforms. According to Pham, "Content is a strategic asset across the enterprise. It needs to be strategic to ensure it is able to cut through the noise".

The visit to DINFOS was my second and was a real highlight. Imagine a training institution with a 50-year heritage formed from the merger of the United States Department of Defense's single Service training schools into one campus at Fort Meade.

DINFOS conducts 29 courses a year using 400 academic and instructional staff, graduating between 2100-3000 students across the full spectrum of training from initial entry for technical enlistments through to senior military public affairs officer training for command advisors. Following a force structure review, DINFOS is now part of the Defense Media Activity (DMA) group under the Secretary of Defense, headed by a civilian three-star. DINFOS has more recently expanded their remit to the US Coastguard, Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs. DINFOS also conducts training for international students with a focus on NATO countries and near neighbours as part of its international engagement strategy.

This visit and subsequent meeting with DINFOS has highlighted the value of maintaining contact with industry leaders and MPA peers within a rapidly changing world and the ongoing ability to undertake strategic engagement opportunities may prove beneficial for Joint Operations Command and VCDF Group in maintaining best practice processes.



FORT MEADE

LTCOL Michael Harris briefs a class of Military Public Affairs trainees at DINFOS during a recent visit.

He provided an overview of Defence's role in the whole-of-government response to the disappearance of Malaysia Airlines flight MH370.

AAPRS ARES Officer Vacancies

AAPRS has several ARES officer vacancies in locations around Australia.

As an ARES Officer, candidates will be required to undertake the broad spectrum of public affairs functions including:

- Leading Army public affairs teams in support of Army activities (including exercises and operations);
- Providing public affairs and issues management advice to Army commanders;
- Developing and implementing strategic, operational and tactical communication strategies;
- Undertaking effective media liaison, escort and support duties;
- Preparing media releases;
- Conducting media awareness training for Army personnel; and
- Overseeing the gathering, management and quality of Army public relations product (including stills and video imagery, and articles for Army publications).

If you know someone you think would be a suitable candidate, point them in the direction of the relevant Corps Consultant (see p.15 for details) and the Army Recruitment website:

<http://www.defencejobs.gov.au/army/jobs/PublicRelationsOfficer/>





The July 2015 edition of *Pen over Sword* was produced by MAJ Lily Mulholland, SO (Res) to HOC AAPS with contributions by AAPS members.

The next edition is planned to be published in December 2015. While a call for news items will be issued in October, contributions are welcomed throughout the year.

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