

The Military History Society of NSW presents

# THE AUSTRALIAN RAILWAY COMPANIES OF THE WESTERN FRONT, 1916-1918



**Public Lecture by Lt-Col David Deasey (retd)**

**10:30AM Saturday 4 April 2026**

**Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Sydney CBD**

Charles Bean mentions Australia's railway units in perhaps half a dozen places in his Official History of Australians in the Great War and then mainly in footnotes. They were never part of the initial offer by Australia to Britain in 1914. Yet by 1918, Australia had effectively deployed a railway regiment of about 1,500 soldiers operating in France. So how and why did they get there and how did a group, which despite contradicting Australian policy and initially not legally part of the Australian Imperial Force (AIF), end up being very much part of the AIF? What role did they play, and as a side issue, how did ten New South Wales Government Railways designed locomotives end up wandering about France?

**TIME AND VENUE: 10:30AM Saturday 4 April 2026 at The Auditorium, Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, Hyde Park South, corner Elizabeth and Liverpool Streets, Sydney CBD. Admission is free of charge but a donation would be appreciated. For info call 0419 698 783 or email: [president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au](mailto:president@militaryhistorynsw.com.au)**

**Speaker – Lieutenant Colonel (retd) David Deasey RFD OAM**



Lieutenant Colonel (retd) David Deasey RFD OAM served in the Australian Army Reserve for 33 years before retiring, and between 1995 and 1997 in the capacity of Commanding Officer of the University of NSW Regiment. He is the co-author of *The History of the University of NSW Regiment 1952-2006* (2009). David is also a retired teacher having taught English and history at various schools for 37 years. In 2019 he was awarded the Medal of the Order of Australia (OAM) "for service to community history" particularly in connection

with his work as chair of the National Boer War Memorial Association's NSW Committee. He is a member of the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) for Defence and Security Studies, New South Wales. He has spoken and written widely about military history.

### **Our Venue**

The venue for The Military History Society of NSW lecture program is the Auditorium on the lower level of Anzac Memorial Hyde Park, corner of Elizabeth and Liverpool Streets, Sydney CBD. Numerous bus services stop at the location and Museum railway station is only 160 metres away. The venue opens its doors at around 10:00AM.

