



AUSTRALIAN PEACEKEEPER & PEACEMAKER
VETERANS' ASSOCIATION
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Federal Government Ignores Peacekeepers

The Federal Government has continued to treat those who have served on peacekeeping operations as second rate veterans, says Mr Allan Thomas of the Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans' Association (APPVA) today.

The comments come as the Government yesterday announced it has accepted the recommendations of the independent Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal inquiry into recognition for Australian Defence Force personnel who served as peacekeepers from 1947 onwards.

"Once again the Defence Honours and Awards Appeals Tribunal, which isn't independent, has demonstrated another failure to provide adequate recognition for Australia's peacekeepers – many who are younger veterans," said Mr Thomas who is the interim National President of the younger veterans organisation.

"As an example of this ongoing failure, those who die on peacekeeping (or non-warlike) operations aren't even afforded the respect and honour of having their name recorded on the memorial wall of the Australian War Memorial."

"This is a disgraceful lack of recognition for those who have died in service of this country on these operations and their families with the names recorded in a book which is locked in a cabinet. Yet the bureaucrats think this is acceptable recognition."

Mr Thomas said it was now becoming apparent where there is a financial impost to Government in relation to inquiries brought before the Tribunal, the accepted recommendations seem to always be in the negative.

"Other nations such as Timor Leste have seen the value of recognising the commitment of Australian, New Zealand and other international peacekeepers across police and Defence – yet after sixty-five years of peacekeeping service our own nation remains ungrateful."

"One of the major issues which continually angers the younger veteran community is the ongoing resistance for adequate recognition. Coupled with the resistance on military pensions, it would appear the Government is not keen to make key decisions

which benefit veterans but are happy to take the photo opportunities when they become available.”

“Australia, in many ways, remains an ungrateful nation towards its veterans, including peacekeepers, and today’s acceptance by the Gillard Government of the Tribunal’s recommendation is an example of that approach.”

Mr Thomas said the Parliamentary Secretary for Defence, Senator David Feeney, was now refusing to meet with the APPVA to discuss their concerns.

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