



Australian Government
Department of Veterans' Affairs
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Ref: S12/0618

Dr Kathleen Dermody
Secretary
Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs,
Defence and Trade
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Dermody

Thank you for your letter of 1 November 2012 in which you sought to clarify a number of matters regarding lists of *Building Excellence in Support and Training* (BEST) grantees as published on the Department of Veterans' Affairs' (DVA's) website as compared to lists supplied to the Committee of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (the Committee).

Firstly, you raised concerns about the answers provided to Question on Notice 11 of February 2012. The inaccuracies to QoN 11 were due to an administrative error after all clearances had been obtained, when a departmental officer was tabling the detailed grants listing. This resulted in a duplication of a report that incorrectly showed the same grant listing for two different financial years. This was the Department's error and has subsequently been corrected.

Secondly, you sought advice about Mr Paul Evans' letter of 14 October 2012. Mr Evans lays out his concerns in his Attachment 2. The Department has checked all Grants data and can advise:

- Ten of the 16 items Mr Evans lists are Grants-In-Aid to National Ex-service Organisations rather than BEST. These items are not reported to the Committee as Grants-In-Aid is not funded from the main BEST budget;
- Two of the 16 items listed by Mr Evans reflect differences that are due to subsequent adjustments agreed with the grantees. Unfortunately the new grant amounts were not promptly updated on DVA's website, but they have subsequently been corrected;
- Three of the 16 items are explained by the practice of grouping applicants under their sponsoring organisation. The sponsoring organisation only is reported to the Committee but each separate organisation is listed on DVA's website. To avoid any future confusion a single presentation protocol has been implemented and will apply to future lists; and
- Finally, one transposition error was found and has been corrected.

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Saluting Their Service

Further details of these explanations are set out in Attachment A.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Ian Campbell', with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Ian Campbell
Secretary

17 December 2012

ENCL

Attachment A

Reasons for differences in the comparison of DVA's published list for BEST Round 13 grant recipients and the FADT Grants List

Organisation	Amount Received	Reason for Difference
National Organisations - GIA		
Regular Defence Force Welfare Association	\$10,000	Grants to national organisations are not included in the FADT list as the funding is from the Grants in Aid Program budget and not from the BEST grants budget. BEST Round 13 Approved Grants list on the DVA website states the grants are to national organisations.
War Widows Guild of Australia	\$9,679	
The Australian Veterans and Defence Services Council Inc.	\$10,000	
Vietnam Veterans Federation of Australia	\$10,000	
Partners of Veterans Association of Australia Inc.	\$7,756	
Naval Association of Australia Inc.	\$10,000	
The Australian Federation of Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Ex-service Men and Women Ltd	\$10,000	
Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans Assoc. Inc.	\$10,000	
Legacy Australia Council Inc.	\$10,000	
Vietnam Veterans' Association of Australia Inc.	\$10,000	
Subsequent Adjustments		
Veterans Support and Advocacy Service – Ipswich	\$11,586	An adjustment was made to the initial amount of \$8,645 granted to VSAS Ipswich for capital equipment to replace equipment damaged in QLD floods. This new amount was not updated on DVA's website. This has now been done.
Legacy Club of Fraser Coast	\$13,901	An adjustment was made to initial amount of \$9,715 granted to Legacy Club of Fraser Coast for contribution to a salary. This new amount was not updated on DVA's website. This has now been done.
Goodna RSL Sub-branch	\$9,022	In previous BEST lists provided to FADT only the sponsoring organisation was listed, while on DVA's website each separately funded organisation was listed. Round 14 and all future lists provided to FADT will show each separate organisation under the name of the sponsor organisation.
Pine Rivers District RSL Sub-branch	\$6,700	
Beachmere RSL Sub-branch	\$1,700	
Transposition		
Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (VVAA)– Far North Coast Sub-branch	\$21,234	A transposition error occurred when data was copied from one report to another and the amount of \$21,234 was entered against Woolgoolga RSL instead of VVAA Far North Coast.