



## RUSI WA NEWSLETTER

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**RUSI WA Upcoming Lecture – Professor Stephen Smith, Former Defence Minister and Director of the Perth USAsia Centre**

This Thursday 24 September at 7.30 pm Professor Stephen Smith, Former Australian Defence Minister and Director of the Perth USAsia Centre, located at the University of Western Australia, will be delivering a lecture in our Building 13, Leeuwin Barracks, East Fremantle headquarters entitled *‘Perth: a strategic view of our region’*. We would like to encourage all RUSI WA members to join this prestigious event and engage in the discussions that will follow.

**New RUSI WA Lapel Pins**



An initial batch of 25 lapel pins have been manufactured by Sheridans < [www.sheridans.com.au](http://www.sheridans.com.au) >. Sheridans is a well- known local company and they have been making badges in Perth since 1913. Historically, the Royal United Services Institute of Western Australia has presented a RUSI tie to guest speakers. Stock of their ties have been exhausted and, with an increasing number of female speakers, it was time to come up with a more appropriate presentation. To that end, the RUSI WA Council decided that it would initiate the manufacture of a RUSI WA Lapel Pin, based on our logo.

For those RUSI WA members who would like to order a lapel pin, they can be ordered through our Secretary / Treasurer via email at < [rusiwa.au@gmail.com](mailto:rusiwa.au@gmail.com) >, or purchased on our lecture nights. They are on sale at \$25 each.



**RUSI WA June Lecture**

**‘Antipodean Perspectives: How the world looks different from Washington DC and Perth’**

**Delivered by Professor Gordon Flake, CEO of the PerthUSAsia Centre, located at the University of Western Australia**

On Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> June RUSI WA promoted a thought provoking lecture delivered by Professor Gordon Flake entitled ***‘ANTIPODEAN PERSPECTIVES: How the world looks different from Washington DC and Perth’***. Professor Gordon Flake is currently the CEO of the Perth USAsia Centre, has worked several years in Washington DC within the policy and strategic analysis sector, dealing mostly with political think tanks in America, his home country.

Professor Flake Steve provided a comprehensive and fascinating account of his experience while living in South East Asia. During these foundational years Professor Flake became aware of the strategic importance of the region and became ever since an advocate for Asian studies, particularly during the time he worked with think tanks in Washington DC. According to Professor Flake, it is interesting to reflect that back in Washington DC the political *intelligentsia* seemed to overlook the strategic importance of Asia, not only regionally but also to American interests in the region. Since moving from America to Perth, Professor Flake stated that he sees the relationship between countries such as Indonesia, Singapore of crucial strategic importance for Australia and also for peace and stability across the region. Also, it is valid to pin point that the strategic importance of Perth is one of the reasons behind the recent creation of the Perth USAsia Centre. Finally, Professor Flake mentioned that since moving to Perth he has developed a more accurate perception of the political dynamics in Asia, and particularly of the growing importance of the Indo-Pacific region. Professor Flake also believes that Australia foreign policy in the region should focus on the use of smart power through diplomatic avenues and strong relationship building in the region, thus promoting peace and security with its neighbouring nations.



**RUSI WA August Lecture: ‘Future prospects for naval shipbuilding in WA’**

**Delivered by Senator Linda Reynolds, Liberal Senator for Western Australia**

On Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> August RUSI WA promoted a fascinating and engaging lecture delivered by Senator Linda Reynolds entitled *‘Future prospects for naval shipbuilding in WA’*. Senator Reynolds was sworn as the 91<sup>st</sup> Senator for Western Australia on 07 July 2014 and has a comprehensive and diverse professional background, having wide experience in politics, defence and also the commercial sectors.

Senator Reynold provided a thought provoking account on the current naval shipbuilding capabilities in Western Australia. Senator Reynolds stated that there is an assumption in Australian defence circles that South Australia may have the better equipped and efficient naval building facilities in the Australian Commonwealth. According to Senator Reynolds, however, this national assumption may not accurate. Senator Reynolds stated that the Western Australian naval shipbuilding facilities have been delivering projects on time and within the budgetary time frame. Furthermore, the oil and gas industry infrastructure can also be utilized for the naval building sector. Thus, the qualified workers attracted to the field of oil and gas could be recruited for naval shipbuilding projects and purposes. Furthermore, according to Senator Reynolds, the Western Australian mining and resources sector boom have created a very efficient industrial relations culture in the State. This could play a decisive role on how projects are managed, assisting defence industry projects to be delivered within the scheduled time frame and budget. Senator Reynolds also stated that Western Australia may have sufficient infrastructure to be involved in the Sea 1000 project and building the next generation of Australian submarines. However, it is of crucial importance that the Western Australian shipbuilding industry starts marketing more efficiently its capabilities. Senator Reynolds believes that the Western Australian shipping industry should play a more significant role in the Sea 1000 project, and also in the future maintenance of such vessels and in the naval shipping production line.



**RUSI WA September Lecture:  
‘Resource Security, Climate Change and the Future Character of War’  
Delivered by Dr. Albert Palazzo, Director of Research, Army Strategic  
Plans**

On Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September RUSI WA promoted an engaging and rather interesting lecture delivered by Dr. Albert Palazzo ‘*Resource Security, Climate Change and the Future Character of War*’.

Dr Palazzo is the Director of Research in Strategic Plans-Army a part of Army Headquarters, holds a PhD from the Ohio State University and has migrated to Australia in the 1990’s. He has published several articles on military warfare, particularly the role played by the Australian armed forces in hybrid and modern day conflicts.

Dr Palazzo presented an impressive lecture instigating further reflection on the future of human kind and the current challenges faced by society with the effects of climate change. This being so, Dr. Palazzo mentioned the need to introduce sustainable and resilient policies in Australia, so that society can accommodate the growing population with lesser impact to the environment. Dr Palazzo stated that it is fundamental to rethink the way society is organised and promote environmental resilience in the international arena. With steady population growth worldwide, food and water security will become pressing issues, particularly in South East Asia. According to Dr. Palazzo, the Middle East is already experiencing great political turmoil and instability. If the current global challenges faced by a growing population and the need for more significant environmental resilience, we could experience worldwide political instability in the near future. Finally, it is important to state that the population in neighbouring Asian nations continues to grow very rapidly, and food and water security will play a significant role in the way politics operates across the region.

Dear RUSI WA members,

It is with great delight that I inform that our latest issue was very well received by RUSI WA members. We have already received suggestions and comments that will certainly increase the level of discussion for future issues.

I would be grateful if all members could forward opinion pieces, academic articles or book reviews so that we can instigate greater debate around matters of defence and national security both in Western Australia and in the country. It would be fantastic if we could make our newsletter as democratic as possible.

Your opinion and contributions to the magazine are highly valued and will instigate further debate on defence issues and Australia’s strategic posture in the region.

I hope you all enjoy our latest issue!

With kind regards,

Flavia Bellieni Zimmermann

Editor

**Announcements:**

**First Australian female Defence Minister**



The new Australian Prime Minister Hon Michael Turnbull has taken an unprecedented move in Australian politics by appointing the first female Defence Minister in the country. The recently appointed Minister for Defence Senator, Marise Payne, will be facing several challenges in this role, such as handing down the upcoming Defence White Paper. Also, there are other fundamental issues for the future of the Australian Defence capabilities such as the Sea 1000 submarine project and which country should win the bid to design and build Australia’s next generation of submarines.

It is valid to note that with the appointment of Senator Marise Payne for the Defence portfolio, and by having Hon Julie Bishop once again holding the Foreign affairs portfolio, Australia will have for the first time two women sitting in the powerful National Security Committee. This may indicate a trend towards greater women’s representation in the area of Defence and Security in the country.

## **Indian Ocean Rim Association Dialogue in Perth**

On 6 September 2015, the Australian Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade Hon Julie Bishop has welcomed 80 officials from 20 Ocean Rim Association (IORA) for the second Indian Ocean Dialogue in Perth. This major event had as its main aim to increase relationship building in the Indo-Pacific. This forum of discussion has set out common strategic goals for regional economic and developmental targets, and particularly future security cooperation between these nations due to the current challenges posed by international terrorism.

It is important to note that the Indian Ocean is a region of growing strategic importance for Australia, with Australian merchandise between IORA nations accounting approximately 86 billion last year alone. Furthermore, the Indian Ocean is the maritime route to essential markets in the Middle East, Europe and the Americas. This maritime route also comprises of at least two thirds of the world's oil tankers, thus, of fundamental relevance for oil transportation. This being so, this region is strategically crucial for energy security issues not only in Asia and the Indo-Pacific, but also for countries across the globe.

Finally, Australia has assumed the IORA chair in November 2013 and has played a fundamental role to strengthen this association, particularly on issues such as economic growth and women empowerment across the region. It is very exciting news to have the city of Perth hosting an international event of such magnitude.

## **Australia's Counter Terrorism Strategy**

On 23 July former Australian Prime Minister Hon Tony Abbott promoted the first counter-terrorism Council of Australian Governments (COAG) meeting since the last decade. The outcome of this discussion table was an official Australian Counter-Terrorism Strategy, bringing about a comprehensive long-term national counter-terrorism blue print for the nation. Moreover, this strategy will also provide the necessary information to local communities on current terrorist threats existing in their region, and the measures being adopted by the Australian Commonwealth to effectively counter it.

For further information and to have full access the Australian Counter-Terrorism Strategy please following link below:

<http://www.nationalsecurity.gov.au/Media-and-publications/Publications/Documents/Australias-Counter-Terrorism-Strategy-2015.pdf>

**Editorial Comment****The Shangri-La Dialogue 2015 and American rebalance of power in the Asia-Pacific**

During this year's Shangri La Dialogue in Singapore America has demonstrated its desire to once again exert greater influence in the Asia-Pacific. With the end of the so called 'Pax Americana' and US decline as the world's leading economic and military power, a new world order has been unfolding, re-shifting the balance of power across the globe. It is valid to state that the current geopolitical landscape in South East Asia has been highly influenced by American hegemonic power after WWII and the Cold War period. This being so, the current transition between a unilateral to multilateral international arena has produced significant changes particularly across the Asia-Pacific.

Another important issue is the rise of China and its growing economic influence in the region. A stronger Chinese economy and influence has instigated its imperialistic ambitions in the region, particularly in the disputed areas of the South and East China Seas. China's growing military capabilities is already sparking fears of a future clash with Japanese military forces, who also wish to exert greater influence in the region. With tensions growing between these two major regional powers, it is fundamental that America reclaims its role as a major political and diplomatic player in the Asia, a region of growing strategic importance.

This being so, in the 2015 Shangri-La Dialogue the US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter delivered an impressive speech articulating the need of a more comprehensive American presence in the Asia-Pacific. One of the most relevant features of this speech were matters concerning maritime security. Secretary Carter declared that the US Defence Department

would be launching a new South Asia Maritime Security initiative worldwide. Another highlight of his speech was the pressing issue of the South and East China Seas dispute. It is valid to state that America's assertive posture on such issues and the growing military and naval Chinese capabilities have been initially addressed at the 2014 Shangri-La Dialogue.

It is claimed, nevertheless, that America strategic posture has shifted from the 2014 Shangri-La dialogue to this year's address. Former US Secretary of Defence Chuck Hagel affirmed in his 2014 Shangri-La speech that America has been 'clear and consistent' on not taking political sides on any 'competing territorial claims' in the region. On the other hand, in the 2015 Shangri-La address Secretary Carter has been highly critical of the current Chinese military posture in Asia, clearly stating that America will take action if China continues developing artificial islands in disputed maritime waters. It is valid to mention, moreover, that the East and South China Seas is a region that is rich in natural gas and oil, being of crucial importance for energy security in the Pacific and across the globe.

Finally, there are claims that the 2015 American address in Singapore has been far less compelling than Secretary's Hagel speech last year. At this year's dialogue, Secretary Carter was the first speaker of the weekend and there were high expectations that America would relentlessly criticise the Chinese for flexing its muscles in the Asia-Pacific. It is interesting to note, however, that for the surprise of most delegations, the US Secretary of Defence initially mentioned China on complimentary terms. Secretary Carter also made a public commitment to improve military ties with China during his term in office. This being so, the Chinese senior representative at the dialogue, Colonel Xiaozhuo, has declared that Secretary Carter's speech at the 2015 Shangri-La Dialogue was far more moderate and condescending than last year's American address. The South and East China Seas disputed areas continue to be a matter of concern to the American administration. However, it seems that stronger relationship building with China may promote the necessary diplomatic avenue to deescalate political tensions between the Chinese, the Japanese and other countries in the region.

In a nutshell, it is in the American strategic interest to regain bargaining power and influence in the Asia-Pacific. Since the 2014 Shangri-La Dialogue America has repostured itself in Asia, giving clear signals to the international community that it wishes to remain a major political and diplomatic player in the region. At the 2015 dialogue America has reinforced the principles laid out at last year's US address. American rhetoric on Chinese military ambitions and the South and East China Seas dispute may be a political move to consolidate its strategic

and defence alliance with Japan and the defence cooperation with other Asian nations. It seems that America's ultimate aim in Asia is to rebalance its power as a reaction to a growing Chinese influence, thus refraining political tensions particularly between China and Japan. However, Chinese economic might also demands a comprehensive American diplomatic effort to build a solid relationship with Chinese authorities. This being so, the new American strategic plan for the Asia- Pacific is to consolidate its presence and influence with all nations in the region, promoting regional peace and security in the years to come.

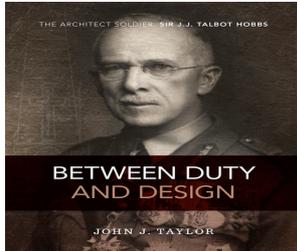
### **The Editor**

*Letters to the Editor are welcome and will be published in our next issue.*

## Book Review

**‘Between Duty and Design: The Architect Soldier Sir J.J. Talbot Hobbs’, by John J. Taylor.**

**Reviewed by Colonel Mike Brennan**



On 26 June 2015 the Royal United Services Institute of Western Australia and Notre Dame University conducted a military history conference titled *1915: Western Australians at War and on the Home Front*. One of the many excellent presentations delivered at that event was a lecture by Dr John J. Taylor. Dr Taylor’s lecture discussed the life of that great Australian general and architect

Lieutenant General Sir Joseph John Talbot Hobbs.

Western Australian architect and author John J. Taylor, who is previously known for his meticulous work *Between Devotion and Design: The Architecture of John Cyril Hawes 1876-1956*, has followed up with his comprehensive work on Talbot Hobbs.

Taylor’s latest work is the culmination of a decade of research on Talbot Hobbs, both in Australia and the United Kingdom. Over that time he developed an extremely detailed knowledge of a most significant Australian soldier, citizen and architect.

Students of Western Australian architecture will be impressed by the scale and range Talbot Hobbs’ private and commercial buildings constructed, during Perth’s rapid growth, from the late nineteenth century and to the early twentieth century. Sadly, many of Talbot Hobbs’ magnificent buildings have been demolished by developers over recent decades.

Talbot Hobbs had a strong sense of duty and he had a long and devoted, predominately part time, military career. He was fifty years old when he embarked for the Great War. He went on to serve in numerous key appointments at Gallipoli and on the Western Front. At the end of the Great War, when the (then) Lieutenant General Sir John Monash stepped down as the Commander of the 166,000 strong Australian Corps, he handed over his command to Lieutenant General Sir Joseph John Talbot Hobbs. Following the Great War Hobbs played a key role in the design of the Australian war memorials in France and Belgium.

As a young major, in the early nineteen hundreds, Hobbs was on the founding committee of the United Services Institution of Western Australia and at that time he commanded No 1 Battery, AFA. Sir J. J. Talbot Hobbs, KCB, KCMG, VD, was the President of the Institution from 1921-28 and again during 1932-33.

A copy of *Between Duty and Design: The Architect Soldier Sir J.J. Talbot Hobbs* is available for loan from the RUSI WA Library. It is also available for purchase through UWA Press.