



LEST WE FORGET

# STAND TO

'THE PRICE OF LIBERTY IS ETERNAL VIGILANCE'

NUMBER 141 September 2008

VETERANS' NEWS FROM THE CAPITAL



ACT NEWS FROM THE CAPITAL

# Long Tan bravery recognised at last

The Federal Government has announced changes to military awards in response to the independent review of Battle of Long Tan recognition. It has also announced its response to the review of service recognition for RAAF Ubon (1965–68).

Cabinet Secretary Senator John Faulkner, Minister for Veterans' Affairs Alan Griffin and Parliamentary Secretary for Defence Support Dr Mike Kelly say they have considered carefully the reports of the independent review panel and a number of public responses to the reports.

Key decisions, approved by the Governor-General, are:

Harry Smith, Commander D Company 6RAR, will be offered the Star of Gallantry (equivalent to the Distinguished Service Order) and Platoon Commanders Dave Sabben and Geoff Kendall will be offered the Medal for Gallantry (equivalent to the Military Cross).

This restores the original award recommended for Harry Smith by his commanding officers and accepts that the intention was to award Dave Sabben and Geoff Kendall higher honours.

## Tribunal to decide

The strength of D Company 6RAR in Vietnam on 18 August 1966 will receive approval to wear the former Republic of Vietnam's Gallantry Cross with Palm Unit Citation Emblem.

The ministers say, "Any other unresolved concerns regarding individual awards for Long Tan will be referred to the independent Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal. The Government will consider itself bound by the Tribunal's recommendations on these matters.

"Implementation of these recommendations will properly recognise the individual and collective gallantry of these men on 18 August 1966, provide an equitable mix of awards for the battle and will confer considerable honour on all the men of D Company 6RAR in Vietnam who fought in the Battle of Long Tan.

The independent panel reviewing service recognition for RAAF Ubon found that the close working relationship that Australian personnel developed with the Americans at Ubon, in Thailand, does not translate to an intention by the Government to deploy assets as part of the Vietnam War. The Government has accepted this finding. It is open for the Ubon Veterans to seek a review of this matter by the independent Defence Honours and Awards Tribunal.

## C-in-C farewells his troops



The retiring Governor-General of Australia and Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Defence Force, Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC and Chief of Defence Force Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston inspect Australia's Federation Guard at the Governor-General's farewell parade at Sir Thomas Blamey Square, Russell. The new Governor-General of Australia and Commander-in-Chief of the ADF, Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, was sworn in at Parliament House on September 5.

## Some old soldiers won't ever fade away

The Australian Defence Force held a farewell parade on August 27 for His Excellency the Governor-General of Australia, Major General Michael Jeffery AC CVO MC, at Sir Thomas Blamey Square in Canberra.

Chief of Defence Force Air Chief Marshal Angus Houston paid tribute to

the outgoing Commander-in-Chief and his wife, Her Excellency Mrs Marlena Jeffery.

The Secretary, Vice Chief of Defence Force and Service Chiefs were also in attendance.

The Governor-General's farewell to the RSL is published on Page 10.

## Afghanistan takes its toll in ambush

An Australian Special Forces soldier who suffered life-threatening wounds in a battle with Taliban extremists on September 2 remains in a critical condition.

The soldier left Tarin Kowt for medical treatment in Germany on September 5 but in the first leg of the flight his condition was assessed as being too unstable to continue. He received further surgery at Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan.

The other eight soldiers wounded in the incident with Taliban extremists continue to be treated in Afghanistan.

Several Taliban extremists were killed in the contact.

## Students to study Defence

Over the next two months, hundreds of young students will be studying defence issues and responsible citizenship as part of the Defence 2020 Youth Challenge program.

Defence 2020 aims to raise awareness of the values of the Australian Defence Force among senior school students and to encourage discussion about defence issues through such subjects as history, economics, geography, politics and citizenship.

A national forum will be held in Canberra at the beginning of December.

For further information on Defence 2020 visit [www.Defence2020.info](http://www.Defence2020.info)

## New Chief Defence Scientist appointed

Professor Robert Clark, an eminent scientist in the field of quantum computing, will be Chief Defence Scientist and head the Defence Science and Technology Organisation (DSTO) from October.

He holds several professorial and director appointments.

Professor Clark joined the Royal Australian Navy as a cadet midshipman in 1969 and served in eight ships before leaving the Navy in 1979.

War graves for at last for diggers — Page 2

Veterans' suicide views sought — Page 4

Bulletin Board links old mates — Page 11