

Media Release

The Hon Shaun Leane MLC
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Suburban Development
Minister for Veterans



Thursday, 4 February 2021

NEW SHRINE OF REMEMBRANCE CHAIR APPOINTED

The Andrews Labor Government has welcomed the appointment of naval veteran Stephen Bowater as incoming Chairperson of the Shrine of Remembrance Trustees.

A veteran of more than 40 years' service, Captain Bowater was most recently the Executive Director of the Royal Australian Navy's Commander Shore Force and takes over from Air Vice-Marshal Chris Spence who is stepping down after a nine-year term.

The Chairperson's role is to lead the Trustees in the care, management, maintenance and preservation of the Shrine of Remembrance and Shrine Reserve land.

With the Commander Shore Force, Captain Bowater oversaw Australia's 14 naval bases and 3,000 staff, as well as operational responses to the 2019-20 Australian Bushfires and the Coronavirus outbreak in Australia.

He has served in Iraq and Kuwait and has experience on nine operational deployments.

Air Vice-Marshal Spence leaves a significant legacy at the Shrine, having overseen the development and strategic direction that has grown the Shrine's reputation as the pre-eminent site of Victorian and national commemoration.

He also spearheaded the Galleries of Remembrance project, a \$45 million development of gallery space in the Shrine's undercroft, which attracted new visitors and universal acclaim as the single most important addition to the Shrine since its establishment in 1934.

Captain Bowater commences his term on Sunday, 14 February 2021.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Veterans Shaun Leane

"As Chairperson, Captain Bowater will be responsible for one of our nation's most prized and revered monuments, honouring the service and sacrifice of our veterans and our rich military history."

"He brings a wealth of knowledge from his extensive military service in Australia and abroad and I look forward to working closely with him throughout his tenure."

"I thank Air Vice-Marshal Chris Spence for his hard work over nine years in making the Shrine a fitting and appropriate dedication to the work and sacrifice of Victorian and Australian service personnel."