



**RSL**  
Australia

**THE RETURNED & SERVICES LEAGUE OF AUSTRALIA LTD**

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**Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee - 18/08/2025**

**Review of Schedule 9 of the Veterans' Entitlements, Treatment and Support  
(Simplification and Harmonisation) Act 2025**

**Questions on Notice  
Monday, 18 August 2025  
Parliament House, Canberra**

**RSL Australia National President MAJGEN (Retd) Greg Melick AO RFD FANZCN KC**

**Question 1**

**Hansard page reference: 4**

**Senator SHOEBRIDGE asked the following question:**

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: But most times when these kinds of powers are given to a statutory entity or an individual there is also a very clear mechanism for oversight. There might be an independent inspector appointed if these powers are given to a statutory body. There might be an express reference to the ombudsman having an oversight role, or there might be an express reference to a parliamentary committee to oversight those powers. Sometimes there's a combination of those things. But it's not clear to me who's watching the watcher, if you like, in this regard, in the case where these powers might be wrongly or inappropriately used. Have you had any thoughts about that?

Major Gen. Melick : I think parliamentary oversight committees are a very effective way of doing it, rather than necessarily an oversighting inspector. Parliamentary committees have significant powers and often combine a whole lot of experience from all sides of politics. I've been working to parliamentary committees for many years in various capacities, and I'm quite impressed at the ability of parliamentarians to burrow down and ask the right questions.

Senator SHOEBRIDGE: but maybe you could think about where, in your experience or the RSL's experience, that kind of oversight would best lie amongst the different potential parliamentary committees. If you could provide that on notice, that would be of assistance.

**Response:**

The Defence and Veterans' Services Commission requires oversight by a Parliamentary Committee. This oversight will ensure impartiality and independence, and maintain, protect, and enhance public trust and confidence in the response of the Government and relevant agencies. I do not have an opinion on which Parliamentary Committee should provide that oversight.