



## UPDATE 24 - ACTION ON TWO FRONTS

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### In the Public Arena - we rallied

We were prominent again in August in the lead up to Vietnam Veterans' Day when we conducted successfully Phase 2 of 'OP AWARE'. This continued our public awareness activities to explain to the public at large and to targeted politicians in particular how unjust is the Government's failure to neither fairly index Military Superannuation pensions nor to restore Veterans' Disability Pensions to parity.

ADSO's strategy of planned incremental increases in the size of its public rally activities deliberately limited our efforts in this one to specific targets within our increasing capabilities and resources. Those efforts will increase in size, scope and time as required.

The rallies of planned limited numbers were held at mid day on Friday 17 August outside some marginal Labor electorate offices while at some other MP's electorate and Senators' offices, deputations delivered a formal ADSO letter to the Office staff.

The operation was successful. In summary there were 34 reported events (rallies and deputations) in all States and Territories (except Tasmania). They included the Offices of MPs' PM, Treasurer, Defence Minister, Greg Combet, Mike Kelly, Kevin Rudd, Adam Bandt and Senators Wong, Furner, Farrell and Xenophon.

Ralliers in WA were amused to see the Dignitary Protection Police Force was on hand at Fremantle. No sightings this time at Penny Wong's office.

Thank you to all our supporters (men and women) who participated in the rallies, deputations or as lone rangers. The support from Neil Weekes and his warriors boosted our performance, thanks Neil. The response from the public was very encouraging with many expressions of support to prove that our plight is penetrating the community.

It was another great learning experience for us all. The network is in place. We need more of our keep informed supporters, to take another voluntary step and join your local electorate Action Group. What commitment can you make? Check it out and make your choice [here](#)





### **Our intrepid warriors outside Gary Gray's Office in Brand WA.**

There will be a gallery of rally photos to be posted on the web site soon

### **In the House Arena - the Pollie's Games**

Events in the House of Representatives in the period 22-23 August were a good example of political tactics in play. If you were confused then these background notes will help you interpret them.

#### **The Background**

1. The current Oakeshott motion is an expanded (to include MSBS) repeat of his previous motion presented in the House on **24 June 2010** just prior to the 2010 August election. That motion was not fully debated but was accepted unanimously after the Speaker called on the House to voice their support or dissent for it on a show of hands.
2. Earlier, on the **17 June 2010** the Coalition declared its Election policy support for Fair Indexation which pledged that if elected to Government they would introduce a Fair Indexation Bill by the 30 June 2011.
3. The **August 2010** election resulted in a minority Labor Government formed with the support of the Greens and Independents who for stable government had agreed to support the Government in opposing; any out of budget proposals (Bills) that involved additional expenditure not covered by compensatory savings elsewhere, and any no confidence motions against the Government.
4. In **November 2010** the Coalition tabled the Fair Indexation (FI) Bill in the Senate in a move to have it voted on before 30 June 2011 when the Greens would have the balance of voting power. The Coalition's Bill, which applied only for DFRDB and only for over 55's did not include MSBS, under 55 disabled veterans, preserved funds or the total reversionary pension for partners of deceased military superannuation pensioners, was defeated in **June 2011**, after a tied vote 34 – 34: Labor, Greens and Independent Senator Xenophon voting against it: Xenophon on the basis that he was not convinced the Coalition's cost offsets were possible.
5. In **March 2012** the Coalition, in a public announcement in Bendigo, reaffirmed their pledge in Government to legislate the FI Bill in their first budget.

6. In the **June 2012** session of Parliament before its 2012 Winter break the Oakeshott motion was tabled in the Federation Room (not the HoR). Some limited debate was had but further debate adjourned until the next sitting in August. That did not happen but is expected in the 10-20 September sitting.

7. On **20 Aug 2012** the Coalition seized upon the Government's Veterans' Affairs Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 (to vary certain legislative matters) tabled in the House to propose an amendment that would stop the debate on the Government's Bill until the government agreed to introduce a bill on fair indexation of military superannuation pensions. The amendment was debated extensively by the Opposition before being lost in a 69-68 vote. Voting against were Labor MPs including Craig Thomson (who had stated his support for fair indexation to Bob Ihlein and his Dobell Action Group), Green's Adam Bandt, and Independents, Windsor and Katter. Rob Oakeshott abstained from voting by not being present in the House to vote. Andrew Wilkie voted with the Coalition. Read the debate [here](#) and continuing [here](#).

8. The Coalition released a [media statement](#) Robert/Ronaldson - Joint Media Release - Fair Indexation defeated 69-68 by Labor and Independents 22/08/12

9. Rob Oakeshott in response to the Roberts/Ronaldson release said: *"The Bill today had nothing to do with military superannuation. So I was not going to participate in an exercise that ran interference in support to over 200,000 veterans throughout Australia. I judged this as irresponsible. Instead, I have a vote coming on a motion before the House for the issue of military superannuation to be addressed. I am urging all MP's to support it in a fortnights time"*.

10. See both Bob Katter's and Warren Snowdon's contribution to the debate [here](#).

11. Katter's office staff explain his decision to vote against the Coalition's amendment in this way: *"Had Bob voted with and helped pass the Opposition's amendment, it would have resulted in the halting of the Veterans Affairs Legislation Amendment Bill 2012, depriving veterans of the much-needed entitlements. However, Bob voted against the Opposition amendment, and the Bill was subsequently passed without division"*.

12. Snowdon's [media release](#) said *"The Opposition's actions were for political purposes, noting that their proposal to change military superannuation indexation does not apply to anyone who joined the Australian Defence Force after 1991. The Coalition had over 11 years in Government to act on their proposal and chose to do nothing."*

13. The Coalition refuted these claims as false and inaccurate and countered by questioning the will of the Government and the Independents to deliver Fair Indexation in [Ronaldson's Roundup](#) article "Coalition Committed to better deal on Defence Superannuation".

### **The Current Situation**

1. The Coalition has shown its intent to carry out its pledge for Fair Indexation by trying to force the issue through an amendment to the Veterans Affairs Legislation Amendment Bill 2012 tabled by the Government. It failed.

2. The Government continues to oppose Fair Indexation.

3. The Independents saw the Coalition's move as a stunt that would delay the Government's Amendment Bill changes.

4. The Coalition has refuted the Independents' assertions.

5. The Oakeshott motion has yet to get on to the House's business agenda in the September sittings commencing 10 September. **The motion is not a Bill and only calls on the Government "to consider ....."**

**We want you to make it known to your local MP that you expect them to support the Motion to be placed on the House's September Business Agenda and they will vote for the Motion in the House.**

**If the Motion is debated who can predict the outcome?**

The Government could indeed agree to 'consider', and do nothing more, merely saying they are still 'considering' and use all manner of delaying tactics ("but it's too expensive" etc etc) or they could have another inquiry.

If the Motion is debated and passed with the Coalitions support and all the Independents, the Government will have to accede to the House's will and in time bring forward an enabling Bill for debate.

**Now it does get interesting.** Any Bill that is presented is a money bill out of budget and in accordance with the Independent's agreement with the Gillard Labor minority government they should oppose it if there are no costs savings elsewhere in the budget . With the Independents voting against their Agreement with the Gillard Minority Government lurks the potential trigger for the Coalition to move for a vote of no confidence in the Government that one would imagine the Independents would oppose.

If the Bill does pass in the House then it still has to face the Senate hurdle where the Greens would most likely vote it down to save the Government. Of course in the due processes if it fails in the Senate then it would go back to the House for another vote and if successful be returned to the Senate. If it fails a second time in the Senate then there are grounds for a double dissolution.

The forthcoming federal election may be upon us before the Parliament resolves this issue.

One thing we can be sure is we will witness the whole range of Government delaying tactics again. So folks its time to pull out your YES MINISTER and YES PRIME MINISTER video series and follow their application in the House.

## **YOUR INVITATION TO BE PRESENT IN THE HOUSE**

If you live in the ACT or adjoining Federal electorates especially Eden Monaro, or visitng Canberra, come and join us in the House Public Gallery to see and listen to the Oakeshott Motion being debated. Contact Geoff Schmidt (our ADSO ACT Action Group Leader ) on [gnschmidt@netspace.net.au](mailto:gnschmidt@netspace.net.au) or Alf Jaugietis on [ajaugiet@hotmail.com](mailto:ajaugiet@hotmail.com) for details **NOW**.

## **HELP NEEDED**

Due to the expanding size and scope of our operations we seek help from people with skills and experience in the following fields who are willing to help us conduct the Campaign:

1. **Computer Operations - Webmaster** for the [www.standto.org](http://www.standto.org). Ideally, you should have some experience in manipulating images, converting documents to pdf, posting content to (not designing) the web site and experience with social media. If not, but you are experienced as a computer and social media user we can train you in the tasks required.
2. **Data base marketing - Manager.**
3. **Fund Raising - Manager**
4. **Investigative journalism - Journalists**
5. **Research officers** for all the Fair Go Campaign issues.
6. **Media management - Manager**

Please contact Ted Chitham [tchitham@bigpond.com](mailto:tchitham@bigpond.com) for further information.

And please encourage your mates, friends and family to join the Campaign. We owe it to every Australian military serviceperson past and present to restore and protect their rights.

**Thank you for your great support. The awakening is happening.**

From the "Fair Go!" Team

**Campaign Directors:** [Ted Chitham](#) , [Alf Jaugietis](#)

**Campaign National Spokesperson:** [David Jamison](#)

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