



DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

Patron-in-Chief: His Excellency General the Honourable Sir Peter Cosgrove AK MC (Retd)

NATIONAL OFFICE

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19 March 2019

**The Committee Secretary
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600**

SUPPLEMENTARY SUBMISSION TO SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE LEGISLATION COMMITTEE INQUIRY INTO AUSTRALIAN VETERANS' RECOGNITION (PUTTING VETERANS AND THEIR FAMILIES FIRST) BILL 2019

The Defence Force Welfare Association (DFWA) attended and presented its views on the 'Covenant Act' to the FADT Committee hearing yesterday. For that I personally thank the Senators for providing DFWA the opportunity to give evidence.

In his closing remarks the Chair, Senator Eric Abetz, invited interested parties to make final submissions or provide additional thoughts by COB today i.e. Wednesday 19 March 2019.

DFWA is concerned that the Secretary DVA, Ms. Liz Cosson AM CSC, advised the Committee that none of the amendments to the Bill proposed by ESOs and other interested parties appeared to warrant inclusion in it. DFWA has a contrary view. It is ESOs such as DFWA that live with the consequences of such legislation and it is our concern that well considered amendments, based on practical experience, do deserve serious consideration and inclusion.

DFWA cordially requests that the FADT Committee consider the following amendments to the Bill. These are:

- a. **Title of the Bill.** (Note that the word 'Covenant' is not mentions in the Bill as it now stands)

Recommend that the title read: **Australian Defence Veterans' Covenant Recognition (Putting Veterans and their Families First) Bill 2019.** Furthermore, the front cover of the Bill should make mention of the 'Unique Nature of Military Service'. Suggested expanded wording for what the Act provides is: **A Bill for an Act to provide for the recognition of the unique nature of military service, veterans, and for related purposes.**

- b. **General Recognition – Part 2 Paragraph 5**

Add a sub-paragraph (3) to read as follows: *The Commonwealth acknowledges that it will ensure, as far as its authority permits, that veterans and their families will occupy a position, both materially and socially in the community as valued and respected members.*

c. General Recognition – Part 2 Paragraph 7 (1)

Add a sub-paragraph to read:

(d) Any other Act which provides a benefit or service to veterans and their families

Yours Sincerely

Kel Ryan
National President
Defence Force Welfare Association