

Chief of Navy Change of Command Ceremony
6 July 2022
Vice Admiral Mark Hammond, AM, RAN
Canberra



Good Morning Mr **Secretary, Chief of Defence**, VADM Noonan,

Distinguished Guests,

Foreign Defence Representatives,

Fellow members of our Navy, our Defence Force, and our Department.

It is an honour to be here in Ngunnawal country with you this morning, and it is an absolute privilege to be entrusted with Command of Our Navy and membership of our most Senior Defence Leadership Team.

I am accompanied today by my wife Jodi and my son Josh. Our daughter Jessica is currently deployed. To my family I say thank you for your ongoing love and support as we serve our Nation.

I would like to begin by acknowledging our **1550** Officers and Sailors who today serve on, above, and under the ocean as we meet. We owe you nothing short of our very best and I will begin each day with that in mind.

Today I am humbled, energised and restless.

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But first, Mike, today as we haul down your Flag as our Chief of Navy and you step ashore for the final time, I want to acknowledge a remarkable 38 years of service to our country, and of service to our Navy, our shipmates, and to the wider Defence Family, both in and out of uniform.

Today, I submit that as you reflect, be proud of your multitude of professional achievements.

The list of these achievements is long – your efforts to set us on a path to grow our Navy to 21 000 will be a legacy that impacts a generation of our sailors – but I

suspect it is your time in Command of *Parramatta*, and the shipmates you have served with over the years, that are possibly your most treasured memories.

I commend your personal investment in working to enhance conditions of service, and efforts to ensure appropriate recognition of our people throughout your career.

You have led from the front – and set us on the right course during challenging times - our Navy is distinctly better for your leadership.

On behalf of the Officers and Sailors of our **Navy I sincerely thank you and wish you the very best for all that lies ahead.**

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As I accept the weight of responsibility as Chief of Navy I am conscious that **for 121 years Australians have volunteered** to protect and advance our National interests while wearing the uniform of the Royal Australian Navy.

For 121 years our Nation has expected us to be ready to fight and win at sea – wherever and whenever directed by our government to do so.

Today, as begin my watch and scan the horizon, I am at once, ***humbled, energised*** and ***restless*** as I contemplate the next four years.

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I am **humbled** to be entrusted with serving, and leading, our diverse, talented and dedicated people across our Navy.

They deserve no less than our very best each day.

As our shipmates sail the regions oceans; we must ensure that, each of us is absolutely confident that we have done humanly and legally possible to ready them, equip them and enable them to confidently face all contingencies.

In my view there is no greater responsibility than that which a leader has to their team, and I am **humbled** by this responsibility.

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I am also **energized**. I am **energised** by the opportunities, and challenges ahead.

While we may be uncertain of what the future holds, we are certainly the beneficiaries of unprecedented investments by successive governments in our Navy's future.

We must value this investment by our nation and act with **urgency** to ensure our Navy, and our ADF is ready for tomorrow.

This challenge **energises** me.

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And I am **restless**. I am **restless** as our environment increasingly demands that we act to our full potential – as ready for tomorrow as we are today.

There is a palpable electricity in the air above the seas across our region, and the risks confronting our Navy teams who are operating far from home are real.

In this context, there is much to be done, and little time to do it.

This demands a **restless** approach. An approach that does not accept the status quo, does not flinch from challenge, and one that realises a high-functioning fighting culture in our Navy.

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35 years and 336 days have passed since I walked into Recruit School as a skinny Adelaide kid from the wrong side of the tracks.

Today I am **humbled** by this opportunity to serve our Officers and Sailors, I am **energized** by the challenges ahead, and I am **restless** to cast off lines and get underway. Thank you for your support as we do so.