

DS

October 2026



Newsletter
of the
RAAF
STAFF COLLEGE
ASSOCIATION Inc

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Luncheon Seminar and AGM

Thursday 26 November 2026

at the National Press Club

16 National Circuit, Barton

Speaker:

Chris Uhlmann

Journalist and TV presenter

From the President

At this time last year, I outed myself as an optimist. Perhaps I should have been more circumspect: any optimism we may have felt a year ago has been sorely tested. Domestic issues occupying our thoughts have ranged from the shocking terrorist attack on our shores to challenges with the cost of living, and of course the threatened closure of heritage Defence bases. Globally, we have been impacted by the fallout from military operations against Iran that seem to have missed the benefit of any sort of prior Decision-Making and Planning Processes (that's a military appreciation process to you and me), and while on one hand we look to the impact that a long term military blockade might have on Iran, we are probably confused by prospect of the United States administration's apparent sanction busting activity as it imports Russian diesel. All these issues and more provide a rich setting for insightful commentary by such highly respected journalists as our next lunch guest, [Chris Uhlmann](#). With a stellar

media career in print media, radio and television, I think it's fair to say that Chris prides himself on taking a rounded, rather than ideological view of contemporary issues. I am really looking forward to hearing him speak on 26 November.

As usual, this meeting will also be our AGM, and in keeping with our guided democracy, will aim to keep the meeting as brief as possible. Meeting papers will be distributed to members in advance of the meeting, and in true staff college style, will have been assumed to have been read prior to the lunch.

By way of my now template President's Report, I acknowledge the three speakers from the past year who have both entertained us and kept us in touch with higher level strategic issues. Last November, we were honoured by the presence [Air Marshal Stephen Chappell DSC CSC OAM](#), Chief and RAAFSCA co-patron. We were left in no doubt that our Air Force is currently in very safe hands, and I was particularly pleased when the Chief said that he would be happy to have a return outing with us – I must pursue that! In his March presentation, [Professor Clive Williams MG](#), Director of the Terrorism Research Centre, and former Australian Army and Defence intelligence officer shared his personal view of Australia's Strategic Circumstances – a very contemporary and evolving theme. Most recently, we were joined by [Air Commodore Pete Warmerdam](#), UK Defence Advisor, Australia, who spoke to us about the UK-Australia bilateral relationship. I noted when introducing Air Commodore Warmerdam that he is a graduate of both the Australian Command and Staff Course and the Defence Strategic Studies Course at Weston Creek, making him doubly eligible to join our association – but will Pete and his family permanently join the Australian population as Australian citizens?

As always, I conclude my President's Report by thanking most sincerely my long-serving and dedicated fellow committee members, Paul McMahon, Frank Kelly and David Wade. I also extend my thanks to our new honorary reviewer, Dennis Mitchell for confirming the great job that David Wade has done to keep our accounts in order. Finally, I again acknowledge the continuing efforts by the management and staff of the National Press Club to ensure that our lunches are pleasurable outings for us. As always, I look forward to seeing those of you who can attend on Thursday 26 November, and encourage you to monitor our website for earliest advice of any changes to the program, and other news.

Stay well,

Ian

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