



Submission No 22

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

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Please accept this as young diggers submission into the care of ADF personnel wounded or injured on operations.

The treatment of wounded or injured personnel while on operations is excellent if the wound or injury is serious or critical.

Repatriation arrangements are also very good. We have had no complaints in this regard.

The care of wounded and injured personnel on their return to Australia is a mixed bag. If the member is able to be sent back to his/her unit after rehab then the treatment is excellent. If the member is going to be discharged then in some cases the treatment deteriorates as the member gets close to discharge. Some members are given long term medical leave which creates major issues. In most cases the member sees his/her doctor once or twice per month and for the rest of the time is at home. There is no unit discipline and the member has no connection to the military except for pay day and the doctors. This leads to partnership breakdowns and arrests for alcohol related incidents and violence. Some members end up in prison.

Young Diggers is taking these members on bush camps and we are trying to get them involved in voluntary work.

When a member can return to work the arrangements in general appear reasonable.

The management of personnel who cannot return to work. When a member gets a medical discharge his/her transition through to and including DVA is mostly very good.as is the ongoing health care.

The shortfall of this terms of reference is that there is no mention of stress related illness. This is the area that needs examination. The care by most units in the ADF is appalling. Army has improved dramatically in recent times but only in some units. Most need improvement urgently. Air Force and Navy leave a lot to be desired and are in that order by far the worst.

Most of all improvement needs to be made into the treatment of these illnesses, most mental health units are still treating young members the same way that they have treated Vietnam Vets, and when we go to these units the Vietnam Vets are still there in their droves. Why after 40 years?. Maybe we need to look at this.

The Soldier Recovery Centres are really good but don't cater for mental health issues.

Regards John Jarrett
President.

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