

# Getting to know you: new ministerial faces

## Mike Kelly — Parliamentary Secretary for Defence



Mike Kelly

While working his way through university, **Colonel Michael J. Kelly AM BA LLB PhD** worked as a storeman and packer at an oil refinery, a cleaner at a veterans' hospital and a labourer with Sydney's Water, Sewerage and Drainage Board.

After graduating he worked at a law firm in Sydney for three years, fighting for the rights of injured workers and helping with campaigns for those suffering from asbestos-related diseases in the very early days of those struggles.

Mike Kelly, the new member for Eden-Monaro, joined the Army in 1987 and has extensive military experience including deployments in Somalia (for which he was awarded the Chief of the General Staff Commendation and made a Member of the Order of Australia for his contributions); with the International Red Cross in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Croatia; Kenya; East Timor; with the SAS in Australia in the lead-up to the Sydney Olympics and at the Headquarters Australian Theatre and in Iraq. He finished his military career as Director of Operations and International Law and Director of Army Legal

Services in May 2007.

He has been a regular speaker at military training programs and conferences worldwide and is widely regarded as a leading expert on operations law, peace operations, postconflict reconstruction and counterinsurgency issues. He has published many articles and chapters on military and legal subjects.

Mike Kelly has a long family history in Eden-Monaro. His great-great-grandfather, Thomas Joseph Kelly, settled in Bega in 1865. Thomas went on to found the Bega Cheese factory and was its first chairman. Thomas married the daughter of Daniel Gowing, also a significant family in the region, and had many descendants who helped build the area as farmers, sawmillers and teachers. Mike's great-grandfather, Benjamin George Kelly, ran for the seat of Eden-Monaro in 1940 and his great-uncle, Father John Kelly, was the parish priest in Bombala and Braidwood before becoming a Monsignor and the Inspector of Catholic Education for the region. Mike has many relatives still living and working in the Bega-Tanja area.

## Defence Science and Personnel



Warren Snowdon

Warren Snowdon, the new Minister for Defence Science and Personnel, was born in Canberra. He graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1973 and then completed a Diploma in Education in 1975, moving to the Northern Territory to work as a teacher in Darwin.

Between 1978 and 1981 he worked as a researcher at the Australian National University's Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies, with Dr H C (Nugget) Coombs and Dr Maria Brandl, on the Aboriginal Children's and Families' Heritage Project.

He was elected to Parliament in 1987. He was appointed Parliamentary Secretary for various portfolios including Transport and Communications, Employment Education and Training and Environment, Sport and Territories, in the Hawke and Keating Governments.

Warren lives in Alice Springs with his partner, Elizabeth, and their four children.

## Greg Combet — Parliamentary Secretary for Defence



Greg Combet

**Greg Combet AM** has university degrees in mining engineering and economics.

He has also a graduate diploma in labour relations and the law.

He joined the Australian Council of Trade Unions in 1993 and was secretary of the ACTU from 1999 until he stood for the federal seat of Charlton, NSW, which includes the Newcastle area.

He grew up in western Sydney and worked as a trades assistant; in coal mining; and for a range of community organisations before working for unions.

In his work at the ACTU Mr Combet has overseen numerous national wage cases to secure pay increases

for low-paid Australian workers.

He led the union movement in the high-profile 1998 waterfront dispute.

Other union campaign that he led secured employees' entitlements for 16,000 workers after the collapse of Ansett; and another was the one that secured from James Hardie a multibillion-dollar settlement for Australian asbestos victims.

More recently he has coordinated and led the union and community campaign against the industrial-relations laws introduced by the previous government.

He was made a Member of the Order of Australia in 2006.

Mr Combet is married to Petra and they have three children.

## The new Minister for Health and Ageing



Although not directly linked with veterans and their dependents, the portfolio of Health and Ageing does have a direct bearing on the lives of members of ex-service organisations.

Three new faces are involved, **Nicola Roxon** (left) being the new Minister for Health and Ageing and a member of Cabinet.

Representing the seat of Gellibrand in Melbourne, she has been Shadow Minister Children and Youth, Shadow Minister Assisting the Leader on the Status of Women, Shadow Minister for Immigration, and Shadow Attorney-General.

Nicola Roxon is an honours law graduate, who worked as an industrial lawyer, union organiser and judge's associate to Justice Mary Gaudron in the High Court of Australia before her election to Parliament.

**Justine Elliot** is the new Minister for Ageing.

Before being a federal MP, she had been a community representative on the Northern Rivers Area Health Service Hospital and Community Health Council and a representative of Fingal Head on the Tweed Coastal Committee.

Parliamentary Secretary for Health and Ageing. In the Senate she chaired the Senate Community Affairs References Committee and has chaired two select committee inquiries into Medicare and, more recently, the Inquiry into Children in Institutional Care.

Other inquiries in which she has been involved include the examination of the Tobacco Advertising Regime and the current one into aged-care service delivery to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

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**Senator Jan McLucas** is the new

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