



Submission No 20

**Inquiry into the Care of ADF Personnel Wounded and Injured
on Operations**

Name: Mr Geoff Parker

Organisation: Private

8 August 2012

House of Representatives
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Inquiry into the Care of ADF Personnel Wounded and Injured on Operations

Dear Sir, Madam,

An integral part of the care of ADF Personnel Wounded and Injured on Operations is the impact upon their families, because it requires the families to provide physical and mental support, care and understanding.

The ADF Personnel Wounded and Injured on Operations has an impact on the physical and mental health of their family members.

The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) is currently undertaking a Family Health Study and the findings of that study should be incorporated into your inquiry please.

Background: In August 2007, the Australian (Labor) Government provided \$13.5 million for the DVA to establish the Family Study Program; a research program to assess the impact of war service on the health and welfare of the families of deployed Australian Defence Force (ADF) personnel.

The program will help Defence and DVA better understand the impact of deployment on families and the kinds of support services that would best help these families.

Announced in September 2006, the methodology is based on the Research Protocol by CMVH, titled Intergenerational Health Effects of Service in the Military.

The DVA contracted Colmar Brunton, who have collected and collated most of the data, and the DVA has prepared most of the information obtained from the multi-tier study.

The final report was to be considered by the Repatriation Commission early in the second half of 2012, and forwarded to the Government for consideration.

In the Winter 2012 edition of *'Veterans Affairs'* you identify that "*current and former members of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) are being offered the support they needrelating to mental illness, anxiety, post traumatic stress disorder, depressive disorders and alcohol disorders*". To present and past members of the ADF, the health study is as equally important as the support being offered by the DVA.

Allied Issue: In June 2012, the Repatriation Commissioner advised that due to resource constraints during 2012-13 (\$12 mil budget reduction) the program would be delayed considerably.

This research is extremely important to war veterans, past present and future. A long delay during this vital time when so many members of the ADF, War veterans and their wider families have contributed and waited years for the study findings is very poor. The work commenced many years ago.

The results are much needed by many veterans and their families. There seems to be a higher incidence of health issues within this community, even though the parents are amongst the fittest in Australia. Families of ADF and DVA people need these results to inform these families after having provided such comprehensive information to the study.

Please consider recommending this study be moved forward, to enable the findings to be included into your inquiry findings.

Yours sincerely

Geoff and Sue Parker