

**ANZAC DAY 2025**  
**ADDRESS BY**  
**HER EXCELLENCY THE HONOURABLE BARBARA BAKER AC**  
**GOVERNOR OF TASMANIA**  
**HOBART CENOTAPH, FRIDAY 25 APRIL 2025**

Good morning and welcome to everyone.

May I extend a special welcome to our veterans, to current and past members of our Australian Defence Force, and to the families of those who have served and continue to serve.

May I acknowledge all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women who have served in defence of our Nation.

On this day, we commemorate the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the landing of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps troops at Gallipoli, as well as all Australians who have served our nation during war, conflict, and peacekeeping operations. We remember those who lost their lives while serving, and we remember those who returned home, bearing the scars of the horrors of war and forever changed. We honour their courage and sacrifice.

This year marks the centenary of the formation of the Royal Australian Corps of Signals. To honour this centenary, our local Tasmanian Royal Australian Signals Association members led today's ANZAC Day march.

For 100 years, this vital branch of our Australian Army has played a crucial role in our Nation's defence. Over 100,000 signallers have served our nation in the Corps, since the First World War.<sup>1</sup>

Throughout their history, our signallers have embodied innovation, adaptability, and bravery. From the first landing on the shores of Gallipoli, on 25 April 1915, communication was a lifeline. Our Australian Imperial Force immediately established a Divisional Signal Office. Amidst the chaos of battle, signallers

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<sup>1</sup> <https://rasigs.org/certa-cito-100/head-of-corps-centenary-message/Dean> Limmer, CSM Brigadier Head of Corps 14 February 2025

worked tirelessly to establish lines of communication. Under fire, they laid cables, transmitted messages, and braved enemy snipers to ensure that orders and information reached the frontlines. They faced challenges, including broken lines and rapidly moving troops, so telephone networks could not be set up. They used a variety of methods to overcome these challenges. Heliographs, code lamps, and flags were used with varying degrees of success. Homing pigeons were referred to as 'the winged wireless' and were used throughout the war. In those early days, the bravery and ingenuity of our signallers, then part of the Army Engineers, set the foundation for what would become our Royal Australian Corps of Signals.<sup>2</sup>

One Tasmanian link to these wartime signallers is through Reginald Biggs.<sup>3</sup> Living in Scottsdale, he was 18 years old when he joined the Australian Imperial Army in 1916. His older brother, Leonard, had joined two days earlier. Initially rejected due to his height and false teeth, Reginald finally gained admission. He was assigned to the signallers. He became part of the newly formed Tasmanian 40<sup>th</sup> Battalion. While serving in France and Belgium, his duties often took him within 100 metres of the German defences, sometimes in direct line of fire of German guns and poisoned gas. He recorded his experiences in a journal, including a harrowing moment when an enemy gunner targeted him: I quote,

“I found that the gun was trained right on me. I flattened out and tried to simulate “dead.” ... bullets were landing just near my head and kicking up pebbles which hit my face. I thought ‘he can’t miss me now; it will get me right through the crown of my head’.

Fortunately, the gunner had to reload, giving Reginald time to slide headfirst into the cover of a shell hole.<sup>4</sup> He survived the war and returned to Tasmania. He received the British War Medal and Victory Medal. He lived to the remarkable age of 98. His brother, Leonard, also survived the War.

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<sup>2</sup> Email from Matthew Brocklehurst to Thomas Calderwood and David Hughes with attachments, re Royal Australian Corps of Signals dated 8 April 2025.

<sup>3</sup> <https://libraries.tas.gov.au/slat/blog/tasmanians-in-world-war-1-private-reginald-allan-biggs-private-ashmead/> accessed 4 Mar 25

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On 1 January 1925, our Australian Corps of Signals was officially formed, separating from the Army Engineers.

Over the past century, our signallers have served with distinction in every major conflict involving our Australian forces, from the deserts of North Africa in World War II to the jungles of Vietnam, and more recently in Iraq and Afghanistan and in peacekeeping operations worldwide. They have also served in domestic humanitarian and disaster relief operations.<sup>5</sup>

Our modern-day Corps of Signals are technical experts and heavily involved in Information Technology, satellite communications, cyber operations, and advanced information systems to support military operations.

Their motto is “Certa Cito”, Latin for “Swift and Sure”. This motto reflects their commitment to ensuring communication flows under all conditions. Their essential work saves lives and shapes military strategy.

This centenary of our Royal Australian Corps of Signals is a reminder of their crucial role in our armed forces. May we acknowledge their achievements and service. May we also thank the families who supported our signallers and made sacrifices for the service of their loved ones.

We honour and remember all who have served our nation.

We remember the devastating human cost of war and the ongoing conflicts in our world today.

We give thanks for the peace they gave their lives for, and may we recommit to strive for peace.

Lest we forget.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://rasigs.org/certa-cito-100/head-of-corps-centenary-message/Dean> Limmer, CSM Brigadier Head of Corps 14 February 2025