

Speech by VADM Tim Barrett, AO, CSC, RAN
Chief of Navy Change of Command Ceremony

30 June 2014

Senator Zed Seselja, representing the Minister for Defence, The Honourable David Feeney, Shadow Assistant Minister for Defence, Ms Gai Brodtmann, Shadow Parliamentary Secretary for Defence, CDF, Secretary, Senior ADF and Defence leaders, distinguished guests, men and women of the RAN, ladies and gentlemen.

Today I have the distinct honour and privilege to take command of the Royal Australian Navy.

As my first act I wish to recognise, with deep appreciation, the progressive leadership of Vice Admiral Ray Griggs over the last three years. Other than me, I know of no-one, no-one, who cares more about the Navy than Admiral Griggs. His energy, his devotion and his intellect have made him a formidable Chief – and that is just what Navy has needed over the last three years. The reforms which have been put in place during his stewardship – Rizzo and seaworthiness, Coles and the submarine enterprise, NGN and cultural change, and others – are all fundamental to our future capability and have flourished under his personal guidance, his direction and, indeed, his passion. The Navy is better placed today than it was because of his commitment. But that is not to say that all is done and that there are not challenges ahead – as he alluded to a few moments ago. We still have much to do to move this working Navy forward, but the direction set by Admiral Griggs is the right one. And so, let me state here, publically, at the start of my tenure that the three goals he mentioned a few minutes ago:

- To gain and maintain our contract with government and with it the trust of the Australian people;
- to prepare for new capabilities; and
- to continue our reform and cultural change journey

are my goals also. Not because I don't have any alternatives, but because these have proven to be the right goals and they require a steady passage to mature, and whilst I might run a slightly different watchbill, the headmark will remain the same. And that headmark is promising for Navy; new ships and new aircraft all within the visible horizon. So whilst many challenges remain they should be framed in what is a sound future.

My second and final act at this ceremony today is to give my commitment to lead the men and women of the Royal Australian Navy to the best of my ability. You should note that at all future graduation ceremonies for officers and sailors alike I will require new members of our Navy to publically state their commitment to Navy Values. I would not do this if it were not suitable for me to do the same.

So before all of you here today, representing all the men and women of the Royal Australian Navy let me say: I commit to uphold the Navy Values of Honour, Honesty, Loyalty, Integrity and Courage. With that said, I readily accept Command of the Royal Australian Navy.