

Senate Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Inquiry into Australia's involvement in peacekeeping operations

Australian War Memorial
Questions on Notice

Question 1: Peacekeeping displays at the Australian War Memorial

a. Would you please outline for the committee the displays and exhibitions at the Australian War Memorial which commemorate Australia's peacekeeping activities?

The Australian War Memorial is currently undergoing a major upgrade as part of the \$24m redevelopment of all Post 1945 Conflict galleries. These galleries, titled *Conflicts 1945 to today*, will include a section dedicated to the story of Australian peacekeeping, and are due for completion at the end of 2007, with an official public launch planned for early 2008. The new peacekeeping gallery will reference every commitment in which Australia has undertaken peacekeeping activities. A display on major Peacekeeping commitments through the 1990's (specifically Rwanda; Cambodia; Somalia; and East Timor) is also intended. This redevelopment has meant that galleries which commemorate Australia's peacekeeping activities have been temporarily closed since 2006 while they undergo a full refurbishment.

Since 1999, the Australian War Memorial has had an active program to record the efforts of Australian Defence Force personnel in peacekeeping operations around the world. The Memorial has consistently acquired official and private records, and work created by both official and unofficial artists and photographers that directly relate to peacekeeping operations in which Australians are involved. This program has covered peacekeeping operations in Rwanda, Cambodia, Western Sahara, Lebanon and Somalia and East Timor. The Memorial has also purchased a comprehensive photographic coverage of ADF activities in Timor from 1999 to 2007, in Bougainville and the Solomon Islands. Furthermore, several participants in Peacekeeping operations have donated collections of photographs taken whilst on duty.

The galleries are only one way in which the Memorial tells the story of the Australian experience of peacekeeping. Its website, which attracts over 4.2 million visitors a year, allows access to photographs, paintings, and also research papers and official histories. Additionally, peacekeeping activities were featured in the travelling exhibitions 'Witness to War' and 'Focus: photography and war 1945-2006'.

To mark the 60th anniversary of Australian peacekeeping, the Australian War Memorial hosted a conference on 13-14 September 2007 featuring a distinguished line up of speakers and former peacekeepers. The Australian Government's commemorations program, *Saluting their Service* has supported the conference with \$25,000. The conference will hear from past and present commanders of multinational peacekeeping operations, including Lieutenant General John Sanderson, who commanded 17,000 troops in Cambodia; and Major General Ian Gordon, currently commander of the UN military observers in Israel, Syria and Lebanon. The conference will deliver a unique perspective on the achievements over 60 years and the way peacekeeping is today.

b. Did any stakeholders, groups or agencies outside the Australian War Memorial provide input into these displays?

Yes. The Memorial consulted widely in the development of the new Post 1945 Conflict galleries; including current serving peacekeepers; peacekeeping veterans, and peacekeeping organisations and associations.

Question 2: Clarification regarding the Anzac Parade memorial.

The committee has received evidence about the National Peacekeeping Memorial proposed for Anzac Parade.

What, if any, involvement does the Australian War Memorial have with this project?

The memorials on ANZAC Parade are the responsibility of the National Capital Authority and the Australian War Memorial has little if any involvement. The Australian War Memorial has provided some minor historical advice to those planning this memorial.

Question 3: Peacekeepers and the Roll of Honour

The Australian Peacekeeper and Peacemaker Veterans' Association (APPVA) commented that 'the Australian War Memorial (AWM) has for some time rejected calls for the deaths of Australian Peacekeepers to be listed alongside those who have served and paid the ultimate sacrifice for Australia'.

APPVA recommended that all Australian peacekeeper deaths be listed in the AWM Roll of Honour.

What is the AWM's response to this suggestion and why?

The Australian War Memorial's Council determines policy for the Roll of Honour and has, over many years, considered the eligibility criteria for the Roll of Honour. The eligibility criteria for the Roll of Honour are based on resolutions agreed by Council in August 1997 and are consistent with long standing policy:

- to use Department of Defence definitions of types of service and categorisations of particular campaigns or periods of service under those definitions; and
- to adopt as criteria for inclusion on the Roll of Honour:
 - to be a member of the Australian Defence Force at the time of death; and
 - to have died on Warlike Service, or as a result of such Service and within the prescribed period.

These criteria reflect the Memorial's functions under the Australian War Memorial Act, 1980 as a national memorial of members of the defence forces who have died on or as a result of active service in war or warlike operations.

Consequently, only those Peacekeeping operations classified by the Department of Defence as 'Warlike' are eligible for the Roll of Honour. To date, Somalia and East Timor are the only Peacekeeping operations to be classified as warlike in which members of the Australian Defence Forces have died and those names are commemorated on the Roll of Honour.

The Council of the Australian War Memorial has been mindful of a need to commemorate members of the Australian Defence Force who have died on Peacekeeping operations. Consequently, at a meeting held on 22 May 2007, it resolved to commemorate in a

Remembrance Book all those members of the ADF not eligible for the Roll of Honour but who died on Peacekeeping operations.

The Remembrance Book will be located adjacent to the Roll of Honour panels in the Memorial's commemorative area.