



COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENT OF  
**VETERANS' AFFAIRS**

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY



Paul Barsdell  
Secretary  
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Barsdell

On 6 February 2001 the Selection of Bills Committee referred the Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment (Application of Criminal Code) Bill 2000 to the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee. The referral was made to consider the appropriateness of the penalties.

This Bill harmonises all offence-creating and related provisions in Veterans' Affairs legislation with the general principles of criminal responsibility as codified in Chapter 2 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995*. The only penalties in the Bill are those attached to offence-making provisions that the Bill will substitute for legislation that is to be repealed. The explanatory memorandum states "(T)he amendments are intended to ensure that relevant offences continue to have much the same meaning and to operate in the same manner as they do at present."

The Bill does not alter any existing penalties that are attached to the provisions that are being replaced.

Yours sincerely

NEIL JOHNSTON

9 FEBRUARY 2001