



VIETNAM VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

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Committee Secretary
Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee
Department of the Senate
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

INQUIRY INTO THE ADMINISTRATIVE APPEALS TRIBUNAL AMENDMENT BILL 2004

The Vietnam Veterans Association has examined the proposed changes to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal Act 1975 detailed in the Bill.

While a number of the amendments are little more than 'good housekeeping' for more efficient operations, we do have some concerns.

In particular, the Association has concerns about the fixed tenure for the President, Deputy President and other senior members of the tribunal in that, it may, in some way discourage some quality applicants from seeking positions on the tribunal.

We welcome the provisions for the appointment of a judge of any federal court or a judge from any state or territory Supreme Court, but have reservations with the appointment of a legal practitioner enrolled for a minimum of five years.

We support the long overdue provisions for the Federal Court to dispose of appropriate matters completely rather than remitting them back to the tribunal.

This Association is mindful of attempts by the government to introduce legislation in the year 2000 to give affect to the Administrative Review Tribunal Act, which contained significant changes we vigorously apposed, along with the majority of Ex-service organisations. As a consequence the government decided not to proceed with the legislation.

On behalf of the Vietnam Veterans Association of Australia, I appreciate the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes.

Yours Sincerely,

BRIAN MCKENZIE
NATIONAL PRESIDENT