



**Robyn Collins**  
General Manager



## REFLECTING ON 2012

I would firstly like to thank our donors – the lifeblood of our organisation.

In terms of dedication and contribution to our work, there are few who could surpass the Women's Auxiliaries and RSL sub-Branches. Fundraising can be hard and time-consuming work. Defencecare values each contribution, no matter how small, and extends to you our heartfelt appreciation for your efforts.

To our clients and families – your willingness to approach us and share your difficulties has enriched our lives and hopefully our help has made a real difference to yours.

Thank you also to those who helped us in our work, in particular, our sub-Branch members (Daniel Sloan, Des Green and Clay Musgrave) who came to aid of Defencecare when our staff were suddenly depleted. Our thanks also to the Government organisations (such as ADF, DVA, DCO and VVCS) that provide important links to the community and vital information to help our clients.

On a personal note, I would like to thank you for welcoming me and helping our new team transition to a new way of operating.

The caring, compassionate way RSL NSW, its sub-Branches and affiliated organisations work with the defence communities has been apparent from my first day. I hope in time, I can make a real difference and positive contribution in return.

## PEOPLE WE HAVE HELPED

### Rochelle and Taylor

In the last issue, I reported on how Defencecare was able help a family relocate from the Northern Territory to Sydney while their daughter Taylor underwent treatment for leukaemia. Taylor's mum Rochelle serves in the RAAF and her grandfather is a Vietnam vet.

Taylor is currently doing well and attending school a few days a week at Prince of Wales Hospital. We are now providing follow-up support with transport and shopping vouchers and will continue to support the family as long as we are needed.



Taylor and Dr Sue  
Russell celebrate  
Halloween.

### Brandon and his assistance dog Ruby

Dogs play an important role in the Defence Force and our four legged friends can play an equally big role in helping an ex-service man or woman adjust to life back at home.

We'd like you to meet Ruby, sponsored by Defencecare to help Brandon.

Brandon is an army veteran of Timor in 1999/2000 and now has severe damage to



Brandon plays  
with his dog  
Ruby.

his spine, shoulders, hips, knees and wrists. Ruby gives him support and is a friend to him each day.

Assistance dogs can help ex-service men and women accomplish tasks which they previously could not perform alone and can also increase their confidence and self-esteem. In the case of a disability, assistance dogs can also increase acceptance in social situations because a dog makes it easy for people to relate to that person, instead of the disability.

## MINUTE TO REMEMBER CAMPAIGN

To commemorate Remembrance Day and make the ritual of honouring Australia's war heroes more relevant to young people, Defencecare launched a digital campaign to remind participants to turn off their phones for one minute at 11am, 11 November 2012.

The campaign required participants to "like" Defencecare's page on Facebook and enter their phone number so an SMS could be sent to them as a reminder. Participants were also given an opportunity to donate by buying a virtual poppy, which was uploaded to their Facebook profile and helped to spread the message about remembering members of the armed forces who have died in the line of duty. In five days, 6000 people connected with Defencecare through this application and \$2004 was donated.



## BEREAVEMENT SERVICES

When a service man or woman (or a relative of theirs) passes away, Defencecare is available to support and assist them and their families during this difficult and sensitive time. We can:

- Arrange funeral services;
- Provide financial assistance for funeral services;
- Provide counselling and support;
- Organise RSL funeral tributes for ex-serving members;
- Organise RSL Star Ceremonies to commemorate a service man or woman's life and aid in the grieving process for the family; and
- Assist with claims with DVA.

To find out how we can assist, please call 8088 0388 or email [defencecare@rslnsw.org.au](mailto:defencecare@rslnsw.org.au)

## VETERANS' FUN RUN

Veterans' Health Week, October 22–28, provided an opportunity for veterans, war widows, widowers, current and ex-Australian Defence Force members and their families to participate, connect and influence the health and wellbeing of themselves and their friends.

Defencecare organised the first RSL Fun Run Walk on October 27 at Cronulla Park to and raise awareness of how physical activity can improve the health and social inclusion amongst the veteran community. The event attracted young and old, male and female and people of all fitness levels.

Over 60 participants were blessed with great sunny weather and a stunning view of Cronulla beach as they ran the race.

Thank you to RSL CEO Chris Perrin for starting the event, Deputy Commissioner DVA Jennifer Collins for speaking and participating and Sutherland Deputy Mayor Carol Provan for speaking. Thanks also to the volunteers from South Lake Macquarie sub-Branch (Morisset) for preparing a BBQ for the participants. Lastly, thanks to

## PAIN MANAGEMENT SEMINAR FOR VETERANS

In conjunction with the Australian Pain Management Association, we are holding the first "Walking Wounded: Manage Your Pain" seminar for veterans. The seminar features two world authorities who will present on the latest developments. This is the first of its kind in Australia, and all members of the serving and ex-serving community and their partners are welcome to attend.

**Date:** Thursday 21 March 2013

**Time:** 12:00pm - 5.15pm  
(includes lunch)

**Place:** Department of Veterans' Affairs, Sydney

**RSVP:** [secretary.apma@bigpond.com](mailto:secretary.apma@bigpond.com) or (07) 3391 6629 by 8 March 2013

The seminar will explore the current needs of veterans inside and outside the service and improvements to pain management pathways for younger and older veterans.

**Prof Rollin Gallagher**, Deputy Director of the USA Veterans' Pain

Program will present the Veterans' Affairs National Pain Management Strategy, the Stepped Care Model: its implementation, challenges and outcomes for returning veterans.

**Prof Michael Cousins**, Director of the Pain Management Research Institute and Director of PainAustralia, will discuss how far we have come and what still needs to be done to provide better access for veterans in the area of pain management.

Other speakers will include senior figures from the veterans' community and DVA.



the RSL NSW staff and the Defencecare team, especially Louise Summerhayes and Elvi Wood, who put so much effort into the event.



The winners of our Veterans' Fun Run: (left to right) 2nd place Chris Woodhouse, 1st place Paul Boehm and 3rd place James Fethers.

## CONTACT US

**Defencecare: A charity supporting the Australian Defence Force**

If you would like to discuss ways Defencecare can assist you and your family, please contact us.

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