

Dear Sir

This has come to my attention on the very last day for submissions. As an Army wife, I think I have some input into the special conditions of being part of the Military.

The governments (Labour and Liberal) appear to have been trying to "civilianise" the Army over the last few years. While many reforms were necessary as rights of families needed to be given some priority, the reality is that it is NOT a normal job that you expect to be from 9 to 5 each day with your weekends free. While it has become a more flexible organisation and is in some ways probably a better organisation for those changes, it is still military service with all that entails. Our husbands do consider they are employed 24 x 7, they do go away regularly and in some units for months at a time. They do go into situations which are extremely dangerous and where they live with that danger for every minute they are there. That doesn't stop when they get home as they bring it home with them. But for the serving members being part of a 'special' organisation is why they joined and the development of the uniqueness over their service is why they then continue, and why that uniqueness must continue.

All of these reasons are why being in the Military is different and they must continue to be treated differently. To combine any part of their service or conditions with civilians can only be detrimental to the serving and past members of the services. To continue to have a viable Army, with people committed to what they do and therefore willing to do all that being in the Army means, the Government (regardless of the political party currently in power) must treat them with the respect and with the knowledge that they are not civilians and cannot be lumped together with civilian organisations with the purpose of trying to save money. To continue to be able to recruit and more importantly retain the people, it must be recognised the job they do is 'different' and therefore they must be treated as a separate organisation.

To make a board to oversee Military superannuation and include Union members doesn't appear to contain any logic. While I do understand the need for civilian "experts" to be involved, this does not mean ACTU executives. Their priority is rightly for their own members, as it should be.

This needs to be stopped.

Thank you

Diane Warren (Retired Army officer's wife)