



VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

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VIETNAM WAR VETERANS TO CONGREGATE IN BRISBANE

The National President of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia (VVAA) Brian McKenzie said today, 'the Association was looking forward to conducting its 25th National Congress in Brisbane from 28th till 30th May 2004.

Mr McKenzie said; this years Congress will be particularly important given there is a Federal election around the corner, and the need to define and prioritise the Association's position with respect to the needs of War veterans and their families.

The Government's response to the Clarke Review and the recent Budget outcomes will understandably be high on the agenda for this year's event, and while there are some positives, a number of outstanding matters still need the Government's full attention; he said.

Mr McKenzie said; the Association had initiated a 'Summit' of eleven peak Ex-service Organisations (ESO's) in Canberra in March 2003 and is seeking support for another event to discuss matters of mutual interest to our respective memberships before the Federal election.

We live in a very robust democracy and this Association will continue to express veterans concerns to Government, the Opposition and the Australian community. Governments of all persuasions need to aware that war veterans will not sit idly by when perfectly reasonable requests continue to be ignored; he said.

Mr McKenzie said; the Shadow Minister for Veterans Affairs, Senator Mark Bishop will also address the Congress and we are particularly keen to hear the Labour party's philosophy and policies on Veteran matters in the run up to the election.

The three day Congress is being hosted by the VVAA, Queensland Branch and will be conducted at the 'William Abell' Community Centre, Pine Rivers RSL, 1347 Anzac Avenue, Kallangur QLD commencing at 8.30am on 28 May 2004, and will be officially opened by the Minister for Veterans Affairs, Danna Vale MP at 11am on Friday the 28 May 2004.

The Minister will present a number of 'Long Tan' Bursaries to young Queenslanders following the opening.

Mr McKenzie said; the Association sincerely thanks the Pine Rivers RSL, Pine Rivers Shire Council, Department of Veterans Affairs, Angus House, Greenslopes Private Hospital and Toowong Private Hospital for their continued support. I would like to congratulate our Queensland branch for doing a wonderful job in organising the event.

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