



## *The Retired Ambulance Association Victoria Inc.*

# TRAAVI Times

May 2026 Vol. 10



## **President's introduction and welcome**

Tasmania Update.

During our last trip to Tasmania Graham Douglas and I had several meetings with the following groups;

- Tim Jacobson and Robbie Moore from Hospital and Community Services Union (HACSU)
- Ambulance Tasmania's (AT) new CEO Nicole Ashworth (Craigieburn CERT, AV Paramedic & Triple Zero Victoria) and Jane Sweeney (AT Senior Manager Culture and Wellbeing).
- Paul Meehan who organises several semi-regular gatherings for retired and former AT Paramedics and Nurses who have worked with each other over the years in Hobart.
- Devonport Chaplaincy Inc., CEO Andrew Hillier and Gordon Kelly the Chaplaincy and Wellbeing Manager, Peter Smith Chaplaincy Co-ordinator Devonport. Where we signed a Memorandum of Understanding for the provision of Volunteer Chaplains to support not only for TRAAVI Members in Tasmania but also all retired Paramedics and former AT employees.
- It came to light that retiring AT Paramedics are only supported post separation for a solitary month support, compare that with what AV offers retiring Paramedics.
- We are working to ensure all Employees; post separation receives the care they deserve regardless of location.

We need to be mindful of and acknowledge all the work done by previous TRAAVI Committees' who advocated for support programs such as RAPE Peer Support along with access to AV Chaplains.

Discussions are continuing with AV to increase the number of AV's Volunteer Chaplains attending TRAAVI Meetings. We currently have several Chaplains who are members and regularly attend meetings at Bendigo, Ballarat, Metro East, Metro North and Metro West.

One key objective is to increase that number of Chaplains available to attend District Meetings. These discussions will also need to include VCCEM from whom AV draw their Volunteer Chaplains

The developments in Tasmania, have reinforced our efforts with our Regional areas especially in North Eastern and North Western regions of Victoria. Includes places such as Swan Hill, Wangaratta, Wodonga and Seymour.

In Gippsland and South Western regions meeting venues are rotated making it easier for members to attend meetings. Increasing the number of venues provides easier access for everyone, both members and non-members to gather and meet up with former and current work colleagues.

The Committee continues the effort to reduce the administrative workloads. Our Membership database (Airtable) sends out reminder notices for each District prior to each District meeting thereby reducing that task for Co-ordinators.

We are also establishing an SMS system which will provide TRAAVI with another format to contact our members; It's presently in the "testing" stage, the advantage being the message goes directly to mobile phone or smart devices. As with these type of communication systems, individuals are able to opt out prior to the system going "live".

One last thing, at the last Committee meeting we discussed the possibility of inviting a Regional Member(s) join into a Committee meeting. Using video conferencing (MS Teams) we having more online meetings such as the upcoming Regional Co-ordinators meetings. With access to smart devices, laptops or desktop computers allows one to join any meeting without the need to be physically at the same venue where the meeting is being held.

If you have any questions or concerns, please inform me or any member of the Committee.

Steve MULLIGAN.

M: 0418 331 984

E: [president@traavi.org.au](mailto:president@traavi.org.au)

## Secretary's Report

I'm sitting here writing this with the recent news than one of our front-line MICA paramedics has been stabbed while meeting up with colleagues for a morning coffee. The news is pleasing that physically he is well and receiving appropriate support from AV and the VAU.

Further to this, a female paramedic who is pregnant has allegedly been assaulted by a recovering drug overdose patient that she was treating, causing great distress to all concerned. CEO Jordan Emery has come out in support of all paramedics and management's backing if a crew depart a scene due to it being unsafe because of violence. Danny Hill, VAU Secretary has called for tightening of the laws pertaining to assaulting a front-line worker.

This is distressing as we know, the industry has its early roots in single officer crewing which largely prevailed in the regional areas up until the 90's when the Union pushed for two officer crewing.

Due to an ever-increasing demand for service and response time pressure, paramedic fatigue resulting in increased absenteeism and declining morale there seems to be greater tolerance for single officer dispatch.

With stress levels at an all-time high within the industry and professional accountability at a level that none of the 'old guard' experiencing in their careers it's difficult to empathise and relate to the pressure cooker environment our industry is enduring. The budgetary constraints applied to the industry sees many paramedicine university graduates unable to secure a position either forcing them to work underutilising their newfound skills in the private ambulance transport industry or move interstate or overseas.

A safe working environment demands adequate crewing for our paramedics, no regression back to the old days of single officer dispatch and a budget which would see adequate staffing.

Jim Ballard

Mobile: 0412 544 011

Email: [secretary@traavi.org.au](mailto:secretary@traavi.org.au)

## The Vice President's Report/Membership Officer

As at the time of writing, our membership totals 555.

Members by membership type:

- Full: 386
- Life: 119
- Associate: 50
- New members: 46 have joined this FY.

In the previous three months we have welcomed:

Linda Ross	Metro South
Ross Breaden	Gipps Central & South
Austen Toad	MetroWest
Bruce Williams	SW Warrnambool
Colin McIver	Metro South
Garry Ralfs	CW Ballarat
Billy Dettmer	Metro South
Al Briggs	MetroWest
Paul Dickison	Gipps Central & South
Greg Knowles	TAS Northwest
Peter Smith	TAS Northwest, Launceston, Hobart
Ross Whelan	Central Echuca
Graeme Smout	NE Shepparton
Alan Penaluna	MetroWest
Geoff McGregor	NE Shepparton
Paul Meehan	TAS Hobart

**\*\*REMINDER - Membership subscriptions\*\***

These fall due on **July 1st** each year, invoices will be emailed in early June.

Payment options will be detailed within the request for payment.

Briefly, these options are via:

1. As in the past, we accept **EFT** (electronic funds transfer via your bank account).
2. This year payments can be made at district meetings via the "**Square app**". Note: not available at all districts. Speak to your Coordinator to confirm the availability of this service.
3. **Credit card** payment over the phone, a number to call will be listed in the email.

## District Matters

We've recently had a request to make meeting dates more readily accessible.

A calendar for each TRAAVI Region has been created and an all-inclusive calendar of all events including Committee Meetings & the AGM.

Whether you're looking for the next meeting for your District or Region or you are travelling & want to attend a local meeting they are all there and up to date.

Up to date because the link is directly into the TRAAVI admin system.  
If a change is made the calendar reflects that update immediately.

To view the "live" TRAAVI Events Calendars click the links below.

### NOTE:

To add a calendar to your calendar app a separate unique link is required.  
These will be circulated in the next edition of *TRAAVI Times* or you can [request the link now via email](#) specifying your Region.

#### All events (incl Admin meetings)

- [All events](#)

#### Regional Calendars

- [Central](#)
- [Central West](#)
- [Gippsland](#)
- [Metropolitan](#)
- [North East](#)
- [North West](#)
- [South West](#)
- [Tasmania](#)

Cheers  
Graham Douglas



## **We have mourned the passing of:**

Ian Dale 25 February 2026

Ted Van Dyken 9 March 2026

Ted is also recognised for his tireless support of the retired & wider community of first responders, through his Facebook page, Signal 8

Geoffrey Pickering 11 April 2026

May they all rest in peace.

We honour their service to Ambulance and the wider community.

## **Merchandise**

We have spoken recently about a new product to our line and that is a retired ambulance beanie.

We are currently in production, they will be available from June and we're taking pre-orders now via our online store and Square, if you have that available to you, the price is set at \$15.00 plus postage.

This will be a limited run and expected to be a popular item in navy blue with our logo on the front turnover.



Les Wood  
Merchandise Officer

## **Welfare**

JUST A BIG HELLO FROM WELFARE and our weather changes far too quickly.

Daylight saving is away, and it's into a little sloth-like space when we realize winter is not far away. This space between newsletters gives a chance to send out cards for "*good wishes*", "*thinking of you*" and admiration and condolence to families who have lost a dear one.

These little touches, together with the "how long will it take to get there" from Aust Post do encourage a little, but, you know, it's the friendship and kinship from actually being there for someone that counts.

There is a realization that some may not really want to hear from some of the work team after retiring or leaving a career. But there ARE those that miss hearing your news and achievements (the response from birthday greetings on Facebook shows that!)

Ring someone. Take that little time. It's such a missed opportunity when you feel you are on your own when there is a chance to meet up. Keep and encourage those links & ties; you may just "make someone else's day!"

**Do We Have As Much Sense As A Goose?  
(I'm sure we all know a few!)**

A flock of geese flying in a formation 'V'

Much research reveals what you do not see, each bird in front by flapping its wings creates an uplift for the goose following. Flying in 'V' formation they change by 71% plus, their flying range (in a) common direction and a sense of community.

Our efforts become quick and easy, if a goose falls out of formation by chance it feels greater drag and resistance.

If we have as much sense as a goose, we'll stay in formation with those headed our way. When tired the lead goose rotates to the rear, another taking its place in the air.

It pays, while doing hard jobs, to take turns, thus no one is overburdened or gets burnt

The geese in the back honk from behind encouraging, gentle and kind. We must encourage others as they strive to meet the daily grind of life.

If a goose gets sick and or wounded, if for some reason it gets grounded, two geese will fall out of formation they keep it company and for protection and stay with it until it flies or dies.

Such are the depths of their ties.

If we humans have the sense of a goose their way of life is what we'd choose.

*Based on a write-up "Do we have as much sense as a goose?"*

-- Unknown.

Thank you

Deb Stallard  
Welfare Coordinator.

## Letters



Department of Paramedicine  
School of Allied and Primary Health Care  
Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

Dear Jim,

### **Victorian Ambulance Cadet History Project**

We invite former Victorian ambulance cadets or the families of deceased or incapacitated cadets to participate in this study to recognise and acknowledge the contributions that the program and the cadets made to ambulance services in Victoria and to paramedic education.

#### **Background**

The study will bring together expert participants to describe and acknowledge the contributions of the Victorian Ambulance Service Cadet Program that operated in the 1960s and 1970s. The objectives are to locate the available documents related to the program, identify all the cadets, capture the experiences and insights of former cadets and families, and reflect on the contributions that the program and the cadets made.

#### **What is expected of participants?**

Participants are invited to complete a semi-structured on-line questionnaire that will provide an opportunity to recount their memories of the program and reflect on its impact. The researchers have used archival materials and their own personal knowledge to develop an incomplete list of Victorian Ambulance Service Cadets (some of who are deceased) and participants will be invited to fill in the gaps. The questionnaire is likely to take from 15-25 minutes to complete.

Participants will be asked whether they would be willing to loan or send copies of any documents related to the Victorian Ambulance Cadet Program. An opportunity to provide a short biography as a personal contribution to the project is also available, this will be edited and may be identifiable in publications, presentations and displays with consent.

#### **Why is this research significant?**

Little information about the Victorian Ambulance Cadet Program is on the public record and acknowledgement of the program and those who participated is overdue. Responses to the questionnaire will be combined with documentary evidence to write a historical account to recognise and acknowledge the cadet program and its participants.

## Research Team

Peter O’Meara and Ken Curtis (both former cadets) are conducting this research through the auspices of Monash University, Department of Paramedicine.

## Approvals

This project has been approved by the Monash University Human Research Ethics Committee – Approval No. 50764.

## Next Step

To access further information and the on-line questionnaire, please use this link:

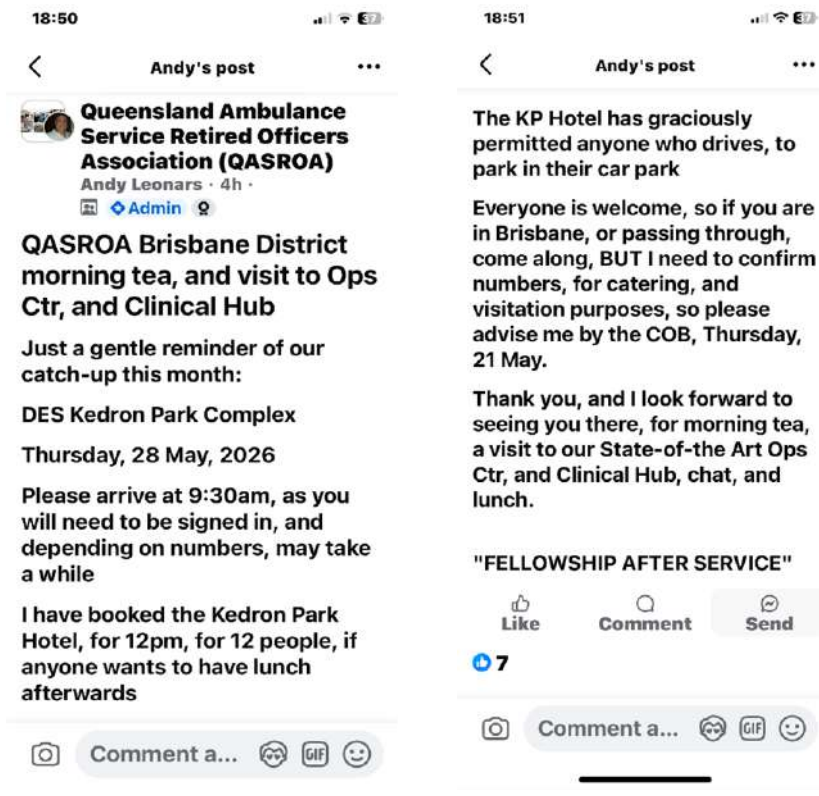
<https://retiredambulancevictoria.org.au/wp-content/uploads/Appendix-3-Advertisement-for-Study.pdf>

Thanks for your assistance.

Peter O'Meara & Ken Curtis  
Investigators

## Queensland Ambulance Service Retired Officers Association

I received this message from the QASROA is obviously pertinent to our Queensland TRAAVI members.



## Metro West



Our Chaplain Jenny McGuirk presented with her Life Membership Certificate by Graeme Parker.

The Metro West lunch and catch-up held on Friday, 8 May provided another great opportunity for former colleagues and friends to reconnect, share stories, reminisce, and continue the strong camaraderie that remains such an important part of our ambulance family.

A highlight of the afternoon was the presentation of Life Membership to our much-valued Chaplain, Jenny McGuirk. Jenny has provided outstanding support, care, and friendship to many of our members over a long period of time. It was wonderful that TRAAVI members were able to formally present Jenny with her Life Membership certificate in recognition of her dedication and contribution to the retired ambulance community.

Members were also advised that the next Metro West meeting will be held on Friday, 5 June — only four weeks away. This adjustment has been made to create a better spread between the North and West district meetings, recognising that many of our members enjoy attending both catchups.

We are also very pleased to advise that Georgie Hall will be returning from her well-earned break and resuming the role of Metro West District Coordinator. We are sure all members will join in warmly welcoming Georgie back.

While the day was thoroughly enjoyed by those who attended, we would really encourage more of our Metro West members to come along to future lunches and catch-ups. With more than 50 members in the Metro West district, these gatherings are a valuable chance to maintain friendships, support one another, and stay connected with the wider retired ambulance community.



## North East – Shepparton

TRAAVI, meeting in Shepparton on 11th of May, had 26 attending and 14 apologies. It was a time warp experience of 30 years that most of us were together again. The effort to get popular reliever Peter Spolding from Alexandra to the meeting despite his health problems was amazing and cheered him up no end.

We had members from Clifton Springs, Warrnambool, Gisborne, Melbourne, Cobram and Yarrawonga, together with the locals.

- The meeting did what Ambo's do best, "yap" and "yap"" and a great meal and company. It was very interesting comments by retirees that on retirement, they saw the world and returned home and said what next, and most said they wanted fellowship and a laughs, and this was a way of dealing with what all Ambo's suffer, that only Ambo's understand, and once an Ambo always an Ambo.

To all of you unwell, may you have a speedy recovery, and keep safe, and until next time, over and out.

Our next meeting is August 10th, at the Shepparton RSL at midday, hope you can make it. There is also available 2 wheelchairs for use if required.

Regards

Roger Vidler, 0477 704 556 and David Gawne 0438 290 051



## Gippsland East District

The East Gippsland team met for a small, but intimate get together at the Bairnsdale RSL last Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> May.

It was great to catch up on all the news, relating to ambulance, travelling, and of course all the health issues that come with the demographic we are now members of.



(Apologies Jim as I know you consider yourself a youngster still in his prime!).

Talk eventually moved onto where our next meeting should be held and we are working with the Morwell members to hold a combined luncheon at Maffra with a visit to the car museum and lunch at a venue to be determined. More details to follow.

Kind regards  
Paul Lodder

## Central Northwest - Bendigo

A few words about the meeting on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> April

A large number of invites went out to potential members so when I arrived there were many familiar faces in the foyer area. This included some of our valued members who regularly attend and approximately 20 other ex-ambos who had responded to the invites.

Everyone seemed to be enjoying catching up and chatting with colleagues they had not seen in some time. It was encouraging to see.

It took some time and effort to eventually convince everyone to move in and order their meals and make their way to the reserved tables.

I was pleased to note that everyone seemed involved in conversation whenever I surveyed the group. It felt like a very warm and inclusive group.

Once the meal was complete there was more mingling around and catching up... Many stayed on till well into the afternoon chatting and enjoying the company.

We look forward to next meeting and hope that some (if not all) of the new visitors return.

I also think there is good reason to believe that there are a number of ex ambos who were unable to make it this time round that may be able to make it to future meetings. Time will tell on that score.



Dale Prentice  
District Coordinator

## OBITUARY

*First published in the Mornington News – 5 May 2026*

Dr. Roger Redston will be fondly remembered by early MICA candidates and many ex-PAS staff who had a reasonable amount to do with the old Frankston Community Hospital (FCH)

23 March 1938 – 13 April 2026



Roger Redston, who served as a physician on the Mornington Peninsula for over 35 years, died peacefully on 13 April 2026, aged 88.

He was a devoted husband for 61 years, a proud father of five children, grandfather to eleven grandchildren, and great grandfather to five great grandchildren.

Born on 23 March 1938 in Croydon, Surrey, his life began as Europe edged towards war. As a toddler he travelled overseas to Canada, returning to England in mid-1941 by ship during the height of the Battle of the Atlantic, navigating routes threatened by U boats, with family stories later recounting the presence of Nazi spies on board.

It was perhaps an early seed of the curiosity that led to a love of spy stories which stayed with him for life.

He was educated at Wycliffe College, Gloucester, completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Cambridge, and undertook clinical training at University College London, where he met Rosemary; a nurse who became his wife and lifelong partner, and who died in January this year.

After qualification, they spent two years in Uganda, contributing to post independence medical care following the end of colonial rule. Their first two children, Thomas and Suzanne, were born there; both delivered at home by their father.

The family returned to England and settled in Exeter, where their third child, Kathleen, was born. During this time, he completed his physician training and became a Member of the Royal College of Physicians. Never short of adventure, they then joined the wave of “ten pound poms”, emigrating to Australia aboard the Fairstar, settling initially in Perth, Western Australia, where he worked as a hospital based general physician, and where they welcomed their fourth child Toby.

After two years, the family moved to the Mornington Peninsula, welcoming their fifth and final child, Samuel. He joined Frankston Community Hospital, later attaining Fellowship of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians. From 1972, the peninsula remained his home for the rest of his life.

In 1974, he became the first Medical Director of Frankston Hospital. He was instrumental in establishing the hospital’s first coronary care unit, and he provided longstanding support for the MICA (Mobile Intensive Care Ambulance) concept, contributing to training, advocacy, and fundraising to ensure advanced paramedic care became part of the Victorian Ambulance Service, including on the Peninsula.

He trained generations of nurses, paramedics, medical students, and junior doctors, and for many years served as Medical Dean for Monash University at Frankston Hospital. Alongside this work, he maintained a long and respected private practice.

His career in cardiology reflected a lifelong fascination with physics and how things work – from childhood experiments with miniature steam engines and electricity, and dismantling clocks and radios, to practising cardiology before modern cardiac interventions were routine. He loved the heart as a system, captivated by the interplay of electricity, chemical signalling, and mechanical pumps. Renowned for his skill in reading ECGs, he delighted in teaching, including his much remembered “bundle branch block dance”, an animated way to explain how electrical delays affect the synchrony of the heart.

Beyond medicine, he pursued his interests with equal curiosity and care. In later life, he and Rosie established an olive grove in Moorooduc, applying patience, study, and quiet determination to its cultivation. The grove went on to produce award winning olive oil, a source of great pride and a reflection of his belief in craftsmanship, science, and doing things well. An avid reader with broad and deep curiosity, it was a rare day when he could not join a conversation on almost any topic or engage a stranger through genuine interest in what mattered to them.

He is remembered as a man of intelligence, kindness, calm authority, and generosity of spirit — a healer, teacher, husband, father, and grandfather who lived a life of service, curiosity, and quiet purpose.

He is deeply missed and fondly remembered.

A celebration of his life was at the Mornington Bowling Club Friday 22 May

### Forth Coming Meeting Dates

21 <sup>st</sup> May	<b>Central District – Echuca</b> Echuca Workers Club 165 Annesley St, Echuca	Contact Harry Sheppard 0417 323 376
23 <sup>rd</sup> May	<b>North East District – Benalla.</b> Benalla Bowls Club 25 Arundel St, Benalla	Contact Graham Douglas (Interim) 0450 319 111
1 <sup>st</sup> June	<b>South Western District</b> Thomson’s Tavern 138 Gray St, Hamilton	Contact Rhonda Oliver 0409 073 216
4 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>Metro East – Wheelers Hill</b> Wheelers Hill Hotel 871 Ferntree Gully Rd, Wheelers Hill	Contact David Hadj 0418 557 490
9 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>North West District - Mildura</b> Mildura RSL 130 Madden Ave, Mildura	Contact Alan Cooksley 0400 055 144
15 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>Central West – Ballarat</b> Golf House Hotel 920 Doveton St North, Ballarat	Contact John Head (Interim) 0408 332 302
17 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>Gippsland Central/South</b> Esplanade Hotel Inverloch 1 Abeckett St, Inverloch	Contact Neil Akers 0407 351 626
30 <sup>th</sup> June	<b>Metro South Mornington</b> Steeple’s Bistro Mornington- Tyabb Rd, Mornington	Contact Bryan Cass 0417 554 360

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