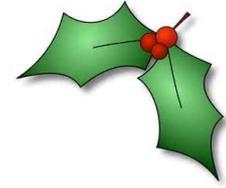


From the desk of the DSTA

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I'd like to wish all of our families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Safe New Year. The support I have received as I settled into the position of DSTA has been overwhelming. I appreciate the opportunity to work with families as they have encountered any complexities created by being a Defence family. I look forward to all that 2013 brings and hope that I can be of help to any Defence family who may need some assistance.



For some of our Defence families, 2012 has seen them facing some very difficult challenges. As is characteristic of a Defence family, the resilience and capability shown during these times has been amazing.

The past couple of weeks have been very busy, with 12 of our Defence children saying goodbye to their school friends due to a parent posting out. We all worked together to create our Defence Kids Memory Tree. Each one of them decorated a leaf and, on their last day, they have placed it on the tree. Hopefully we are given the opportunity to welcome them back sometime and hear all about their adventures.

In the next few weeks we have parents returning home and some who will be deploying. Please keep them and our parents who remain deployed over the festive season in your thoughts and prayers. The sacrifice made by them and their families cannot be overstated.

Joy and Blessings to you all.

DCO Deployment Assistance

Families are again reminded that they MUST register for DCO Deployment Assistance via the Defence Family Helpline. The National Welfare Coordination Centre no longer maintains a list of families of deployed members. Families can request assistance including regular phone calls, invitations to events or individual counselling. The DCO Helpline is attended 24 hours 7 days a week. The number is 1800 624 608 or you can email defencefamilyhelpline@defence.gov.au

Website

The Defence Community Organisation website has many of their pamphlets available for you to download. Some topics include

- Support during posting and relocation
- Support during deployment and time apart
- Support for Defence Families
- Education support

I have copies of these, and others, so please don't hesitate to contact me if you'd like something sent home.