

E NEWS

A U S T R A L I A N R O Y A L N A V Y W R I T E R S

FROM THE PRESIDENT

The trial delivery email of the eNews that was sent out on 29th February 2016 proved to be very interesting. It confirmed my belief that we have a lot of Great Writers in the Association, but some of their reading skills have faded over the years. Many anxious fingers went to work before the Grey Cells locked in and as a result a lot hit the Unsubscribe Button. Rest assured you don't get away that easy. You have all been restored to the list (LOL).

The test proved to be a good result for the association. We were able to dispatch the list in less than 10 minutes, where as the old process was spread out over 2-3 days.

Many thanks to all for your patience.

VALE

WTR Edward [Ted] Coyle

Passed away 24 December 2015 at Hervey Bay Qld.

Ex-CPOWTR Bruce William ANTHON R37520

Passed away 5 February 2016. Joined in July 1949 as RCT WTR. After the initial three months, went to Writers school where the instructors were commissioned Warrant Officer Alf Calder and CPOWTR Eddie Rodgers. Names from the course of about 10 that he remembers are Frank Young, Col Fraser, Binny Roberts, Ken Hall, and Peter Samuels.

First draft on completion of course late 1949 was to Cerberus. Other establishments served in were Albatross, Harman (where he was promoted LWTR), Lonsdale (where he and a very young Brian Tucker implemented the transfer of the old ledger system to the new pay cards in 1956), Cerberus again (for PO's Course, 3 years after he was rated Petty Officer!) and Harman (Navy Office) (where he was promoted to CPO). Served in Ships Quadrant (where he was promoted PO), Tobruk (Ships Office, where Jack Sherwood was Captain's Sec and Graham Smith Captain's Office). Discharged in July 1961.

WTR John Wade

Passed away in Maclean NSW. John served from 1980 to 1986. He was on his Writer Course from 18 August 1980 to 12 December 1980. His instructor was Dave Whelan and Class mates were: Anderson, Barker, Deery, Edwards, Glover, McNeil, Moule, Stickler and Williamson. Sea Service and Depots served in not known at this stage; anyone who can add to his service please send it to the Association.

Wran Writer Norma Jean RHODES (nee McCarthy)

Norma joined in March 1945, and served all her time in PENGUIN. She was discharged in April 1946.

Jack “Darcy” Short.

Jack passed away 23/3/2016. Once again we have no history of his service; we are endeavouring to get some.

Ex POWTR John Owen ANDREWS RANR S2658

Passed away 2015. Joined the Reserves in 1936 as a Writer. As he had sailed all his life, he realized that he had made a mistake joining as a Writer. After three years, requested a change to Seaman. Mobilised at outbreak of war and request denied. Tried everything, but never got any sea time during his seven years, however, spent some time in Darwin. Did get the opportunity to sail from Wollongong to Sydney one day in Townsville. The CO insisted he take his seat on the bridge for the full trip and everybody on board was wonderful to him. They gave him a framed picture of the ship, inscribed from the officers and crew and signed by the CO. Now he was happy!

Sometime after, nearly got disgraced by Pay Captain Ernie Trivett when asked about pay experience as a LSWTR. He told him that he'd been doing more important work than ledgers! Received Reserves Long Service Medal. Later, as a scout master at Eden, Sir William Slim paid the troop a visit and was very impressed by his ribbon. It made John's day. Finally got his sea time fishing at Eden then in the pilot service for about 40 years.

LOST SCRIBES

RHONDA GREEN [nee MCCULLOCH]

Pleased to report that Rhonda has made contact with us after being missing for so long. Any of her old friends who would like to make contact please do so through: scribes@ranwriters.com.

TRACEY HAMILTON [nee BURKITT]

Tracy has also made contact with us after an absence.

HMAS ADELAIDE COMMISSIONING

Seaman Maritime Logistics Personnel Operations Sahara McLellan provided the following photo and stated: "Cutting the commissioning cake beside the CO was a proud moment and one I'll look back on."



The Governor General of Australia, His Excellency General, the Hon. Sir Peter Cosgrove, AK, MC, (Retd), Minister for Defence, Senator Honourable Marise Payne, Seaman Maritime Logistics Personnel Operations Sahara McLellan, Chief of Navy, Vice Admiral Tim Barrett, AO, CSC, RAN and Commanding Officer HMAS Adelaide, Captain Paul Mandziy, CSC, RAN, cut the commissioning cake after the commissioning ceremony of HMAS Adelaide.

REUNION MELBOURNE 2017 - Dates and Proposed Outline

Wednesday 1 March is the 50th anniversary of the flying of the White Ensign on all Australian war ships and naval establishments so the 2017 Reunion will be held in the same week. We are looking to arrange for one price to cover the full weekend activities; financial members will pay \$100 and non-financial members \$110.

Thursday 2nd March/Friday 3rd March – Arrive at Williamstown

Friday 3 March:

Lunch anywhere along the Strand (Nelson Place) or maybe even Williamstown RSL (cnr Melbourne Road and Ferguson Street).

1145: Free Williamstown Heritage Walking Tour. Step back in time: Unlock the secrets of the historic Williamstown waterfront and sea port on a free guided walking tour. Explore hidden lanes, a burial ground, an abandoned morgue, historic buildings and monuments. Departs from the Hobsons Bay Visitor Information Centre, located in Commonwealth Reserve, Nelson Place, Williamstown. To book contact 03 9932 4310 or visit www.hobsonsbaytickets.com.au

1300: Guided tour of HMAS CASTLEMAINE (1942 Australian Corvette) - Maritime Museum Ship - Outer West Gem Pier. www.hmascastlemaine.org.au. Entrance fee applies. Meter parking along the Strand (very active parking inspectors in the area).

1600-1800: Meet and Greet at Ye Olde Pirates Tavern. A part of the Seaworks Complex, which is home of the Williamstown Maritime Association, rear of 82 Nelson Place near the main entrance of the old Williamstown Naval Dockyard. Ample FREE off road parking.

1800: The Tavern opens to the general public with lots of food vans parked on the wharf.

2000: Free band/music starts for the young at heart.

The venue is set in Williamstown's oldest maritime industrial precinct. The Pirates Tavern is unique among Melbourne's tourist attractions where you can sit and watch the ships pass by whilst enjoying a wine or a beer from the bar, listen to great music and relax whilst hidden from the annoying urban crowd. Food and drinks are at individual's expense. www.seaworks.com.au

Saturday 4 March:

Free day. Visit any of the following at own expense or just goof off:

- Queen Victoria Market,
- Southbank,
- Docklands,
- Immigration Museum Flinders Street,
- Melbourne Museum/Royal Exhibition Building/Imax,

- Sports Museum at MCG,
- Tram Car Restaurant for lunch

All of the above can be reached via train, bus or ferry from Williamstown or own car

- RAAF Museum, Point Cook. Car only. www.airforce.gov.au/raafmuseum
- Scienceworks, Williamstown. Car only
- Navy Museum, HMAS CERBERUS, Car only
- HMAS CASTLEMAINE. By foot. www.hmascastlemaine.org.au
- Maritime Discovery Centre, 82 Nelson Place. By foot. www.seaworks.com.au
- Organised Bus or Ferry Tour of Melbourne/Geelong if enough interest is shown. www.melbcruises.com.au or www.williamstownferries.com.au Ferry Tours leave the Gem Street Pier near HMAS CASTLEMAINE every couple of hours. Ferry schedules and other tourist information can be obtained from Williamstown Information Bureau on the corner of the Commonwealth Reserve near the Gem Street Pier.
- Aviation Museum (not RAAF). Car only www.b24australia.org.au
- Victoria State Rose Garden, Werribee Park. Car only. www.vicstaterosegarden.com.au
- Werribee Open Range Zoo. Car only
- Werribee Park Mansion. Car only
- Geelong/Great Ocean Road. Car only

Afternoon/Evening

1600-1800: Drinks onboard HMAS CASTLEMAINE. No cost

1800-1830: Travel by bus provided from Pier opposite HMAS CASTLEMAINE or make own way to Seaview Restaurant, Williamstown Events Centre, Morris Street, Williamstown. seaviewwilliamstown.com.au 03 9399 8369 approx 2.5km from Gem Street Pier. Plenty of free onsite parking. Extensive breathtaking views of Hobsons Bay and city skyline.

1830-2330: Enjoy the night. Individual drinks at bar prices

Bus return to the Strand, Williamstown

Sunday 5 March (75th Anniversary of sinking of HMAS YARRA 2):

1000-1100 approx: Attend memorial service at HMAS YARRA National Memorial set on the picturesque banks at the Williamstown entrance of the Yarra. Medals to be worn.

TS VOYAGER Cadets from Williamstown will be providing band, guard and full support for the Memorial Service. On completion of service we have been invited to use the facilities of TS VOYAGER situated on the Strand, Williamstown for our farewell lunch. Metered parking only and will be very busy because of local craft markets.

Lunch: TS VOYAGER inspection of Cadet facilities and BBQ Luncheon. Clubrooms next to Craft Market.

Afternoon: For the strong, Williamstown RSL will have a band on during the afternoon. Very limited parking.

Accommodation

Negotiations have been held with the following serviced apartments and discounted rates will be offered shortly. once advised it will be the individuals own responsibility to liaise direct with the accommodation, not through us. All have been inspected and are excellent places to stay. All have limited one Bedroom serviced apartments available and it is suggested that you get together with other mates and take up a 2/3 or 4 bedroom option and share the costs.

Amawind Apartments, Williamstown apartments@amawind.com or www.amawind.com

Punt Hill, Williamstown, 4-18 Ferguson Street, Williamstown info@punthill.com.au or www.punthill.com.au

Quest Williamstown (Gem Street Pier Complex and the most convenient), 1 Syme Street, Williamstown questwilliamstown@questapartments.com.au or www.questapartments.com.au

All of the above are within walking distance of the Strand, Williamstown.

Quest North Williamstown, 115 Kororoit Creek Road, North Williamstown. 62 apartments in total. Approx 3 kms from the Strand. questwilliamstown@questapartments.com.au or www.questapartments.com.au

No other accommodation places have been approached for a discount.

Plenty of other options available including caravan parks in the area.

For further tourist information please contact:

Hobsons Bay Visitor Information Centre, Commonwealth Reserve, Nelson Place, Williamstown, Victoria, 3016. 03 9932 4310 www.visithobsonsbay.com.au

Melbourne Reunion Committee can be contacted at: melbournewritersreunion@gmail.com

Registration

Please complete the registration form on the next page or on the 2017 Reunion page at www.ranwriters.com. A Rain/Wind jacket with the reunion's logo is available for purchase, along with a cap and stubby holder. Prices and a copy of the logo are provided in the registration form.

RAN WRITERS ASSOCIATION INC**2017 NATIONAL REUNION – WILLIAMSTOWN VICTORIA – 3-5 March 2017****REGISTRATION FORM**

Please complete the details below and forward to scribes@ranwriters.com. Cost for the weekend is \$100 for financial members and \$110 for non-members.

SURNAME			
GIVEN NAMES		AKA	
Dietary Requirements			
Financial Member	Yes/No	Member No	
Email			
Address		Phone:	
PARTNER Surname			
GIVEN NAMES		AKA	
Dietary Requirements			
Financial Member	Yes/No	Member No	
Reunion Jacket - Full Zip (\$50 each)	Size S, M, L, XL, XXL	Colour	Navy Gold Navy/White Royal/White Black/Dark Red Black/White
Jacket Half Zip (\$50 each)	Size S, M, L, XL, XXL	Colour	Navy/White Black/White
Stubby Holder (\$7 each)	Number:		
Cap (\$15 each)	Number:		
Name Badge (\$10 each)	NAME:		

PAYMENT OPTIONS

Cheque	Send cheque made out to RAN Writers Association Inc with registration form to: PO Box 5020, CHISHOLM ACT 2905		
Direct Deposit	Send registration to scribes@ranwriters.com and deposit funds to: BSB: 642-170 Account No: 398002 Bank Name: Australian Military Bank Account Name: RAN Writers Association Inc (Provide Surname and Initial as Reference)		
Credit Card	Send registration to scribes@ranwriters.com and pay directly through website at Reunion 2017 Page, or provide credit card details below: (only provide credit card details if payment has not been made online)		
Card Type	Mastercard	Visa	
Card Number		Expiry	
Card Name		CSV	

Logo to be inscribed on Jacket, Stubby Holder and Cap:



THIS ITEM MAY BE OF INTEREST TO THE OLDER SCRIBES**RESTORING JUSTICE AND FAIRNESS FOR ALL DFRB/DFRDB BENEFICIARIES**

An article by the “Boys from the Bush”: Herb Ellerbock (Rutherglen) and Jim Hislop (Wodonga) and Editorial support from Ross Eastgate

For some years we have been researching injustices we see in the Defence Force Retirement and Death Benefits (DFRDB) Act and their adverse impact on the entitlements of DFRB/DFRDB beneficiaries.

Due to the complex wording of the DFRDB Act, most DFRDB beneficiaries have little or no understanding of its operation or how they may be disadvantaged. This article will attempt to explain and demonstrate:

- the operation of the DFRDB Act,
- how the major entitlements are determined, and
- how DFRDB beneficiaries are being disadvantaged.

For example, let's look at beneficiary Sergeant X, discharged on 8 Jan 1980 aged 43.

Table 1 - Sgt X's particulars on discharge:

Age at discharge	43
Effective service	23 years
Separation salary	\$13,760
Retirement pay entitlement	39.5 per cent
Annual retirement pay before commutation	Separation salary @ 39.5 per cent = \$5435.20
Commutation factor	4 = effective service ÷ 5 (rounded down))
Commutation Amount = 4 x Uncommuted Rate	\$21,740.80
Individual life Expectancy Factor	29.14 (= life expectancy - age on discharge)
Reduction of Retirement Pay (= Commutation Amount ÷ Life Expectancy Factor)	\$746.08
Reduced Annual Retirement Pay (Commutated Rate)	\$4,689.12
Notional Retirement Pay= Same as commuting 4 years (Notional Rate)	\$4,689.12

- Note: 1. After indexation Sgt X's annual benefit in 2015 was \$19,512.35 (See Figure 1)
2. The notional rate as applied to a member who did not commute is quarantined from indexation

Our major concerns are:

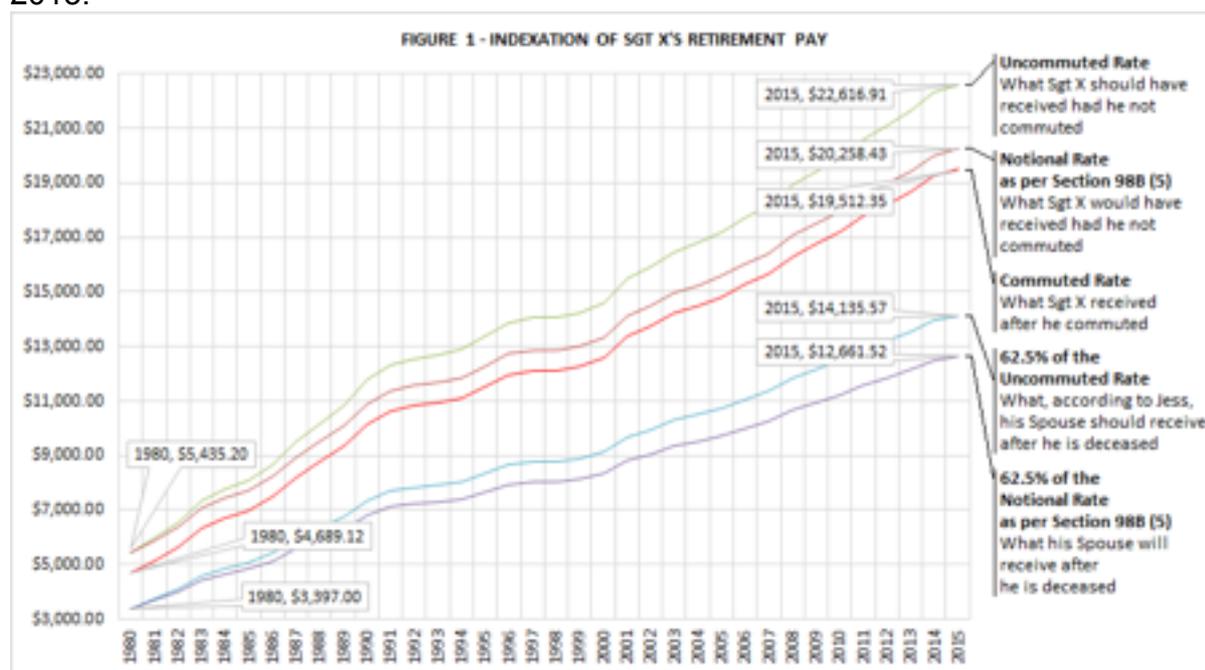
- the manner in which amounts commuted (i.e. advances of future entitlements, taken at the time of discharge) are recovered;
- the manner in which spouses' benefits are determined; and
- the effective reduction of DFRDB benefits due to the prolonged use of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for indexing DFRDB entitlements.

A Joint Parliamentary Committee (the Jess Committee) defined the entitlements to be provided by the DFRDB Scheme in 1972, but when enacting the legislation, neither the Canberra bureaucrats nor the Government honoured those provisions. Neither has any Government since.

In particular Jess:

1. recognised the unique nature of military service and that retiring servicemen/ women would require additional funds to re-establish themselves after 20 or more years of posting turbulence and therefore, defined the entitlement to commutation;
2. stipulated that Spouse and Dependent Offspring pensions should be based on the deceased member's retirement pay, as though he/she had not commuted;
3. made no reference whatsoever to a Notional Rate of Retirement or Invalidity Pay; and
4. stipulated that DFRDB entitlements should be adjusted to maintain pace with Average Weekly Earnings.

Figure 1 below shows how the key rates (*highlighted in Table 1 above*) have increased through indexation from the time of Sgt X's discharge until the end of 2015.



Of immediate concern is the Notional Rate, which is stipulated in Section 98B (5) of the DFRDB Act and which determines the Retirement Pay and Invalidity Pay of DFRDB members who did not commute at least 4 years.

The Notional Rate also determines the pensions of the Spouses and the Dependent Offspring of the members who are deceased.

Figure 2 below shows the accumulated difference between the Uncommuted Rate and the Commuted Rate. Basic logic states that this must be the Actual Commutation Payback Amount.

Figure 2 shows that by the end of 1996, Sgt X had already paid back more than the Amount Commuted. By the time Sgt X reached his Life Expectancy, he had paid back almost 2.5 times the Amount Commuted and by the end of 2015 he had paid back almost 3.25 times the Amount Commuted.

By comparison, a Centrelink client can request an advance of future entitlements, receive a reduced pension and once repayment is made in full, revert to full pension entitlement.

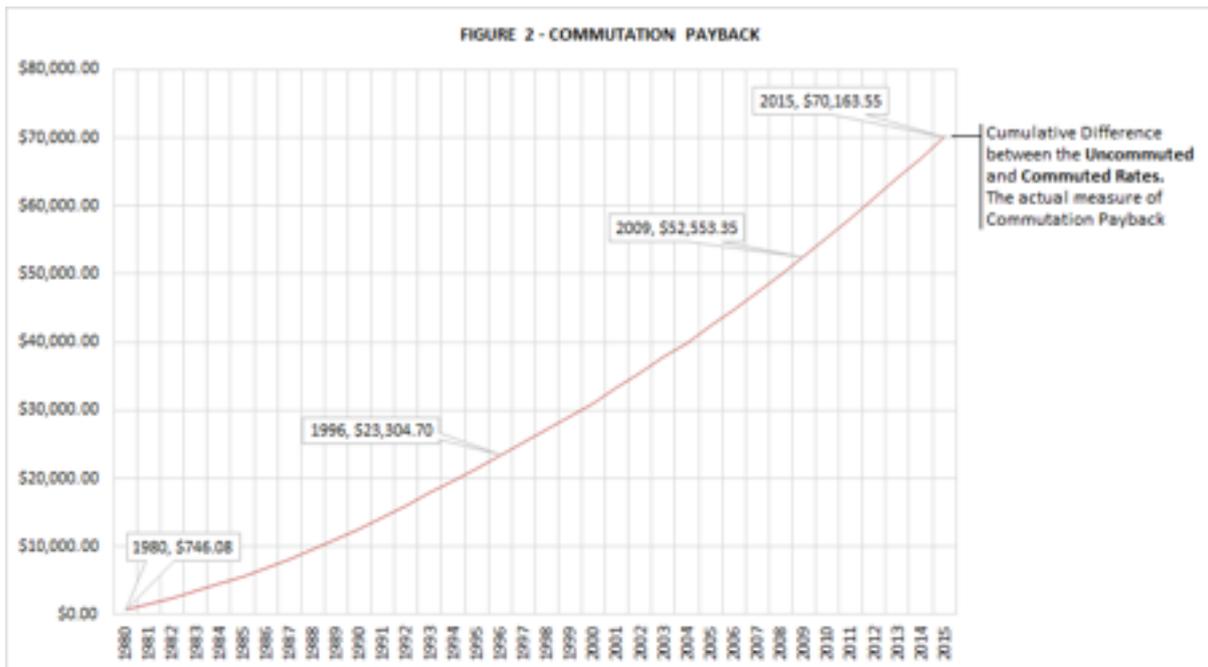
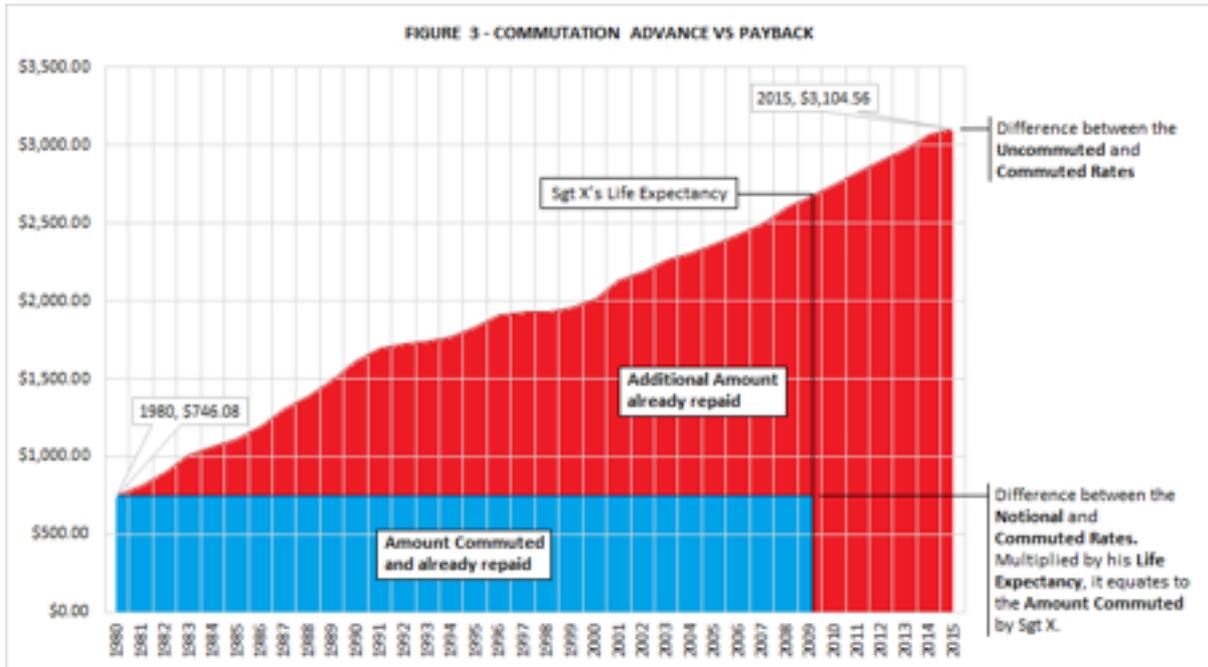


Figure 3 below shows the relationship between the amount Sgt X commuted and the amount he had in fact repaid at the end of 2015.



When the DFRDB Act was enacted the Life Expectancy for males was 72.14 years. Sgt X had 29.14 years before reaching that age and technically repay his commutation.

In 2016 his Life Expectancy has risen to 82 years. If Sgt X survives to that age, he will have repaid close to 5 times the amount commuted.

This was not the intent of the legislation and unjustly penalises beneficiaries who have repaid their commutation and enjoy longer lives.

Another major concern is the impact of the Notional Rate on Spouses' and Dependent Offspring pensions. Figure 4 below shows the adverse effect of the Notional Rate on the pension of Sgt X's spouse if, hypothetically, he had died when he reached his Life Expectancy.

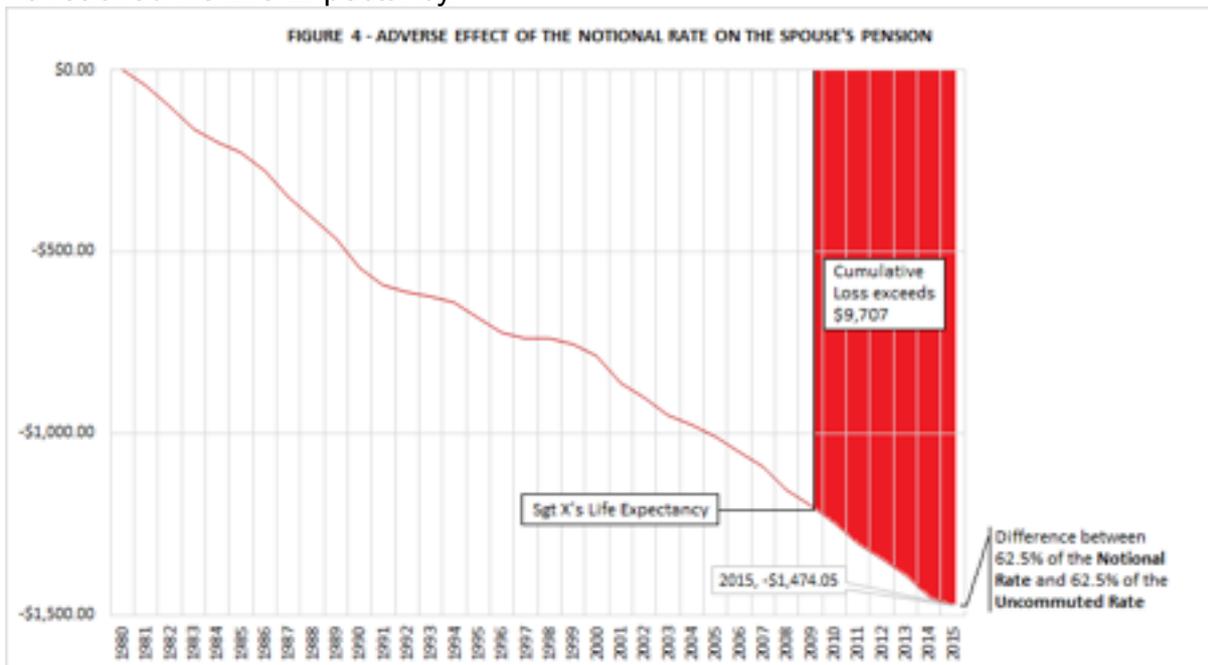


Figure 4 shows the difference between 62.6 per cent of the Notional Rate (his Spouse’s pension entitlement as stipulated in Section 98B (5) of the DFRDB Act and 62.5 per cent of the Uncommuted Rate (what his Spouse’s pension should be entitled to, according to Jess). By the end of 2015, Sgt X’s Spouse would have received over \$1,474 per annum (i.e. more than 10 per cent) less than she should have received. Her cumulative losses by then would have been more than \$9,707.

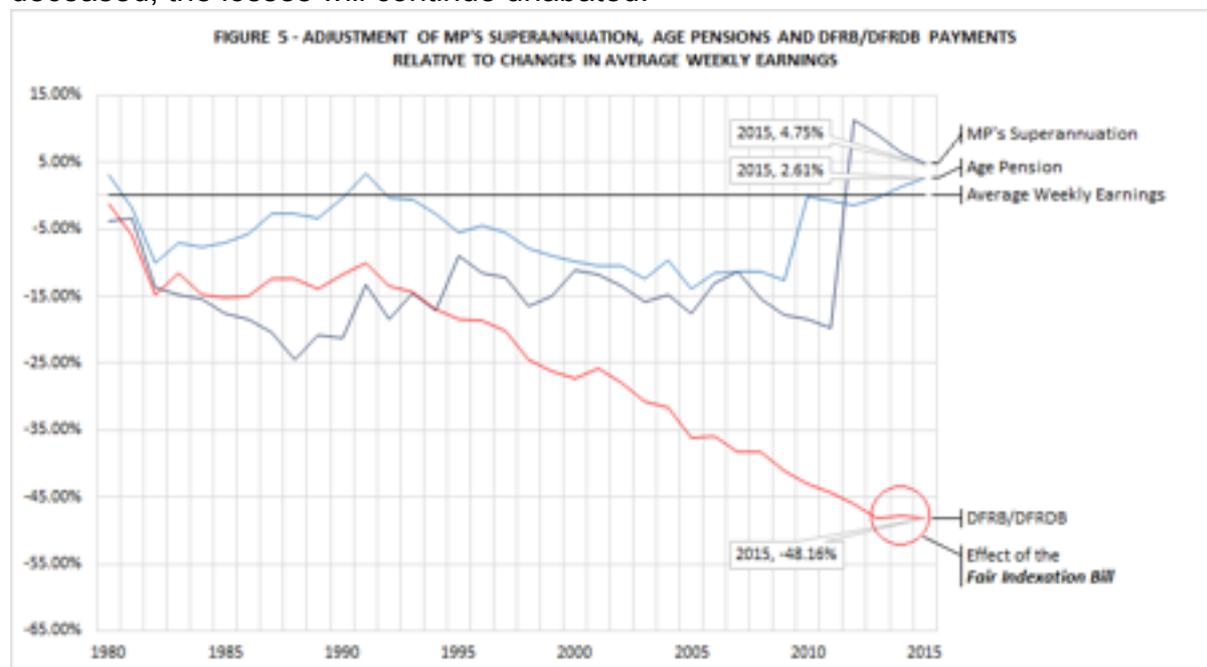
Our final concern is that over many years of using the CPI indexation determinant, the entitlements of DFRDB beneficiaries have, in effect, been drastically reduced.

This unfairly affects every DFRB/DFRDB beneficiary. Figure 5 below clearly shows this situation.

For many years, individuals, ESOs and ADSO in particular campaigned to have the method of indexation changed. But none sought to restore the very significant level of entitlements which have, in effect, been lost.

On 1 July 2014, the Government finally enacted the "Fair Indexation Bill", which purported to deliver on the Coalition’s election promise of; "... ensuring fairness to our retired military personnel and to ease their cost of living".

The "Fair Indexation Bill" however, did absolutely nothing to improve the plight of military superannuates and their families. It merely arrested the further loss of superannuation entitlements for those aged 55 and over. For those aged under 55, which includes widows and all dependent children of the members already deceased, the losses will continue unabated.



When age pensioners complained that their pensions were losing ground, the Government both increased the amount of their pensions and changed the way they were adjusted. We believe DFRDB beneficiaries should be treated equally.

What are we seeking?

We want to work with ADSO to obtain the proper, entitled benefit for all present and future DFRDB beneficiaries.

One objective of the ADSO 2015 Update is to have life expectancy tables updated.

We support this for the 2000 DFRDB members still serving, but it should not then adversely affect the 55,000 already receiving DFRDB superannuation based on the original life expectancy assessment.

The DFRDB Act Section 24 must also be amended so that on achieving assessed life expectancy on discharge, and having paid their commutation advance members' benefits revert to their full entitlement.

We believe Comsuper has no moral right to apply the equivalent penalty of the commutation deduction to any member who did not apply in writing to commute.

This section of the Act must be deleted.

Our final concern is that over many years using the CPI indexation determinant, the purchasing power of DFRDB recipients has been drastically eroded.

We are not seeking back pay for all, what we seek is to have the intended incremental value of our original entitlement restored.

What we want is to have our original entitlements brought back on a par with the Average Weekly Earnings index.

The Government will argue that it cannot afford to do this. We believe this not to be so. Funds have already been set aside in the Future Fund for the express purpose of meeting future Commonwealth Superannuation payments, including those of Defence Force retirees. Restoring DFRB/DFRDB benefits to their rightful amounts would use just a small fraction of this huge reserve.

The Government will no doubt claim the cost would be prohibitive but the Futures Fund has the capacity to resolve the problem but only if our political leaders were to show some commitment to those who served in the ADF.

Their service and sacrifice deserves fair treatment.

This issue affects so many of us, and we must work together to remove these iniquities. We have also placed a petition on www.Changeorg.com. Go to the site, enter DFRDB and show your support by signing our petition.

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AND THIS ITEM MAY BE OF INTEREST TO SERVING SCRIBES**What Changed When You Went On Christmas Leave?****Well for One Thing – your R&Q Charges were Increased!**

By Corporal Cosmo Reports

Hello and Happy New Year readers. I hope you're feeling well and had a great break over the Summer!

When I returned from leave, a diligent ex-serving member raised an important matter with me.

As ADF members know, the declared ADF reduced activity period for 2015 commenced on 19 December 2015 and finished on 17 January 2016.

On the first 'working' day of the reduced activity period, Monday 21 December 2015, DEFGRAM 599/2015 was released, advising ADF members of the *annual review of ADF accommodation assistance and associated contributions and charges*.

Did you all get to read that?

Well, it's not all bad news. Some of you will receive a small (0.35%) reduction in rent – depending upon your rent band.

However, the matter that was brought to my attention by the ex-serving member was that Living-in members have had their Fortnightly Meal Charge increased by 13.3%.

The DEFGRAM explained the \$21.10 increase to the Fortnightly Meal Charge, from \$158.90 to a flat \$180, this way:

The 2016 living-in meal charge adjustments reflects changes in the cost of providing the service.

Defence Determinations

It's not the DEFGRAM that is the authority to change member contributions for subsidised accommodation and meals – a Defence Determination signed by an authorised delegate or officer is the authoritative document to amend charges imposed on, or that ADF members are subject to.

Upon closer examination of the Defence Determination (2015/47) *Living-in accommodation – amendment*, the Explanatory Statement provides more detail surrounding the increase to the Fortnightly Meal Charge:

“...This change means that the member contribution is now set at half the average cost to Defence based on materials and labour.”

“Hang on a sec.” I thought. Everything else in this Determination (rental and utility contributions), has increased in line with changes to the CPI. Aren’t meals for Living-in members subject to changes in the CPI?

So I flashed up the Australian Bureau of Statistics website and checked the **Food and non-alcoholic beverage** sub-component of the CPI for September 2015, because that is what the Determination cites for the rent and utilities increases.

I was shocked to read that the food and non-alcoholic beverages sub-component of the CPI increased by just 0.2% in the 12 months from Sept. 2014 to Sept. 2015.

That’s 66-and-a-half times less than the 13.3% increase imposed on living-in members!

Had the CPI been used as the index to adjust the Fortnightly Meal Charge for living-in members, it would have increased by 32 cents to \$159.22, not by \$21.10 to \$180.

So when did Defence decide to move away from CPI?

My research led me to a document entitled **ADF Policy Update**, buried on a Defence People Group web page. (I challenge you to find it).

I thought that I was pretty good at keeping up with policy changes for ADF conditions of service, but this one escaped my surveillance!

On page two of the *ADF Policy Update*, which was dated 10 December 2014, it is advised that, “In 2015, meal contributions policy will be simplified.”

“**Simplified**”. I love that word. It’s so... reassuring. We all love things to be **simple**, don’t we?

In this case, **simplified** means shifting the goal posts for Living-in members who pay the Fortnightly Meal Charge.

Why did Defence rid itself of Service personnel in its Messes and replace them with contractors? That’s right. Because it’s cheaper. But it looks like whoever wrote the contract to provide meals overlooked the fact that meal costs to serving members are indexed against the CPI – whoops!

So because the contract was poorly written and the contractor is paid by Defence for the cost of their inputs – “materials and labour” – it’s the Living-in members who get stabbed to make up the difference. It wouldn’t have been too much of a stretch to include in the contract that “materials and labour” can only go up in line with the food component of CPI. The contract could have even been sweetened by stipulating that when the CPI for the food component was negative, which it was in 2013 and 2014, the contract price wouldn’t fall but would remain steady.

Usually, when there is a significant policy change in Defence, such as changing the method of indexation of a charge or payment in Defence, it is widely promulgated. DEFGRAMs are the standard tool for advising the workforce of such changes. Not in this case though. There is no record of a DEFGRAM advising ADF members of the

changes outlined in **ADF Policy Update** of 10 December 2014. And it was left buried on a webpage, barely visited by anyone.

The way changes to the Fortnightly Meal Charge for Living-in members were introduced was sneaky and evasive. Certainly, the perception amongst those members affected is that it's as though Defence People Group didn't want members to be aware of the **simplified** changes.

If you're sitting there reading this thinking, "There's nothing I can do about it", well I'm here to tell you, you're wrong. Dead wrong.

In the Defence Determination document itself, at the very end of the *Explanatory Statement* it states:

Criteria are provided for the exercise of discretions under the Principal Determination, as amended by this Determination. Adverse decisions may be investigated by the Defence Force Ombudsman. If the complaint does not relate to a benefit payable to the member or their dependent, it may be made to the Commonwealth Ombudsman.

I'll also give you this little tip: Following the *Explanatory Statement*, there is a *Statement of Compatibility With Human Rights*. Defence People Group neglected to include any reference to moving away from the CPI as the method of indexation for the cost of providing meals to Living-in members.

This is important because Defence Determinations are subject to Parliamentary scrutiny and it would seem that Parliament is not getting the whole picture when it comes to how costs to ADF Living-in members are changing.

If you think this is small potatoes and nothing to worry about, consider that DHA is being actively pursued for privatisation. Were DHA to be privatised and owned by a shareholding organisation and movements in rent in the CPI stagnated for a year or two, what's going to stop the CEO of the company that owns DHA lobbying for a change in the method of indexation for the rents paid to DHA? After all, the CEO must keep his shareholders happy – otherwise they won't be CEO for very long.

Conclusion

Moving away from using the CPI as the standard method of indexation for charges (and payments) to ADF members is a dangerous precedent. Defence must reverse clause 6 of Defence Determination 2015/47 and find a fairer way of indexing the cost of meals to Living-in members.

And finally By the way, CPI remains the method of indexation for meals paid to ADF members on official duty and for travel. Enjoy your 0.2% increase on your next trip!

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