



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

HMAS CERBERUS CEREMONIAL DIVISIONS

Friday 30 November, 2018

Captain Michael Oborn, CSM, Commanding Officer HMAS Cerberus

Commodore Colin Dagg, CSC, Director General Engineering Navy

Distinguished guests

Ladies and gentlemen

First, I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land upon which we are gathering and pay my respects to their Elders past and present and to any Elders here with us this morning.

Tony and I are delighted to join you here today for HMAS CERBERUS, Ceremonial Divisions. Naturally, when I look at you, I think about what you give. How you serve. The role you play to represent us. To protect us. To help other communities in times of need.

But I am conscious that you don't need me to remind you of that. It is what you train for. It is what you do. It is what you live.

And I am conscious too that I don't have the expertise of your Senior Sailors and Officers or those who have served and come back to address you. They can describe far better than I can, the responsibilities of your roles, and the detail of your many achievements.

So, I would like to talk to you from a different perspective. It is from the perspective of someone outside the ADF, although with the special experience and vantage-point of the Governor's role.

In this role, I see our service men and women, and our veterans, in all different contexts. On parade. On various ceremonial occasions. Visiting bases. On ships. When I meet with senior defence leaders. And up close, when we have defence personnel helping us at Government House, which – to our good fortune – is often.

What I see are the strengths that you gain from your choice of career.

I wonder if you even notice the development and growth of these strengths, as you set about your rigorous training or the hard work you do every day.

First, I see amongst you a very particular sense of belonging. Many of you refer to the intensely close bonds between you, describing your colleagues as your 'navy family'.

You even 'speak navy'.

Going around the bouy with duff. Smashing down a goffa at mornos. Getting some gammas on the uppers.

Friendships (and certainly a new language) you would be unlikely to match in civilian life, at least in the same timeframe.

We know that a sense of belonging and connection breeds resilience. You have it in spades.

I see other benefits too that you experience well ahead of your peers, when it comes to skills development, career progression and job security.

For the younger ones amongst you, your high school friends will be just starting out in civilian jobs – choosing a trade or putting their knees under a desk. Meanwhile, you will be handling first grade weapons and travelling across the world.

You receive training in specialist fields. Whether or not everything that you learn can translate directly into the broader workforce, you do learn how to quickly acquire new skills, how to master new technologies and how to adapt to changes and new demands.

That is, you learn something more useful than just a hard skill. You learn the skills that a modern and agile workforce demands. And so, skills that you can take anywhere.

You certainly learn something that you might not pick up as readily in every workplace. You learn the necessity of teamwork. It is at the heart of all that you do, whether landing a helicopter on a moving vessel, learning how to cook in the field, or how to operate communication and information systems.

In your daily working lives you learn to put the team above the individual. You master the art of taking instructions, working innovatively and thinking on the go.

And finally, you are exposed to great leaders and leadership skills. You are exposed to a chain of command, and you can see leadership modelled up closer and more vividly than in most other vocations.

You see what you like and what you don't. You see how you will model your own leadership. And you learn the transparency needed – and the courage – to step up to help fix something that you see that's not right.

I hope that you can appreciate that when I look at you, I see such a competent, caring, skilful, respectful and confident group of young (and not so young) people representing our country.

That makes me particularly pleased for this opportunity to thank you. Thank you for your choice of career. Thank you for what you give.

That leads me to thank your families too for their faith and support for you.

And your instructors, who work patiently to help you develop and hone your skills.

And to thank you all, for being such a fine group of Australians.

I wish you all well.