



ADSO ALLIANCE OF DEFENCE SERVICE ORGANISATIONS

24 May 2016

MEDIA STATEMENT

‘IT’S TIME’

TO STUMP UP FOR OUR SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN, AND VETERANS

The Defence Force Welfare Association, together with its partners in the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations (ADSO)¹ comprising some 90,000 members, are beginning to wonder whether the men and women of the Australian Defence Force, and the veterans’ community, are in **a policy free zone** leading up to the forthcoming election. As a combined voice those Associations are looking for policy initiatives from all political parties that would provide some redress of the concerns expressed to the Government and Opposition parties over the last many years.

Instead of positive policies we see;

1. Government wastefully spending millions fighting veterans’ claims most of which are ultimately proven to be valid. Such disputes almost invariably lead to depression, high levels of stress and adverse mental outcomes.
2. Government and Defence failing to fully recognize that many ADF members who took Mefloquine may have suffered physical and mental harm. They need reassurance that the Government will take positive and proactive action to survey those who were administered this drug and provide no questions asked health support to combat the impacts of this drug. It’s Time to actively support them and their families in every way possible to ensure their physical and mental health needs are met.
3. Government allowing the Veteran Disability Pensions to be reduced in relative value at the expense of our disabled veterans.
4. Government reducing the value of ADF superannuation by deliberately discounting the indexation of MSBS and DFRB/DFERDB superannuation payments, not to mention the use of 50-year old life tables to reduce DFRDB superannuation payments.
5. Government resisting the provision of hearing appliances to meet the identified clinical need of veterans with complex hearing loss requirements.

Our service personnel have made a major contribution to Nation’s security and freedom since federation but governments over the years have fallen well short of their obligations to them. This reinforces the need to recognize the special compact between the Nation and its service personnel with an ‘Australian Military Accord’.

It’s Time for all political parties to release their veterans’ policies.

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¹ The Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA), Naval Association of Australia (NAA), RAAF Association (RAAFA), Royal Australian Regiment Corporation (RAR), Australian Special Air Service Association (ASASA), Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (VVAA), the Australian Federation of Totally and Permanently Incapacitated Ex-Service Men and Women, the Fleet Air Arm Association of Australia, Partners of Veterans Association of Australia, Royal Australian Armoured Corps Corporation (RAAC), the National Malaya & Borneo Veterans Association Australia (NMBVAA), Defence Reserves Association (DRA), Australian Gulf War Veterans Association, Australian Commando Association, War Widows Guild, Military Police Association Australia (MPAA), and the Australian Army Apprentices Association.