

## From the Co-Chair

The build up has begun. This became undeniably apparent when I stepped out of the air-conditioned comfort of my car to find myself without vision as the effect of condensation rendered me blind behind my sunglasses.

Other tell tale signs alert even those without UV protective eyewear such as: shops suddenly shut or opened for a limited time on Sundays in the city, decreasing traffic, general lethargy and of course the increasing heat and humidity. Here's to a short build up.

By now most would have seen the refreshed logo which was officially unveiled during the APS National Conference in Canberra. I think it's a great update which is contemporary, yet still retains elements that are synonymous with the society. Visit the information page on the web to learn more (<http://www.psychology.org.au/Content.aspx?ID=3940>)

Also announced at the National Conference were the results of the election for the new President Elect and Board of Directors. Congratulations to the President Elect – Mr Tim Hannan FAPS and new Directors - Associate Professor Erica Frydenberg FAPS, Professor Mike Kyrios FAPS and Mr Alan Plumb FAPS. For a list of the full composition of the new 18th APS Board of Directors and associated information go to: <http://www.psychology.org.au/Content.aspx?ID=3950>

On a local level, the NT Branch welcomed visiting N.O. Director - Emeritus Professor Trang Thomas

FAPS to our September committee meeting. It was a pleasure to have Trang with us for the meeting and she outlined her role as conduit between the NT Branch and N.O. We look forward to establishing a strong relationship with Trang during the time she has with us.

### PsyBA update

The NT Branch has submitted numerous requests to the Board about the ongoing issue of finding supervisors for 4+2, Masters students and endorsement seeking registrars. We have received communication previously that this is an issue the Board is addressing – indeed the PsyBA website informs us that a list of Board-approved supervisors is coming soon. Your committee continues to act as advocates for these causes and will keep you up to date regarding these issues.

### Alice Springs update

Our Alice Springs committee member - Sascha Kowalenko, is current coordinator of the Alice Springs APS NT Branch Group and she provides the following update regarding our Alice colleagues.

- Approximately 30 psychologists working in Alice Springs
  - Approx. 16 APS members
  - Majority work in non-government settings
- Group meets the last Tuesday of each month (tradition established by Michael Tyrrell over many years)

- Formalities are kept to a minimum
- Format of the meeting:
  - Informal discussion of professional issues re. registration, CPD requirements, supervision etc
  - Discuss local activities, challenges, achievements
  - Professional development event each meeting:
    - Rural Health Education Foundation
    - MHPN webinars
    - Visiting speakers
    - In-service re. participants' training, conference attendance

## IN THIS ISSUE

- 3 Report from the APS National Office
- 2 Considerations regarding treatment of current members of the military service

## *From the Co-Chair (continued)*

- Broader aim of the group is to encourage the development of 'synergies' with other mental health and health providers in Alice Springs in an attempt to (a) improve the profile of the profession, (b) improve client outcomes through coordinated care, and (c) improve efficiencies re. service delivery. This is being tackled by linking in with MHPN funding and PD opportunities.
- Attendance varies throughout the year but there is a core group of 6-8 practitioners that present regularly.
- Re-occurring discussion points for the group:
  - Working with Aboriginal clients and related structural issues
  - Access to CPD (with many people preferring to

travel interstate but costs are often inhibitory) and supervision (good supervision opportunities for interns or new psychs; challenging for senior practitioners, those with several endorsements)

- Challenges of working in a smaller town

We are looking forward to Sascha providing a regular column each Psych News in the future.

Also regarding future editions of Psych News, I am hopeful to receive articles, commentary or feedback from NT Branch members in order to make our newsletter informative and relevant to all members. All submissions welcome and encouraged – especially from our more remote practitioners and student members.

And of the future, as mentioned briefly in the last Psych News,

the NT Branch AGM will be held on Wednesday 30th November and all committee positions will become vacant. Nominations are open and I shall be sending around more information via email in the coming weeks. In keeping with the committee's commitment to increasing Branch's value and relevance to members is the exciting news that our AGM will be a free drinks and nibbles event with a guest speaker providing CPD. Our hope is to provide more opportunities for our members to meet, mingle and share valuable local knowledge. Full details of AGM location and time will be circulated via the bulk emailer. We will be encouraging RSVP by 21st November for catering purposes.

So, keep an eye on your emails and get involved!

**Kate Crawley**

# Report from the APS National Office

This regular report provides information on some of the recent activities and news from the APS National Office.

## Results of APS Board of Directors election 2011

An election for the President-Elect and two General Director positions on the APS Board of Directors was held and the result was declared at the Society's AGM on 6 October 2011. The successful candidate for the President-Elect is **Mr Tim Hannan FAPS**. Following a 12-month term as President-Elect, Tim Hannan will assume the office of President of the Society from the AGM in 2012 for a two-year term. As Tim is currently a Director on the APS Board, his election to President-Elect has produced a third vacancy for a General Director on the Board. Therefore three successful candidates have been elected to General Director positions on the Board and they are **Associate Professor Erica Frydenberg FAPS** and **Professor Mike Kyrios FAPS** for three-year terms, and **Mr Alan Plumb FAPS** for a two-year term to fill the vacancy left by Tim Hannan. At the first meeting of the new APS Board of Directors following the AGM, two additional Directors were appointed to provide greater Board diversity. These are **Ms Sue Carter** and **Dr Nick Reynolds MAPS** who have each been appointed for a one-year term. Profiles of all members of the new APS Board can be found on the APS website under 'About the APS'.

## New APS Divisions to give all members a forum

As part of the governance review of the Society, the recent work of the APS Constituent Units Review Committee investigated whether alternative structures might better meet the needs of the Society to ensure the APS fulfils its primary function of serving its members. In particular the Committee considered how to give greater representation to all members, particularly non-specialist psychologists and academics and educators, some of whom did not have a particular 'home' within the current member group structure.

The Review Committee recommended a new Divisional structure to ensure that all categories of members have a forum with which to engage to make policy recommendations, and to facilitate communication throughout the APS. The three new Divisions will be:

1. Division of Specialist Psychological Practice
2. Division of General Psychological Practice
3. Division of Research, Education and Training

This new structure will ensure that there is a strong voice for all sections of the APS membership, and will enable tailored advocacy and policy preparation, and the development of resources and initiatives to suit their particular needs. The functions and processes associated with the new Divisions within the Society are still being finalised, but they will have a direct conduit to the Board of Directors and National Office through regular meetings with the Executive Director and President, as currently happens with the College Chairs' Forum.

## Evolution of the APS logo

An initiative to enable greater recognition of the APS postnominals (Hon FAPS, FAPS, MAPS, Assoc MAPS) that signify belonging to the peak professional organisation for psychology has commenced. This has entailed an evolution of the APS logo so that it more prominently displays the APS acronym that is used in the postnominal letters, while still retaining links to the previous logo. The 'refreshed' logo reflects the APS history as a learned society through the retention of the tree of knowledge, but provides a more forward-looking image and prominent APS acronym that will assist in increasing awareness of the meaning of APS members' postnominals. The refreshed APS logo was launched at the APS Conference and will gradually be incorporated across all APS communications materials, resources and stationery in the coming months. The changes to the APS logo are part of a wider initiative to ensure that all APS members benefit from the growing strength and prominence of the Society.

## Deadline for meeting CPD requirements is fast approaching

The end of the first annual continuing professional development (CPD) cycle under the new arrangements is imminent, and all CPD requirements must be met by 30 November 2011. There is a complex array of mandatory CPD requirements for maintenance of general registration with the Psychology Board of Australia, membership of the Australian Psychological Society, and Medicare provider status. Those members who have not yet commenced logging their CPD using the APS online CPD logging system are strongly encouraged to do so to assist them in understanding, organising and tracking their individual CPD requirements. The APS has also developed comprehensive CPD information which is available on the website. The APS CPD resources and logging system can be accessed from the APS website under 'CPD and Events'.

## Registration renewal with the Psychology Board of Australia due by 30 November 2011

All members who hold full ('general') registration with the Psychology Board of Australia are reminded that registration renewal is due by 30 November 2011. Psychologists in all States and Territories of Australia (including those with non-practising registration) are required to renew their registration by this date. The only exception to this is psychologists who hold provisional registration, who must renew their registration on their anniversary date. The registration renewal process is being managed by the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). Psychologists will be notified by email and mail that registration renewal is due. There are substantial late fees and serious consequences if registration is not renewed on time, so members are urged to renew their registration by 30 November 2011 to avoid these problems.

**Professor Lyn Littlefield OAM FAPS**  
Executive Director

## Considerations regarding treatment of current members of the military service

by David Moorcroft.

Darwin has become a location of concentrated resources for all the three armed forces. As many of you would know I work in private practice, and over time the majority of clients have become current or past members of the ADF. It is perhaps broadly accepted that the nature of military training and service involves the 'acculturation' of a civilian into becoming a member of the ADF. The intense and pervasive consequences of this vocational choice go well beyond what most civilians experience when starting a career. I thought that there are likely colleagues who may be relatively unfamiliar with this population but may become involved in providing services to military members, or families. I thought it might be helpful to briefly reflect on some of the fundamental issues that I have found worthwhile to bear in mind.

For several reasons, I have chosen to loosely structure much of this article around the passage of a new recruit from training to first posting. Initial induction and training was considered to illustrate some aspects of the military useful to understand. This period was also regarded to be a rich source of particularly good examples to reflect upon the psychological processes underlying aspects of training and some of the potential implications for broader social functioning. Lastly, by virtue of their youth and inexperience, the younger, recently enlisted members would seem to have the greatest potential vulnerability for adverse psychological adjustments, and therefore appropriate for particular consideration.

Foremost, I have found it useful to reflect that the ADF is literally 'a law unto itself'. In addition to civil and criminal law, ADF members are also subject to military law and discipline. They may face punishments for infringements that many of us (civilians) would find rather unreasonable. Members themselves indicate often feeling this way, however the more experienced ones report that they have learned that it is often easier to accept the verdict than to dispute it. The scope of punishments available in the military is considerable - from 'extras' (additional duties), restrictions (eg. blocked from courses or promotion), reduction in seniority or rank, discharge from service, and even imprisonment (in military goal).

The rank structure is another important distinction from civilian workforces. This is apparent in the structure of the organization from the recruitment process onwards, with distinctly separate pathways across all forces for regular, compared to officer recruits. Within the ADF there are many examples of the institutional separation between officers, non-commissioned officers, senior, junior and lowest ranked members (egs. different messes on base, work locations, training). In most circumstances, the

hierarchy tends to be strictly maintained with the expected demonstrations of respect to superior rank actively policed, particularly early in a member's career. Members tend to socialise around their similarly ranked peers and this is actively supported by the organisation.

Separation according to rank is consistent with the long-standing core principal that in an operational context, in order to achieve overall military objectives, is seen as important to have psychological separation between the people giving the orders from those carrying them out. The obvious increasing status and associated privileges that accompany rank also acts as a strong incentive for career-minded members to seek promotion. The opportunities for promotion vary greatly and when there is constriction (inevitable if the member progresses high enough) there may be considerable competitiveness.

Recruit training is perhaps the most useful example of the concentrated application of military-style psychological conditioning. Behind the apparently harsh aspects of this process, there are several strategic intentions such as— desensitization to aggression, creating networks of 'automatic' skills (through repetitive drilling), and shaping unquestioning adherence to orders and legitimate authority in general. Such training is considered required for the effective implementation of coordinated, controlled aggression by any battle group. The ADF endeavours to maintain as many personnel as possible within a state of 'readiness' for deployment. This involves maintaining a high degree of physical conditioning, skill maintenance and in the case of frontline operational members, the potential to engage in 'controlled aggression'.

In parallel, the recruits are actively being 'acculturated' into the ADF within their particular service. When the recruits graduate, they are initiated into a particular corps, by undertaking another period of more specific, intense training. Members become increasingly aware of the range of prevailing attitudes and expectations, between different services, different corps within a service specialisations within the corps and so on. From an outside professional perspective, although there has developed an awareness of some difference between members of the three armed forces, these appear significantly out-weighted by all ADF members facing similar psychologically significant factors that demarcate a military career, such as obeying orders, adjusting to posting cycles and the potential for exposure to threat or the impact of disaster.

Following completion of initial training, the member is assigned their first posting (usually involves relocating). Often new members may be living within military barracks amongst other junior members. In this environment they remain under military rules and regulations regarding

wide ranging aspects of their behaviour. In contrast to the many restrictions imposed, there are also a range of opportunities provided for members to socialise together, but often still structured to reflect the over-arching military system (eg. organised according to rank).

Single members tend to socialise together and married members, like-wise tend to become acquainted with other military families. The transient nature of posting, combined with all the other aspects of military life makes establishing and maintaining social bonds within the military community the most likely source of compatible company.

Consistent with their age cohort, pubs and clubs are often the venues of choice for recently enlisted and newly posted members. These locations bring together young civilian and military people and for the majority of occasions, a good time is enjoyed by all. Groups of relatively new recruits are reasonably easy to identify in social situations and there are many reasons why they may become the object of negative attention by some civilians (eg. rivals for romantic attention).

The combination of desensitization to aggression, training to approach threat, strong group identification and young impressionable brains can lead to increased risk of conflict if a member encounters provocations in broader society. The instilled aggression provocation tolerance and the very real threat of significant negative consequences (civilian and military) likely often assist the member contain excessively negative reactions. However if the disinhibiting effects of alcohol intoxication is present then trouble may be much more likely. It is also likely that on many occasions potentially serious situations have been averted by the actions of 'mates'. It is worth noting that such experiences of conflict may reinforce the bonds of group membership, and also the feeling of separation from their civilian age cohort.

Military induction and training deliberately implements a process that shapes individuals pre-existing attitudes, beliefs and preferences to become more consistent with the psychological and physical attributes believed to be associated with effective operational readiness. Induction into military service can be viewed as a relatively severe conditioning process to gain membership of a specific sub-culture that is given special status in the broader society. The combination of military law and the rank structure provide powerful coercive tools to maintain the system.

There are many aspects of the training process that can be seen to be applications of behavioural learning theory. From a behaviour modification point of view, aspects of the process are similar to 'flooding' – extreme and prolonged exposure to a stimulus to achieve desensitization. The extensive use of participant modelling, self-instructions, and repetition are foundation behavioural learning

strategies. There are examples of very clear graded exposure paradigms adopted, for example in weapons training there is a systematic progression with the members first learning and mastering the basics, then a progression of paced practice toward increasingly 'battle-like' conditions.

With regard to operant conditioning strategies, there would seem to be a rather strong reliance upon punishment. It is considered that positive reinforcement for behavioural maintenance appears associated with beliefs and meanings with members 'accepting' (not merely complying) the core values and principals associated with military service. This likely includes aspects of 'doctrine' and increasingly as time goes by, expectations regarding 'doing the right thing' by one's peers and the chain of command. It is considered informative to reflect upon the fundamental concept of 'service' and parallels between the military and perhaps unusual candidates, such as induction and training into a religious order. There are many commonalities, however in both systems 'doctrine' forms the core of the system and 'indoctrination' characterises the overall training strategy applied – creating a membership whose behaviour tends to be motivated and maintained by belief in a higher power and purpose.

There are other potential incentives to remain within the military, such as reliability of employment, health and other entitlements, and for eligible members, the financial incentive associated with overseas deployment. Progressing in rank may be particularly motivational those who want a 'career' in the military or those who aspire to perform a specific role .

### **Working with ADF members**

A general perspective adopted when I commenced work with ADF members was to approach interviews in a similar manner as if commencing work with someone from a different cultural background. Taking time to understand the 'cultural meaning' of events is therefore not only considered appropriate, but essential in order to improve the chances that any 'intervention' will have significant benefit to the individual within their cultural context.

If ADF members are experiencing problems, there is often significant, additional concern regarding any potential for negative work consequences. Trouble such as substance-related and conduct offences that (in the civilian spectrum of offending) may be considered to be relatively 'minor' may have disproportionate consequences for the ADF members career, through the independent military disciplinary processes.

There are many avenues of support and assistance available for ADF members, within the forces (eg. medical centres, psychological support team, chaplaincy services, alcohol rehabilitation programs), through the organisations

## **Considerations regarding treatment of current members of the military service (continued)**

specifically relevant for the health needs of military members (eg Defence Community Organization, Veterans and Veterans families Counselling Services, Department of Veteran Affairs) or lastly through referral to external service providers (eg. specialist medical and health professionals).

Despite many avenues of support being available through agencies more closely aligned to the military, members frequently report a preference for external referral for psychological difficulties. There have been a variety of reasons cited, perhaps most commonly has been concern regarding increased risk of negative career impact if they presented for assistance to ADF psychologists, which was often related to the medical documentation. It is perhaps useful to reflect that if a member is presenting entirely independent of the ADF or associated sources, they may well be particularly sensitive regarding confidentiality.

As always is appropriate practice, establishing clear, agreed boundaries of confidentiality is considered particularly important when commencing any psychological work with ADF members. Identifying any specific risks peculiar to the member's service context has proved

to be useful in adjusting the treatment planning and recommendations to maximise the chances of approval and support from the chain of command.

If the presenting problem is considered associated to a collateral effect of military training or service, then psycho-education unpacking the physiology and psychology regarding the impact of military training and experiences is considered to have been particularly helpful for ADF clients.

Useful concepts for 'pitching' psychological interventions include 'coaching adaptive responses' and 'extending skills' for adaptive behaviour in the civilian domains of life. Members are very familiar with skills training and tend to be rather more reliable regarding undertaking the agreed practise.

In conclusion, I have found working with ADF personnel to be very interesting, challenging and rewarding. The members are generally punctual, reliable, prepared to practise suggested strategies and willing to tolerate immediate discomfort for longer-term gain (positive treatment indicators). I hope the article has been of some interest and may of benefit to you at some time.

Think well.

Be well.



**NATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY WEEK**

13-19 November 2011

[www.psychologyweek.com.au](http://www.psychologyweek.com.au)



**APS** Australian Psychological Society

## Get organised for 2012 with our new APS diaries and notebook

This year members have the choice of two sizes of APS diaries (A5 and quarto) as well as a new APS notebook (A5 size), all with quality black leather-look covers featuring the new APS logo.

These covers are reusable year after year, with replacement inserts available. Diary inserts are available in day-to-a page or week-to-an-opening varieties, and notebook inserts come with lined pages.

### PRICES (including GST, postage and handling)

	A5 (Page size 210 x 148.5mm)	QUARTO (Page size 260 x 210mm)
<b>APS diary</b> APS branded, reusable leather-look slip-on cover, with choice of wiro-bound day-to-a-page or week-to-an-opening diary	\$40.00	\$50.00
<b>APS notebook</b> APS branded reusable leather-look slip-on cover, with wiro-bound ruled notebook	\$35.00	

To order your 2012 APS diary or APS notebook, please go to the APS online shop ([www.psychology.org.au/publications/shop](http://www.psychology.org.au/publications/shop)) or call 03 8662 3300 for more information.

**ORDER YOURS TODAY!**



## PSYCH NEWS – THE APS NORTHERN TERRITORY NEWSLETTER

### 2012 advertising rates and specifications\*

There are usually five APS Northern Territory newsletters published each year: March, May, July, September and November. Distribution numbers vary from one issue to the next. There are approximately 220 APS members in the Northern Territory who all receive PSYCH NEWS free of

Advertisement	Price (inc. GST)	Specifications (mm)
Full page	\$170	190mm wide x 277mm deep
Half page	\$100	190mm wide x 120mm deep
Quarter page	\$70	92mm wide x 120mm deep
Eighth page	\$45	92mm wide x 57.5mm deep
Insert	\$180	Maximum two A4 pages

\*All specifications are width by depth, and ads are NOT required to have any bleed

### 2012 editorial and advertising deadlines\*\*

Any articles for publication, and advertising bookings, must reach the editor by the dates listed below.

Issue	Deadline	Publication date 2012
March 2012	9 February	Mid March
May 2012	9 April	Mid May
July 2012	8 June	Mid July
September 2012	8 August	Mid September
November 2012	8 October	Mid November

\*\*Please take note of the publication date when promoting activities and events

**To book an advertisement or insert^, please contact PSYCH NEWS editor Peter Laming.**

Email: [plcs@aapt.net.au](mailto:plcs@aapt.net.au)  
Home: (08) 8945 5688

**Articles:** All readers, including students, are invited to submit editorial contributions in the form of news, professional information, letters to the editor, notices, opinion, comment or short articles and should be emailed to the editor for consideration (preferably attached as an MS Word file). Publication of articles – solicited or unsolicited – is not guaranteed.

**Advertising:** The activities of APS member groups (Branches, Colleges and Interest Groups) may be advertised free of charge, dependent on available advertising space and upon consultation with the editor.

Non-APS groups wishing to advertise professional development activities provided on a not-for-profit basis should contact the editor to discuss whether the activity may be advertised free of charge, subject to available space. All other non-APS advertising material will be charged according to the advertising rates listed above. The quoted rates may be changed without notice.

All advertising and editorial material submitted must be accurate and adhere to the principles of the APS Code of Ethics. Materials may be checked with the APS Executive Officer and edited accordingly.

**^Inserts need to be booked with the editor by the deadlines listed above. You will then be provided with the address details to supply the printed material directly to the mail house in Melbourne.**

**PUBLISHER'S DISCLAIMER:** The views expressed in PSYCH NEWS are not necessarily those of the Australian Psychological Society. Letters to the editor are welcomed and will be published at the discretion of the editor and state committee. Published letters do not necessarily reflect the thoughts of the editor, committee or the APS, except where specifically indicated. The publication of an advertisement by the Australian Psychological Society is not an endorsement of the advertiser nor of the products or services advertised. Only those professional development activities carrying the APS logo and an appropriate endorsement statement can be considered to be specifically approved by the APS. Advertisers may not incorporate in a subsequent advertisement or promotional piece the fact that a product or service has been advertised in any publication of the Society. The publications of the Society are published for and on behalf of the membership to advance psychology as a science and a profession. The APS reserves the right unilaterally to cancel or reject advertising which is not deemed to be in keeping with its scientific and professional aims. Whilst all care is taken, the APS does not take responsibility for advertising containing incorrect information or for advertisements which do not appear as scheduled.

## BRANCH EXECUTIVE

### Co Chairpersons

Kate Crawley  
Kerry Williams

### Secretary

Belinda Cooper

### Treasurer

Vicki Norman  
(student representative)

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Sascha Kowalenko  
Mary Morris  
Cheryl Blakey  
David Moorcroft  
Bernie Davies  
Dianne Mayo  
Natalie Althouse  
(student representative)

## NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Peter Laming  
(08) 8945 5688

NT Branch meetings are held on the fourth Wednesday bimonthly (from September). All members are welcome. Venue is the Electoral Office of the Local Member, Parap Shopping Centre. Time 6pm.