

If you are new to receiving IPAN's publication, "Voice" , please note that if you do not want to receive this publication in future, you can un-subscribe by clicking the words at the bottom of this publication.



No 49

December, 2020

In this issue:

- * IPAN's Peoples' Inquiry successfully launched on 26th November with 126 attendees
- * "Australia must reconsider its relationship with the U.S." - Kellie Tranter, Inquiry Chair
- * Inquiry now open for submissions
- * Some of the costs and consequences of Australia's involvement in U.S.-led wars and the alliance
- * Request for donation to support the Inquiry
- * War Crimes allegations -Letter to the Editor: Peter Jones
- * Afghan War shows the need for a Peoples' Inquiry into the U.S.

alliance - Sam Brennan

* David McBride: Spoke the truth & "blew the whistle" on SAS Afghan war crimes and faces prosecution for it

* Brereton's comments which gave rise to the Chinese tweet on Australian Afghanistan war crimes

* Honour the Dead by ending war - Marrickville Peace Group on Armistice Day

* Hong Kong is part of China. Our media fails to grasp this basic point
- John Menadue

* On a Defence Alternative for Australia - Tony Broe

In hunting for Chinese spies we hang on for dear life to Anglo-Saxon allies - John Menadue

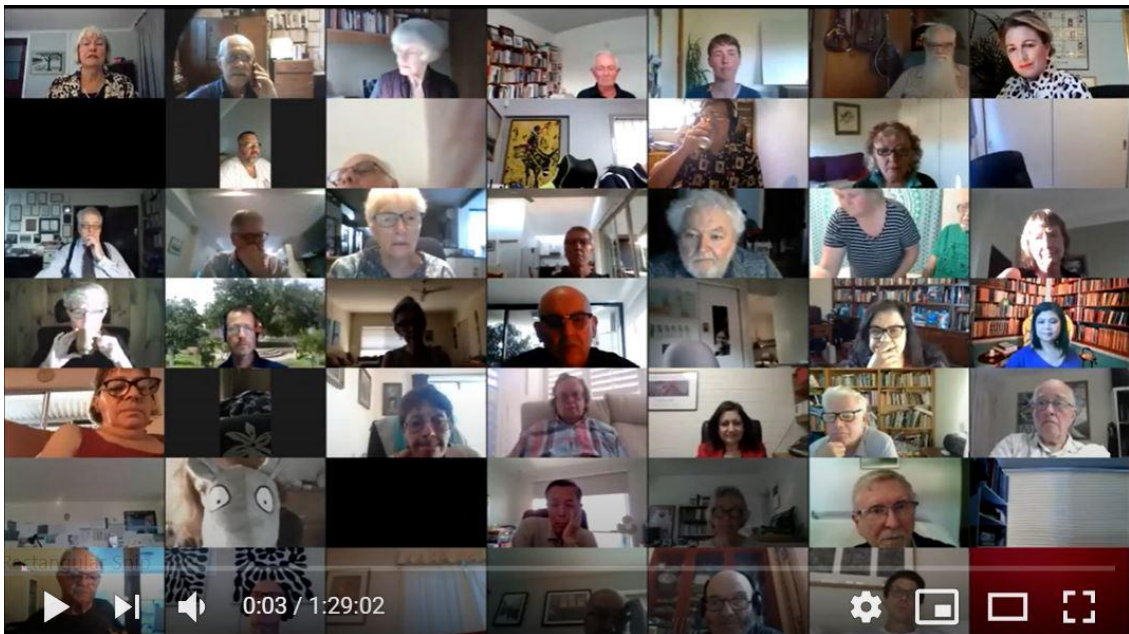
* 'Exports on a knife edge' raised serious concerns for regional and S.A. businesses which have been successfully exporting to China for years - Ben Oquist

* ICAN Newsletter- From 22nd January, 2021, nuclear weapons will be illegal under international law, for all time

* US F35A fighter now equipped with Nuclear Warhead

- * War Powers Reform: Overwhelming support for war powers reform
- * Hundreds of Papuans rally as independence leaders declare provisional government on road to independence from Indonesia
- * Rapid Public Response

IPAN's Peoples" Inquiry successfully launched on 26th November with 126 attendees



View the complete launch [HERE](#)



The People's Inquiry:
**"Australia must reconsider
its relationship with the
U.S."**
says Kellie Tranter, Inquiry
Chair

It is time to re-evaluate the U.S.-Australian alliance in light of challenges such as international security and climate change, says Kellie Tranter. This is a transcript of the keynote address at the IPAN Inquiry launch: 'A People's Inquiry', proudly partnered by Independent Australia.

Hear her speech **HERE**

INQUIRY NOW OPEN FOR SUBMISSIONS

If you or your organisation has concerns about the costs and consequences of Australia's involvement in U.S. wars and the U.S. Alliance please put down your concerns in writing.

Submissions can **now** be made to the Inquiry **via the Inquiry web site** **HERE**

Submissions can be as short (a paragraph) or as long (up to 5,000 words) as you wish .

If you wish to make a verbal submission, please contact the **Inquiry Help Desk : Bevan 0418 697 528 or Annette 0431 597 256**



Some of the costs and consequences of Australia's involvement in U.S.-led wars and the U.S. alliance



REQUEST FOR DONATION TO SUPPORT THE INQUIRY

Dear IPAN Member or Supporter

As you may be aware, the Independent and Peaceful Australia Network has undertaken to establish a national people's Inquiry: **Exploring the Case for an Independent and Peaceful Australia**
What are the costs and consequences of Australia's involvement

in US-led wars and the US Alliance?

A lot of work has gone into the development of the Inquiry process so far with more to be put in place. The majority of the work is being done on a volunteer basis, however, there are some specialist tasks/roles that require a paid worker. These tasks/roles include

- Development of a vibrant website to help maximise publicity and ensure a user-friendly submission process.
- Worker to manage the Communications Strategy for the Inquiry
- Administrative Support for the Inquiry Panel
- Publication costs for the Inquiry Report

We are therefore writing to all of our IPAN members and supporters to seek financial support towards the costs of the Inquiry, specifically for the needs outlined above.

If you feel you can contribute towards these costs it would make an enormous contribution to the work of the Inquiry and help maximise our reach into the Australian public.

Donations can be made:

*** Via the Inquiry website (preferred) at**

<https://independentpeacefulaustralia.com.au>

*** Bank transfer CUA BSB 814282 Acct 51169962 ensure you add your name**

*** IPAN at Post PO Box 573 Coorparoo Brisbane 4151 via cheque to ***

Thank you in anticipation for your support with this. Any assistance at all that you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

Yours

sincerely,

Annette

Brownlie

IPAN

Chairperson

0431597256

ipan.australia@gmail.com

www.ipan.org.au

<https://www.facebook.com/IndependentAndPeacefulAustraliaNetwork/>



War Crimes allegations

Letter to the Editor- Hobart Mercury

by Peter Jones

Polly's cartoon (Mercury, November 20) was spot on. The ADF troops in Afghanistan ask who sent them there in the first place and are they being held responsible. The answer as always, is "NO". Few of today's politicians were in parliament in 2001 when the then Prime Minister John Howard made the decision to invoke the ANZUS Treaty and send ADF troops into a conflict. As always we blindly followed the U.S. military to Afghanistan to support U.S. military in Operation Enduring Freedom. As always we blindly followed the U.S. military into a conflict that had nothing to do with us. The basic question remains today as we expand ANZUS to include India and Japan, spending billions of dollars on more military hardware purchased overseas, but with no debate in Canberra where the two major parties march lock-step over defence matters, and the ANZUS Treaty is considered sacrosanct.

Afghan War Shows the Need for a People's Inquiry Into the US Alliance

by Sam Brennan

The aimlessness and violence of Australia's involvement in the Afghanistan War, typified by the Brereton Report's findings, is a sober reminder of the need to re-evaluate Australia's complicity in US-led wars and the US alliance itself, writes Sam Brennan, for the Independent and Peaceful Australia Inquiry.

The revelations of the Brereton Report that Australian special forces allegedly killed nearly 40 innocents and committed war crimes in

Afghanistan, came as little surprise to those who have followed Australian involvement in US-led wars.

As human rights lawyer and activist, Kellie Tranter, said of the findings: “[People are] disgusted, yes. Appalled, yes. But no one is shocked, and that’s a problem.”

Australian Defence Force chief General Angus Campbell blamed military culture for the crimes and said the ADF is being “held to account.”

However Campbell did not - nor any prominent military or government official - point out that the only way to permanently prevent Australia troops from continuing to commit war crimes, is to not be at war.

READ

ON

**David McBride: spoke truth & "blew the whistle"
on SAS Afghan war crimes and faces
prosecution for it**



**I SERVED MY
COUNTRY**

I DID MY JOB

**NOW THEY
WANT TO
JAIL ME FOR IT.**

GOFUNDME DAVID MCBRIDE

My name is David McBride. I am facing 50 years in prison for blowing the whistle on the Australian Defence Force's unethical, harmful and highly politicised leadership which fostered a culture of impunity in Afghanistan. As I continue to fight these unjust criminal charges, I am asking for your support to access expert legal representation.

For the past 19 years, Australian troops have been fighting a war in Afghanistan. After all this time, there still seems to be no end in sight. In 2011 and 2013, I served in Afghanistan as a military lawyer to the Royal Australian Regiment and Australian Special Forces respectively. When I joined the Australian Defence Force, I swore an oath to fight for Australian values.

Over my two deployments, I became increasingly concerned that the war was dictated by politics rather than the best interests of Australians and Australian soldiers. I saw the Rule of Law and the rules of war not being followed, and indeed being breached with

complete impunity because of the indifference of Command. I saw people in leadership avoiding tough decisions because their political careers were more important than people's lives.

More than 26,000 Australian soldiers have served in Afghanistan since the war started. I believe the lives and sacrifices our people in uniform make should never be taken for granted. After learning that what I had seen was unfortunately widespread and systematic, I made an internal report in 2014. As I saw no real or effective action, I disclosed documents to the ABC in 2016.

Since being charged, I have had little choice but to represent myself. I believed that, in keeping with the values of our armed forces, I had to show staunch courage and face this battle alone, no matter the odds. I have since realised that this case represents something much bigger than my personal imprisonment. It represents the erosion of our democracy. It flies in the face of everything our armed forces are fighting for.

The Australian Government is using the catchall cry of 'national security' to take away our right to know what our government is doing and to remove their accountability to the people that elect them. Legislation is being used to threaten whistleblowers, lawyers and journalists with long jail sentences and hefty fines. Media organisations are being raided by the police.

Trying your best means asking for support when you need it. I would be very grateful if you made a contribution within your capacity to help

fund this legal battle. You can also show support by sharing this campaign with your family and friends.

My family and I are incredibly grateful for all the kindness and support.

Go Fund Me link [HERE](#)

Sign Petition [HERE](#)

With acknowledgement to Pearls & Irritations: 2 December,2020

Brereton's comments which gave rise to the Chinese tweet on Australian Afghanistan war crimes

by John Menadue

The Brereton report sheds light on the tweet posted by a spokesperson for China's Foreign Ministry of a digitally altered image depicting an Australian soldier holding a knife to a veiled Afghanistan child. But I have not seen any of our mainstream media do the obvious, publish the relevant extracts on alleged killing of Afghan children by Australian soldiers.

On p, 120-121 of the Report , the following references to throat-slitting appear in two paragraphs related to the February 2016 study by Dr Samantha Cromptoets, which helped to initiate the Brereton Inquiry. ‘

'Squirters' were in Special forces speak people who ran from compounds when our troops advanced on/attacked them.

1. *Clearance Operations.* Dr Crompvoets was told that, after squirters were 'dealt' with, Special Forces would then cordon off a whole village, taking men and boys to guesthouses, which are typically on the edge of a village. There they would be tied up and tortured by Special Forces, sometimes for days. When the Special Forces left, the men and boys would be found dead: shot in the head or blindfolded and **with throats slit**.
2. *Cover-ups.* A specific incident described to Dr Crompvoets involved an incident where members from the 'SASR' were driving along a road and saw two 14-year-old boys whom they decided might be Taliban sympathisers. They stopped, searched the boys **and slit their throats**. The rest of the Troop then had to 'clean up the mess', which involved bagging the bodies and throwing them into a nearby river. Dr Crompvoets says she was told this was not an isolated incident. In this context, Dr Crompvoets says she was told that Special Forces soldiers were committing unsanctioned killing in order to 'get a name for themselves' and to join the 'in' group.

(No doubt Brereton refers to these incidents in detail but that would be in the 6 redacted volumes.)
Page 103 of the report, referring to the entirely redacted Chapter 2.50 comments:

"what is described in this Chapter is possibly the most disgraceful episode in Australia's military history, and the commanders at troop, squadron and task group level bear moral command responsibility for

what happened under their command, regardless of personal fault.”



Honour the dead by ending war

Members of Marrickville Peace Group conducted a vigil outside the official Armistice Day ceremony on November 11, each carrying a small sign with the words "Honour the dead by ending war". The original Armistice Day in 1918 was a day of joy, celebrating the end of a hugely bloody war.

With Acknowledgement to Pearls and Irritations 24 November, 2020

**Hong Kong is part of China.
Our media fails to grasp this basic point.**

by John Menadue

Hong Kong was seized by Britain to facilitate its opium trade. After a century of humiliation for China, Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997 under a complex arrangement. Foreign countries should keep out of what is a domestic issue for China. CIA, take note.

For months our media gave us wall-to-wall coverage of riots and blockades in Hong Kong. Little attempt was made to explain who the leaders were, what they really wanted except 'democracy', and who was backing and encouraging them. US flags were prominent but our media did not regard that as significant.

Hong Kong was not democratic under UK colonial rule. Have the media forgotten! It is not democratic today and will not be in the future. That is a fact of real life.

READ ON

With acknowledgement to Pearls and Irritations: 4th December, 2020

On a Defence Alternative for Australia

Wars, just like Bruce Springsteen, are 'born in the USA'

by Tony Broe

'Defence' for Australia has usually involved being shanghaied – often willingly – into other nations' inappropriate, politically motivated wars. Our alliances are increasingly dysfunctional and inappropriate in our

region.

In any such war setting, Australia is unlikely to provide significant physical support to influence outcomes and unlikely to receive significant benefits from the major powers in our new world setting, yet likely to sustain major collateral damage. Our previous alliances are therefore increasingly dysfunctional and inappropriate to our geographical situation and socio-economic situation in the Asia-Pacific region.

We should renege on any involvement in conflict between the major powers, certainly until we can firm up on who our friends are and where our evolving interests lie. We should adopt **neutrality** – become a Southland Switzerland in the Asia-Pacific – and save the vast sums spent on major items of war and defence to refashion our post-Covid home base, while we work on persuading the major powers to be mutual friends.....

Prevention – not attack, not alliances, not participation in threats and wars – is our best form of Australian defence; **become a neutral state** and urge the US and China to try the Golden Rule – *treat others as you would wish to be treated*; try judicious non-confrontation for peaceful international relations in a world of sovereign states, international anarchy, rising nationalism and, increasingly powerful privatised globalisation through multinational corporations. Rather than a vastly expensive, useless, politically motivated, submarine fleet we should buy upmarket patrol boats and appropriate aircraft to monitor our island borders; we should keep our fossil fuels and uranium in the ground; and leave the big guys' borders alone. We

should use our longstanding (but rapidly diminishing) Aussie goodwill in the world and our middle power status to keep well away from involvement with the big guys and the rough stuff.

For complete article: [READ HERE](#)

With acknowledgement to Pearls & Irritations:4th December, 2020

In hunting for Chinese spies we hang on for dear life to Anglo-Saxon allies

by Henry Reynolds

Like so many members of the security establishment Director of ASIO Duncan Lewis adopted the time-honoured tactic of implicitly saying to the public 'trust us because we know things you don't know and which we can't tell you'.

READ ON

With acknowledgement to Portland Observer,13th November, 2020

'Exports on a knife edge' raised serious concerns for regional and S.A. businesses which have been successfully exporting to China for years.

by Ben Oquist

By sheer size, China is the largest trading partner to almost all countries in the Asia Pacific region and almost every economy in Europe. It is the Factory of the world and with an increasingly prosperous 1.4 billion population. Unlike Australia, countries in our region (including US allies; Japan, South Korea, Philippines, Thailand) are not going to, nor willing to pick a fight with their greatest customer. There are other more diplomatic ways to handle differences.

Unfortunately, Canberra has allowed the Australia-China relationship to deteriorate, while flaunting it's cosy relationship with America. In 2018 Australia introduced new political foreign interference laws, keeping ASIO and the Federal Police occupied in the 'Spy's R Us' game. (Currently, the rules are changing.) In the same year, the Australian government banned the Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei from the 5G network. However, the worst insult to China occurred this year, during the global pandemic.

Australia's Foreign Minister, Marise Payne announced an investigation into China's responsibility for the corona virus.

It sounded like an attack on China while they were fast building a huge hospital designated to isolate C.V. patients while treating this deadly disease; their scientists desperately trying to create a vaccine.

As N.Z.'s COVID-19 Response Minister Chris Hipkins recently reminded us ...“It is the virus that’s the problem and not the people’.



Christmas is great, but something else is coming up that we think is more exciting... In exactly 50 days the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons will enter into force!

From the 22nd of January, nuclear weapons will be illegal under international law, for all time.

Australia presents itself as a country committed to nuclear disarmament, while at the same time claiming the US nuclear arsenal is essential to its security. This is a contradictory position and our leaders know it. That's one of the reasons the treaty is so powerful; it brings such hypocrisy out into the light. Please enjoy our new fact-checking publication *For the Record... Addressing the Australian Government's misrepresentation of the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.*

Meanwhile, the federal Opposition, Australian Labor, is crafting their new policy platform and we are pleased to see that their 2018 commitment to sign and ratify the treaty, in government, is retained in the Consultation Draft.

What can you do now?

- If you haven't already, **email your parliamentary reps** to let them know about the treaty's impending entry into force: [click here for the handy action tool](#).
- Add your face to our **virtual march**, launching soon: [click here](#).
- **What are you doing on Friday the 22nd of January?** If you're

planning something, let us know. There will be activities in Perth, Alice Springs, Sydney, Melbourne and more. If you're in any of those places and interested, reply to this email!

- Tune into a [December 10 webinar](#) on the TPNW with a cast of champions from Australian Red Cross, the International Committee of the Red Cross, Corrs Chambers and ICAN.

With

excitement,

Gem

ICAN Australia.

With acknowledgement to Global Research 3rd December, 2020

US F-35A fighter *now equipped with B61-12* , Nuclear Warhead with 4 “Selectable Power Options”

*A video was released on November 23 by Sandia National Laboratories that shows a **US F-35A fighter** flying at supersonic speed 3000 meters above sea level, launching a B61-12 nuclear bomb (non-nuclear warhead equipped). The bomb did not fall vertically but glided until the tail section rocket ignition gave a rotational motion and the B61-12 (satellite-guided system) headed for the target and hit 42 seconds after launch. The test was carried out on August 25 at the Tonopah shooting range in the Nevada desert.*

An official statement confirmed its full success: it was a real nuclear attack, proof that the fighter carried out at supersonic speed and in stealth attitude (with nuclear bombs placed in its internal hold) has the

capability to penetrate through enemy defenses.

The B61-12 has a nuclear warhead with four selectable power options at launch depending on the target to hit. It has the ability to penetrate underground, exploding deep to destroy command center bunkers and other underground structures. The Pentagon's program foresees the construction of about five hundred B61-12 with an estimated cost of roughly 10 billion dollars (so each bomb will cost double what it would cost if it were built entirely of gold).

Editorial

Comment:

Will Australia's F35's be fitted to carry this nuclear bomb?
Will the Australian Government allow U.S. F35's operating out of Australia to carry this nuclear bomb?
Does the Australian Government and the ALP have a policy not to allow such nuclear weapons into Australia?



Overwhelming support for war powers reform

83.3% of Australians want Parliament to decide whether our

troops are sent into armed conflict abroad, according to a nationwide Roy Morgan opinion poll released recently.

In the survey of 1052 people, only 16.7% said they favour the current system whereby The Prime Minister and the executive alone decide if Australia goes to war. “Ordinary Australians want their local MPs and Senators to oversee this life and death decision, not just the Prime Minister and a few ministers behind closed doors,” said Paul Barratt AO, a former Secretary of Defence and President of Australians for War Powers Reform (AWPR). “The disastrous Iraq conflict and the drawn out Afghanistan deployment have made people rethink how we as a nation view overseas wars. This survey result is an overwhelming demand for more oversight and transparency,” he said. The poll found that support for reform is very strong across the political spectrum.

More than 75% of all Labor, Coalition and Greens voters believe that Parliamentary approval should be required before Australian troops are deployed. Overall support for Parliamentary approval being required has jumped more than 6% since the last poll was undertaken in 2014.



Hundreds of Papuans held rallies across at least eight cities in Indonesia on Tuesday to renew calls for independence. Source: AFP

Hundreds of Papuans rally as independence leaders declare provisional government on 'road to independence' from Indonesia

SBS News: independence. Source: AFP

As West Papua marks independence day, experts say the declaration could be the beginning of its road to independence.

Hundreds of Papuans held rallies across at least eight cities in Indonesia on Tuesday to renew calls for independence, as a separatist group declared it had established a provisional government in exile. The demonstrations marked the anniversary of West Papua declaring independence from Dutch rule in 1961, which was followed by a contentious UN-sanctioned referendum in 1969 that brought Papua under Indonesian control.

Among more than 100 students who marched in the capital Jakarta, Papuan Roland Levy said the date remained significant decades on. "My goal in joining the rally today is to commemorate 59 years of the proclamation of independence of the West Papuan nation that was annexed by Indonesia," he told Reuters, as demonstrators waved banners calling for the right to self-determination. Some Papuans regard the 1969 plebiscite as unfair and say intimidation was used to influence the outcome, which Jakarta has rejected.

The rallies came after West Papuan independence leaders declared a new provisional government, intensifying their decades-long push to break away from Indonesia amid recent escalations in violence. The United Liberation Movement for West Papua (ULMWP) outlined a new constitution on 1 December, as the contested Indonesian province marks independence day.

RAPID PUBLIC RESONSE

In the event of an imminent major military conflict, military invasion or war actually breaking out, IPAN organisations in the following states, urge everyone to rally :

In Melbourne, outside the State Library in Swanston St, Melbourne, from 5pm that evening- bring banners and placards - family and friends

In Adelaide, on Parliament Steps at 4.30 pm that evening – bring banners and placards – family and friends.

In Newcastle, at the Clocktower, Hamilton, 4.30pm that evening- bring banners and placards and tell family and friends

In Canberra, on the median strip at the corner of London Circuit and Northbourne Ave.

In Brisbane, at King George Square, 5 pm

Voice is produced and edited by the Media Group of the IPAN co-ordinating committee. It is produced for IPAN affiliates to:

**provide a medium for communication of their campaigns and activities*

**provide a medium for discussion of issues central to IPAN's objectives*

**provide affiliates with details of co-ordinating committee activities, media releases, lobbying activities and other actions taken on behalf of IPAN*

** provide information on issues/events relating to IPAN's objectives*

Contributions to Voice, in information or comment, should be emailed to :

ipan.australia@gmail.com and limited, if possible to 200 words.

The Media Group takes editorial responsibility for choice of content and is responsible to the IPAN co-ordinating committee. **Disclaimer:** Voice publishes a range of articles which reflect the broad movement for an independent and peaceful Australia but not all articles will necessarily reflect IPAN's position."

Copyright © 2017 IPAN, All rights reserved.

Our emailing address is:

ipan.australia@gmail.com

Our mailing address is:

IPAN

PO Box 573

Coorparoo, Qld 4151

Australia

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

Voice is produced and edited by the Media Group of the IPAN co-ordinating committee. It is produced for IPAN affiliates to:

**provide a medium for communication of their campaigns and activities*

**provide a medium for discussion of issues central to IPAN's objectives*

**provide affiliates with details of co-ordinating committee activities, media releases, lobbying activities and other actions taken on behalf of IPAN*

** provide information on issues/events relating to IPAN's objectives*

Contributions to Voice, in information or comment, should be emailed to :

ipan.australia@gmail.com and limited, if possible to 200 words.

The Media Group takes editorial responsibility for choice of content and is responsible to the IPAN co-ordinating committee. **Disclaimer:** Voice publishes a range of articles which reflect the broad movement for an independent and peaceful Australia but not all articles will necessarily reflect IPAN's position."

Copyright © 2017 IPAN, All rights reserved.

Our emailing address is:

ipan.australia@gmail.com

Our mailing address is:

IPAN

PO Box 573

Coorparoo, Qld 4151

Australia

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?

You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)

