Australian Naval Institute

2021 ANI McNeil Prize

Ted Huber

Founder and Chairman

Acacia Systems

At the Australian Naval Institute's Annual Dinner on 1 June, the Deputy Chief of Navy Rear Admiral Chris Smith announced the winner of the Australian Naval Institute's McNeil Prize for 2021. The recipient is Mr Ted Huber, the Founder and Chairman of Acacia Systems.

The McNeil Prize is awarded to "an individual from Australian industry and academia who has made an outstanding contribution to the capabilities of the Royal Australian Navy". The Prize is sponsored by Lockheed Martin Australia.

The McNeil Prize is named in honour of Rear Admiral Percival McNeil CB RAN (1883-1951). He was one of the great champions of Australian shipbuilding. McNeil played a pivotal role in the design and construction of the famed Bathurst class corvettes as well as helping to maintain a local warship construction capability in the post-war period.

This year's recipient, Mr Ted Huber was born in Warsaw in 1947 and his family emigrated to Australia when he was thirteen years old. Ted studied Biophysics, Physical Chemistry and Neurophysiology at Flinders University and worked as a medical researcher before studying Electrical Engineering at the University of Adelaide and working in defence industry with Vision Systems.

In 1992, Ted Huber founded Acacia Research (now Acacia Systems) and has been supporting the RAN for the last 29 years. Ted Huber has an enduring passion for solving the problems of sailors at sea in both submarines and surface ships. He has a rare ability to bridge the gap from intellectual theory to practical systems.

For many years Acacia conducted research on behalf and with the then Defence Science Technology Organization – not the Defence Science & Technology Group. This has included work in the 2000s on a new tactical data management system for Collins Class submarines. Later Ted was involved in work in the architecture and systems for RAN units to share anti-submarine information. He and his team have also developed the Reflex data management system that captures and visualises all elements of mission data for the Collins Class submarine.

Ted Huber and Acacia have made a major contribution to the anti-submarine capabilities of the Hobart Class destroyers and the fleet with the Onyx Advanced Sensor Tracking

Optimisation System. This is a world class multi-sensor data fusion capability that supports the fusion of Fleet sensor data across the active and passive sonar domains to significantly enhance the Navy's anti-submarine performance.

The ANI President, Vice Admiral Peter Jones said, "Ted Huber has made an outstanding contribution to Navy's capability over almost three decades. This is a testament to his commitment to the Navy and the nation. Perhaps, his most enduring legacy is the establishment of an Australian owned and controlled, world-leading high technology, sovereign defence industry capability."