

**SENATE FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE
REFERENCES COMMITTEE**

**INQUIRY INTO RECRUITMENT & RETENTION
OF DEFENCE PERSONNEL**

SUBMISSION

Submission No: 115

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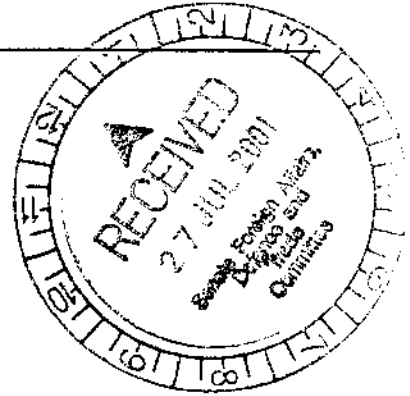


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Mr Paul Bassdell

Dear Sir,

To add my thoughts to the host of submissions already submitted. I am a chaplain of 11 years (part (4) and full time?).
CHAPLAINCY
Recruitment and retention of chaplains I believe has two issues. - (a) financial (as opposed to heavenly) remuneration does not make chaplaincy such a viable option. When the pay case before the Tribunal review was delayed once again and chaplains remained on pay levels below fellow officers it may be a humbling experience but along with that a negative one for recruiting & retention.

(b) the lack of support or clear career paths outlined for chaplains is also a negative impacting aspect of current chaplaincy. Due to the decreasing numbers, chaplains know that they will be retained even if they don't move so it appears some get preferential treatment and discontent creeps in.

GENERAL RECRUITING AND RETENTION

Along with the decrease in number of chaplains goes also diminishing of benefits; M.S.B. (without any 20 year incentive as under DRAB.); the threat of

dismissal due to injury (even if it was in the line of duty) and a current trend outlook by the army along with politics and many business practices that finance dictates not people.

If we can't care for our own people how are we really going to care for people of other countries.

The whole outlook is furnished with a view of political expedience & economic rationalism. ha!!

The recruiting is trying to focus on the defence force as a way of doing interesting things and learning skills rather ~~than~~ than setting a standard and offering a challenge and a deeper, more meaningful purpose of self discovery and significant participation in discovering a purposeful way of living for the world. There is no meaningful vision.

I believe people are looking for meaning and purpose and our little political interventions don't fool or hold young people for too long these days.

In my cynical assessment of this report I believe it will be a sop to the soldier and an expensive exercise that will avail nothing because there are already many people in the role of leadership who are not on about a leadership of service, but a leadership from the top down. It can't work.

God Bless the genuine efforts

Keith Wheeler -
Chaplain