

## **CN SPEECH**

### **SIR DAVID MARTIN FOUNDATION AND RAN CENTENARY**

#### **BALL**

**05 November 2011**

Good evening, His Excellency, Mr Abel Guterres, Ambassador of the Democratic Republic of Timor Leste in Australia, Lady Martin, members of the board of Governors of the Sir David Martin Foundation, sponsors of tonight's event, members of the naval family and other distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen...

I appreciate the opportunity to make some brief remarks tonight about the centenary of the Royal Australian Navy. Part of that story is about the bond between the Sir David Martin Foundation and the Navy which has been, is, and I hope will continue to be a strong one.

That bond is rooted in the past, the Martin family, from my Chief of Staff, Will Martin to his father Sir David and his father William span some 89 years of Service in the RAN.

89 years out of the 100 years that the RAN has been in existence there has been a Martin in uniform- in the history of any organisation that is quite an achievement.

As an organisation this year we have been reflecting on that 100 years and what it means to us today. The event we celebrate is the decree signed on the 10<sup>th</sup> of July 1911 by His Majesty King George V that we should be known as the 'Royal Australian Navy'. Later that year he decided that our ships should be called 'His Majesty's Australian Ships'. It was an historic moment and one that recognised our growing maturity on the world scene.

To me though what we have really been celebrating, commemorating and honouring are the tens of thousands of men and women who have donned this uniform and served their country in peace and war over the last 100 years. Thousands of them have paid the ultimate sacrifice and we should always remember that. 600 of them are on watch tonight on operations around the globe. From those conducting Border Protection to those in Afghanistan, in the Middle East through to Southern Sudan.

The men and women of your Navy have, and still do, go about their business with great humility, determination and that uniquely irreverent sailor's sense of humour. Without them we would have Captains without crews, ships without a heart and most importantly a Navy without a soul.

Like the Sir David Martin Foundation it is where we are headed into the future that we must focus on. Navy's future is an exciting one, we have a major program of recapitalisation in train, next month our newest ship CHOULES will arrive from the UK, next year our first LHD will arrive in Melbourne from Spain, our Air Warfare Destroyers are coming together at ASC in Adelaide and our new combat helicopters are less than one posting cycle away from entering service. This is only the start of a period of great change for us. It is a period of genuine excitement, but also a time of significant challenge too. Challenges that can only be met by a team of dedicated and skilled people- we are lucky to have such a team.

Part of that team that I would like to make special mention of are the men and women of the Royal Australian Navy Band and the Federation Guard, some of whom performed tonight. They have the most unsociable of hours, they are often the part of Navy that most people see, they are great ambassadors for the Navy and for Australia and I would like to thank them for their efforts.

Finally I would like to thank the foundation for putting on tonight's event, I would like to thank you all for supporting it and look forward to a great night as we start our second century as the Royal Australian Navy.