



DEFENCE FORCE WELFARE ASSOCIATION

Patron-in-Chief: His Excellency General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd)

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14 June 2021

Senator Kimberley Kitching
Chair
Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Senate FADT Inquiry - Accuracy of Information Provided to DFRDB Members

Question 1

Senator Kimberley Kitching asked the Defence Force Welfare Association:

CHAIR: *One of the findings from the Ombudsman's investigation was that there had been defective administration with the implementation of the DFRDB scheme. Do you know if any DFWA members have applied and received payments under the Scheme for Compensation for Detriment caused by Defective Administration—the CDDA scheme? Have any of your members applied for and received payments under that scheme?*

Mr Fowles: *Not that we're aware of.*

CHAIR: *Okay. If you do become aware of any—if you asked some people—are you able to come back to the committee secretariat and just let them know? I'm interested in whether that scheme has been used.*

Mr Fowles: *Certainly.*

Mr Ryan: *Yes*

(Per Proof Committee Hansard p 14)

Question 2

The Defence Force Welfare Association has canvassed its members, following the hearing. No DFWA member has advised that they have *applied for and received payments under [the CDDA] scheme.*

NOTE:

Note however that this does not mean that individual members have applied for payment under the DFRDB CDDA Scheme and not advised DFWA.

The DFRDB CDDA Scheme is difficult and not veteran friendly. Veterans do not have the financial or clerical resources available to the Ombudsman. This makes it challenging to counter the analytical arguments and demands of the Ombudsman.

Seriously consider the age of the veterans involved here. I recommend that you and the FADT view the DFRDB CDDA Application Form, its demands for records, timings, names of individuals consulted or advisors, possibly going back 30 or 40 years.

The Ombudsman devised the DFRDB CDDA Scheme itself, its demands, and the exhausting of legal avenues before the submission of a claim. All of this after the resolution of ongoing compensation claims should the veteran be in that position. Senator, there is an unfairness written into the DFRDB CDDA Application Form that works against the individual veteran seeking to make a claim.

This is in many ways reflective of the unfairness of the Commutation issue which ties veterans who are in receipt of DFRDB pensions to out-of-date life tables in the commutation calculations. This is at the centre of the DFWA case.

Yours Faithfully

Kel Ryan
National President
Defence Force Welfare Association