



Special points of interest:

- ◆ ACT Branch Fax—change of number
- ◆ SCOA ACT's involvement in the 2010 Election Campaign
- ◆ Pensions put on the political agenda
- ◆ New Membership Data Base Management System

November 2010

NOVEMBER 2010 General Meeting
Southern Cross Club, Woden
"Top of the Cross"
Monday 6 December 2010 at 10:30am

Agenda

Opening - 10:30am
 Confirm Minutes of September 2010 GM
 Guest Speaker — Bruce Arnold
 Other Business
 Close—12:00 noon

audience and their families can safeguard themselves.

People attending the talk will receive some entertainment, some hard statistics, practical advice and food for thought.

**SPEAKER FOR DECEMBER 2010
 GENERAL MEETING**

Bruce Arnold teaches law at the University of Canberra. He was a 'new technologies' specialist in the Commonwealth public service, was deputy CEO of the smallest Commonwealth company, and consulted in Australia and overseas on electronic publishing, information security and privacy. He has a particular interest in identity crime, apparent in keynote presentations for the Australia & New Zealand Institute of Insurance & Finance (ANZIIF) and the Victorian Privacy Commissioner's 'Watch This Space' conference. Recent publications include work on genetic privacy, on CV fraud and on 'stolen honour', i.e. people falsely claiming to have been awarded military honours such as the DSO, MC and VC.

His presentation for SCOA will outline the nature of identity crime, in particular financial scams affecting retirees, and give statistics on that crime (how many incidents, how much money, who are the offenders and victims). He will illustrate his talk with colourful and worrying incidents from the past, and discuss how identity crime is changing in the world of BPAY, ATMs, biometric passports and Facebook. The talk will conclude with a discussion of identity crime myths and realities, and suggestions for ways that members of the

VALE DAVID BYWATERS

David Bywaters, a life member of both the ACT and Queensland Branches of SCOA, recently died in Eudlo, Queensland.

Dave, as he was known, came to Canberra in 1967 as part of the move of the Department of Supply headquarters from Melbourne. He worked in the Personnel area and was a well liked and well respected officer.

Upon retiring about 1987, Dave immediately joined SCOA as a member of the NSW Branch which covered ACT resident members at that time. He joined the Interim Committee which was formed that year to examine the possibility of setting up a separate ACT Branch and was then appointed to the first Executive of this Branch when it was formally established in January 1988. He was a very dedicated member and contributed at an extremely significant level, including periods as Assistant Secretary, Vice President and Federal Councillor.

Dave and his wife, Judith, moved to Queensland about the end of 1990. He immediately joined the Queensland Branch and became very active on their

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SCOA (ACT) INC
A B N : 6 2 - 1 4 1 - 6 3 7 - 5 5 6

SCOA News

From the Branch President

Put it in your Diary

The Annual General Meeting of SCOA ACT will be held in the Ainslie Football Club, Ainslie, on Monday 7 March, starting at 10.30am. The speaker will be Kim Sattler, Secretary, Unions ACT, and the topic will be "Campaigns and lobbying in the new political environment".

During the recent Federal elections, SCOA conducted a very active campaign on the vital issue for us of fair indexation of superannuation, to the same national standard as other pensions.

Our campaign was conducted in conjunction with the ACT Branch of the Defence Force Welfare Association, and, in Eden-Monaro, in collaboration with the New South Wales branch of SCOA. There was also key input from SCOA Federal Office through John Coleman, SCOA's Indexation Manager.

Our campaign included public meetings with candidates at Bateman's Bay (targeted at candidates for the House of Representatives seat of Eden-Monaro) and in the ACT, the latter being attended by ACT Senate candidates from each major party. We also encouraged our members to maintain the pressure by writing to newspapers and contacting their local candidates. (We understand that more than 3,000 members' campaign letters were received by Government MPs and Senators alone).

The Greens committed themselves to supporting SCOA's position, while the Coalition offered support for improved indexation for some defence force superannuants. Although ALP MPs and Senators elected in the ACT have been supportive, the government has to date refused to consider a wage-based index for Commonwealth superannuants. However, in response to SCOA pressure the government did informally acknowledge the shortcomings of the


CPI and (we understand) has instructed the Department of Finance to work with the ABS to try and come up with an alternative index. SCOA has made it clear that any index that is based on the CPI, such as the PBLCI, is unacceptable because of the discounting of the CPI.

The election and formation of a government are finally over - but our campaign is not. Some interesting possibilities arise from the make-up of the new parliament and SCOA is pursuing contacts with independent MPs who we believe may have a sympathetic approach to this issue.

This issue will remain a very high priority for continuing action and pressure.

Our former Branch President Peter Hurley, who has remained an active contributor and was made an Honorary Life Member at the September 2010 General Meeting, has unfortunately been very ill and has our best wishes and prayers for an early recovery. On a brighter note, the ACT Branch Executive Committee is very happy to welcome back to the Committee Trevor Smith (a former ACT Branch Secretary) as well as the appointment of Anne Meade as Assistant Secretary, Membership.

SCOA is only as strong as the commitment of its members and we look forward to your continuing support and involvement.



John Blount
jb.canberra@gmail.com

**"SCOA News" is a supplement to "SuperTime". Print Post approved
PP231677/00006**



PLEASE DO NOT PAY YOUR MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION BY CASH

We would like members to pay their membership subscription by credit card, cheque or money order, as this eliminates the need to handle cash and simplifies the administration of the Branch's finances.

If you are intending to pay your membership subscription by cash at a SCOA ACT General Meeting, please bring the correct amount. If you do not have the correct amount when you arrive at the venue for the meeting, you can get change at the club's cash office. In each of the clubs where SCOA ACT holds its General Meetings, the cash office is located in the poker machine area. Doing this will save time at the meeting.

Continued from Page 1

Executive. However, he also retained his ACT Branch membership so he could keep informed through our newsletters and he would occasionally contact us to contribute to our debate on specific issues.

Dave was particularly interested in advancing co-operation between branches and developing SCOA's function as a national body. He was elected National Vice President in July 1998, a position he occupied until March 2000.

In 2001, the ACT and Queensland Branches both granted life membership to Dave in recognition of his significant contribution to the two branches and to SCOA nationally.



FAX CHANGE

The ACT Branch now has a phone/fax machine on its telephone number: 6287 3024. From now on, all fax messages to the ACT Branch should be directed to this number.

The ACT Branch's current dedicated fax number: 6287 3023 has been closed down and Telstra asked to re-direct calls to this number to our phone/fax number: 6287 3024 for a period of twelve months, commencing on 28 October 2010.

“ACT Branch now has a phone/fax machine on its telephone number: 6287 3024.”

Centrelink's Financial Advisory Service

SCOA ACT receives many enquiries from members about financial information and advice. Many are dissatisfied by their experience of the private sector in this regard. While Centrelink's Financial Advisory Service provides information about the options facing enquirers, it does not make any recommendations for action. SCOA ACT has had a number of excellent presentations by Centrelink's Financial Advisory Service at its quarterly General Meetings.

Minutes of September 2010 General Meeting

In the absence of President Peter Blount, Vice President Annette Barbetti chaired the meeting. Approximately 60 members were present. Four apologies were received.

A summary of minutes of the General Meeting of 7 June 2010 had been published in SCOA NEWS. They were taken as read and confirmed. There was no business arising.

GUEST SPEAKER: Dr Barbetti introduced Guest Speaker Lewis Conn, Head of the CPI Section, Australian Bureau of Statistics, who spoke on the history of the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and Analytical living cost indexes (ALCIs) and how they are calculated and used. He answered questions from the audience.

Dr Barbetti thanked Mr Conn and this was carried by acclamation.

MOTION ON NOTICE: Notice had been published in SCOA NEWS that the Executive Committee would move that Peter Hurley and Ewan Hazell be each granted honorary life membership of the ACT Branch. In moving the motion, Frank Mines advised members that honorary membership can be awarded in recognition of meritorious service. He said that meritorious service is strictly assessed and that only eight living members currently hold this award. He referred to the background and reasons for the motion given in SCOA NEWS and spoke of his personal experience of significant contributions by both Peter and Ewan over an extended period of time. The motion was seconded by Joe Clark and was carried unanimously.

GENERAL BUSINESS: Indexation Campaign Manager, John Coleman, spoke of the campaign activities during the run up to the recent Federal Government elections. He commented that whilst the Labor Government recognises SCOA's views on the need for improved indexation, they had determined a policy not to implement improvement as proposed by SCOA. They had asked the Department of Finance and the Australian Bureau of Statistics to look at the development of a more robust living cost index appropriate for this purpose. However, SCOA believes that this could take some considerable time to develop and could be compromised if based on the current CPI arrangements.

In response to questions from members, Mr Coleman said that:

- Prior to the election, the Greens issued a formal policy supporting improved indexation and SCOA will follow this up strongly.
- SCOA was not supportive of the proposal by the Coalition during the election campaign that, if elected, they would grant improved indexation for some Defence Force pensioners but would give no time commitment to extending this to other Defence and Public Service retirees. SCOA believed that this would be unfair discrimination.

He said that he had written letters to each of the four independents elected to the House of Representatives seeking their support and was endeavouring to arrange appropriate meetings. He said it was essential to continue pressure and that the current political situation might provide a beneficial climate for this.

A member said that he had analysed the potential cost to Government of improving indexation of superannuation and believed it would delay paying off Government debt by only one and one half days.

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Advertise
in SCOA News

Commercial
Ads

\$500 full page
\$300 half
page
\$150 quarter
page

Charges for
community
organisations
or individuals
are
determined by
the Committee
case by case



SCOA ACT'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE 2010 ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Our campaign was conducted in conjunction with the ACT Branch of the Defence Force Welfare Association, and, in the case of Eden-Monaro, in collaboration with the New South Wales branch of SCOA. There was also input from SCOA Federal Office through John Coleman, SCOA's Indexation Manager.

Special bulletin. A special election bulletin advertising the campaign meetings in Eden-Monaro and the A.C.T. was posted out to SCOA ACT members in the A.C.T. and Eden-Monaro. The NSW Branch of SCOA posted out the same bulletin to its members in Eden-Monaro.

Batemans Bay meeting, Tuesday 10 August. This was targeted at the candidates for the federal House of Representative seat of Eden-Monaro. The venue was the Catalina Club. There were about fifty attendees. Participation in the event was probably affected by the rain. The ALP was represented by the sitting member, Dr Mike Kelly, the Greens by their candidate Catherine Moore and the Liberals by Matthew Mason-Cox of the NSW Legislative Council. Publicity was through the "Bay Post" and East Coast Radio. SCOA Indexation Manager John Coleman was interviewed on East Coast Radio on the Thursday morning preceding the meeting. Les Bienkiewicz, the Executive Director of the Defence Force Welfare Association, chaired the meeting. The Indexation Manager, John Coleman, set out the case for improved indexation.

Canberra meeting, Monday 16 August. The venue was the Southern Cross Club, Woden. The lead Senate candidates from the ALP, Greens and Liberals were present. They were: Senator Kate Lundy (ALP), Senator Gary Humphries (Liberal) and Lin Hatfield-Dodds (Greens). The venue was free. About 300 people attended. John Blount, President of the ACT Branch of SCOA, chaired the meeting. John Coleman, SCOA's Indexation Manager, spoke on the case for better indexation of the public sector pensions. The Executive Director of the Defence Force Welfare Association, Les Bienkiewicz, spoke on the unique nature of military employment. He acknowledged the shift in policy made by the Coalition but pointed out that this would not help younger disabled pensioners, widows of service personnel killed in current wars, or currently serving military personnel.

Publicity. We had an advertisement in the "Canberra Times" on Friday 13 August in the Public Notices section of the paper. The Indexation Manager John Coleman was able to put in a plug for the Woden meeting on ABC radio on the Saturday morning preceding the meeting.

Feedback by members. One member at the Woden meeting said he had also been at the Batemans Bay meeting. Another attendee said he was not a member of SCOA but had seen the advertisement in the "Canberra Times".

"John Coleman, SCOA's Indexation Manager, spoke on the case for better indexation of the public sector pensions."

Pensions put on the political agenda

By JOSH GIDNEY

The following article is reprinted from the Eurobodalla "Independent" Thursday, August 19, 2010, p.3 by kind permission of the Editor of the "Bay Post". A photo taken just after the meeting accompanied the article.

FIFTY people gathered at the Catalina County Club last week for a public meeting regarding the indexation of Commonwealth and Military pensions.

It was conducted by the ACT Branches of the Superannuated Commonwealth Officers Association (SCOA) and the Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA), and was attended by Federal Member for Eden-Monaro Mike Kelly, Liberal Member of the NSW Legislative Council Matthew Mason-Cox and Greens candidate Catherine Moore.

The meeting was entitled "Going out backwards as Australia goes forwards" and was held so that members and potential members of SCOA and DFWA could voice their concerns about the indexation of pensions (military and civilian) which has been much lower than that of MPs and aged pensioners for most of the past two decades.

Questions were put to Dr Kelly and other political candidates regarding these issues.

"This is a question of justice not fairness," ACT Branch secretary Frank Mines said.

Mr Mines was pleased with the opportunity for the members to air their grievances and for the politicians to respond.

"We were very happy with the meeting, he said. "There weren't as many people there as we would have liked, but 50 people was not disappointing."

Both the SCOA and DFWA believe that with the economy going forward, an improved budget forecast for 2010-2011 and \$68 billion in the Future Fund to pay Commonwealth superannuation pensions, there should be more available for its members and potential members.

"We've had a gutful," SCOA ACT president John Blount said.

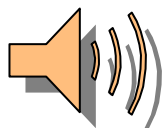
The Labor Party is not in favour of the SCOA and DFWA campaign but Dr Kelly declared his personal support and said he would take up the cause in the party room. The Coalition is supporting the campaign, believing that there is a case, while the Greens are also supportive, as they see it as a social justice issue.

Defence Force Welfare Association executive director Les Bienkiewicz said he was impressed with the way the candidates spoke.

"They were pretty forthright," he said. "They were open and direct and put forward their cases strongly.

"We hope that Mike Kelly has the energy to translate his support into outcomes, and we will be taking our concerns to the successful candidate after the election," Mr Blount said.

"The Labor Party is not in favour of the SCOA and DFWA campaign but Dr Kelly declared his personal support and said he would take up the cause in the party room."



GUEST SPEAKER AT SEPTEMBER GENERAL MEETING CPI, ALCI and PBLCI

The Guest Speaker at our September General Meeting, Mr Lewis Conn, Director of the CPI Section, Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), gave an overview of the way in which the Consumer Price Index (CPI) and Analytical living cost indexes (ALCIs) are calculated and used. He explained the differences between the various living cost indexes and their applications.

The CPI is a general measure of price inflation for all Australian households. It is not a measure of the cost of living mainly because it is based on a defined package of goods, and prices are adjusted for movement in quality. This means that increases in prices are discounted if the product now has a higher level of technology or quality than when it was priced the previous year. Equally, measured increases may be adjusted upward if the technology or quality is reduced. In calculating it, the ABS uses international standard techniques for measurement, so the movements can be used for international comparison and Government policy development.

ALCIs differ from the CPI. They are not measures of price inflation, but of the impact of price changes on the out-of-pocket living expenses of different population sub-groups. The packages of goods and services which are measured reflect the expenditure patterns of people in those sub-groups. Currently, they are produced in relation to four types of Australian households: employee households; age pensioner households; self-funded retiree households; and other Government transfer recipients' households.

In 2009, following a recommendation of the Harmer Review, the Government asked the ABS to develop "an alternative measure of price change which is more fully responsive to specific changes in pensioners' purchasing power". ABS responded by amalgamating the ALCI for the two subgroups of age pensioners and other Government transfer recipients. The new index was called the Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index (PBLCI).

The Government then announced a new policy that from September 2009 the base pension rate will be adjusted by whichever is the greater of CPI or the new PBLCI, but pension rates will also continue to be benchmarked to community living standards as measured by wages, using Male Total Average Weekly Earnings (MTAWE).

Conceptually the difference between the indexes arises because:

- The CPI is based on an acquisitions approach. The measured basket consists of goods and services acquired in the "base period";
- The PBLCI (and ALCIs) are based on an outlays approach. The measured basket is defined in terms of amounts paid by households during the base period to gain access to consumer goods and services.

Over the period from June 2007 to June 2010, the PBLCI increased by approximately 3% more than the CPI. However, the use of the MTAWE as a benchmark still continues to be the major factor in indexation of the level of age and other Social Security pensions.

The structures of the CPI and ALCIs are currently under review. Some of the issues to be considered include: frequency of weight updates; options for a monthly CPI; new goods and services, and; the quality adjustment process. SCOA is represented on the review committee.

"The CPI is a general measure of price inflation for all Australian households. It is not a measure of the cost of living mainly because it is based on a defined package of goods and prices are adjusted for movement in quality."

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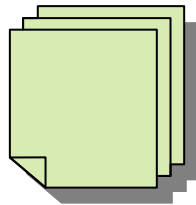
Dr Barbetti reported that SCOA had not yet received full documentation on the Henry Review of taxation so had not been able to fully analyse impacts on superannuants. In response to a member's comment on taxation of Comsuper pensions, she advised that the SCOA submission to the Henry Review had included recommendations on this matter. However, she said, the Henry Review had not considered the issue as they believed it would be addressed by the Matthews Review and vice versa. SCOA will continue to press this matter.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Treasurer, Wal Collins, reported that the auditor had completed an audit of the SCOA (ACT) accounts for the year ended 31 December 2009 and, with two minor amendments, had reported favourably. The amendments resulted in reclassification of one item of expenditure and a decision to write off a cheque which remains uncashed by Telstra although Telstra has recorded the account as paid. The report was accepted.

OTHER BUSINESS: Dr Barbetti advised the meeting that the position of Secretary of Federal Office had become vacant and details were available on the SCOA website, should members or others wish to apply. Dr Barbetti moved a vote of thanks to the retiring Secretary, Marita Linkson, on behalf of the ACT Branch. This was carried unanimously.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed at 12.00 noon.

"A working party of the ACT Branch Executive Committee is developing a new membership data base management system."



NEW MEMBERSHIP DATA BASE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

A working party of the ACT Branch Executive Committee is developing a new membership data base management system. The current system is considered to have passed its use-by date. Members interested in the progress of this project should contact the Branch office on 6287 3024.

Subs for 2011

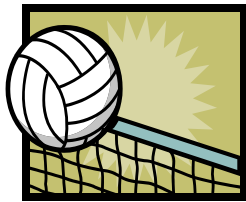
SCOA annual subscriptions become due at the beginning of each calendar year.

Fees for 2011:
 Ordinary membership \$29
 Joint membership \$40
 Surviving partner of Contributor membership \$21

Cheques should be made payable to SCOA (ACT) and sent to SCOA (ACT), PO Box 3989, Weston Creek (NOT SCOA Federal Office—it adds to their already heavy workload)



E-MAIL DELIVERY OF NEWSLETTERS: Do you want your newsletters delivered to you by e-mail rather than in hard copy? Please let us know.



SUPPORTING THE CLUBS THAT SUPPORT US

SCOA ACT is fortunate in being provided with venues for its General Meetings by the Southern Cross Club, Woden, and the Ainslie Football Club, Ainslie. SCOA ACT urges its members to reward the generosity of these clubs by patronising their premises and taking up membership in the clubs. Their fees are as follows:

Ainslie Football Club: Associate Membership: \$5.00 for one year or \$10.00 for three years; Senior/Pensioner Membership: \$2.00 for one year, \$4.00 for three years.

Southern Cross Club: Ordinary membership: \$10.00; family membership: \$12.00; senior or pensioner membership: \$5.00; senior or pensioner family membership: \$6.00; for a three year membership the rates are: ordinary membership: \$25.00; family membership: \$30.00; senior or pensioner membership: \$12.00; senior or pensioner family membership: \$15.00.

DONATIONS TO SCOA

The Branch is grateful to those members who make donations to SCOA. Although most of the work of SCOA is carried on by volunteers there is inevitably the need for expenditure on items such as media advertising, rent of premises, purchase of equipment, occasional hire of premises and so on. SCOA's only source of income is the subscriptions paid by members. The relatively modest level of the retirement incomes of most members is a constraint on the amount of money that can be raised from this source. Therefore, SCOA is always grateful when those members who do have adequate incomes make donations to SCOA. However, donations to SCOA are not tax deductible as the Taxation Office does not classify SCOA as a charity.

Electronic Transfer of Subscription Payments

Please do not use e-mail to make subscription payments as it is not a secure means of transmission. Use fax as it is relatively secure. Thanks!

SCOA'S VOLUNTEERS

SCOA ACT has an e-mail list of volunteers who assist with the quarterly newsletter mailouts and with some other activities such as shopping centre stalls and the processing of membership renewals in the peak January period. There is no obligation on volunteers to participate in any particular activity. There are currently 21 members on the volunteers list. If you would like to be put on the volunteers e-mail list, please telephone Frank Mines on 6253 9096 or e-mail him on: frankmines@bigpond.com.

SCOA (ACT) Inc Superannuated Commonwealth Officers' Association

ABN: 62-141-637-556

Grant Cameron Community Centre
27 Mulley Street
HOLDER ACT 2611
PO Box 3989
WESTON CREEK ACT 2611

Phone/Fax: (02) 6287 3024

"There is no obligation on volunteers to participate in any particular activity."

CONSUMER PRICE INDEX

(sourced from www.abs.gov.au)

SEPTEMBER QUARTER KEY POINTS:

THE ALL GROUPS CPI

✦ Rose 0.7% in the September quarter 2010, compared with a rise of 0.6% in the June quarter 2010.

✦ Rose 2.8% through the year to September quarter 2010, compared with a rise of 3.1% through the year to June quarter 2010.

OVERVIEW OF CPI MOVEMENTS

✦ The most significant price rises this quarter were for tobacco (+7.0%), water and sewerage (+12.8%), electricity (+6.0%), property rates and charges (+6.2%) and rents (+1.1%).

✦ The most significant offsetting price falls were for automotive fuel (-3.7%), vegetables (-5.4%), pharmaceuticals (-3.9%), audio, visual and computing equipment (-2.7%) and soft drinks, waters and juices (-1.8%).

For the 12 months ending 30 September 2010 the CPI was 2.8%

For the 6 months ending 30 September 2010 the CPI was 1.3%

For the 3 months ending 30 September 2010 the CPI was 0.7%

CSS and PSS Pensions will increase by 1.3% on pension payday 13 January 2011.

Have you provided your current e-mail address to SCOA ACT?

SCOA ACT is making increasing use of e-mail addresses to keep members informed of developments and/or requirements. Much can happen in the three month period between issues of "SCOA News" and not all developments find their way onto relevant websites.

So if you have an e-mail address but have not advised it to SCOA ACT please give consideration to doing so. If you have changed your e-mail address but have not advised SCOA ACT of the change, it would be appreciated if you would now provide the current e-mail address. The SCOA ACT e-mail address is scoa.act@scoa.asn.au

Associate Membership of the Community and Public Sector Union

If you were a member of the Community and Public Sector Union while in the public service, you are entitled to continue as an Associate Member. The annual fee is \$24.55. The benefits that go with membership can be accessed on the CPSU's website: www.cpsu.org.au

SCOA ACT Membership

(as at 25 October 2010)

Life	10
Joint	1216
Ordinary	1470
Partner of deceased contributor	328
TOTAL	3024

ACT Branch Executive Committee (as at 29.10.2010)

President: John Blount

Imm Past President: Peter Hurley

Vice President: Annette Barbetti

Vice President: Graeme Evans

Secretary: Frank Mines

Treasurer: Wal Collins

A/S Finance: Vacant

A/S Information Tech: Peter Barker

A/S Membership: Anne Meade

A/S Minutes: Joe Clark

A/S Correspondence: Bob Steins

A/S Research & Compensation: Ian Buchanan

Federal Councillor: Graeme Evans

(Proxy) Frank Mines

Members: Ewan Hazell

John Coleman

Trevor Smith

Public Officer: Bob Steins

IT Manager: John Blank

Administration Officer: John Richmond

"SCOA News" Editor: Kylie Pryde

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