
The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia

Visit to Australian Forces deployed to the International Coalition Against Terrorism

Parliament's Watching Brief on the War on Terrorism

Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade

October 2002
Canberra

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ISBN: 0 642 78420 5



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Foreword

In late July 2002, a delegation of nine members from the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade visited Australian Defence Force personnel deployed on active service in the Middle East and Central Asia to as part of Australia's contribution to the International Coalition Against Terrorism.

The delegation travelled by Defence Force aircraft and met with:

- personnel deployed at the Australian National Command Element in Kuwait;
- Royal Australian Navy personnel deployed on maritime interception operations in the Persian Gulf;
- Royal Australian Air Force personnel conducting air-to-air refuelling operations from Kyrgyzstan; and
- forces from Special Air Service Regiment conducting operations in Afghanistan.

The visit was part of a wider program of activities being undertaken by the Committee to monitor Australia's ongoing commitment to the War on Terrorism. Those members fortunate enough to participate in the visit now have a far more comprehensive understanding of the nature and effectiveness of Australia's commitment than can be achieved by receiving briefings in Parliament House. This report is one of the ways in which we are seeking to make this experience available to a wider audience.

An equally important element of the visit was to demonstrate Parliament's strong bipartisan support, and the support of the Australian community, for the Defence Force personnel deployed on these operations.

We were extremely impressed by the outstanding professionalism and dedication to duty being displayed by our service men and women in demanding and, at times hostile, circumstances. They are performing with great distinction and have earned the respect and admiration of the international forces with whom they are working.

All Australians should be proud of their achievements and the contribution they are making to the success of the International Coalition Against Terrorism.

Senator Alan Ferguson
Committee Chairman

Membership of the Committee

Chair Senator A B Ferguson

Deputy Chair Hon L J Brereton, MP

Members

Senator A Bartlett (from 1/7/02)	Hon K C Beazley, MP
Senator M Bishop (from 1/7/02; to 19/8/02)	Hon A R Bevis, MP
Senator the Hon N Bolkus (from 1/7/02)	Mr A M Byrne (from 24/9/02)
Senator V W Bourne (to 30/6/02)	Hon G J Edwards, MP
Senator P H Calvert (to 19/8/02)	Mr L D T Ferguson, MP
Senator H G P Chapman (to 30/6/02)	Mrs J Gash, MP
Senator the Hon P Cook	Mr D P M Hawker, MP
Senator A Eggleston (from 1/7/02)	Hon D F Jull, MP
Senator C Evans	Mr P J Lindsay, MP
Senator B Gibbs (to 30/6/02)	Hon Dr S P Martin, MP (to 16/8/02)
Senator B Harradine	Hon J E Moylan, MP
Senator S Hutchins (to 30/6/02; from 19/8/02)	Mr G R Nairn, MP
Senator D Johnston (from 22/8/02)	Hon L R S Price, MP
Senator J A L Macdonald	Hon G D Prosser, MP
Senator K O'Brien (from 1/7/02)	Hon B C Scott, MP
Senator M A Payne	Hon W E Snowdon, MP
Senator the Hon C Schacht (to 30/6/02)	Hon A M Somlyay, MP
Hon B G Baird, MP	Mr C P Thompson, MP
Mr R C Baldwin, MP	



Membership of the Delegation

Leader	Senator A B Ferguson
Deputy Leader	Hon L J Brereton, MP
Members	Senator M A Payne
	Hon K C Beazley, MP
	Hon D F Jull, MP
	Hon G J Edwards, MP
	Hon G D Prosser, MP
	Hon B C Scott, MP
	Hon W E Snowdon, MP
Secretary	Grant Harrison
Defence Adviser	Lieutenant Colonel Roger Noble



Recommendations

Recommendation 1

The Minister for Defence should consider issuing an Australian campaign medal to those Australian Defence Force personnel who have served on operations in support of the International Coalition Against Terrorism (paragraph 8.13).

Recommendation 2

The Minister for Defence should:

- expedite the awarding of the Australian Active Service Medal to those Australian Defence Force personnel deployed as part of OPERATION SLIPPER who have already returned from their deployment; and
- ensure that, in future, the Australian Active Service Medal is awarded immediately upon completion of a tour of duty (paragraph 8.14).

