

**Speech by Deputy Chief of Air Force
Air Vice-Marshal Gavin 'Leo' Davies, AO, CSC
Annual Services Golf Day
23 April 2015**

Good evening ladies and gentlemen, and thank you to Club Captain Simon Gould for offering me the opportunity to say a few words prior to awarding the prizes tonight. And no, I won't be giving myself anything.

On the eve of the 100th anniversary of the Anzac landings at Gallipoli, it is appropriate to consider Australia's military history but I'm better placed to discuss the role of air power than anything else. Australian military aviation came of age in World War I with four Australian Flying Corps squadrons forming part of the Australian Imperial Force. During WWI, just over 3500 officers and airmen served in the AFC. 175 did not come home.

Following the formation of the RAAF in 1921, over 215,000 Air Force men and women served during World War II, with nearly 10,000 losing their lives. Since then, Air Force personnel have served with distinction in Korea, Malaya, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan, working closely with Army and Navy in many key battles. We are also proud of our role in peacekeeping and humanitarian missions throughout the world, including Bougainville, Cambodia, East Timor, Rwanda, Somalia and Sudan.

Today we are supporting the coalition fight against Daesh through an air task group that includes F/A-18 fighters, a KC-30 refueler and an E-7 control aircraft, as well as the Combined Air Operations Centre and combat support elements. The air task group has flown nearly 7000 hours, off-loaded over 19 million pounds of fuel, and completed over 800 combat missions that have delivered nearly 300 weapons.

Highlighting the operational flexibility of air power, Air Force recently provided a significant contribution to Operation PACIFIC ASSIST which was the ADF response to the cyclone in Vanuatu. Eight Air Force aircraft were rapidly deployed in response to the disaster with over 400 hours flown, almost 800 passengers moved and over 1.5 million pounds of cargo delivered.

These operational examples underscore the fact that we do not know what tomorrow will demand of us—but we must be ready to respond quickly. The launch of Plan JERICHO during the CAF Symposium in February this year is part of this preparation. Jericho is the Chief's plan to transform Air Force into an integrated fighting force that will take full advantage of the technologies offered by our new aircraft, our innovative people and new enabling systems. Plan JERICHO will transform us into a 5th generation-enabled force that is capable of fighting and winning in 2025; even if we don't know where or what we will be tasked with. Jericho seeks to develop a modern, fully integrated combat force that can deliver air and space power effects in the information age. Our new aircraft—such as the E-7 Wedgetail, P-8 Poseidon, Triton, Growler and F-35A—will demand new operating concepts, new support arrangements and contemporary sustainment options.

We will give Army and Navy the most potent and connected air power effects seen in our nation's history and be able to respond to government demands more quickly and comprehensively. I suggest that in the 1980s and 90s, we were better at air-land integration, anti-submarine warfare and maritime strike—and that this has to change.

Indeed, while we look to the future, it is essential that we understand and learn from our past. The proud history of our Air Force is an integral part of the history of the ADF—and it continues to evolve.

As Anzac Day approaches, I believe it is important to pause and think about those men and women who have served before us and those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in the service of our nation. It is also just as important to think about those who have suffered and continue to suffer as a result of their service. Given the nature of today's golfing activities, I think it is appropriate to highlight the positive impact that sport has in the recovery process from physical and mental injuries. Golf is a great sport, able to challenge and inspire. The Nationals last year were a taste of what we can do for our wounded if we choose to.

Remembering the service of those who have gone before us and those who continue to serve is not only part of our military traditions but part of our national identity - lest we forget.