



Royal United Service Institute Queensland Incorporated

Promoting Australia's National Security & Defence

A Constituent Body of the Royal United Services Institute of Australia

ABN: 91 025 331 202

Tel: (07) 3233 4420
(07) 3233 4616
Fax: (07) 32334545
Email: rusiq@optusnet.com.au
Web: www.rusi.org.au

Victoria Barracks
Brisbane QLD 4000
Correspondence to:
Victoria Barracks Brisbane
ENOGGERA QLD 4051

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Dear Members,

EXECUTIVE DISPATCH 1/19

The Executive Committee's (EC) commenced its formal meetings on 8 January. The work of the EC has continued over the Christmas/New Year break, the results of which were addressed at this EC meeting. The key themes of the meeting include the 2019 Seminar, Special Interest Group (SIG) management, membership development, and Constitutional review. All are designed to position the Institute for stronger performance this year. The main issues to report are as follows:

- The planning for the 2019 Seminar has firmed with agreement on the date of Friday, 5 July and approval to expend funds to bring two key speakers from Indonesia. We are still negotiating with the University of Queensland to partner with us for the seminar. The EC has accepted the Tattersalls Club's accommodation and dinner package for guest speakers as the best value for money and will finalise a contract with the Club in due course. We will conduct an 'ice-breaker dinner' on the evening of 4 July for guest speakers, but have the ability to invite paying guests to mix with this group. The Chancellor of the University of Queensland has agreed-in-principle to attend the dinner and speak to the group.
- The EC reaffirmed the importance of Special Interest Groups (SIG). However, rules governing SIG operations are important to ensure proper and effective conduct. The EC has agreed a set of guidelines to manage SIGs. These guidelines take immediate effect and are designed to protect both the SIGs and RUSIQ members' interests.
- The EC reiterated the absolute requirement for any financial dealings to be approved by the EC. The EC takes seriously its responsibility to manage membership monies properly. Past transgressions have been addressed and a renewed focus on the correct procedures will ensure proper expenditure and accountability.
- Access to RUSI Hall was discussed. RUSI Hall is a shared facility and access is ultimately the responsibility of the Victoria Barracks Brisbane Base Support Manager (BSM). The BSM can authorise anyone access for any reason deemed appropriate. However, RUSI Members accessing RUSI Hall for purposes not authorised by the EC do so at their own risk. This is an important distinction when considering public liabilities. Of course, use of any RUSIQ equipment, goods or chattels can only occur with EC permission. Any member wishing to access RUSI Hall for RUSIQ business should seek prior approval from the EC.

- The EC considered RUSIQ membership at some length. There is recognition that we must expand our base (target is to double current membership in 2019) and offer an increased palette of activities and events to attract broader participation that will underpin our growth and sustainability. It is no longer viable to rely on the monthly lecture program as our main effort. A number of possible initiatives were discussed, all of which were considered viable. However, the EC is in urgent need of an additional Committee member to coordinate the Membership Drive and management. The EC will be seeking expressions of interest from suitably motivated members to assist in this regard. Don't be shy. Step up and contribute to this fundamental aspect of our Institute.
- On membership, the EC considered current membership fees. There is no doubt that these must increase. However, the EC is now seeking the membership's views on what rates should be charged. There is an argument to align our fees with the national standard so that mobility between the Constituent Bodies is seamless. The other argument to increase fees relates to our fundamental ability to expand our program and become more attractive. Elements of the current membership have already expressed a desire for interstate speakers, which we can only do sustainably if we increase our revenue. The counter argument concerns the financial burden on members. However, this concern needs to be tested, and our program managed accordingly. Indicatively, the EC considered the following rates:
 - New members joining from 1 July 2019 \$60 per annum
 - Current members renewing from 1 July 2019 \$50 per annum
 - All members from 1 July 2020 \$60 per annum
 - Fees to then be adjusted in line with the CPI annually thereafter.

The EC invites comments on the fees as a matter high importance to all members.

- Following earlier advice to members about the need to review our Constitution, the EC has agreed to consider various models for relevance to RUSIQ's needs. These deliberations will be put to the membership for consultation, following which there will be a formal presentation to members to adopt any preferred changes.
- Major General (Retd) Maurie McNarn is confirmed as the first speaker for the year (20 February). He is a former Director of the Defence Intelligence Organisation and he will address the role of intelligence in a rapidly changing regional security environment. It is certain to be an insightful, contemporary and interesting presentation and discussion.
- Further on the topic of the Lecture Program, it was agreed to allocate up to \$3000.00 this calendar year to fund a number of presenters from interstate. The advantages of this are self-evident, but there are risks. The way to make this successful is to ensure maximum attendance at the lectures. We will monitor closely the overall cost-benefit and consider each proposal on its merits.

Thank you for your ongoing contributions to RUSIQ in the interests of defence and national security.

Peter Mapp
President