



DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

20 April 2021

MEDIA STATEMENT

DFWA WELCOMES THE CALL FOR A ROYAL COMMISSION

The Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA) congratulates the Prime Minister on his decision to establish a Royal Commission into veteran suicide. It welcomed the Government's recognition of not only the depth of feeling within the veteran community regarding such tragedies but also by all sides of politics within the confines of both Houses of the Parliament.

In speaking on behalf of DFWA, its National President, Mr Kel Ryan, said that the Royal Commission was a positive step forward in the search for answers and committed the Association to fully support and cooperate with it. He further proffered that:

- a. It was imperative that the work of interim National Commissioner for Defence and Suicide Prevention continue with her task to investigate cases of suicide not only in the veteran community but also among serving ADF members.
- b. It was important that the appointed National Commissioner and the Family Advocate work in conjunction with the judicial inquiry and the Independent National Commissioner so that the entire spectrum of inter-related and complex issues which impact on the well-being of veterans and their families can be examined.
- c. It was critical that the true impact of the transition process from military service to civilian life be recognised as a potential contributing factor to suicides.

DFWA views the Royal Commission as a new chapter in the care of Veterans and their families who served the nation's bidding. The Inquiry is a positive step in the march to stop the tragedy that is Veteran suicide.

DFWA looks forward to working closely with the Commission so that ultimately there is a marked improvement in Veterans' mental health into the future.

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