



Duncan E. Lewis, AO, DSC, CSC

NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISER

March 2009

Duncan Lewis graduated from the Royal Military College and the University of NSW in 1975 and served for more than 30 years as an officer in the Australian Army, including three tours with the Special Air Service Regiment. He joined the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet in 2005, on leaving the Regular Army as a Major General in command of the Australian Special Forces. For his services as a commanding officer he was awarded the Conspicuous Service Cross.

As a junior officer Duncan Lewis served with UNTSO as a military observer during the 1982 Lebanon War. From 1990-92, he commanded the Special Air Service Regiment, which included command of the National Counter Terrorist Tactical Assault Group. He has served on the Army Headquarters policy staff as Director of the Defence Reform Program in Army and as the Director of Strategy and International Engagement. During the INTERFET deployment he was the Australian Defence Force spokesman on East Timor. Duncan served as Army Attaché in Jakarta from 1994-96 and returned to Jakarta as acting Head of Defence Staff for a short period in 1998 following the evacuation of Australian nationals.

In January 2000 Duncan Lewis was promoted to the rank of Brigadier and appointed Commander Sector West in the United Nations peace-keeping force in East Timor, where he commanded the Australian and New Zealand forces on the border. He was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for his command in East Timor. He assumed the appointment as Commander Special Forces in January 2001 and, in late 2002, became the inaugural commander of the newly created Special Operations Command. During his period as Commander Special Forces he was involved in the planning of a wide range of operations including deployments to Afghanistan, Iraq, East Timor and border protection operations including the seizure of the MV Tampa and the North Korean drug carrying ship, MV Pong Su. For his service in command of the Australian Special Forces, Duncan was appointed an Officer of the Order of Australia.

Duncan is a graduate of the British Army Staff College, Camberley and the United States Army War College. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of NSW and a Graduate Diploma in Defence Studies and Management from Deakin University. He is a graduate of the Australian Defence Force School of languages, where he studied Indonesian.

On leaving the Regular Army in 2005, Duncan Lewis was appointed to the position of First Assistant Secretary of the National Security Division in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, and in October 2005 was appointed to the position of Deputy Secretary in the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. On 4 December 2008, Duncan was appointed as the National Security Adviser, at the Associate Secretary level, within the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. In his current appointment, he provides direct advice to the Prime Minister on all policy matters relating to the security of the nation, is responsible for the strategic leadership of the national security community as well as the coordination of national security policy development and crisis response.

He is an ex officio member of the Council of the order of Australia and the National Australia Day Committee.

Personal Details

Duncan and his wife, Jenny, have a son and daughter (Simon and Alison). His interests include classical music, history, Australian Rules football and tennis.