

VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA INC
SUBMISSION TO THE
SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE.
Review of the.
Australian Veterans' Recognition (Putting Veterans and their Families First)
Bill 2019 [Provisions]

Background

The Bill will create a new Act, namely the Australian Veterans' Recognition (Putting Veterans and their Families First) Act 2019.

The Prime Minister, the Hon. Scott Morrison MP and the Hon. Darren Chester, MP made a joint media statement on 27 October 2018 stating that the Government will develop an Australian Defence Veteran Covenant (Covenant), to be enacted in legislation, to recognise the unique nature of military service and support veterans and their families.

As part of the joint media statement – “recognising and respecting our veterans” it was announced that a lapel pin and veteran card will be part of the Veteran Recognition package.

The Covenant will provide an opportunity for Australians and the business community to recognise veterans and their families and the service and sacrifice they have made as members of the Australian Defence Force.

This Bill is part of the Veteran Recognition package designed to provide recognition to veterans and their families. As part of the recognition package, a lapel pin and the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant will be distributed to veterans. The lapel pin will allow veterans to be easily identifiable by the Australian community where they choose to wear it.

The Bill also provides for the issue of cards and other artefacts in recognition of the military service of veterans.

The beneficial legislation statement at clause 7 makes it clear the Veterans' Affairs portfolio legislation has a beneficial purpose and should be interpreted accordingly.

Clause 6 - Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant

This clause provides that the Parliament, on behalf of the Australia, endorses the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant set out in Schedule 1 to this Bill.

This clause will ensure that the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant is an intrinsic part of the Bill to give it the importance and status required to honour those who have provided service as part of the Australian Defence Force.

The Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant purpose is to enable the Australian community to acknowledge, honour and support veterans and their families.

RESPONSE;

The V.V.A.A. Has no objections to the concept or wording of the proposed covenant.

Schedule 1 – Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant

Schedule 1 is the Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant that the Parliament of Australia endorses on behalf of the people of Australia.

The purpose of the Covenant is to acknowledge the unique nature of military service and the sacrifice demanded of those who commit to defend our nation and their families.



AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE VETERANS' COVENANT

*We, the people of Australia, respect and give thanks
to all who have served in our defence force and their families.*

*We acknowledge the unique nature of military service and the sacrifice
demanded of all who commit to defend our nation.*

*We undertake to preserve the memory and deeds of all who have served
and promise to welcome, embrace, and support
all military veterans as respected and valued members of our community.*

For what they have done, this we will do.

Clause 9 - Issue of pins, cards and other artefacts of recognition

New clause 9 would provide that the Commonwealth may issue pins, cards and other artefacts to veterans in recognition of their military service and to family members of veterans in recognition of the military service of veterans or the demands places on, and the sacrifices made by, families of veterans.

The intent of this clause is to provide such items or artefacts in recognition of veterans and their families as part of the broader Veteran Recognition package. The clause will enable the Department to continue to provide other forms of recognition into the future.

RESPONSE;

The V.V.A.A. has no objections to the issue of pins, cards and other artefacts to veterans in recognition of their military service and to their family members.

Kenneth H FOSTER OAM JP
National President
Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia
26 February 2019