



THE SOUTHERN CLOUD

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE AUSTRALIAN AIR LEAGUE INC - VICTORIA GROUP

2022... adventure awaits!



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Group Executive
Commissioner 2022 Address

Group Executive Commissioner

Dear Members,

2022 has begun and we are off to a great start. I am very pleased to write this address to you all from the comfort of Group Headquarters and not my dining room table, which has been the reality for most, if not all members during the last few years. Like you, I am praying that the days of online learning and the endless Zoom meetings are over.

Over the last few months, I have been working hard to develop a new Headquarters team. A team that can take Victoria Group into the future with a renewed energy and vigour for the organisation. I am proud to see how quickly the team has adapted to their new roles, and how responsive they have been to changing the way we support our members. Already, the team has made significant changes at GHQ with restructuring our office to reflect a space that is open and collaborative, allowing our resources to be organised in ways that build efficiency and uncomplicated use. Along with this, the team has been clearing a backlog of requests and overdue items that were overlooked or put aside due to covid restrictions. Now that restrictions have eased, and we are able to be at GHQ more often, the team has been able to action these items. If you are aware of anything outstanding, please send through a reminder so the team can look into them and prioritise accordingly.

During our last Group Council and Group staff meeting, a number of ideas were presented and discussed. In particular were topics regarding how Group staff can support our squadrons; how we can support knowledge, confidence, growth and compliance. I must say, these discussions were quite different to those in the past. The staff were very focussed on the word support, and what that looks like for each of the GHQ roles. I know this has been said before, but I am confident that this new team understands. They understand the pain of being on their own, the pressure of making decisions with limited resources and the lack of real opportunities for our members. From these meetings I can see the team has a real connection to the topics discussed and real solutions have been put forward.

This year we are here to support you. We make this promise to each and every member of Victoria Group. Your concerns are our concerns. Your direction is our direction.

If you wish to discuss anything, big or small, my door is always open.



Yours faithfully,

Greg O'Brien

Group Executive Commissioner



GHQ UPDATES

The **Development Officer** has been working on **marketing** materials for squadrons to use in their recruitment efforts. Recruitment packs will include flyers, wristbands and other aviation materials to help engage the next generation of members and encourage them to join.

A new **social media strategy** has also been developed with the intention of being informative to current members and a tool for partnerships and collaborating with other organisations.

The **Air Activities Officer** is very keen on getting members **in the air** this year. Plans are in place to deliver an aviation camp, aviation outings and yes, flying nights. GHQ staff are working on **establishing relationships** that squadrons can tap into to meet the requirements of aviation courses.

The **Finance Officer** is preparing a **training day** for all **Branch Committee members** to give them a better understanding of the reporting requirements needed under AAL guidelines. The aim is to **strengthen the financial literacy** and record keeping, which ultimately will make things much easier for end of financial year reporting.

The **Field Officer** has developed a series of training days that will be hosted at GHQ over the coming months. The first is a **Drill Training Day**, which all cadets and staff are invited to. This day will assist members in strengthening their drill knowledge and confidence with parade instruction. In addition to training days, the Field Officer has been working on a **Fieldcraft and recreation camp**. Expressions of interest are being sought at the moment. Check with your OC.

The **Q-Store** is ready to go! We have a large supply of uniform stock in a range of sizes. Recently OC's were emailed a list of items and prices. If you would like to know more about what is available, please ask your OC to pass on the uniform list, or pop in to GHQ and try on what you need from 10am-1pm Saturday's.



International Women's Day 2022

"a world free from bias, stereotypes, and discrimination"

International Women's Day is a global day of celebration that recognises the achievements of all women around the world. The Australian Air League - Victoria Group is proud to highlight the success and contribution of **Squadron Lieutenant Mykhala Boyde**, who is currently performing the role of Adjutant at the Cranbourne Squadron.

"I joined the Australian Air League in 2001 with the desire to get out of the house and participate in something meaningful. I saw the Air League as an opportunity to connect me to the aviation world and provide skills that could sustain my excitement for flying."

Mykhala has led her squadron at competitions, air shows and commemorative events such as ANZAC Day and Remembrance Day. These opportunities have given Mykhala time to hone her skills and perfect her approach to leadership and management.

"By taking on positions of responsibility as a cadet, I was able to set standards and support the development of others by being inclusive and considerate of their varying needs, rather than being autocratic or dominating. This is an approach that I am very proud of as it shows people in this organisation what can be possible when young women are given the chance to lead and represent their peers. It shows that despite the stereotypes, a gentle approach has merit and can be an effective motivator."

Mykhala has since become an officer who drives the culture of inclusive approaches, and for us, this makes her the perfect member to highlight on such a significant occasion. Well done Mykhala and keep up the good work.



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ACHIEVEMENTS

32 YEARS IN THE MAKING

By 2nd Officer Victor Tikhanov

On Tuesday 16th, 2021, Squadron Lieutenant Bruce Dusting was invited to receive the National Medal for his service in the CFA.

The National Medal is a medal awarded to recognise long and diligent service by members of recognised government and voluntary organisations. It is to recognise how they risked their lives or safety to protect or assist the community in enforcement of the law or in times of emergency or natural disaster.

Sqn Lt. Dusting began his volunteer firefighting journey back in 1974, and served a total of 18 years at the Bayswater Urban Fire Brigade. He was a committed and diligent fireman, never afraid to put his life on the line to protect his community. In 1992, he officially left the CFA to pursue his interest in aviation, before joining the Australian Air League 12 years ago, where he has been ever since as a valued member of Berwick Squadron.

Now, 32 years later, Sqn. Lt. Dusting has finally been recognised for his service. On Tuesday 16th, he was formally invited to a medal presentation at his old fire brigade. The night began with Ex Captain Alan Waters delivering an address to current firefighters, detailing Sqn. Lt. Dustings history with the CFA. He was then presented with the medal by Commander Richard Hill.

We are glad to see Sqn. Lt. Dusting being recognised for his accomplishments, and are proud to have him in our ranks!



AUSTRALIA DAY HONOURS

Chief Comr. Nigel Edwards (Ret'd) OAM, LM, DSA

It is with pleasure that the League recognises that Chief Comr. Nigel Edwards (Ret'd) LM, DSA was included in the Australia Day 2022 Honours List as recipient of the Medal of the Order of Australia.



Chief Comr. Edwards has had a long and distinguished career with the Australian Air League. He:

- Joined as a junior Officer with Glenhuntly Company (Squadron) in February 1943;
 - Commanded this Company from May 1946;
 - Became a senior member of Victoria Group staff in 1952, progressing through to Group Field Commissioner from early 1959;
 - Became Federal Field Commissioner in 1961;
 - Was awarded Life Membership in 1970 and was also awarded the Distinguished Service Award;
- and
- Held the appointment of Chief Commissioner from 1974 until 1977.

Chief Comr. Edwards has recently celebrated his 96th birthday and is living in Capel Sound (previously Rosebud West); he still takes a great interest in the activities of the Victoria Group and the Air League in general.

The Council of the League extends its hearty congratulations to Chief Comr. Edwards on his well merited honour.

Congratulations Nigel – job well done for not only the League but also the other Organisations you have benefited over the years.



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