

SENATE INQUIRY INTO SUPERANNUATION REFORM

I write this submission as the wife of an ex serviceman who gave 20 years plus to the Military and is also a Vietnam Veteran.

Dedicated servicemen and war veterans continue to receive shoddy treatment from both past and present Governments, and the latest 'Governance of Australian Superannuation Schemes Bill 2010 and related Bills' seems to be no exception.

I note that the Bill proposes that management of civilian and military superannuation schemes be merged under one authority with a board comprising 10 persons.

It is my belief that the watering down and amalgamation of military schemes of any sort is and always has been detrimental to the military group. The schemes are never managed as well, and their original charters deteriorate with the impact of either inept management or negative interest groups.

Then when one looks at the composition of the current proposed board one is left with a feeling of disbelief at the impending potential for the further erosion of benefits. What on earth have Trade Union Members (3 of) to do with the military? From events which took place during several wars – and my memory is of the diabolical treatment of soldiers by Unions (stopping their mail, disrupting their re-supply) during the Vietnam War – Trade Unionists appear to have an active dislike for the military.

We then have military members – 2 of. Only a majority here would achieve fair and reasonable understanding. The rest of the board – 5 – is to be made up of members selected by the Finance Minister. All of this leaves the board susceptible to political cronyism and disruption. Not a good way to get things done in a fair and equitable manner. Not a good recipe to get anything done at all!

We already have an increasingly suspect Matthews' Report creating great angst amongst the military and Veteran Community – a more unfair and uninformed report would be difficult to find. It contains bias typical of what could be expected from this newly dreamed up Merger.

Military superannuants must be considered quite separately from civilian superannuants. Their employment parameters are different from any other form of employment and require different considerations. How the erosion of their entitlements is allowed to continue beggars belief.

Australia's military personal and ex servicemen deserve the very best of consideration from their Government. This is the least that a country can do to support the men and women who complete the hard tasks which **you** ask of them and which they willingly do at great cost. Just ask their wives and families!

Forget the Merger. Re-visit the Matthews' Report. Let us get this right for once.

Lest we forget.

Sandra Shakespeare