

ADDRESS BY  
HIS EXCELLENCY MAJOR GENERAL MICHAEL JEFFERY AC CVO MC  
**GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA**  
ON THE OCCASION OF  
**AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE FAREWELL CEREMONY**  
SIR THOMAS BLAMEY SQUARE, RUSSELL  
27 AUGUST 2008

Good morning, and very well done on a splendid parade. Thank you to the Federation Guard and the RMC Band for an association with you both at so many official ceremonies both military and diplomatic in this country and abroad.

I thank the CDF for his wonderfully kind words and I would like to congratulate him personally for his superb leadership of the ADF and for a very well deserved extension of his appointment.

As Marlena and I begin the transition to the next phase of our lives, we have had cause to reflect on the past five years, and to consider the wonderful opportunities presented to us, and the exceptional people we have had the privilege to meet.

Without doubt, one of the highlights for me personally as Governor General has been in my role as Commander in Chief of the Australian Defence Force and my close relationship with all three services.

A relationship that began more than 50 years ago as an Army School Cadet; an experience that enthused me so much, that to enter Duntroon became my driving ambition; a decision I have never regretted for a single day.

And the four years at Duntroon taught by battle experienced instructors; wonderful men both officer and Senior NCO who inspired us and taught us the fundamental of junior officer leadership.

Fifty-five years later I am still inordinately proud that I chose to devote most of my working life to the profession of arms.

Though I thank CDF for his kind words about my contribution to the ADF, I firmly believe that no matter the hard work and long hours, no matter the time away from home, and the sacrifices made by my family, the ADF provided me with far more than I was able to give in return, because it gave me the privilege of commanding Australian and PNG soldiers in peace and at war at every level of command from platoon to division - the greatest honour of all.

And it is that special relationship of the warrior class; of loyalty to one another, the essential personal discipline freely endured, of shared dangers faced and overcome, of the sharing of everything - water, rations, work parties and sentry duty on the gun pit at night. And after leaving the service that special continuity of those relationships through ANZAC Day, the RSL and unit, ship and squadron ex-service affiliations.

And also for me personally, in a relationship sense, on so many hundreds of occasions having old soldiers come up in the street and say 'g'day boss' or 'g'day skip, it's great to see you again', or to share the breaking dawn of an ANZAC service in Afghanistan with the sun rising over the quiet desert sands, our magnificent Australian Flag raised and the padre in quiet tones reminding us of mates departed and the spiritual dimension.

And the oh so good times. A beer in the Airman's club, the camaraderie of the Sergeant's and Officer's

messes, kicking a footy in the battalion team and ships visits to exotic ports.

But in my time as Commander in Chief, nothing has given me greater joy than the opportunity to meet so many of our serving personnel in their bases in Australia and so many different operational theatres - Israel, East Timor, The Solomon's, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Today's operational tempo is the highest seen since I too was a young man deploying to a foreign land.

I would argue the tempo is even higher today, with four major operating locations and the corresponding logistical difficulties.

For the last part of my service career, operational tours were for only the minority of service personnel.

In the 1980s there were just 16 ADF operational deployments involving just over 1,000 personnel. In the 1990s there was a spike with INTERFET, when there were 82 operational deployments involving nearly 17,000 personnel. Since then, the tempo has further increased.

Astoundingly, more than 45,000 ADF personnel have taken part in deployments between 2001 and 2007 - with almost 35,000 in the last three years alone.

And this year some 12,000 personnel will be added to that figure.

Now briefly to the future, which in our region, and in other areas of the world, remains both uncertain and volatile.

In meeting those uncertainties, you can reasonably anticipate that the ADF will continue to be involved in providing much the same support to what can be termed its three main security objectives.

First, dealing with the continuing threat of global terrorism. Second, responding to law and order - and institutional breakdown-type crises closer to home. And, third, operating at the higher end of the war-fighting spectrum as part of coalition or United Nations forces.

As serving soldiers, sailors and airmen, you follow in the footsteps of men and women who set the ANZAC standard. You are adding to that proud heritage and will continue to do so, and I leave confident in the knowledge that the ADF and indeed the defence of our nation is in excellent hands.

I thank you personally and your families wholeheartedly for what you do and what you represent. Thank you for such a special parade today, and more importantly for the many friends, memories and experiences that we will treasure for the rest of our lives.

Thank you.