



# NAVY FAMILIES NEWSLETTER

December 2024



Welcome to the NEW bi-annual Navy Families Newsletter. This newsletter will provide you with news and information to support you and your family.



## A holiday message from the Chief of Navy

2024 has turned about to be an extraordinarily busy year. It has been a year of challenge and a year of achievement, meeting all government directed operations at sea, multiple international exercises and engagements across the Indo Pacific and around the globe. For those not at the waterfront, it has been a year of supporting our fleet from ashore and working towards accelerating delivery of our upgraded current fleet and a larger and more capable future fleet and future workforce. It has truly been a year of remarkable achievements by our sailors and officers.

It has also been a year of inspiring achievements by many of our family members and partners, some of whom I have enjoyed meeting and learning from, and they deserve a special mention. Of note, I would like to thank Hayley Anne Boswell at [Defence Kidz](#), Claire Harris at [Cowork](#)

[Coplay](#), Maxine Starkey at [Shoalhaven Defence Families Association](#), Bianca Sibbald at [Someone I Love is in Defence](#), Mark, Savannah, Jay and Lesley at [RSL LifeCare](#) and Beck Rayner at the [Military Life](#) Podcast. In case you missed it, you can find my discussion with Beck Rayner from Military Life on episode 176 of the podcast. In this podcast, we discussed what makes Navy families special, the fundamental role our families play in supporting our people and generating power at sea, and the importance of frequent engagement with Navy families. I am both impressed and inspired by the work of our Navy partners and spouses in

supporting Defence families, and in giving them a voice and sharing their lived experiences with senior leaders so that we can better support you, our Navy families. I know there are many of you deserving of recognition and I hope to meet and learn from you too in 2025.

I hope you have also heard about some of the initiatives we have launched this year, as we continue to refine our approach and try different ways of engaging with and supporting our Navy families. We have supported trials to enable better partner support and we have enhanced support for families of those deployed. HOW? We have generated a dedicated Navy Families Team and promoted a number of local initiatives from ships and establishments across the country as they vie for the Families and Community Engagement Award. There are also multiple ongoing initiatives as part of our [Stay Onboard – People First](#) campaign. If you haven't seen these initiatives, I encourage the uniformed members of your family to ensure you can access and benefit from these programs. Alternatively, please visit [ADF Members & Families](#) for more information on how Defence is working to support families across the ADF.

While there has been tremendous work done this year, we recognise that every family is different. If you have ideas that you think we should consider, we would love to hear them. Please contact the Navy Families Team at [navy.families@defence.gov.au](mailto:navy.families@defence.gov.au).

As we begin the holiday season, I hope you are all able to prioritise time at home with family and friends. For those who will 'stand and watch' while others take a break, thank you for doing so and I hope your time with family and friends will be maximised when your turn comes. As my friend, the Chief of Army LTGEN Simon Stuart said in his podcast with Beck Rayner "Your family is your team for life". I hope you can share this time of year with **your** team for life while our ships rest in harbour.

Finally, thank you. Without your support, we could not do what we do, safeguarding the security and economic prosperity of our Nation. I look forward to meeting as many of you as I can in 2025 and continuing to learn from your lived experience so that we can ensure your family has access to the best support we can give.

**Mark D. Hammond, AO**  
Vice Admiral, Royal Australian Navy  
Chief of Navy



## Need support over the holiday season?





## Things to do over the holiday period

Click the links to find out more

## A message from the Navy Families Team



This year, we established the Navy Families Team to support you as you support your loved ones Service. You are an important part of the Navy family and we aim to demonstrate this through action.

In 2024, we launched the Navy Families Handbook, the New Navy Families Information Pack and the Deployment Support Pack. We have also completed three family support trials to improve your knowledge of the benefits available to all Navy families.

Thank you to those who have sent us ideas and provided feedback. We are excited to implement our Partner Support Program nationally in 2025 and meet you in your hometown.

## Do you have the Navy Families Handbook?

As part of the *Stay Onboard – People First* campaign, the Navy Families Team developed the Navy Families Handbook. This handbook includes valuable information and contacts to support you and your family.

Head to the Navy website to download a copy of the Navy Families Handbook today or ask your loved one for a hard copy.





## Service spotlight: Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS)

Defence Member and Family Support (DMFS) provide support services to Defence families throughout their military journey.

DMFS provides relocation support, deployment support, community engagement, priority access to childcare services, children's education support, crisis support and partner employment support.

For more information, please visit the ADF Members & Families website or **call the Defence Member and Family Helpline on [1800 624 608](tel:1800624608)** (available 24/7 for all support needs).

## Navy Partner Support Trial Expansion

Over August and September, families from HMAS *Albatross* and *Creswell* were invited to join in a Partner Support Trial in Nowra. Running over three sessions, the aim was to provide valuable information, child minding and social connection with other Navy families. To learn more about the trial, head to Navy News.

**This program will be expanded nationally in 2025.** You can register your interest by contacting the Navy Families Team.



## Supporting families, supporting Navy: New Navy Families Information Pack



Our Navy People rely on the support they receive from their families at home. We have developed a set of resources to ensure that Navy returns the support for families. This pack is for partners of serving members upon recognition as an Accompanied Resident Family.

Head to the Navy website to download the information pack or contact the Navy Families Team for a hard copy.



If you have ideas, questions or comments, the Navy Families Team would love to hear from you. Email: [navy.families@defence.gov.au](mailto:navy.families@defence.gov.au)