

## **End of War List Bill 1989 (Private Senator's Bill)**

**Date Introduced:** 7 September 1989

**House:** Senate

**Presented by:** Senator Julian McGauran

### **Digest of Bill**

#### **Purpose**

To establish a list of Australian service personnel who served in the Vietnam War or later military conflicts in order to give awards for unrecognised acts of valour.

#### **Background**

British/Australian awards during the Vietnam war were made on a scale based on the average strength of the Australian Forces. Awards were granted as a quota of one decoration per 250 personnel and one 'Mention in Dispatches' per 150 personnel for each six monthly period. Awards were not allowed to exceed the quota. The total number of awards received by Australians for the Vietnam War was 1064, including four recipients of the Victoria Cross.<sup>1</sup>

After World War II and the Korean War, Australian authorities issued an End of War List. This is a final allocations of honours, decorations and medals additional to the operational quotas. The End of War List provides an opportunity for previously unsuccessful recommendations for honours to be reconsidered and for consideration of other nominations which for one reason or another (e.g. security) were not put forward. No Australian End of War List was established for the Vietnam War. Reasons for not establishing an End of War List have included that Australia was not officially at war; that the Vietnam War was different, as there was no decisive result; and that it would be seen as celebrating the war.

#### **Main Provisions**

The object of the Bill is to establish an End of War List to recognise, and give awards for, unrecognised acts of valour by Australian service personnel who served in the Vietnam War and subsequent military conflicts (clause 4).

The Minister is to establish an End of War List Tribunal. The Tribunal is to consist of three members, one from each arm of the Australian Defence Forces, appointed by the Minister (clause 5).

Clause 6 provides that the functions of the Tribunal will be to prepare a list of Australian service personnel who served in the Vietnam War, or a later military conflict, who, in the opinion of the Tribunal, did not receive awards for acts of valour but should have.

The Tribunal, after the end of a military conflict, is to recommend to the Minister a list of 30 service personnel whose actions in that conflict, in the opinion of the Tribunal, deserve awards for unrecognised acts of valour and the level of award they should receive. The Minister may direct that the Tribunal consider a list of service personnel greater than 30. The Tribunal, in making its recommendations, is not to have regard to whether or not the standard quota of awards in a conflict have been filled (clause 7).

## References

1. I. L. Barnes, *Gallant and Distinguished Service - Vietnam 1962-73*, 1974, pp. 1-6, and 9.

For further information, if required, contact the Defence Group.

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This Digest does not have any official legal status. Other sources should be consulted to determine the subsequent official status of the Bill.

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