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Opening Address for the 2019 Chief of Army History Conference: An Army of Influence, Adams Hall, Australian Defence Force Academy, Thursday 28 November 2019.

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On behalf of the Australian Army I would like to acknowledge the Ngunnawal People who are the Traditional Custodians of this land on which we gather today, and pay my respects to their Elders both past and present and emerging.

I would also like to pay my respects to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who have contributed to the defence of Australia in times of peace and war.

To those of you from other departments, academia, and other nations, thank you for supporting and bring different perspectives and paradigms.

Welcome to this Chief of Army History Conference.

It is a great honour to lead our Army. Our Army is a national institution and our story is part of our nation's story. We are, and always have been an *Army for the nation* and an *Army in the community*.

As my predecessors have done, I must focus on more than now and the future. We must look back, respect and honour the past, carrying it forward into our future. We do this to continuously build and strengthen our institution for the future.

That future is in a fast changing world and we must, as we always have, continuously change, adapt, and evolve. We must be an **Army in Motion**, ready now and future ready.

The intellectual component of an **Army in Motion** is key; through it we understand and focus effort. We need to be a learning organisation, professionally curious, comfortable to contest ideas and respectful of other perspectives. The study and application of history is vital in this endeavour.

Through the study of history we open ourselves to learning, from our own experiences and from that of others. But we must have the courage to embrace what we learn and act on it. This is the art and science of command, imagining the future and knowing how to act in it.

I am particularly pleased to see the number of junior leaders in the audience. They know that in our Army they are empowered. The key to being empowered is to be informed, to understand context and to exercise good judgement. Leading and a passion for learning go together which is why I am pleased that you are here and grateful for your insights.

We have many great parts to our Army. The Australian Army History Unit is one of the units on our order of battle and appropriately situated in our Future Land Warfare Branch. This reinforces the idea that looking back helps us to look forward, but we must look back with purpose.

To Tim Gellel and his Army History Unit team, thank you for organising this annual Chief of Army History Conference, for bringing these outstanding historians here today. Through their intellect and research they help us to be stronger. Thank you for being part of the Army team.

This conference provides us a chance to look at the theme of influence. Influence is essential to our Army now, and will be of enduring relevance in helping create and deliver strategic impact.

Today, and on any one day, we have many people and activities overseas, as well as hosting our regional partners here in Australia. This includes single service activities, joint activities, multinational, multiagency, individual and collective training, bilateral, and multilateral, short term and long term projects; working with old friends and making new friends, different types of engagements in different places and contexts and perhaps purpose.

What is the same, common to all is that to be effective, to be credible, to have influence, we must win and sustain trust. This is all about people, relationships, building partnerships grounded in respect, sincerity and genuine commitment. This requires patience and endurance.

Only just last week I visited Indonesia and it reinforced these points to me. In my tenure I have now met with KASAD (Kepala Staf TNI Angkatan Darat – the Chief of the Indonesian Army) on four occasions. Our relationship has a broad base and is growing. This month we have established exchange instructor positions in our respective officer training establishments, an Indonesian Captain at the Royal Military College Duntroon and an Australian Captain at Akademi Militer. Whilst in Indonesian I visited Exercise Wirra Jaya, now in its 7th iteration. The exercise continues to grow in complexity and sophistication, this year including Bushmaster Protected Mobility vehicles from our Army and combined arms live firing.

Given this context am I pleased that the next two days will provide a great many insights.

- How Army has sought to balance regional relationships and global commitments.

- Army's people in the region since the end of the Second World War, a small but symbolic presence, first in Singapore, later at Terendak in Malaysia, and since 1970 at Butterworth.
- Over the past sixty years, Army personnel have also served with their Indonesian counterparts. In 1941 and 1942, Army committed units to the defence of Java, Timor and Ambon, in what was then the Netherlands East Indies.
- We will also learn about how the Australian Army has worked in the South West Pacific, and especially in Papua New Guinea. We should reflect that Army's first major operation took place there more than six months before the first ANZACs landed at Gallipoli. Later, the Pacific Islands Regiment transitioned from initially comprising one-quarter of the Australian Army's regular infantry strength into today's sovereign Papua New Guinea Defence Force.

These are only a few of the key points; you will find your own interest and focus. As well as these specific lessons, the conference highlights the importance and power of studying the past to inform the future.

I am pleased to open this year's Chief of Army's History Conference – 'An Army of influence: The Australian Army's connection with the region.'