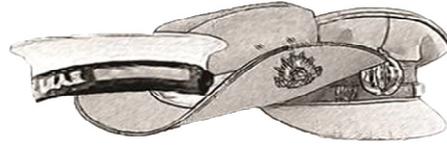
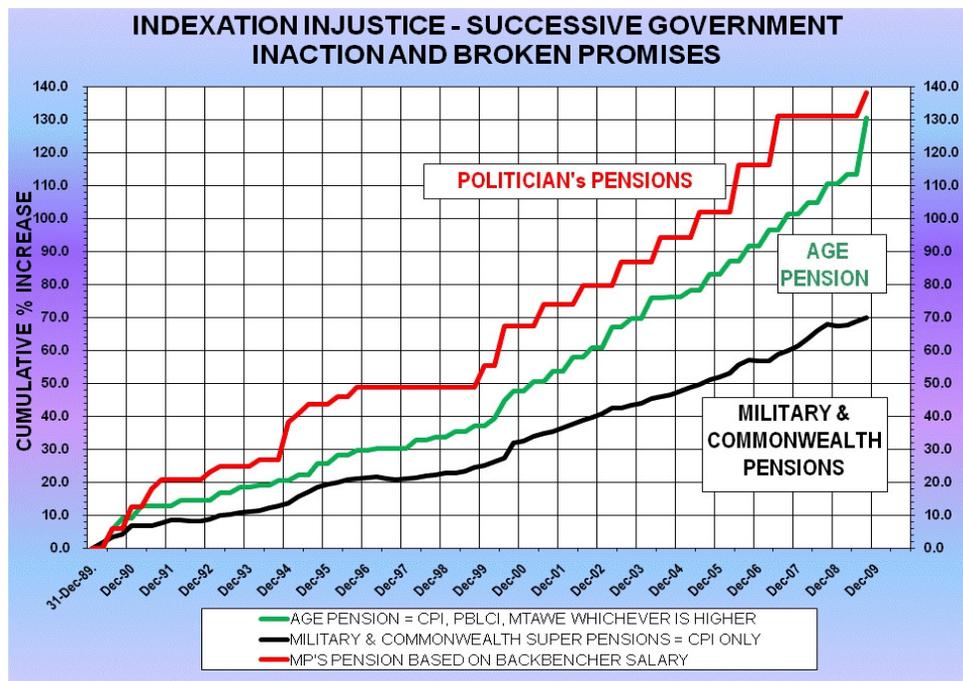


# FAIR GO!



## Public Awareness Campaign

# 2010



## **A 'FAIR GO!' FOR AUSTRALIA'S DEFENCE FAMILY**

Australia's serving and retired servicemen and women deserve a Fair Go!

Servicemen and women are members of the Defence Family. So are their wives, husbands, partners, families, widows and widowers – and don't forget the many thousands of parents and friends who also nurture and support those who protect Australia on behalf of us all.

Serving members of the ADF are, rightly, constrained from speaking out on their own behalf. But ex-service people are not so constrained, which is why the Fair Go! public awareness campaign is underway. The Fair Go! campaign is sponsored by many ex-service organisations on behalf of the entire Defence Family.

Serving and former service men and women deserve a Fair Go! in four key areas:

1. ***Fair indexation of military superannuation pensions*** – because, unlike the Age Pension and other welfare and superannuation pensions, the purchasing power of military superannuation pensions is not protected.
2. ***Equitable treatment of veterans' disability pensions*** – because the pensions of men and women who were disabled in the service of Australia are losing their value.
3. ***Certainty in military compensation*** – because ongoing indecision and uncertainty is stressful, unnecessary and unacceptable.
4. ***Veterans' health care*** – because mental health and residential accommodation for younger veterans in particular are issues that are increasing in frequency and severity.

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**SERVICEMEN AND WOMEN – AND THOSE THEY TOO OFTEN LEAVE  
BEHIND – ARE NOT SECOND CLASS CITIZENS.  
THEY DESERVE A FAIR GO!**

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This package includes information on the unique nature of military service as well as more on Defence Family matters and the specific outcomes that the Fair Go! public awareness campaign seeks to achieve. It also includes a Fact Sheet for each of the four key areas.

More information is at the DFWA's website <http://www.dfw.org.au> and RARA's website <http://www.rar.org.au/Advocacy.html> Or contact the Fair Go! National Coordinator, David Jamison, at 0416 107 557

**Please read on...**

## THE UNIQUE NATURE OF MILITARY SERVICE

Many in government who shape policy are increasingly swayed by the idea that the sailor, soldier and airman/woman is adequately provided for by in-service salary and allowances that compensate for his/her service both while it is being given and after it has ceased. Military service is seen by some as comparable to other forms of service involving risk and danger, and therefore no longer unique. That's wrong.

Military service is not 'employment' in an industrial relations sense. ADF people are *members*, not employees, an important distinction. ADF members do not and should not enjoy employee privileges such as trade union representation and fixed industrial awards. The consequence is that ADF members in the past, present and future require special treatment by the State. That's because military service is unique. Here's why.

Most democratic societies recognise that the individual is the primary unit of sovereignty. Individuals are vested with inalienable human rights, recognised in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights Article 3 as – among others – life, liberty and the security of the person.

Australia is a signatory of the Declaration, adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1948.

Implicit in Article 3 is also a right to defence of self and of others from attack. This right inevitably gives rise to an *obligation* to do so if it is the State which is under threat or attack.

The complex interrelationship of rights and responsibilities borne both by the State and the individual is based on the principle of a social contract. The State may not alienate the rights of the individual without that person's assent. The individual citizen, while preserving the integrity of his/her rights, may assent to the State's demand for surrender of some of them for the common good but, in all circumstances save one, military service, the State is obliged to uphold and defend the individual's rights.

In volunteering for military service, the individual accepts the surrender of his/her basic rights under Article 3. S/he places his or her life, liberty and security of person in the hands of the State. This surrender is not unconditional, though *in extremis* it is absolute.

The State, for its part, accepts the obligation to preserve, as far as is consistent with the achievement of the military mission, the physical and spiritual wellbeing of the individuals who place themselves at its disposal. This obligation extends beyond the period of service itself to the physical and psychological consequences of that service. That's why Australia and comparable nations have a Department of Veterans' Affairs as well as special legislation covering servicemen and women during and after their period of service.

Even when the State demands surrender of human rights by imposing compulsory military service, the social contract still implies that the compulsion only occurs within a democratic framework and is therefore with the assent of the individual, who at all times is party to it.

In no other calling, occupation or profession does the State possess the power to accept or demand the surrender of basic human rights. It is servicemen and women, and only servicemen and women, who, when lawfully directed, are required to surrender their human rights up to and including the surrender of their life.

Military service in this most fundamental of respects is, and will remain, unique. The consequent obligation placed on the State is as inescapable as it is enduring.

## THE DEFENCE FAMILY

More than 4 million people – or about 18% of the Australian population – are members of the Defence Family.

The Defence Family includes veterans of the nation's many overseas deployments and operational commitments, former servicemen and women, serving servicemen and women, and the families of all of them. Importantly, the Defence Family includes the widows, widowers and children whom servicemen and women too often leave behind.

The Fair Go Ex-Service Partnership, consisting of many ex-service organisations, represents the Defence Family's interests in the Fair Go! public awareness campaign.

Partnership organisations provide camaraderie, advocacy and welfare support in concert with the Department of Veterans' Affairs (DVA) in order to provide welfare, education, pension and advisory support to their members and their families.

This support and assistance is provided on a voluntary basis, without remuneration and in the Australian spirit of mateship.

Pension and Welfare Officers are trained through Training Information Programs (TIP), which are conducted in partnership with DVA.

This partnership provides clear benefits and is a major cost saving to DVA and, in turn, to the Federal Government and the Australian taxpayer.

## SPECIFIC OUTCOMES

*We seek these commitments from all political parties contesting the next Federal election:*

- All military superannuation pensions (DFRB/DFRDB/MSBS) to rise twice each year by the same percentage as the Age Pension, in order to provide equal protection for military superannuation pension purchasing power. See Fact Sheet 1 for details.
  - Removal of the remaining level of erosion of the value of the Veterans' Disability Pensions and adjustment of the Veterans' Disability Pensions (including the general rate, EDA, intermediate rate, temporary special rate and the special rate) in light of increased community living standards since 1997 as has happened for Age and other welfare pensions. See Fact Sheet 2 for details.
  - A single compensation regime for all serving and former members of the ADF that recognizes the unique nature of military service. See Fact Sheet 3 for details.
  - Funding and DVA support for appropriate community accommodation in order to meet the needs of veterans with mental health issues as well as younger veterans in need of care. See Fact Sheet 4 for details.
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