

In memoriam

The Shark 02 crew



Lieutenant Matthew Davey RANR



Sergeant Wendy Jones RAAF



Squadron Leader Paul McCarthy RAAF



Flight Lieutenant Lynne Rowbottom RAAF



Petty Officer Stephen Slattery RAN

Months have now passed since the tragic loss of the Shark 02 helicopter crew on 2 April 2005 while providing humanitarian assistance to victims of the Sumatran earthquake. There have been nine funerals, many memorial services and countless thousands of words written. Despite all of this, it seems that it happened only yesterday and I suspect that for many of us the emotions still lie very close to the surface. While our rational minds can analyse the “facts” — the dangers inherent in military flying and the challenges of working in a region devastated by a natural disaster, it still seems so unfair. These people were there helping others; they were volunteers who were totally committed to serving their country, by helping the citizens from another in their time of need.

As members of the Defence Health Service, it is all too easy for us to lose sight of why we do what we do. The day-to-day pressures of limited resources, low staffing lev-

els and frequent deployments can allow us to lose sight of why we joined in the first place. I would like to think that we can all draw inspiration from our colleagues who perished in this tragic accident. All of the crew were professionals — they were doing a tough job, yet they relished the opportunity. They wanted to be there and they wanted to help. The nation and the world has recognised their sacrifice and they have left a lasting legacy. We should never let ourselves stray too far from the commitment to service — service to country and service to others — that has earned us all the respect of our military peers and the citizens of our country.

Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received — only what you have given: a full heart, enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage.
— *St Francis of Assisi*

Air Vice Marshall Tony Austin, AM

Head, Defence Health Service