

Luncheon Meeting

20 April 2023

DS

March 2023

Emeritus Professor Paul Dibb AM

'Geopolitical implications of Russia's invasion of Ukraine'



**Newsletter
of the
RAAF
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From the President

Anyone who reads newspapers, listens to the radio, watches television or surfs the net cannot escape the myriad of defence and strategic issues currently confronting the world.

Locally we await the public release of the Defence Strategic Review, now before Government, and giving many in Canberra's national security establishment some very long working days as they draft responses to the classified document. The release of the unclassified version is not expected until a yet to be identified date next month - timing that precludes us from having a speaker from the DSR team for our 20 April meeting.

The DSR will be the first major strategic document released by Government since the inception of AUKUS. When released, a reasonable person would expect the DSR to reference the changing strategic landscape in the Indo-Pacific and beyond, and what implications that might have for Australia, and in particular, for the Australian Defence Force. Part of that consideration will likely to include what China's more assertive strategic stance might mean for Australia. China's activity extends well beyond our region, as evidenced most recently by its agreement to provide Russia with the weapons it requires for the continued prosecution of its war in Ukraine.

In turn, that begs the question of what impact the current war in Ukraine is having, or might have on Australia. Such questions might be asked of our next speaker, Paul Dibb, very well known as a very eminent strategist, author of the seminal 1986 Review of Australia's Defence Capabilities, 'The Dibb Report', and currently Emeritus Professor of Strategic Studies at the Strategic & Defence Studies Centre of the Australian National University.

I anticipate an outstanding presentation, and an excellent opportunity for questions on 20 April. For that reason I greatly regret that for the first time in at least eleven years I will be unable to attend the meeting. I am currently overseas, right now in Africa learning about such things as power outages arising from power infrastructure that is unable to meet community and industry demands. Will we ever be faced with similar challenges? I expect to have a story or two to tell (for those who want to hear!) when I return shortly before our July meeting. In my absence your hardworking committee will be ensuring that all the usual arrangements are made to ensure a successful lunch, and my ever loyal Vice-President, Paul McMahon will be presiding.

Finally, I wish to acknowledge the outstanding assistance from AVM Bob Richardson in securing our speaker for next month. I fully expect his efforts will be rewarded by a good showing from members and guests on 20 April.

Stay well,

Ian