

# DS

## LUNCHEON SEMINAR AND AGM

*Friday 1 December 2023*

**at the National Press Club**

**16 National Circuit, Barton**

**October 2023**

**Speaker: [Air Commodore James Badgery AM](#)**

***Chief of Staff, Air Force Headquarters***

### **'Air Force in the Defence Strategic Review Era'**



**Newsletter  
of the  
RAAF  
STAFF COLLEGE  
ASSOCIATION Inc**

From the President

As we approach our final meeting for the year I want to bring you up to date with a serious issue that has the potential to impact on our lunch meetings. In the past the National Press Club has waived the \$500 venue hire charge for our use of its 'Situation Room' as the venue for our lunches (and those of the Australian Aviation Club, of which many of you are also members). However, NPC management has advised that because it has been running these activities at a financial loss, from next year that waiver cannot continue.

I can assure you that your committee has undertaken considerable research to identify other suitable venues, but right now the Press Club remains the best option. Other possible venues demand considerably higher hire charges and/or meal and beverage costs. So from our first meeting in 2024 we will have a \$500 shortfall for each lunch meeting that we need to meet. I know you can work the arithmetic, but for the purposes of illustrating the potential impact of this new charge on those attending the lunch, a \$500 venue hire charge translates to an additional \$20 per head if twenty-five of us attend a lunch, down to an extra \$13 each if forty attend. And this is before any cost of living generated increases to food and beverage costs, and of course not knowing, until immediately prior to the lunch, how many will be attending. While this sounds fairly dire, in the short to medium term (at least next year), our association's financial reserves could meet the venue hire charge. (If we don't use the money for such purposes, then what else is it there for?)

GPO Box 1204 Canberra ACT 2601

[www.raafsca.org](http://www.raafsca.org)

**Patron:**

ACM M.D. Binskin AC (Ret'd)  
AIRMSHL R.T. Chipman AM, CSC

**President:**

AIRCDR I.M. PEARSON (Ret'd)

**Vice-President:**

WGCDR P.C. MCMAHON (Ret'd)

**Secretary:**

MR F.J. KELLY, pac      Ph: 0428 266  
134

**Treasurer:**

MR D.I. WADE, pac

**Committee Member:**

WGCDR I. MALLETT AFC, (Ret'd)

Meanwhile, we are exploring options for sponsorship to cover the venue hire cost, noting that each of us would be meeting our individual meal and beverage costs (as well as those of our guest speaker). I will keep you up-to-date on those developments.

On a bittersweet note, I want to pass on to members the news that since the sad passing of our former president, Noel Wainwright, Noel's widow Marie-Paule has kindly offered two bottles of Course 26 (1982) commemorative port as door prizes for our next two meetings. While obviously attractive to Course 26 members (who are listed on the label), I expect the contents will be equally acceptable to the lucky members whose numbers are drawn at our next two lunches.

Since our next meeting is also our Annual General Meeting, I request that members (and guests who don't want to wait out the AGM in the lounge area), arm themselves with a refreshment from the bar and be seated by 1210, so we can get the meeting out of the way before the lunch service commences at 1230.

By way of President's Report, I can remind members that over the past year we have enjoyed three excellent presentations. Last November, Australian War Memorial Director, Matt Anderson updated us on progress with the AWM's significant [upgrade](#), now [well advanced](#). Members can stay in touch with this progress via the [Current Works](#) page on the Australian War Memorial's website.

This year we have enjoyed two outstanding presentations from eminent strategic analysts. In April [Emeritus Professor Paul Dibb](#) spoke to members about the [geopolitical implications of Russia's invasion of Ukraine](#), while in July we were addressed by [Dr Ross Babbage](#) who addressed us on [the risk of a major war in the Indo-Pacific](#). (If you have not yet read Ross' book '[The Next Major War](#)', I encourage you to do so.) I am indebted to AVM Bob Richardson for securing these two outstanding speakers for our lunches. Having heard from those two speakers, now our attention is very much on events in the Middle East. We are living in a distracted world, ripe for opportunists to create mischief.

As always I conclude my President's Report by thanking most sincerely my fellow committee members, especially for keeping the show going during my absence earlier this year, and our honorary auditor, LTCOL Maurice Gault (Ret'd) whose continuing efforts have ensured the good governance of our Association. Finally, notwithstanding the financial issues alluded to earlier in this newsletter, I would also like to thank the management and staff of the National Press Club who remain keen to do what is required to ensure the success of our lunches. The Press Club staff have assured me that they welcome our presence for our lunches, but are forced by financial imperatives to impose the hitherto waived venue hire charge.

Looking ahead to our next lunch, by now I trust everyone has updated their calendars to reflect that this will be on Friday 1 December, rather than our usual practice of meeting on the last Thursday of the month. This has been driven by the availability of our speaker, [Air Commodore James Badgery AM](#), who has of late been acting Deputy Chief of Air Force, and will be standing in at our lunch for the Chief of Air Force whose prior commitments preclude him from joining us at this time. James will speak about Air Force in the Defence Strategic Review Era, and I expect his presentation will provide an excellent opportunity for all of us to be brought up to date with the many changes in our Air Force that have occurred in recent times, and possibly further changes that are in prospect. Start thinking of your questions now. I am happy to put on notice to James any questions you consider that might require research in advance of our lunch. Please forward such questions either directly to me ([ian.pearson@bigpond.com](mailto:ian.pearson@bigpond.com)) or through our Secretary, whose email address is no doubt already on your contacts list.

Finally, I look forward to seeing those of you who can attend on Friday 1 December, and as always, encourage you to monitor our website for earliest advice of any changes to the program, and other news.

Stay well,

Ian Pearson  
Mob: 0407 561 080