



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Defence Sub-Committee

MEDIA RELEASE
Issued: 27 June 2012

Chair: Senator Mark Furner
Deputy: Dr Dennis Jensen MP

Care of Australian Defence Force personnel wounded and injured on operations examined

The management and support of Australian Defence Force personnel wounded and injured on operations will be examined by the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, in a new inquiry referred by the Minister for Defence Science and Personnel.

The ADF defines any personnel who is serving in war-like conditions and is hurt during contact with the enemy to have been 'wounded'. An ADF member hurt in an incident that has not been the result of enemy action in warlike conditions is said to have been 'injured'.

There have been 227 ADF members wounded in action in Afghanistan since 2002. There were 64 soldiers and one sailor wounded in 2010, 50 soldiers wounded in 2011 and 13 soldiers and one sailor wounded so far in 2012. In 2012, 10 were wounded by improvised explosive devices and four were wounded during contact with the enemy. Three personnel suffered fractures, two suffered fragmentation wounds, one suffered lacerations and contusions, and four sustained gunshot wounds. Four personnel have suffered mild traumatic brain injury.

"It is of paramount importance that the systems and processes to care for, repatriate, and rehabilitate or transition Australian Defence Force personnel wounded and injured on operations are efficient and effective," Defence Sub-Committee Chair Senator Mark Furner said.

"The inquiry will enable the committee to review current arrangements to ensure they are appropriate to support Australian Defence Force personnel who have been wounded and injured while serving their country."

The focus of the committee's inquiry will be on:

- Care of wounded and injured Australian Defence Force personnel while in operational areas;
- Repatriation arrangements for wounded and injured personnel to Australia;
- Care of wounded and injured personnel on return to Australia including ongoing health, welfare, and rehabilitation support arrangements;
- Return to work arrangements and management for personnel who can return to ADF service; and
- Management of personnel who cannot return to Australian Defence Force service including the Medically Unfit for Further Service process, transition from ADF managed health care and support to DVA managed health care and support, and ongoing health care and support post transition from the ADF.

The committee invites interested persons and organisations to make submissions addressing the terms of reference by Friday, 10 August 2012.

Individuals and organisations interested in making a submission are encouraged to read the information on the inquiry published on the Committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/jfadt> or by contacting the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2313 or emailing jscfadt@aph.gov.au.

For media comment: please contact the Sub-Committee Chair, Senator Mark Furner, on (07) 3881 3710 (Electorate Office) or (02) 6277 3423 (Parliament House)

For further information: please contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2313, via email at jscfadt@aph.gov.au or visit the inquiry website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/jfadt>