



DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION NATIONAL OFFICE

A member of the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations

12 August 2016

MEDIA STATEMENT

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES ON EMPLOYMENT AND MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT WELCOME

The announcement yesterday on the Prime Minister's employment initiative reiterates his commitment to stage a forum of "captains of industry" to encourage them to consider employing former ADF members in their companies.

Whilst this is a welcome project DFWA, along with its partners in the Alliance of Defence Service Organisations, thinks this needs to be placed in a wider perspective and be separate from the mental health support initiative.

The skills and attributes of former ADF members are a national resource that can bring enormous value to the Australian workforce and if properly harnessed will significantly enhance the skill sets in Australian commercial enterprises for the benefit of the nation and its economic competitiveness. Implementing a national Australian Covenant to which the Government and Australian industry can subscribe is important so that these attributes and skill sets can be recognised and effectively harnessed for the benefit of both veterans and industry.

The mental health issues faced by some veterans is a separate matter that requires the sort of very welcome approaches announced by the Government in its budget and by the Prime Minister today.

Whilst this is an important issue, impacting too many of our serving and former ADF members, DFWA stresses that the overwhelming proportion of veterans are not effected by this and go on to live very fruitful lives supported by loving families and contributing to the life of the nation.

<i>Contacts</i>		
Executive Director: Alf Jaugietis (0438) 282 284	www.dfwa.org.au	National President: David Jamison (0416) 107 557

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