



## THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN REGIMENT CORPORATION

17<sup>TH</sup> November 2020

Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

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**Via Email.**

Dear Senator Lambie,

**Reference: Senator Jacqui Lambie – Question on Notice – What Broad Support Does the RARC have from its members?**

The RARC has 12 Battalion Associations and 8 RARA state and territory chapters as its constituted members. The RARC does not have individual membership. The Battalion Associations and RARA have individual members and all these entities like the RARC are legally incorporated. The matters of suicide and self-harm is a regular agenda item for Board meetings and members meetings through the AGM, where the last physical meeting was held pre Covid-19 in Canberra 24/25<sup>th</sup> July 2019, where the matter of a Royal Commission into Veterans Suicide and Self harm was discussed. A unanimous resolution was passed that the RARC would not be supporting the calls for a Royal Commission.

Although the RARC has its own website and monitors social media; its is more a vehicle for the passing of information and to see where assistance is required, than to seek input from the broader community on matters of concern or sensitivity. In the interests of governance and probity, the RARC communicates and discusses matters of mutual interest with its Battalion Associations and its elected members. It is the old chain of command principal which seems to work very well for us.

We would not be under any illusion that there may be some members of the Battalion Associations who may not agree with our position and they have every right to declare that but

through the Battalion Associations Boards or Committees, who no doubt will consider it as a part of an overall opinion.

If our members are entirely unhappy on a particular position the RARC has taken and it hasn't happened thus far, as no decision is made without consultation, the members have every right to exercise their democratic right to call for an EGM and remove the Directors. As the Chair I have been in this position for ten years with my fellow founding Director Maj Gen Hori Howard AO MC ESM (rtd) and supporting us we have two young operationally experienced veterans appointed at the last AGM supporting our views. In addition, Mr Phil Thompson MP OAM was a Director of our organization before being elected to Parliament, and his views based on his own more recent experiences were not ignored.

In closing Senator, I hope I have managed to explain your question on notice but in the meantime, we appreciate your passion and perseverance in all that you are doing to help our veterans.

Duty First

Regards

Michael von Berg MC OAM  
Chair and National President