

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration
PO Box 6100, Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

SUBMISSION BY OWEN BARTROP
ON THE PROPOSED
GOVERNANCE OF AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT SUPERANNUATION SCHEMES BILL
2010

Dear Committee Secretary,

I hereby submit this document to the Senate Inquiry into military and civilian superannuation reforms.

As a returned serviceman in receipt of a DFRDB pension I am very interested in ensuring the Senate committee has all the facts of military service and pensions before they make a decision to change the current structure of determining, governing and administration of military pensions. I am unable to supply all the facts but would like to add items that I believe should be aired in the committee's considerations.

The DFRB scheme that was in place when I joined the RAAF in the early 1950s was a funded superannuation scheme. In the 1970s the government of the day saw fit to transfer the accrued monies of over \$100m into consolidated revenue and increased the fortnightly amount each member had to pay into the new DFRDB scheme. Both the DFRB and DFRDB now became unfunded schemes.

Military service has very little in common with the public service and it would be inappropriate to try and combine the two. It would be like comparing apples with oranges.

Military personnel join the service to serve their country and during their time in the military are required to move from place to place at very short notice. Households and children's schooling are disrupted, not once but many times during the life of servicemen. Service personnel do not have the luxury of being able to refuse these disruptions. They are called upon to lay their lives on the line and work under stressful conditions. Many retain impressions of the horrific situations they find themselves in and the sights and sounds that they have had to endure. This occurs whether these people serve in a war zone or not.

Just because a serviceman leaves the service it does not mean that his service life has come to an end. He carries the memories both good and bad with him for the rest of his life. This is where there is a difference between service retirees and public servants. A good example can be drawn from the National Servicemen who served in Vietnam. How many public servants have suffered to the extent that these brave men have suffered and are still suffering? How many public servants fully understand the effect that military service has on these retired servicemen?

Public servants carrying out their normal duties and do not come under the stress experienced by service personnel, nor are they subject to forcible domestic upheaval. They cannot hope to understand the lives of retired servicemen and that is one reason for having a whole department to look after these retirees – the Department of Veteran Affairs.

Having the President of the ACTU nominate three directors to the Commonwealth Superannuation Corporation ensures that at least three of the directors are always Labor supporters. This appears to be a blatant attempt to politicise the Corporation. Why should the President of the ACTU be involved in the selection of directors? What would these directors know about military matters? I object strongly to the imposition of the ATCU in influencing the military pension scheme.

Therefore, I implore you not to combine military superannuation, its determination and administration with those of the public service pension scheme.

Yours sincerely,

O.R.F. Bartrop