

Chief of Navy Address at the 2017 Defence Blood Challenge Launch

Canberra

1 September 2017

Good Afternoon

I am pleased to be here today to launch the 2017 Defence Blood Challenge on behalf of the Chief of the Defence Force, Air Chief Marshal Mark Binksin, who is regrettably unable to attend today's launch.

Blood donation is vitally important to Defence as blood supplies are critical to Defence personnel on operations, exercises and to all members of the Defence community in their daily life.

With this in mind, every year since 2009, Navy, Army, Air Force and Defence civilian personnel from around Australia have competed in the Defence Blood Challenge to see who can give the most blood donations and save the most lives.

Since the Challenge started in 2009 Defence personnel and their families have made 30,099 donations, saving up to 90,297 lives — an impressive effort.

I am very pleased that four of those who have decided to contribute to the success of the Defence Blood Challenge, our 2017 Defence Blood Challenge Ambassadors, are here today.

Petty Officer Rob Bateman, Warrant Officer Geneen Lord, Officer Cadet Emma Halliday and Oliver Oakman — not only have you chosen to serve your country every day at sea and ashore — you have chosen to serve your community through regular blood donations. Your donations are truly appreciated by so many.

The 2017 Defence Blood Challenge begins today and will run until 8 December. It is one of the largest community events that Defence supports.

This year, as a member of Red25, Defence is aiming to exceed 7000 donations.

I encourage all ADF and Defence APS personnel and their families to donate — an hour of your life now and then is a small inconvenience when compared to the difference it makes for so many.

Thank you again for the opportunity to be here to help launch of the 2017 Defence Blood Challenge; it is a fantastic initiative between the Defence and the Australian Red Cross Blood Service.

Thank you.