



LEST WE FORGET

STAND TO

"THE PRICE OF LIBERTY IS ETERNAL VIGILANCE"
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VETERANS' NEWS FROM THE CAPITAL

ACT NEWS FROM THE CAPITAL

A happy and peaceful festive season to all our members

Minister acts on compo delays

The new Minister for Veterans' Affairs, Alan Griffin, has asked his department to give immediate attention to reducing the long delays experienced by veterans seeking compensation for war-related injuries.

Mr Griffin said on December 13, "The previous government's own statistics supported what the ex-service community was telling me, that too often veterans and ex-service personnel were being frustrated by lengthy delays on the outcomes of their claims.

"Average processing of primary injury claims under the Military Rehabilitation and Compensation Act more than doubled since 2004–05.

Special claims unit

"I have tasked my own office to work closely with the Department to achieve immediate improvements and to advise on the establishment of a special claims unit to implement a longer-term action plan to speed up claims processing."

He also outlined his immediate priorities, including improving consultative mechanisms and responding to the emerging issues faced by younger veterans from multiple deployments.

It was known that war service had both a physical and mental impact on personnel but there had been delays in adequately supporting those who served Australia in recent conflicts, including East Timor, Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Working ... with the ex-service community and key government agencies, I want to ensure that we not only respond to the needs of today's veterans and their families, but also prepare for the future," he said. "This Government went to the election with a comprehensive policy to deliver real benefits to veterans and ex-serving personnel. We need to strive for continuous improvement in our Repatriation system, seeking greater flexibility and enhanced responsiveness."

Troops back from Iraq

More than 40 personnel of the Australian Army Training Team Iraq VIII arrived home on December 13 with the Commander of the Overwatch Battle Group West 3rd rotation, Lieutenant Colonel Jake Ellwood. In the rotation, OBG(W)-3 conducted more than 22 major security operations and patrolled to counter improvised explosive devices and indirect fire threats.



Cadets from the French Officers' Army School, Second Lieutenants Olivier Frach, Charline Lavaux, Morgane Martin, Pauline Moreau and Foulques Crousillac, at the Australian-French Memorial at the French Embassy, Canberra, after a Remembrance Day ceremony on November 11. Photo: Courtesy of the Embassy of France — See page 8

New ministers and parliamentary secretaries
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Burley Griffin launching for RAN surf marathon
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ADFA graduations and Remembrance Day
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