



**ADSO** ALLIANCE OF DEFENCE SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

## ADSO UPDATE 5/2014 2014 IN REVIEW

### What ADSO is about?

[ADSO is all about protecting the Defence Family's wellbeing.](#)

By necessity it operates within the political arena by direct engagement with the Government and political parties and independent politicians on an issues basis to achieve our objectives.

ADSO is non-partisan. It does not support or oppose any political party. It does, however, support or oppose policies that may help or hinder ADF serving or former military members and their families.

### January 2014

We started the year confident that the new Coalition Government was generally supportive of veterans matters and would deliver on its election pledge to introduce fair indexation for some DFRB/DFRDB superannuates and would with its Defence Ministerial Team (Defence Minister, Assistant Defence Minister, Minister for Veterans' Affairs and the Finance Minister) consult with the ADSO leadership in a more formal forum basis to discuss our [major policy issues](#) and allow us to be privy to the Government's thinking on these and related matters.



Strategically our 2014 major focus was to build an effective working relationship with the Legislators: applicable Government Ministers and their Opposition and minor party equivalents and Independents. We have achieved that through:

1. Our Canberra Parliament House advocacy Group (David Jamison, Alf Jaugietis and others) meeting with the Government's Defence Team, Opposition's Leader, Bill Shorten and Shadow Veterans Affairs Minister, David Feeney; Greens' Veteran Affairs spokesman Senator Peter Whish-Wilson; PUP leader Clive Palmer and Senator Glen Lazarus; Bob Katter (KAP); Senator Jacqui Lambie (Ind) and other Independent MPs and Senators. In addition Alf Jaugietis has established good rapport and regular on call contacts with all Ministers and Parties relevant Chiefs of Staff.
2. Our State and Local Action Group Leaders and their Teams with their State Senators and Local Federal Electorate MPs

During the year we produced these four ADSO Updates:

1. [1/2014 - ONWARD & UPWARD](#)
2. [2/2014 – 23 APRIL 2014](#)
3. **3/2014 - [THERE'S MOVEMENT ON THE STATION](#) -**
4. [4/2014 - ACTION PLAN ON ADF PAY](#)

### March 2014

[The Defence Force Retirement Benefits Legislation Amendment \(Fair Indexation\) Bill 2014](#) was passed in Parliament with the full support of all parties, including the Independents. It took effect from 1<sup>st</sup> July 2014. At long last fair indexation was restored to those DFRB/DFRDB retirees affected by the legislation. The inclusion of the under age 55 contributors is our objective.



### May 2014

[The Federal Budget](#) set the theme for the Government's austerity program measures to return the Budget to a surplus in 2018/2019. It contained a number of measures that will have an adverse impact on the defence community and has changed the landscape for a number of issues about which the serving and past serving community have been seeking a resolution.

In some ways it has been more difficult for us to make progress but on the other hand the makeup of the Senate since 1<sup>st</sup> July with the balance of power in the hands of the PUP and Independents produced difficulties for the Government securing the passage of many of its Budget measures. At the same time we are confident from our consultations across the political spectrum, that positive actions to achieve many of our objectives would have the support of the Opposition, the Australian Greens, Palmer United Party and independent Senators & MPs.



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For veterans the impact related to or may relate to any of these changes:

1. Income Support Pensions (Age Pension, **Service Pension** and Disability Support Pension and their linkage to other pensions – specifically the Veterans Disability Pension to the Service Pension) indexation from 1 July 2017 when MTAWWE and the PBLCI will no longer be used and CPI only will be the indexation measure. **The major adverse impact on veterans comes from the winding back of the hard won indexation mechanism for the Veterans' Disability Pension. This is a particular disappointment to TPI's and other Veteran Disability Pensioners who fought for many years to achieve the indexation levels which the Government now wants to wind back.**

***These changes do not apply to the indexation of DFRB/DFRDB superannuation, which is not an income support pension, and will remain indexed to the greater of MTAWWE, PBLCI or CPI.***

2. Other Pension changes relating to: Asset and income test thresholds; Deeming thresholds; Clean Energy Supplement; Commonwealth Seniors Health Cards; and Increase in the Age Pension eligibility age.

In the Budget the Government also announced the introduction of a new accumulation superannuation scheme ADF Super for new members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) from 1 July 2016. We were surprised by the announcement and its details because we had



been led to believe by the Government that we would have an advisory input to any new Scheme. We stated our displeasure directly to the Government about its decision to introduce this new arrangement without consulting us. The Minister responded by assuring us that he would fully consult on the proposed features of the new scheme which has now commenced. Although the proposed Scheme overcomes many of the MSBS

deficiencies we considered the employer's contribution percentage inadequate and are lobbying for an increased percentage that recognises the uniqueness of the military profession. Additionally, there are MSBS issues namely, indexation, access to employer benefits and maximum benefit limits that need to be resolved by the Government: we will continue to lobby against this unfair treatment.

October, November & December 2014



### The ADF Workplace Remuneration Arrangement (WRA)

stunned the Defence Family and drew attention from DFWA who, as ADSO's monitor subject, **initiated opposition to the unfair val/reduction** of certain entitlements by way of ADF members' reactions to "the which drew 11, and over 33,000 Facebook alone in its submission to the WRA Tribunal. **The Survey** sparked separate "grass root fires" in Townsville led by Ray Martin (ex CO 1 RAR) and a national petition on change.org by the Sydney father (Tony Dagger) of a RAAF person. Both were supported by ADSO.



The Townville action gained the support of some ADF spouses who through establishing their own facebook ([Fight ADF Unfair Pay Deal](#)) gathered momentum through the spouses' network, public network and Townsville community with that support culminating in a public rally on 22<sup>nd</sup> November hosted by the Townsville mayor and coordinated by Ray Martin at which Tony Dagger was an invited guest.



Ray Martin with the Townsville community supporters joined with Tony Dagger and ADSO support to escort Tony to deliver his petition to the PM, and other political leaders on their request for a copy (Bill Shorten, Bob Katter, Christine Milne and Jacqui Lambie), at Parliament House



Canberra on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> December.

Both Bob Katter and Jacqui Lambie have prepared a Members' Bill to support an ADF increased pay %: Lambie's was defeated in the Senate by one vote while Katter's Bill will be tabled in The House of Representatives in February 2015.

The ADF unfair pay deal has received national media attention by national TV, radio and newspapers ([see some of them here in the Latest News](#)) and social media, which together has brought increasing pressure on the Government to react.

At 9.30 am on the 1<sup>st</sup> December, the PM, (prior to the receipt of the Petition through Stuart Robert at 11.30 am), announced that the Government would restore some ADF entitlements that had been removed in the WRA but would stand firm on the 1.5 % pay deal. **We believe DFWA's immediate action to give public voice to the ADF's concern, with ADSO's support and consequently grass roots action and the media actions resulting in a public outcry were responsible for the Government's change of mind.**

[ADSO's Media Release](#) welcomed the Government's decision to revoke its previous support for the need to offset the 1.5% per annum pay offer made to ADF members with 'productivity initiatives' that removed some leave, food and travel entitlements. These entitlements will now be restored.

However, the Government left untouched a review of the inadequacy of the pay offer itself which remains well below the annual inflation rate (about 3%), even further below the expected rise of annual living costs and below the 4% wages increase budgeted by the Government.

Only weeks after providing a paltry 1.5% pay increase to members of the ADF, the [Government is now imposing charges for some married quarter rents](#) well above the 1.5% .....exactly what the Defence Force Welfare Association and ADSO feared would occur.

ADSO will watch the back of the ADF and be their voice to protect their entitlements: that's what families do.

Please stay current with ADSO's activities and events by monitoring both our [website](#) and our [facebook](#) and do encourage your family and friends to sign the [petition](#).

### **ADSO continues to Grow.**

You will have noticed from the ADSO logo that this year we have been joined by the TPI Federation and The Partners of Veterans' Association. Their contribution will add greater strength to our advocacy.

### **The Future – 2015 and Beyond**

In 2015 we will have to work hard to make progress on our outstanding issues and achievements may be limited by the Government's policy constraints but with the possibility of support within the Senate we may be able to at least limit if not reverse some of the 2014 Budget decisions which have an adverse impact on the Defence Family. The Cabinet reshuffle will have an impact but it remains to be seen if the new minister (Kevin Andrews) will adopt an innovative approach to the defence portfolio which is badly needed or whether it will be business as usual. We have long advocated the need for a comprehensive overhaul of the Defence Department as a necessary step to improve the lot of serving ADF members and Australia's defence capability. The ADSO national leadership will continue to engage the Government Defence Ministerial Team in regular consultations to strongly advocate on behalf of the defence family.

2016 is an Election Year. We can expect to be kept busy trying to influence the policy platforms of the various political movements and in evaluating the policy offerings from the major parties. We know this path very well and will be proactive in advocating positive initiatives on behalf of the defence family.

## **THANK YOU AUSTRALIA FOR YOUR SUPPORT**

We couldn't be successful without you! So our sincere thank to you for supporting us in the past and we look forward to you continuing it in the future in whatever way you can.

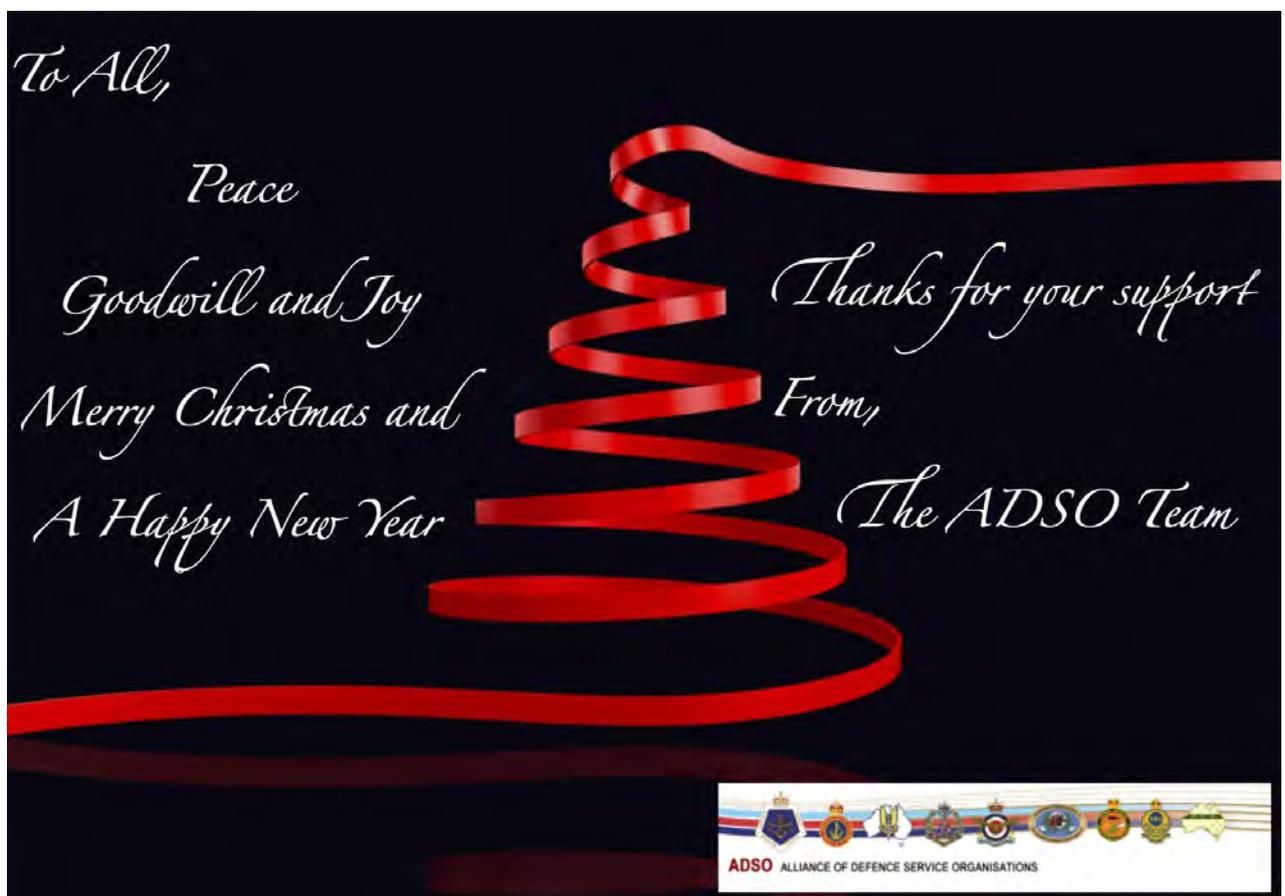
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[Volunteering](#)

Keeping in Touch through [Subscribing to our Newsletter](#)

[Joining DFWA](#) while not neglecting membership of other Alliance Associations.



*From The Fair Go Team our thanks to all our Action Team warriors and supporters.*

Campaign Directors: [Ted Chitham](#), [Alf Jaugietis](#)

Campaign National Spokesperson: [David Jamison](#)