

**RESERVE FORCES DAY MORNING TEA WITH
HER EXCELLENCY GOVERNOR MARIE BASHIR AC CVO
THURSDAY 01 JULY 2010, GOVERNMENT HOUSE SYDNEY**

Your Excellency, Sirs, Ma'ams, my fellow Reservists, Ladies & Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to give this vote of thanks on behalf of the reservists present.

In 1998, when I was a Sub Lieutenant, I marched in the first Reserve Forces Day and had the opportunity to visit Government House with a United States Navy Admiral as guest of honour. It was a very different world then, when the Australian Defence Force was on a peacetime footing with relatively little in the way of foreign deployments. All that was soon to change. In 1999, the ADF was deployed to East Timor, including large numbers of Reservists in the Royal Australian Navy, Army and RAAF. Since 1999, the ADF has had an operational tempo not experienced since at least the concurrent operations in Malaya and Vietnam in the 1960s, if not World War II. Australian reservists have now served in Afghanistan, the Persian Gulf, Iraq, the Sinai, East Timor, the Solomons. Reservists have also served at home in fighting natural disasters. Whenever and wherever Australia is in need, a reservist has been and is there. As Winston Churchill said "*the Reservist is twice the Citizen*": and Reserve Forces Day focuses our citizens on the reservists.

In my case, I have had the enormous privilege of serving on deployments as a naval intelligence officer in East Timor, Iraq, Afghanistan and the Persian Gulf. Every day in the Persian Gulf and Afghanistan is Reserve Forces Day.

I have served not only with brave men and women of the Royal Australian Navy and the Australian Defence Force. I also served with United States Navy and Marine Corps Reservists, US National Guardsmen and British Territorial Army soldiers. In civilian life, these men and women are students, engineers, medical equipment makers, secretaries, paralegals, school teachers, pharmacists, builders, truck drivers, electricians and even lawyers. Each citizen warrior answered their country's call to serve in harm's way. Many paid the ultimate price, or incurred wounds that would scar and disable them. In each case, as Pericles said to the Athenians, "*where the rewards of virtue are greatest, there the noblest citizens are enlisted in the service of the state*".

On behalf of all reservists here this morning, I express our sincere thanks to Her Excellency, the Governor, and through Her Excellency the people of Sydney and New South Wales for supporting Australia's reservists.

LTCDR G.A.F. CONNOLLY, RANR