



VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA NATIONAL COUNCIL ^{INC}
AUSTRALIAN PEACEKEEPERS & PEACEMAKERS VETERANS ASSOCIATION ^{INC}

JOINT MEDIA RELEASE

Veterans Applaud Intergenerational Study

The Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (VVAA) and the Australian Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Veterans Association (APPVA) welcomed yesterday's release of **"The Intergenerational Health Effects of Service in the Military Research Protocol"**. This very broad-reaching and complex study announced by the Minister of Veteran Affairs Mr Bruce Bilson MP was breath taking in its intent and scope.

The Howard Liberal government has pledged \$13.5m dollars to undertake a unique three tier health study into the health, social and psychological outcomes of military and war service on veterans and their families. The first tier will focus on the effects of this service on individuals, their partners, children and grandchildren. Mr Ron Coxon, National President of the VVAA noted the first tier report will be concluded in 2009 and will be ongoing.

Paul Copeland, National President of the APPVA said that he and his members were **delighted that the Government is including younger veterans within the study, especially East Timor veterans and those serving members who are contributing to the present high level of peacekeeping and peacemaking missions around the world.**

Both National Presidents stated that the government announcement more than met their expectations and thanked the Minister, the Repatriation Commissioners and especially the team of dedicated scientist and doctors of the Centre for Military and Veterans' Health (CMVH) led by Professor Niki Ellis.

The determination of the Minister and his Department was demonstrated in the tendering process and first tier study strategies are to be in place by the end of the year. This is the most comprehensive study ever undertaken on the effects of military service. **"We have fought for this follow-up health study for many years" said Mr Coxon "If the delivery matches the promise, we have achieved more than expected."** Mr Copeland thanked the Vietnam veterans who have led the fight for recognition of the effects of military service on all who served in peace and war. Their fight and determination are being taken up by the younger generation to ensure our post Vietnam Service men and women are looked after.

Mr Copeland identified a number of issues that need to be addressed that Cambodia, Rwanda, Somalia & other Operations are not overlooked. Both National Presidents thanked the Leader of the opposition and shadow Minister for Veteran Affairs for supporting this major Government initiative and their determination to keep a watching brief on the issue as it unfolds.

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