



## VIETNAM VETERANS' FEDERATION

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Incorporating

Vietnam Veterans Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Association NSW Branch

Vietnam Veterans Federation Queensland Branch

Vietnam Veterans Federation ACT Branch

Vietnam Veterans Federation Victorian Branch

Vietnam Veterans Federation South Australian Branch

Vietnam Peacekeepers Peacemakers Federation of Tasmania

Vietnam Veterans, Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Federation of Australia WA  
Branch

24 May 2015

### Second Submission

#### Submission to the Senate Foreign Affairs Defence and Trade References Committee

#### Inquiry into the mental health of Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel who have returned from combat, peacekeeping or other deployment.

#### Misleading Statements about the Incidence of Veteran Suicide and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

#### Recent example

##### Suicide

In our first submission we argued that official statements comparing the rate of suicide in the ADF favourably with the rate of their peers in the general community were misleading because the groups being compared are too statistically dissimilar.

Since, there has been another such statement.

On 8 April on the 7.30 Report, Assistant Minister for Defence, Stuart Robert, was being questioned by Leigh Sales:

LEIGH SALES: There are nine suicides that we know of involving serving and former personnel of HMAS Stirling over the past four years. Can you confirm any more?

STUART ROBERT: Always difficult for those who are no longer serving, Leigh. The last 15 years, tragically, we've had 106 members of the ADF suicide. **Now that's less than the national average**, however, it's still tragic. ...

Graham Walker

National Research Officer, Vietnam Veterans Federation

For Bill Roberts OAM, Acting National President