

Mr Matt Anderson PSM
Director



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Senator Raff Ciccone
Committee Chair
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee

Dear Senator,

I am writing in relation to the evidence provided by the Australian War Memorial at the 6 June 2024 hearing of the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee.

The evidence relates to a question asked by Senator DAVEY, reference bottom of page 3 of the Hansard and copied below:

Senator DAVEY: It struck me as interesting that, previously, the War Memorial in the budget statements has had a fairly consistent long-running definition, and there has been an addition of a few words this year. As a curious mind, I'm scratching my head and wondering why. In the past it has always read:
The AWM is responsible for maintaining and developing the national memorial to Australians who have died in wars or warlike operations. It also develops, maintains and exhibits a national collection of historical material and conducts and fosters research into Australian military history.

It's almost the same, but there has been the following additions:

... Memorial to Australians who have died on or as a result of active service or in wars or warlike operations in which Australians have been on active service.

I'm just curious about that change.

Mr Anderson: I think, Senator, you're talking about the difference between our strategic plan and our annual corporate plan. That's where there has been a slight change and, to be honest, that was a drafting error. It's just a human error where some extra words were left in and, in terms of document control, you don't need those extra words. They don't—

Senator DAVEY: So there's—

Mr Anderson: There's no change in form or function.

Senator DAVEY: There's been no feedback to the War Memorial saying that this was lacking or it needed to be an addition?

Mr Anderson: None.

Senator DAVEY: It was just—

Mr Anderson: It was a document control error.

Senator DAVEY: cut and pasted from one document instead of another document.

Mr Anderson: Regrettably.

Senator DAVEY: Nothing nefarious? Nothing to see here?

Mr Anderson: Nothing to see here.

Senator DAVEY: Thank you very much, and thank you for your ongoing service. That's all from me, Chair.

Here is their spirit, in the heart of the land they loved; and here we guard the record which they themselves made. C.E.W. Bean

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Due to a recent FOI request relating to wording in the Corporate Plan and Strategic plan, I responded to Senator Davey with the information related to those documents, rather than the PBS. I have since reviewed the PBS and can see the statements noted in the questions by Senator Davey.

The wording in the PBS has been, as Senator Davey pointed out, consistent for many years. It was altered slightly to bring it back into closer alignment with the wording the Australian War Memorial Act 1980 Section 5(1)(a)(i) and 5(1)(a)(ii):

5 Functions of Memorial

(1) The functions of the Memorial are:

- (a) to maintain and develop the national memorial referred to in subsection 6(1) of the *Australian War Memorial Act 1962* as a national memorial of Australians who have died:
 - (i) on or as a result of active service; or
 - (ii) as a result of any war or warlike operations in which Australians have been on active service;

Apologies to Senator Davey and the committee for this error. If any members would like further information, I would be happy to provide it.

Yours sincerely,

Matt Anderson